

Approved Minutes – Special Meeting  
BUILDING CODES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
Held on Thursday, March 7, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.  
In Room 215 of the Oak Park Village Hall

**ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER**

PRESENT: Commissioners, Hudson, Kelly, Liles, Nussbaum and Visteen  
Chairman Gilchrist  
Staff Liaison Witt

QUORUM: The meeting was called to order at 5:43 p.m. and a quorum was declared.

**AGENDA**

A voice vote was taken and the agenda was approved as written.

**MINUTES**

Minutes from the previous meeting were not available for review.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments related to the agenda topics.

**NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no non-agenda public comments.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

The following items were discussed.

1. The commission elected to write a letter to the Village Board regarding some of the questions that were raised at the February 4, 2013 Village Board meeting. Member Kelly offered to prepare a draft of the letter.
2. A draft copy of the proposed code amendment spreadsheet dated 03/05/13 was presented and a very cursory review was performed. The commission approved the document for form but wanted to take a close look at the contents prior to final approval. Members were asked to review the document prior to the next meeting and forward any comments or corrections to Steve Witt. Member Nussbaum indicated he felt the document would be a great asset to the community to help understand the amendments. He suggested it was a great idea for the Village Board to ask for it to be prepared. Member Hudson indicated that amendments should not be assumed to be more restrictive than the original code, sometimes they add clarity and sometimes they are less restrictive. Some amendments are due to the nature of existing buildings, size of lots and proximities of buildings to one another in Oak Park such as reducing the required building setback from 5 feet to 3 feet for residential properties.
3. Member Hudson moved to make sure that the code section on the Board of Appeals had specific language prohibiting the Board of Appeals from waiving any code requirement. The

- Board of Appeals should offer interpretations of the code or determine if the code was properly applied only. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved unanimously.
4. A proposal brought forth by the Illinois Association of Realtors to allow contractors optional construction techniques in lieu of providing fire sprinklers in 1- and 2-family homes was discussed. This proposal was referred to as the ILLOWA proposal as it originated from the Illinois & Iowa Code Officials group (ILLOWA), copy attached. Steve Witt indicated that at a previous meeting the Fire Chief indicated that the time from start of a fire to the flash point within the room has dropped from about 8 minutes to about 3 and-a-half minutes over the past ten years due to the contents of the building. Member Nussbaum moved to not approve the ILLOWA proposal as the construction alternatives look to contain the fire, not stop the fire. The commissioners felt that the ILLOWA proposal did not provide the same level of fire safety as fire sprinklers. Additionally, the cost differential for providing fire sprinklers versus the ILLOWA proposal was not deemed substantial enough to eliminate the sprinkler requirement. A voice vote was taken and the ILLOWA proposal was not approved, unanimously.
  5. Member Nussbaum asked if, based on the current concerns of the business community, if a building owner position should be added to the commission. Other members felt that doing a better job of reaching out the business community would be better as a building owner would not necessarily have the technical expertise to review code issues on other matters of construction.
  6. Based on the discussion held at the previous meeting, Member Hudson moved to relax the proposed prohibition on the construction of single-wythe exterior masonry walls. The commission voted and approved the use of single-wythe masonry unit construction for exterior walls with the following requirements:
    - a) The masonry units shall be manufactured with an integral water repellant conforming to ASTM 514.
    - b) The mortar shall be mixed with an integral water repellant conforming to ASTM 514.
    - c) A surface-applied water repellant shall be applied to all new exterior exposed concrete block units.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting was set for March 21, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. (regular meeting).

#### ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

By: Stephen Witt  
Staff Liaison,  
Building Codes Advisory Commission

## **ILLOWA (Illinois & Iowa Code Officials)**

### **Proposed Code Change regarding residential fire sprinklers:**

#### **ADD to Section R313.2**

**Exception 2.** An automatic residential fire sprinkler shall not be required when the requirements of Section R501.3 and exceptions 1 through 4 are met, and the under-stair area and any soffits are protected with minimum ½ inch (12.7mm) gypsum wallboard membrane, 5/8 (16mm) wood structural panel membrane, or equivalent on the underside of the floor framing member.

This addition will give home builders five options on building a new house:

1. Install an approved 13 d fire sprinkler
2. The use of fire resistant I-Joist.
3. The use of 2x10 or larger solid sawn lumber.
4. The use of I-Joist or floor trusses with no more than 80 square feet exposed per floor with vertical protection. (Sheet rock ceilings and soffits)
5. Floor over crawl space not intended for storage or containing fuel fired appliances.

**Section R501.3 Fire Protection for floors.** Floor assemblies, not required elsewhere in this code to be fire-resistance rated, shall be provided with a ½ inch (12.7mm) gypsum wallboard membrane, 5/8 (16mm) wood structural panel membrane, or equivalent on the underside of the floor member.

#### **Exceptions:**

1. Floor assemblies located over a space protected by an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with section P2804, NFPA 13d, or other approved or equivalent sprinkler system.
2. Floor assemblies located directly over a crawl space not intended for storage or fuel-fired appliances.
3. Portions of floor assemblies can be unprotected when complying with the following
  - 3.1 The aggregate area of the unprotected portions shall not exceed 80 square feet per story
  - 3.2 Fire blocking in accordance with Section R302.11.1 shall be installed along the perimeter of the unprotected portion to separate the unprotected portion from the remainder of the floor assembly.
4. Wood floor assemblies using dimension lumber or structural composite lumber equal to or greater than 2-inch by 10-inch (50.8mm by 254mm) nominal dimension, or other approved assemblies demonstrating equivalent fire performance.