

APPROVED

**CITY OF URBANA
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE BOARD OF APPEALS
WEDNESDAY, January 9, 2002**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Don Keeler, Bill Rose, Tom Welch, Dick Halberstadt and Gary Stebbins

STAFF PRESENT:

Mike Nickols and Vivian Petrotte

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mohamed Sharabash, owner

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Gary Stebbins at 4:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Gary Stebbins made the motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held Wednesday, September 6, 2000. All agreed and the minutes were not only approved as read, but signed by Donald Keeler.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS: The case to be heard was PMCBA-01-V-01; 101 South Coler Avenue; Mohamed Sharabash and Fatema Elshoura, owner. Mr. Stebbins explained how the process/meeting worked to Mr. Sharabash then turned it over to Mr. Nickols. Mr. Nickols described the background of the case as indicated in his memo of December 21, 2001 and passed around pictures of the basement. He then stated that staff recommended that the variance be denied since the 5 feet 8 inches at the bottom of the stairs represents only 89 percent of the minimum basement ceiling height of 6 feet 4 inches contained in exception 3.

Mr. Stebbins asked if Mr. Sharabash had anything to add other than what was written in his application. Mr. Sharabash explained that this property was purchased around July 17, 2001 and was not in good shape. They have spent a lot of money to fix it up. M. Sharabash stated that if the height is not acceptable, what could be done so his tenants could have some sort of laundry. Mike Nickols stated that the owners have upgraded the electrical, repaired the foundation, put new porches on and have done a lot of work on the inside to bring it up to code and have been very cooperative with the City.

Mr. Halberstadt asked if a laundry is required in a four unit building. Mr. Nickols stated that it was not.

Mr. Rose asked for specifications on the type of pipes above the ceiling. They are steam pipes, which are no longer in use. He's inclined to approve the 6 foot 2, but not

the 5 foot 8 at the bottom of the stairs. A discussion was held on how Mr. Sharabash could eliminate the 5 foot 8 inch at the bottom of the stairs and get an overall ceiling height of 6 foot 2 inches. Mr. Stebbins specified that if all this was done, emergency lighting would need to be installed

Mr. Halberstadt stated that an architect/engineer must draw up the plans for approval by the city.

Mr. Rose made a motion to approve a variance for a six foot two ceiling height in the basement for this use provided that the changes are made in the stairwell so that the 6 foot 2 is a minimum in the stairwell, as well as the basement.

Mr. Stebbins specified how this could/would be met:

- Remove the steam pipes
- New stringers that are either longer or shorter
- Architect must come up with plans that say this is how it will be done, and if it is possible at all
- Header at the bottom of the stairs
- Adequate emergency lighting
- Must be done and reinspected by May 1, 2002

Mr. Halberstadt pointed out that this was for laundry use only, not for habitable living space.

Gary Stebbins stated that emergency lighting is very important, because with the lower ceiling height, if the power went out it could be very dangerous.

Mr. Sharabash thanked everyone and mentioned moving the boiler unit and having the stairs go into the depression that was left, or digging deeper. Mr. Stebbins mentioned that this was in the flood plain and that this may be creating a another problem. Mr. Sharabash suggested moving the laundry into another area

Mr. Halberstadt explained that they would grant the variance for 6 foot 2 but not 5 foot 8. That the stair was the biggest problem, not where the washer was. That he needed a 6 foot 2 ceiling height overall, which removing the steam pipes may solve, and then the stairwell and landing would need to be corrected.

Mr. Stebbins restated that a motion was made to grant a variance for an overall ceiling height of six feet two inches in the basement for a laundry room and asked for a vote on the variance. It was unanimous.

Mr. Stebbins suggested Mr. Sharabash retain an architect as soon as possible. Mr. Halberstadt explained to Mr. Sharabash that we had granted a variance to allow for six foot two ceiling height in the basement and that Mr. Sharabash would be expected to show us how that would be possible.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Stebbins asked if there was any other business to discuss. There wasn't. He made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Tom Welch. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved:

Vivian Petrotte

Don Keeler, Secretary

PMCBA:vp