

**CITY OF URBANA**

**BUILDING SAFETY CODE BOARD OF APPEALS  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2006 – 4:00 P.M.  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 400 S. VINE ST.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Laurie Goscha-Chair, Keith Erickson, Brad Houk, Ed Schaller and William Kubitz

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** John Maloney and J. Dan Stirewalt

**STAFF PRESENT:** Gordon Skinner, Steve Cochran, Tim Mecum, Corey Ireland, Clay Baier, Libby Tyler and Vivian Petrotte

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Troy Flessner and Gary Burgett

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Laurie Goscha at 4:00 p.m. and a roll call was taken. City staff introduced themselves.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Laurie Goscha nominated Keith Erickson as secretary with unanimous approval.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Laurie Goscha asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held Monday, June 5, 1995. Brad Houk made the motion to approve the minutes and Keith Erickson seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Adoption of the 2003 International Code Series. City staff gave an overview, starting with Gordon Skinner, Building Safety Division Manager. He started by thanking everyone for taking the time to go over the codes and appreciates the time that it has taken. He explained that after this meeting and the upcoming Property Maintenance Code Board meeting, this will be forwarded on to City Council for their review and approval. Final approval is expected in early 2007.

The Board was previously supplied with the new ordinance, one with tracked changes from the previous ordinance and one clean copy which would be the new adopting ordinance. The International Code Series represents a merger of three model code groups. Since publication of the first code series in 2000, many active communities have already made the transition to the ICC series. Builders and designers have been using the code for a number of years and are now experienced with the requirements. The City of Champaign has been on the International Series and is currently on the 2000 series and is reviewing the 2006. He then stated that he would have each one of the inspectors that was responsible for their section go over the changes for that particular section. He stated that they would start with Steve Cochran and the building code section.

Steve Cochran said that the biggest change from moving from the 1990 BOCA to the 2003 International Building Code was the formatting change. One of the biggest changes is that there is no longer a table for area reduction for heights of buildings. They are limited to three times the allowable area of the first floor, which is a considerable change but not that difficult to come to grips with. Also, a lot of the allowable area tabular values (the base values that we use) have been revised. Most have gone up and a few have gone down and there is a higher allowance for an area increase for sprinklering one story buildings and there are some two story buildings that are allowed to be unlimited area. We have eliminated the energy section of the building code. We are going to adopt the Illinois State Code. We are doing that because the state will update that code, depending on what they see fit. They are currently on the 2000, not the 2003 and we felt that staying current with what the State wants would make more sense. We are also talking about wanting to eliminate the accessibility sections of the International Building Code, simply for the reason that there are State and Federal laws that govern that.

One minor revision as a result of that is that the code had eliminated the requirement for the last horizontal extension at the bottom of a handrail on stairs. The International Code no longer has that in there, however it is still required by the accessibility code and as such, Mr. Cochran wanted to put it back into the building code to eliminate confusion.

One last thing, we have in our ordinance an exception to sprinklered buildings that allows a small building (no more than 12 units, no more than two stories in height) to be allowed to be unsprinklered. It has to have an open exterior balcony with a stair or exit on either end. In order to give better clarification of that, Mr. Cochran stated that he changed it to say that those buildings have to have an exit stairway at each end. That eliminates the possibility of having a firewall and a doorway that connects it that serves as an exit.

Laurie Goscha asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. Cochran. Mr. Houk asked a question on sprinklers and Mr. Cochran clarified the code.

Mr. Skinner then introduced Tim Mecum, the electrical inspector. Mr. Mecum said that the major changes would be arc fault circuit breakers, which would be required on all outlets in the bedrooms. We also amended that particular section to be consistent with Champaign and accepted smoke detector outlets in bedrooms in that section. The other major change is the requirement for smoke detectors in all bedrooms. That is actually a building code issue but one that is enforced from the electrical perspective. The other change in our own adopting ordinance is less stringent rewiring requirements and the rewiring requirements would be optional. It would give the customer the opportunity to choose how far they want to go with their rewiring. It would ease some of the financial burden for some people who cannot afford a full blown rewire. It makes sense to do this because we do have folks that desperately need to do some changes to their system but they don't need to make a complete change like our code currently requires.

Another major change to our adopting ordinance would be allowing aluminum wire which would allow aluminum feeder cables for surfaces or feeders down to 100 amps. The price of copper has gotten to the point where it's prohibitive and it will be a big help to our

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developers and builders. The new alloy that they are using in aluminum conductors as opposed to what they used in 1972 is a lot more forgiving and has a much better safety record. The last major change is that currently we restrict the use of romex or any wiring to #12 or larger wire. We were not allowing 14 gauge wire and we now intend to allow the use of 14 gauge.

Ms. Goscha asked if there were any questions for Mr. Mecum. There were none.

Mr. Skinner then introduced Mr. Corey Ireland, the building/plumbing inspector who reviewed the International Residential Code.

Mr. Ireland said that one of the major changes was the allowable ceiling height. It will change from seven feet six inches to seven feet for habitable rooms. Another is the requirement for handrails. It will change from three risers to four or more risers. Also the flood resistant construction requirements are added in. We have more details on the basement wall reinforcement requirements. We have also added the carbon monoxide requirements to our adopting ordinance per state law.

Mr. Cochran stated that they are also removing the requirement for Radon mitigation. The reason it is being proposed is that we feel that there is evidence that Radon is not always a problem, and as a result, we don't feel that it's fair to require everyone to do that. That is consistent with what Champaign is doing.

Ms. Goscha asked if there were any questions for Mr. Ireland. There were none.

Mr. Skinner remarked that the carbon monoxide section was added to the building code also, which would apply to apartment buildings and added to the Property Maintenance Code, which would apply to existing buildings, all consistent with the law that goes into effect January 1, 2007. He then introduced Clay Baier to review the Property Maintenance Code.

Mr. Baier stated that one of the major changes of the Code is that if a property becomes over occupied in the City, the International Code gives us the right to condemn it as an unlawful structure. With the new code, graffiti will be the landlord/owner's responsibility to clean up. A section is being added on swimming pools to be maintained sanitary and also pools or hot tubs with over 24 inches of water will be required to be closed with a fence. The new code will require that windows within six feet of reach will be required to have a security latch, although our current adopting ordinance states that all windows are required to have a security latch and we will be keeping that. Any discarded refrigerators will be required to have the door removed if they are outside. We will now have requirements for efficiency units, which we have never listed before. The new code will require that smoke detectors be hardwired if a remodel is taking place. The bedrooms will all be required to have smoke detectors. Our adopting ordinance will state that they can be battery operated, they will not have to be hardwired. We are adding a section that clearly states the time frame to make code

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repairs to meet compliance, which will be 1-3 days for life safety concerns, 1-5 days for livability issues, and 30 days for all other concerns. That schedule will be listed in the adopting ordinance. We are also going to require screens year round. In the past, they were only required during the summer months. We are changing the minimum fine violation to \$135.00, whereas before it could be as low as \$1.00, according to City Ordinances. We are also requiring parking lot lights and as Gordon mentions, we are adding carbon monoxide detectors to our Property Maintenance Code.

Ms. Gosha asked if there were any questions for Mr. Baier. There were none.

Mr. Skinner stated that he would go over the plumbing and mechanical code. The plumbing code is adopted for administrative purposes. We make very few changes to it because we are required by the State of Illinois to use the Illinois Plumbing Code as the official code for Urbana. We have made one modification. In new residential homes, they have to have overhead discharge sewers. You cannot have gravity sewers. In other words, if you have a basement, you have to have a sewage ejector. We put that in the code in 1995 and want to keep that in. It helps prevent sewer backups in people's basement.

The Mechanical Code is now much easier to read. Urbana in the past has not allowed gas log lighters and we are going to keep that in the code. The ventilation tables are changed, for the better. The suppression hoods for over a cooking surface are now two different types so if they are doing less cooking, they don't have to have the full suppression type hood.

Mr. Skinner stated that Tony Foster, Urbana Fire Dept. Division Chief was running late but that he would summarize the changes for him. The major change is to require dormitories to be sprinklered. The State of Illinois requires certified housing to be sprinklered and that is what we call dormitories in Urbana so they will have to be sprinklered. For the most part, half of them have already done that. They have until 2013 by the State ordinance, but we will give them five years from the date of adopting this ordinance to do that. There are some others; high rise buildings (which in fact, all of our high-rise buildings are sprinklered) and buildings with impaired evacuation and institutional buildings, which there may be one of those that will have to do it. The dormitories are only with 16 or more occupants.

Mr. Skinner said that the flood hazard section was done by Brad Bennett using a model ordinance which was plugged into this and is consistent with what other people are using in Illinois.

Mr. Skinner stated that the Mobile Home section had no changes and is consistent with what other codes are saying so we do not think there are any changes needed.

Ms. Goscha asked if there were any questions. She then asked if there were any public comments. There were none. She then asked the board if they had any comments. There were also none. She then stated that she was thrilled that the City was taking on the

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International Code because as an architect it does make it easier to be somewhat consistent with the State and other municipalities.

At this time, Mr. Tony Foster arrived and stated again that the sprinkler section will match the Champaign Code and will be a nice addition.

Mr. Erickson expressed appreciation for the summary provided by the City Staff and asked the Chairman if it was appropriate to make a motion to adopt the code. Ms. Goscha stated that she thought it was appropriate and Mr. Erickson made a motion to adopt the code and Mr. Houk seconded the motion. Libby Tyler clarified what they were voting on. This is a recommendation to adopt to the City Council and they will take it up in January to adopt the ordinance. It passed by unanimous vote.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:42.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved:

Vivian Petrotte

Keith Erickson, Secretary

BSCBA:vp