

BUILDING-DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Minutes of June 17, 2008 Meeting

Jon Morris opened the Building-Development Commission (BDC) meeting at **3:05 p.m. Tuesday, June 17, 2008** in Charlotte Conference located in the Hal Marshall Service Center, 700 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Present: Jon Morris, Elliot Mann, Charley Watts, Barry Hanson, Ed Horne, Harry Sherrill, Wanda Towler, David Shultz, Brian Sigmon, Buford Lovett and Trent Haston

Absent: William Caulder and Danny Phillips

Guest: Paul C. Watkins, VCP Homes, Inc., Cary Saul (LUESA), Mark Baldwin – Home Builders' Association, Bill Carroll (Mecklenburg County - Public Service and Information), Rob Kinniburgh (Charlotte Fire Department, David Weekly (City of Charlotte)

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The motion by Barry Hanson (seconded by Brian Sigmon) to approve the May 2008 meeting minutes passed unanimously.

2. BDC MEMBER ISSUES AND COMMENTS

Elliot Mann asked if staff was aware of the article in the Charlotte Business Journal that stated Code Enforcement was moving to Freedom Drive by the end of the year (2008). Cary Saul stated that LUESA (which includes Code Enforcement) is scheduled to move to Freedom Drive in July 2010. Eddie Prince stated that the Department was hoping to complete the HMC renovations by year's end.

Mr. Mann stated that he has been inundated with complaints regarding the process to permit a residential sales trailer. Some people stated that the process seemed to be more difficult than getting the entire community approved. He offered those individuals an opportunity to represent the Industry by participating on a BDC Subcommittee with the task of streamlining the process. Eddie Prince suggested that Geri Walton be responsible for collecting the information from Mr. Mann and coordinating staff's participation. He suggested that City Fire and City/County Zoning be invited to participate as well.

Jon Morris announced that he wanted to mention three separate items:

- A. NAIOP unanimously agreed to support the Code Enforcement Educational Seminars scheduled for August 27& 28, 2008 with a \$500.00 donation to support the LUESA 2008 United Way Campaign. Tim Taylor agreed to provide the particulars so that the funds can be appropriately directed.
- B. He stated that Industrial Machinery seems to be an example of where the State Legislature has given County Officials a legal "out" and, in this case, it is possible that the County is unnecessarily providing enforcement activities. Eddie Prince stated that the Department's Policy is on the front page of www.meckpermit.com and it provides information on the statutory definition along with the Department's interpretation. The document clearly outlines the Department's response to and activities associated with Industrial Machinery.
- C. Mr. Morris announced that the Monday, June 16, 2008 City/County Meeting was well attended. Although the idea of co-location is no longer being considered; he was pleased that there still exists good dialogue between the Development Community, City/County Policy Makers and City/County Management staff.

Charley Watts stated that he has noticed increased activities at the Front Counters in the lobby. He noted that most times there is standing room only. He asked if it is possible to provide additional seating. Cary Saul stated that most of the increased traffic can be attributed to the fact that it is the Business License renewal season.

2. BDC MEMBER ISSUES AND COMMENTS continued...

Ed Horne provided input on the discussion regarding Industrial Machinery. He stated that OSHA is typically reactionary. In the event of a tragedy, regardless of who the owners are, all parties are subject to legal action. He thanked Gerald Harvell and Gary Mullis for participating in the annual Electrical Contractor's Forum.

Elliot Mann thanked the Department (Trades Inspectors, Trades Chiefs and Eddie Prince) for their support of the annual Builder's Blitz. In spite of the challenges due to the current economic climate, five (5) houses were built in one week.

No other comments were offered.

3. PUBLIC ATTENDEE ISSUES AND COMMENTS

No comments were offered.

4. MEGA PROJECTS HOURLY FEE

Willis Horton – Project Manager, Mega Projects Team provided a presentation showing that over 70% of Mega projects consume Plan Review resources significantly beyond levels calculated within the current permit fee structure. Charging for their reviews by the hour will both solve/align permit fees with regard to cost and promote A/E “plan review readiness”. The \$125 hourly charge will include staff or management time required for project planning meetings, preliminary code reviews, management problem solving and similar associated meetings. Instead of investing in new software to track the process, the Department engaged an existing employee within the Residential Permitting Division, Silvio Conte, to develop a tracking system. This saved the Department an estimated \$24,000.00. The implementation is scheduled for July 1, 2008.

Department Impact:

- Enables the Department to recover actual costs of doing business.

Industry Impact:

- More efficient use of review time to streamline Plan Review turnaround times for large projects.

Employee Impact:

- Establish specific “teams” of knowledgeable individuals to help expedite unusual code interpretations and design problems.

Overall Expectation:

- This removes large projects from main-stream review to assist designers in expediting both large and small projects through the Commercial Plan Review process.

Mr. Horton added that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved this action at its May 7, 2008 Meeting. Jon Morris offered using the Chamber and its resources as an avenue to assist with advertising this process change. Mr. Morris reminded the Department of the importance of how this is advertised to avoid negative reaction from the Industry. Eddie Prince noted that Bill Carroll (PS&I) was present and has been tapped to assist with reshaping all of the Department's marketing activities.

5. BDC ORDINANCE REVISION

Gerald Harvell (Chief, Electrical Administrator) stated that the North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 87 allows homeowners to apply for Mechanical, Electrical or Plumbing (MEP) permits in their own name (serving as the Contractor), if they pass a Department administered examination on the appropriate discipline. In addition, the project address must be their permanent residence where they will continue to occupy for a minimum of twelve (12) months after completion of the work. This Amendment adds the definition of a homeowner along with a brief process description to the BDC Ordinance. Phil Edwards added that homeowners are given two opportunities to pass the exam. If they are not successful, they must engage the services of a licensed contractor.

The BDC unanimously voted to endorse this amendment to the BDC Ordinance. Geri Walton stated that the BOCC is expected to address this issue at its July 1, 2008 meeting.

6. TWELVE YEARS OF CHANGE

Eddie Prince reviewed the handout which summarized 25 key initiatives (not all) that have significantly modified the tools available to customers to comply with the Code, or new tools developed to make the process as efficient as possible, while maintaining the Department’s commitment to public safety. The document was originally compiled in 2006 at the BDC’s request. Mr. Prince asked the BDC to advise how the information could be best used. He showed a proposed copy of a colored brochure along with a proposal to print the documents for approximately \$900.00. The members suggested that the document be made into a webpage where interested individuals could select to read the individual details. They agreed that electronic versions via web-link should be distributed through the customer database and printing a limited number of brochures.

7. DEPARTMENT REPORT

A. STATISTICAL REPORTS

A-1. Permit Revenue

May Total: \$2,685,559M; FY08 YTD Total \$20,022,965
FY08 Projected thru May- \$22,173,130; \$2.15M or 9.7% below projection

A-2. Construction Value of Permits Issued

May Total - \$747,964,743; FY08 YTD = \$4,344,626,601
FY07 Total at May – 4.1393B; so FY08 total is up \$205M or 4.9%

A-3. Permits Issued

	April 08	May 08	3 Month Trend
Residential	3617	4037	3357/3337/3617/4037
Commercial	3049	3610	3087/3285/3049/3610
Other (Fire/Zone)	611	568	660/642/611/568
Total	7234	8215	7104/7264/7234/8125

- For May; residential up 11.61%, commercial up 18.4%; total up about 14.82% Note: New construction Single Family detached total permits in FY08 YTD; total 3790, down 44.8% from FY07 (6904) April YTD
- Overall, YTD total permits issued is running 6% behind FY07 at May; 83,126 FY08 YTD vs. 88,264 FY07 at May

A. STATISTICAL REPORTS

A-4. Inspection Activity

Response Times

Insp. Req.	April 08	May 08	Insp. Perf.	April 08	May 08	% Change
Bldg.	7785	7709	Bldg.	7682	7654	flat
Elec.	7191	7216	Elec.	7096	7194	+0.01%
Mech.	4210	4274	Mech.	4198	4269	+0.01%
Plbg.	4083	4331	Plbg.	4069	4333	-0.06%
Total	23,269	23,530	Total	23,045	23,450	+0.01%

- Note 1: - Inspections Requested – up 1.1%
- Inspections Performed – up 1.76%

Insp. Resp. Time	OnTime %		Total % After 24 Hrs. Late		Total % After 48 Hrs. Late		Average Resp. in Days	
	April	May	April	May	April	May	April	May
Bldg.	97.0	97.8	97.4	98.3	99.3	99.2	1.07	1.05
Elec.	96.8	93.1	97.1	94.2	99.7	97.1	1.07	1.17
Mech.	99.1	98.5	99.4	98.6	99.7	99.3	1.02	1.04
Plbg.	99.9	98.7	99.9	98.7	100	99.1	1.00	1.04
Total	97.9	96.6	98.1	97.2	99.6	98.6	1.05	1.08

- Performance down slightly from April, owed to cutback in OT use
- All trades above 93% for 1st day

A-5. Inspection Failure Rates:

OVERALL MONTHLY AV'G @ 83.42%, from 83.16% in April

Bldg:	April – 76.73%	Elec:	April – 83.14%
	May – 78.66%		May – 82.03%
Mech:	April – 84.81%	Plbg:	April – 90.46%
	May – 85.47%		May – 89.58%

- Note building is at a historic high

A. STATISTICAL REPORTS

A-6. ONSCHEDULE & CTAC NUMBERS

CTAC:

- 156 First reviews
- Projects approval rate (pass/fail) - 63%
- CTAC was 52% of OnSchedule first review volume $(156/156 + 169 = 325) = 48\%$

OnSchedule:

- May, 07: 151 1st review projects; on time/early – 93.4% all trades, 92.1% B/E/M/P only
- June, 07: 161 1st review projects; on time/early – 95.5% all trades, 95.5% B/E/M/P only
- July, 07: 154 1st review projects; on time/early – 95.0% all trades, 93.6% B/E/M/P only
- August, 07: 165 1st review projects; on time/early – 92.1% all trades, 92.5% B/E/M/P only
- September, 07: 146 1st review projects; on time/early – 91.7% all trades, 93.8% B/E/M/P only
- October 07: 146 1st review projects; on time/early – 92.7% all trades, 91.6% B/E/M/P only
- November 07: 174 1st review projects; on time/early – 89.1% all trades, 87.8% B/E/M/P only
- December 07: 140 1st review projects; on time/early – 92.4% all trades, 93% B/E/M/P only
- January 08: 148 1st review projects; on time/early – 94.7% all trades, 94.9% B/E/M/P only
- February 08: 176 1st review projects; on time/early – 89.6% all trades, 89.2% B/E/M/P only
- March 08: 176 1st review projects; on time/early – 91.4% all trades, 89.9% B/E/M/P only
- April 08: 167 1st review projects; on time/early – 92.9 % all trades, 91.3q% B/E/M/P only
- May 08: 1691st review projects; on time/early – 96.3 % all trades, 96.1% B/E/M/P only

Booking Lead Times

- OnSchedule Projects: **see new reporting chart posted on line**, on May 31, showed
 - 1-2 hour projects; at 1-2 work days booking lead time
 - 3-4 hour projects; at 1-4 work days booking lead time; w/County Zoning at 4 work days
 - 5-8 hour projects; at 4-10 work days booking lead time, w/Bldg & CFD at 10 work days and CMUD/Health/City Zoning at 9 work days
- CTAC-BEMPF running 1-3 work days on plan review turn around times, with City Zoning at 5 work days
- Express Review – booking lead time was; 12 work days for small projects, 16 work days for large
- NC Rehab Prelim Review – booking lead time was 7 work days.

B. UPDATE ON DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES

B-1. CO/CC/TCO Follow-up Work

- **Update on Project Permit Master Plan Details (PPMP):** There are 18 projects in the program; internal surveys complete. New technology will allow customers to view the status of each permit versus only viewing the hierarchy.
- **Expired Permits:** Phases I & II are fully implemented and complete. The Division is receiving responses from the courtesy letters which remind customers of their responsibility to close out permits that are issued.
- **Expungement of Records Project:** The goal is deletion of old records by removing the associated relationships in a logical, sequential method in order to not lose critical secondary project objects, e.g. contractor object and/or address object.

B. UPDATE ON DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES (continued)

B-2. Commercial Plan Review Strategy Update

Hiring Update (6 vacant positions):

Three (3) vacancies: two (2) applicants will start on June 18, 2008 and the third applicant requires Level III certification by DOI, which could take a month or more (hope to have on board by mid-July). The remaining 3 positions are frozen per the FY08 Budget Strategy.

Plan Review Subcommittee Meetings:

The A/E Pass Rate Subcommittee's first meeting is scheduled for June 24, 2008 in the Auditorium I Conference Room. The meeting will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. currently, the members have agreed to meet two times per month.

B-3. CPM Comments

- Gerald Harvell reported that the 2008 NEC became effective June 1, 2008. However, the HBA has a few items under protest. The enforcement will be tracked via permit date.
- Tim Taylor reported that Residential Plan Review turnaround times are within 3-5 work days. Server problems are causing delays in the EPS Reciprocal Plan Review project. He announced that Code Enforcement's Annual Education Seminar to benefit the United Way of the Central Carolinas is scheduled for August 27 & 28, 2008. The seminar will address the impacts of the recent Code changes. In response to the feedback received after the 2007 Seminar, the impacts to commercial will be on the 27th and residential impacts will be addressed on the 28th. All interested parties should contact Jeanne Quinn at 704-432-2350 or via email at Jeanne.Quinn@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov. Eddie Prince added that the quality of the presentation as sound as they were last year with regard to Code content and entertainment value.
- Annette Albright reported that on the Code Enforcement Position Update, it reports that her Division is fully staffed. Immediately after filling the last vacancy, another employee went into a "FMLA" or long term leave status. The Division will monitor this situation as it relates to turnaround times.
- Eddie Prince noted that the Trades Inspections Division are focusing on eliminating overtime and relative to the drastic decrease, only a minimal amount of complaints have been received. The overtime dropped from 700 hours to 150 hours yielding a 4% reduction in response times. He also mentioned a drastic cutback on travel costs as well.
- Mr. Prince offered the City Officials and opportunity to address the BDC. Chief Kinniburgh stated that City Fire has been consistently and intimately involved with LUESA and according to the recent Lead Time Reports, City Fire is leading the way in turnaround times. He announced that the intentions of City Fire to have a greater presence with residential plan review. David Weekly (City Engineering) stated that he found the BDC meeting to be informative and felt that City Engineering should participate in meeting regarding the residential sales trailers.
- Jon Morris asked if the City had a similar advisory board where he, Jim Bartl and Eddie Prince could attend to reciprocate and show the City and County's commitment towards working together. Mr. Weekly stated that the City did not have such an advisory board in place.

B-4. Other

- BDC Appointments moved to the July 1, 2008 BOCC meeting to allow for support documentation from HBA and Charlotte Chapter of the American Society for Landscape Architects to reach the BOCC.
- The Director of Permitting and Senior Project Manager Positions for Commercial Plan Review are currently posted on the AIA – CHARLOTTE, AIA-NATIONAL, PENC, ICC websites as well as in the national periodicals.
- The BDC members were pleased with the new Charlotte Conference Room. It was agreed that future BDC meetings will be scheduled in the Charlotte Conference Room.
- Cary Saul mentioned that the overall revenues are up and along with lapsed salaries and the recent commitment to reducing costs; Code Enforcement might not have to access the Special Fund to finish out FY08. Jon Morris acknowledged that this was due to the admirable performance of the Code Enforcement's management team.
- The July BDC meeting will focus on:
 - Report on Results of Customer Satisfaction Survey
 - Quarterly Reports
 - BDC Quarterly Bulletin Exercise
 - Others (to be specified)

8. ADJOURNMENT

The June 17, 2008 Building Development Commission meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

NOTE: The next BDC Meeting is scheduled for **3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 20, 2008 in the Charlotte Conference Room** of the Hal Marshall Service Center.