



CITY OF AURORA
BUILDING CODE & CONTRACTOR'S APPEALS & STANDARDS BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, October 8, 2019, 3:00 P.M.
OAK ROOM, 2ND FLOOR, BUILDING DIVISION

MINUTES:**Present:**

Michael Aitken, Chair, Building Code and Contractor's Appeals & Standards Board
John Dougherty, Building Code and Contractor's Appeals & Standards Board
Dan Osoba, Planner
Scott Berg, Chief Building Official
Tod Kuntzleman, Manager of Special Projects
Dora Shols, Permit Technician Supervisor
Steve Greer, Public

Absent:

Greg Echols, Building Code and Contractor's Appeals & Standards Board
Tim Green, Building Code and Contractor's Appeals & Standards Board
Alecia Peabody, Building Code and Contractor's Appeals & Standards Board

Introduction:

Michael Aitken called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Approval of July 9, 2019 meeting minutes

There were no questions on the July 2019 meeting minutes. Michael Aitken approved and signed the July 9, 2019 meeting minutes.

Agenda Item 2 – 2019 Building Division activity summary

Scott Berg addressed September 2019 activity summary. The department had a healthy and robust month to date exceeding where we were last year. This time last year they were winding down the Gaylord project so the 112,921 inspections in 2018 was a one-time thing. The on-time performances were good and wait times for the Permit Center was down below 2 minutes. Plan Review loads are higher than last year. Plans Examiners are fully staffed, there are no vacancies, they added another Life Safety Plans Examiner and an Electrical Plans Examiner. The Electrical Plans Examiner is a recent graduate. Michael asked how much training is needed for a recent graduate. Scott said the new Electrical Plans Examiner is an Electrical Engineering graduate that interned at Aurora since last summer and was up to speed. The Plans Examiners have their own training program, depending on the discipline they sit with a mentor as they go through plans and a full-time staff member review. Jose Rodriguez, Plan Review Manager, has a training program for each discipline whether it's electrical, regular plan review or life safety.

Michael asked if the city is still utilizing roofing consultants for the single-family roof inspections, Scott said yes, and it is trending higher than normal. Usually we are around 4,000 for the year and we are already over this number in September. Tod mentioned it was an average when there is a no weather event year.

There were no further questions or comments.

Agenda Item 3 – Requests for Modifications

Michael stated it looked like there was only one or two modification requests denied. The first one, on Dearborn, was denied because they wanted to call the first floor a basement, not a story. Scott mentioned the way the code reads it is the distance from the floor to the grade or average distance around the building. They were able to change the grading to meet the code definition.

The second denied request was for Arby's, requesting not wanting to use a registered design professional stamp on drawings. Michael was not sure why they would request that except to save money from plan review. He mentioned every jurisdiction requires a fire sprinkler or fire alarm systems be stamped and signed by either a NICET certified technician or a registered design professional. Scott said they had a legal opinion because they do not have a Life Safety Engineer. They had a guy that submitted sprinkler drawings and was asked what his background knowledge was, which was mechanical. They talk to the State and attorneys, they said you can ask for knowledge and expertise, competency. If they stamp it, they stamp it. They gentleman say he had training in it. Michael said NCES has a fire protection engineering exam now. They can be a professional engineer with a fire protection license. The only university Michael is aware of is in Maryland and there might be one in Illinois or Wisconsin that teaches Fire Protection Engineering.

Michael said the other requests were straight forward and approved.

There were no further questions or comments.

Agenda Item 4 – Building Division featured in October Building Safety Journal

Michael liked the article about the Building department being featured in the *Building Safety Journal*. Scott said they contacted the division 6 or 7 months ago, asked a couple of questions about the process and asked for a picture. Michael asked if those were Scott's actual quotes. Scott stated he did acknowledge the quotes and they are still the only accredited Building Department in Colorado. Michael congratulated the Division and he was glad they are staying on top of the certification. Scott mentioned he asked the Director last year if he was still interested in keeping it and he said absolutely, Public Works is also certified.

There were no further questions or comments.

Agenda Item 5 – New Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Briefing

Dan introduced the new zoning code to the Board. He stated this process started in 2014 and expected the process to take two years. They hired Clarion and Associates to help write the code. The Planning Department was always involved in any revisions. The stakeholders were involved in mostly all the decisions and changes. Michael asked the last time the code was updated or reviewed. Dan explained they had different revisions but in pieces since 2003 when it was fully updated. There were updates to the sign code, residential housing code and a lot of those smaller updates did not fit well together. The new code started from scratch and it was needed. He explained it is in three separate modules.

The New Zone Districts and Land Uses was the first module that came out and sent to stakeholders' groups and neighbors. The New Development Standards was next module and lastly, Process and Procedures module. Community outreach meetings and stakeholder meetings were conducted throughout the process. They met with the Home Builders Association (HBA) regarding small residential lots. Which is one of the major changes in the new code regarding the minimum lot sizes, they are significantly reduced to accommodate different housing styles and standards the HBA wants to build. They met with the HBA and Aurora will require higher design standards for smaller lots. The final code was approved by City Council August 21, 2019 and took effect September 21, 2019. Michael asked what the minimum lot size is and Dan explained there are a lot of different variables but in general on a single family detached home with a front-loaded garage, the minimum lot size is 4,500 square feet and with an alternative loading garage it can go down to 3,500 square feet. Duplexes and townhomes could go down to 1,450 square feet which is the smallest lot size not building size. He also mentioned with smaller lot sizes front setbacks are also reduced. Michael asked if the maximum concrete in the front yard changed and Dan said no, that stayed the same at 40% maximum of the front yard and a lot of those development standards are the same.

Other major changes were the 53 zone districts in the old code and were condensed to 19. It is a across the board conversion and there is a table at the beginning of the code that show the conversion. Use regulations and requirements was discussed at various policy committee meetings and stakeholder groups. Whether certain uses were going to be permitted next to residential homes and industrial uses next to I-70. Accessory structure requirements were simplified. It makes it easier to review and simple for the contractor with a 5 foot setback across the board. Parking reductions, almost every use requires less parking than in the old code in response to try to affordable housing. Parking gets expensive and if you require several parking spaces it doesn't meet performance for a lot of developers. Landscape requirements have been updated to the times to use less water. Neighborhood protection standards, commercial and industrial use next to residential use, there are certain neighborhood protection standards that will be required.

Dan was asked to give examples of accessory structures and Dan stated for sheds, permits are required if larger than 120 square feet. In the old code it was based on the mid-roof height, for example if the mid-roof was 15 feet it needed have a 12 foot side setback, now it is just 5 foot side setbacks. Tiny houses are separate than accessory dwelling units, in Original Aurora if someone has an alley they can have an accessory unit on top of the garage or next to the garage and someone can live in that unit. For a tiny house it must be on a permanent foundation and cannot be in the rear of someone's house, that would make it an accessory dwelling unit. As of right now tiny houses are only allowed in a manufactured housing districts with a 400 square foot maximum size.

New concepts include building design standards; the old code did not have a whole lot of building design standards. There were residential minimum masonry requirements for residential units, commercial properties and none for industrial properties. The new table gives more design and material requirements for different types of buildings.

Adjustments in variances is like the old code, where administratively the city can grant a 10% adjustment of the zoning code. If it does not meet anything on the table it would have to go to a hearing, Planning Commission or City Council. Dan said the new code is like the old code but rewritten and reorganized. Michael asked if City Council received the new code and Dan replied yes, when they approved it in August. The new zoning code and slides are available online. [Unified Development Ordinance \(UDO\)](#)

John Dougherty mentioned he liked new visual look to the zoning code instead of pages and pages of tables and text. Planning will be putting something out for interpretations by the planning manager so people can view it. Building and Zone Code page: <https://www.auroragov.org/cms/one.aspx?portalId=1881221&pageId=3077503>

There were no further questions or comments.

Agenda Item 6 – Other items for discussion

Next year dates will remain the same, second Tuesday of each quarter at 3:00pm in the Oak Room, January 14, April 14, July 14 and October 13, 2020.

There were no other items or questions for discussion.

Michael Aitken adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.


Chair, Michael Aitken

1-14-2020
Date