



**TASK FORCE
AGENDA
CITY OF CREVE COEUR
BUILDING TASK FORCE
300 N NEW BALLAS ROAD
JULY 20, 2021
4:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of June 8, 2021 Building Permitting Process Review Task Force Task Force Minutes

DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Technical Code Modifications
3. Efficiency
4. Communication
5. Perception

BUSINESS FROM STAFF

6. Changes Implemented to Date
7. Update on Staffing

NEXT MEETING DATE

8. Next Meeting Date

Pursuant to Section 610.022 RSMo., the City Council could, at any time during the meeting, vote to close the public meeting and move to closed session to discuss matters relating to litigation, legal actions and/or communications from the City Attorney as provided under Section 610.021(1) RSMo. and/or personnel matters under Section 610.021(13) RSMo. And/or employee matters under Section 610.021(3) RSMo. and/or real estate matters under Section 610.021(2) or other matters as permitted by Chapter 610.

Posted: _____ posted 07/19/2021
Deborah Ryan, MPCC
City Clerk



**TASK FORCE
MINUTES
CITY OF CREVE COEUR
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JUNE 8, 2021
4:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Building Permit Task Force was called to order by Chair Dan Tierney at the Online Meeting on Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 4:00 PM.

ROLL CALL- VIA ZOOM

Chair Dan Tierney
Vice-Chair Heather Silverman
Member Joseph Martinich
Member James Myers
Member Mark Manlin
Member Ned Maniscalco
Member Victor Perrin
Member Jeffrey Bernstein
Member Barry Glantz
Mayor Hoffman

Staff Present: City Administrator Mark Perkins, Community Development Director Jason Jaggi and Recording Secretary/City Clerk Deborah Ryan

MINUTES APPROVAL

1. Approval of April 20, 2021 Building Permitting Process Review Task Force Task Force Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Victor Don Perrin, Member
SECONDER:	Mark Manlin, Member
AYES:	Tierney, Martinich, Myers, Silverman, Manlin, Maniscalco, Perrin, Bernstein

The vote on the motion being 8 ayes and 0 nays, motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Recap of Public Forums

Council Member Tierney stated the Resident Forum was held on May 18th and asked what was everyone's take away from that meeting.

Ned Maniscalco stated how have we gotten to where an HOA has inserted themselves into the permitting process, is an additional layer of bureaucracy. That added layer is not very helpful to the process for either party.

Council Member Tierney stated Creve Coeur has been receiving criticism on the process and subdivision trustee review amounts to another layer.



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James Myers stated the current ordinance regarding the smoke detectors seems to be an overreach.

Mark Manlin stated the inconsistency of the code, application process and the inspectors, was a repeating theme.

Council Member Tierney stated there was another issue with environmental requirements and that is not a safety feature but more of an expectation.

Mark Perkins stated windows and doors are more than ten percent of our building permits.

Council Member Tierney asked if the city is in line with other cities regarding the adoption and enforcement of the energy code.

Mark Perkins stated there are several other municipalities that use the energy code in some form, some have it in their ordinance while others use it as a guide or reference, but yes, there are other municipalities that are using the code. Some enforce it and some do not.

Joseph Martinich stated we are above average but not on the cutting edge of the energy code requirements. The city has worked hard at becoming green and setting goals/vision for energy standards and any weakening of this code would be a step back from what has been achieved, thus far.

There were some comments received by a resident indicating that their Real Estate agent was trying to direct them away from even buying in Creve Coeur because of the building department and doing any upgrades or changes to the home would be hard and expensive.

Barry Glantz stated there were good attendance at both meetings and feels that the May 25th contractors meeting was more subcontractors and didn't hear from enough direct contractors and have some concerns about not hearing.

Council Member Tierney asked if the Task Force feels that we should extend the comments or schedule another meeting, but the city sent out over 400 invitations.

Barry Glantz stated the outreach was good but thinks there are a lot of concerns about retribution.

Council Member Tierney asked what was the take away from the May 25th contractors forum.

Don Perrin stated the best suggestion so far, is that there is too much paperwork for the Creve Coeur process and most municipalities are all online. The city is behind there and this issue to correct that, should be expedited.

Mark Perkins stated we have received many comments and complaints over the years and



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plan to address those in FY22 with the acquisition and implementation of new software to reduce paperwork and improve processing time.

Mayor Hoffman stated it would be a good idea to speak with those contractors that will not work in the city any longer and why.

Joseph Martinich stated communication between the inspector, home owners and contractors is the key. That is where most of the issues lay.

Mark Manlin read the following statement for the record.

When I was asked to be part of this task force I in all candor approached these conversations without an abundance of optimism. I've been building in Creve Coeur for 20 years, been directly involved in approximately 15 residential new construction projects and I've a long time ago formed my general opinions of the experience of building in the city. Not to rehash what we've heard time and time again over the past few months but it's a city that I've hoped I could avoid. That said, my business (like many) dictates that we take business where it comes (and when it comes). We don't usually have the luxury of picking and choosing all of our opportunities. We make business decisions (in a competitive environment) to decide where we are willing to work and where we will not. As evident in our discussions, many have decided not to not work or at least try to avoid the city when it comes to construction projects. I can't speak for anybody else on this task force but a very big part of my willingness to work in the city is the recognition of how great this city is and what it has to offer. Wonderful neighborhoods. A strong business community. Cutting edge entrepreneurs. Medical facilities second to none. Parks and more parks to enjoy with our friends and families. The disconnect is that when the decision is made to invest in or community with our projects, we have been too often met with resistance that is so contrary to what we are all about as a city. It's not welcoming, it's more of a message to stay away. I've been very encouraged with the discussions to date. I think the public has been honest with us and I think the city staff has done a good job listening. In our past meeting it was mentioned that the building division has implemented several new changes of which I personally find to be a real positive. With all that said, I firmly believe that this is more than a discussion about code enforcement. This is an issue of public relations. This task force is a good start and the right approach to fixing the problem. As the councilman, I've heard first hand from people that they appreciate what we are doing by having these conversations and in some cases, they've seen some positives in the inspection process. We must go further to yield the desired results. Old habits are hard to break but there's a culture that needs to be addressed. First and foremost, this begins with communication and better defining expectations. Secondly, communication cannot be ambiguous (as too often it is). "Hitting a moving target" is a phrase I've heard several times. As a task force and ultimately when we vote to take action at the city council level, we must take the approach and tone that we are committed to mending fences. We have an opportunity to effect real change and I hope it's not just a



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laundry list of 8-10 current practices that we bend and modify to create the perception that we are listening. I, FOR ONE, WILL BE HAPPY TO HELP LEAD THE CHARGE IN LETTING THE CONTRACTOR COMMUNITY KNOW THAT WE HAVE MADE CHANGES AND THAT THE TONE HAS CHANGED FOR THE BETTER. BEFORE I DO THAT, I NEED TO BELIEVE THAT IT HAS. We need to dig deep and look for thoughtful effective ways to change the tone. We can do better.

Barry Glantz stated he doesn't feel that we need another forum and communication will be the key going forward.

Mayor Hoffman stated having open communication will be most important.

RESULT:	ITEM DISCUSSED
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2. Discussion of Recommended Option

Council Member Tierney stated he doesn't want to rush the Task Force but we need to get to a point where, what is this Task Force going to recommend and how are we going to get there. The question is, what can we do. This is a service that the city provides to the citizens of the Creve Coeur and it has been suggested to outsource to have better service.

Members discussed the notion of outsourcing the city's building permits to St. Louis County. Consensus of the members was that outsourcing this service would be a bad move.

Ned Maniscalco stated he went into this process with the belief that the building process is one of the city's strengths and despite all of the criticism still believe that to be true. The fact that Creve Coeur has high standards is one of our great advantages and don't think we should do away with that lightly. What has been heard is a consensus that we should automate and streamline the process and that will probably go a long way in improving perceptions. As we look at various tasks, we assign ourselves and should assign them in priority order. We aren't going to be able to accomplish everything we want to do.

Council Member Silverman stated we do need to prioritize issues, such as automation and improve communication would be the best use of our time.

Mayor Hoffman and Council Member Silverman left the meeting at 4:53 pm for another meeting.

Barry Glantz stated Mr. Maniscalco really outlined how we can move forward. Our Building Department is a wealth of knowledge and is a strength we want to keep in Creve Coeur but need to figure out how to turn our reputation around.

Mark Manlin stated that he would not advocate contracting with the county.



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Council Member Tierney stated we need to keep our Building Department service and make recommendations to Council and why the changes are necessary.

Council Member Tierney stated he wanted to circle back around to the notion of single-family occupancy inspections and doesn't feel they would add value. When selling a home and the inspections necessary are far more inclusive and thorough than occupancy. Other municipalities that have this service have a different stock of homes, older and many are upgraded by the homeowners.

Mark Perkins suggested looking at condominiums for occupancy inspections, due to the safety considerations of aging, stacked residential construction.

James Myers stated he feels that they will be viewed as intrusive and opposed to adding.

RESULT:	ITEM DISCUSSED
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3. Next Steps

Council Member Tierney stated he will work with Mark and Jason.

Jason Jaggi suggested letting staff know about the role of service and what our role is in the inspection process and we are here to help homeowners and contractors achieve their goals. Jason stated staff has made a change and developed an online library so that applicants can access. Staff has also created fillable forms to streamline the process for now.

Mark Perkins stated we need to change the culture focused to a greater degree on providing service and assistance.

Mark Perkins stated that recruitment for the Chief Building Official position was delayed after the April 1 retirement of Steve Unser, in order to provide time to review issues of concern through the Task Force process. Staff is now planning to begin the recruitment process focused on hiring an agent of change. There is a commercial inspector who will be retiring soon as well.

Joe Martinich left the meeting at 5:15 pm.

RESULT:	ITEM DISCUSSED
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4. Next Meeting - Tuesday, June 29, 2021 @ 4:00 Pm

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 29, 2021 at 4 pm.

Adjourned at 5:20 pm.



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RESULT: ITEM DISCUSSED



ing Permitting Process Review Task Force

300 N New Ballas Road
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

SCHEDULED

STAFF REPORT

Meeting: 07/20/21 04:00 PM
Department: Legislative /City Clerk
Category: Discussion
Prepared By: Debbie Ryan
Department Head: Debbie Ryan

Technical Code Modifications

CITY OF CREVE COEUR



MEMORANDUM

Date: 7/14/2021

To: Building Division Task Force / Mark Perkins

From: Brad Holmes, Interim Chief Building Official

CC:

Subject: Code sections that are above and beyond what the 2015 IRC requires.

During our recent Public Forums we discovered that there were concerns about the code sections that were **amended to be above and beyond (more restrictive)** than what is published in the 2015 International Residential Code. Here are a few code sections that the Task Force can consider that fall into that category. Beyond the technical merits of each code section it may be helpful to consider the following big picture decisions.

- Consider to what extent the City should be involved with safety issues in the household as opposed to safety issues that are inherent to the building itself.
 - Inherent natural hazards like wind events and fire vs. occupant behavior created hazards. Which hazards should the City be involved with ?
- Consider the overall philosophy of when it is prudent to amend the code and how that reflects upon what the decisions that the entire International Code Council organization has made.
- Assess the format of these code section clarifications for future use by City Council when considering new codes.
- Consider how pulling back on these code sections would impact residents that have already had to comply with them. "I had to do XYZ but now my neighbor doesn't ?"

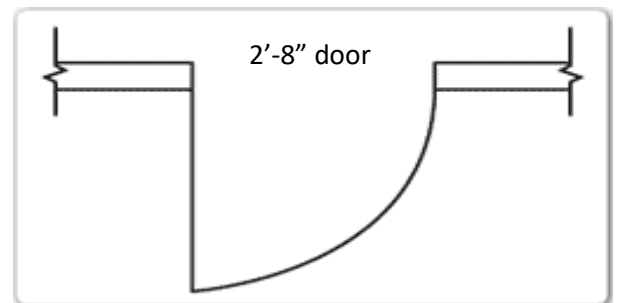
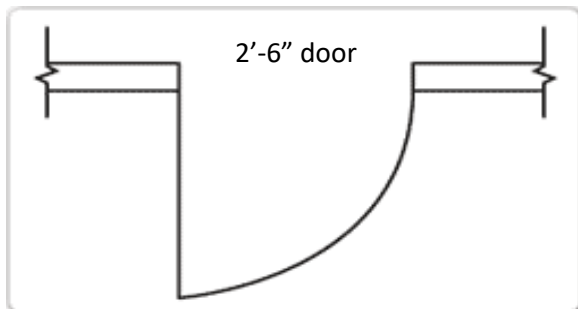
Code Modification Proposal

R 311.2.1 Interior Egress Doors. Currently the City has amended the code to require a minimum door size of 2'-8" for all habitable rooms except for bathrooms and closets. Bathrooms and closets can have any sized door. One main door in the house is to provide 32" of clear width measured from the face of the door to the opposite stop when the door is opened to 90 degrees. This means that you must have at least one 3'-0" door as the required exit.

The proposal is to delete the amendment language and allow the door sizes to be regulated as the 2015 International Residential Code does. The 2015 International Residential Code requires the same 3'-0" main exit door and all other doors do not have to meet this requirement, meaning that any interior door can be of any size.

PRO's	CON's
- This change would make CC consistent with what St. Louis County requires as far as interior door size requirement. - This change would make CC consistent with what the 2015 IRC requires, as published. - This change would allow narrower doors to be used for bedrooms, offices, garages and doors to the basement. Narrower doors result in cost savings. - Allowing narrower doors could help a designer to redesign an exiting house and replace the narrow doors with new ones of the same size, thus eliminating the need to reframe door openings.	- Narrow doors can create difficulty with furniture movement and could contribute to wall damage. - Narrow doors do sometimes need to be removed from the frame to get larger items in and out of the room. - Narrow doors could restrict emergency egress if two people are trying to go through an opening at the same time. 2'-8" doors are more expensive than 2'-6" doors. - A designer could use very narrow doors which are difficult to negotiate and operate. A pair of 2'-0" doors would be allowed for a bedroom.

Commentary: The City has had this code amendment in their adopting ordinances for well over 20 years and it is not clear as to why it was ever introduced. We do see new houses and remodeling plans come in with 2'-6" doors on bedrooms and we currently ask them to provide larger doors. We also see pairs of 2'-6" doors (resulting in a 5 foot wide double door) and we ask them to make those larger as well.



Code Modification Proposal

R 310.6 Alterations or Repairs of Existing Basements. Currently the City has deleted this entire code section from the adopting ordinance. This section, as published in the 2015 International Residential Code, says that an emergency escape and rescue opening is only required when new sleeping rooms are created in the basement.

The proposal is to revise the code language to reinstate this code section and allow basements without sleeping rooms to go with only 1 way out, the stairway leading up to the floor above.

PRO's	CON's
- This change would make CC consistent with what St. Louis County requires as far as when an emergency escape and rescue opening is required. - This change would make CC consistent with what the 2015 IRC requires, as published. - This change would save homeowners money because the egress window is not required.	Having more than 1 way out is always better from a life safety perspective. If there is a fire at the stairway then the basement occupants are trapped with no way out. Loss of Life could occur by making this change to the amended code.

Commentary: The 1999 BOCA Building Code linked the need for an emergency egress window to sleeping rooms whether it was in a basement or not. The 2003 International Residential Code changed that and said that habitable rooms in basements now needed the emergency escape and rescue openings. Any basement improvement (play room, office, family room) would trigger the need for an emergency escape window. The City adopted this code as written and opted to keep this requirement going in the 2015 International Residential Code by deleting the exemption that section 310.6 allows.



Code Modification Proposal

R 312.3 Guard Opening Limitations. Currently the City prohibits any guardrail pattern that would create a ladder effect. Angular intermediate balusters shall be installed at an angle of 45 degrees or greater.

The proposal is to revise the amended code language to require only what the 2015 IRC allows and to eliminate the concept of prohibiting any ladder effect type guardrails.

PRO's	CON's
• This change would make CC consistent with what St. Louis County requires as far as guardrail design. • This change would make CC consistent with what the 2015 IRC requires, as published. • Keeping the existing amended code language would possibly prevent small children from climbing up and over the guardrail and falling to the ground below. • Eliminating the ladder effect prohibition would allow more design flexibility and the use of horizontal cable type railing. We do see this being proposed on occasion.	• It is possible that allowing guardrails with a ladder effect could result in instances where small children could climb up and over the guardrail and fall to the ground below. • Eliminating this amendment would be a change that most design professionals practicing in CC are already used to. • Eliminating this amendment could annoy residents that previously wanted horizontal guardrails and were told that they could not have it.
Commentary: The 1999 BOCA Building Code was where the concept of ladder effect first showed up in the code and the City adopted that as written. The City then amended the 2003 International Residential Code to prohibit ladder effect guardrails because it was removed from this new version of the code. The City then amended the 2009 and 2015 International Residential codes to prohibit ladder effect guardrails to be consistent with all previously adopted codes. The removal of and lack of subsequent reintroduction of the ladder effect concept can presumably be related to the lack of reported incidents involving these designs as hazards.	



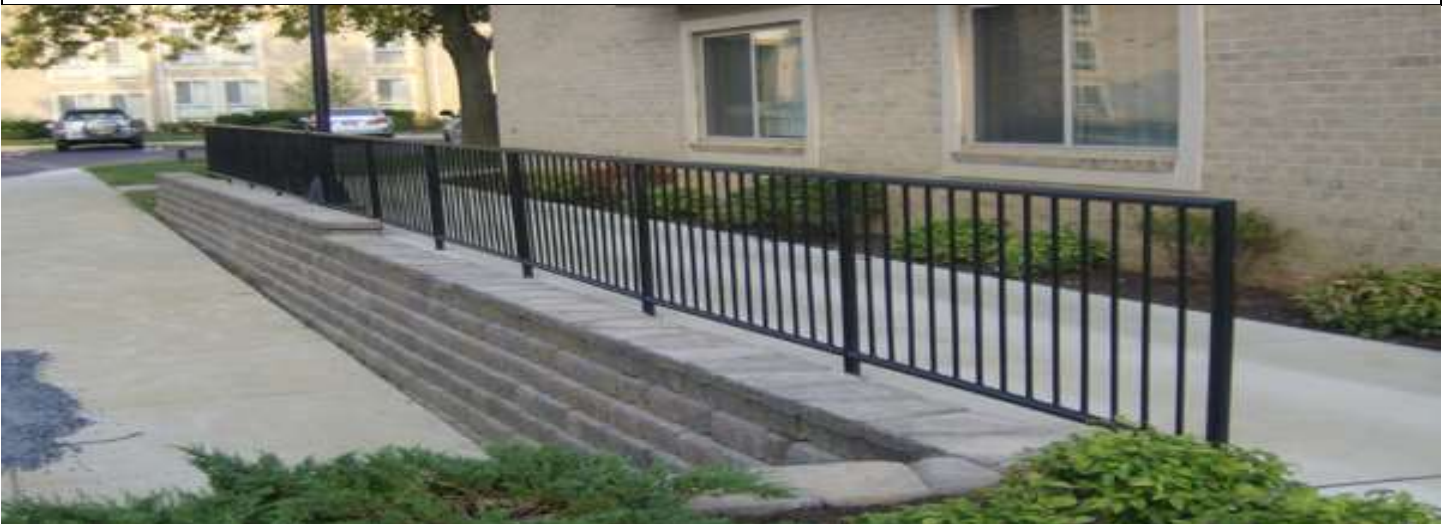
Code Modification Proposal

R 105.2 Work Exempt from Permit. Currently the City lists retaining walls that are **not over 30" in height** measured from the top of the proposed finish grade at the non-retained side of the wall to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge are exempt from needing to get a building permit.

The proposal is to revise the code language to exempt residential retaining walls that are **not over 48" in height** measured from the top of the proposed finish grade at the non-retained side of the wall to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge would be exempt from needing to get a building permit.

PRO's	CON's
- This change would make CC consistent with what St. Louis County requires as far as which retaining walls need a building permit. - This change would make CC consistent with what the 2015 IRC requires, as published. - This change would result in fewer CC building permits being issued for these relatively short retaining walls which results in slightly more staff time being available to address other projects or code enforcement issues. - Homeowners are generally familiar with the retaining walls on their own property and would be aware of the fall hazard.	- It is possible that a retaining wall that is more than 30" but less than 48" in height could be constructed next to an improved walking surface, patio, walkway or ramp where a guardrail would be required. This could create fall hazards because these walls are not permitted or inspected. A guardrail is required when you have a drop off of 30" or more within 24" of an improved walking surface. - This change would result in a very minor reduction in CC Building department permit fee revenue. The lost revenue might be in the neighborhood of \$3,000.00/year.

Commentary: The City originally made this amendment to the 2015 IRC specifically to regulate those instances where a guardrail would be required. Keep in mind that even if a permit is not required the contractor / homeowner is still bound to construct these retaining walls in accordance with the 2015 IRC, meaning that a guardrail is still required but the city would not be involved to verify that it get's installed. Also, this change would not apply to commercial installations; the 2015 IBC would still require permits for walls greater than 30" in height.



Code Modification Proposal

R 314.6 Power Source. Currently the City has amended this code section to require that smoke detector upgrades and carbon monoxide detector upgrades be hard wired wherever possible without the removal of drywall.

The proposal is to delete the code amendment above and restore the code requirements to what the 2015 International Residential Code requires as listed under "Power Source." The 2015 IRC simply says that where existing buildings undergo alterations and this smoke detector / carbon monoxide detector upgrade requirement is triggered that they can all be battery powered only.

PRO's	CON's
- This change would make CC consistent with what St. Louis County requires as far as how smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector upgrades are powered. - This change would make CC consistent with what the 2015 IRC requires, as published. - This change would result in a homeowner being able to perform his / her own upgrade without involving an electrician. This would result in money saved.	- It is possible that the batteries in these detectors are removed or are fully discharged leaving the premises unprotected. Loss of life could occur due to lack of effective smoke / CO detection. - This change could annoy residents that were required to do the hard wiring with their recent projects. - The Fire District believes that the current amended language is more reliable and safer as opposed to battery power only.

Commentary: The City originally made this amendment to the 2015 IRC to be consistent with what a brand new house would be required to do. New houses do have to have AC/DC powered and interconnected detectors. The amendment is only applicable to existing houses that are altered (bath remodel, basement finish, room addition, kitchen remodel). The City has had this amended language in effect for many years and it has always caused consternation and confusion with electricians and homeowners alike.



Code Modification Proposal

R 105.2 Work Exempt from Permit. Currently the City does not list replacement windows and doors under this section.

The proposal is to revise the code language to exempt residential replacement windows and doors from needing to get a building permit under the following conditions:

- The rough framing is not altered.
- There are no emergency escape and rescue openings proposed.

PRO's	CON's
• This change would make CC consistent with what St. Louis County requires as far as when replacement windows need a building permit. • Most windows available in today's market meet or exceed the U factor required by the International Energy Conservation Code. • Most reputable installers are aware of when tempered glass is required and will make their customers aware of it.	• This change would result in far fewer window permits being issued which could equate to an increase in incorrectly installed windows, leaking of windows (air and water) and rotting of supporting wood.

Commentary: The City issues about 150 window permits per year and if that work load were eliminated then building department staff would have more time for other types of permits and code enforcement needs.





ing Permitting Process Review Task Force

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SCHEDULED

STAFF REPORT

Meeting: 07/20/21 04:00 PM
Department: Legislative /City Clerk
Category: Discussion
Prepared By: Debbie Ryan
Department Head: Debbie Ryan

Efficiency



ing Permitting Process Review Task Force

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Communication



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Perception



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Changes Implemented to Date

CITY OF CREVE COEUR



MEMORANDUM

Date: 07/14/2021
To: Building Department Task Force
From: Brad Holmes / Jason Jaggi
CC: Mark Perkins
Subject: Permitting and inspection procedural changes to date

Dan / Mark,

In an effort to make the Building Department procedures and processes more palatable and efficient we have implemented the following procedural changes effective as of 5/13/2021.

- **Fence inspections** - instead of making 2 inspections (PIER and FINAL) for each fence permit we would now make only 1 inspection, the FINAL inspection.
- **Window inspections** - Instead of making 2 inspections (ROUGH and FINAL) for each door & window permit we would now make only 1 inspection, the ROUGH inspection. Homeowners are expected to verify full completion of the project.
- **Small Residential Projects** - For bathroom remodelling, kitchen remodelling, basement finish projects we would waive the insulation and drywall inspections. After the FRAMING inspection is approved we would only perform a FINAL inspection on these small projects. Larger projects / new homes will be partials or at the inspectors discretion.
- **Posting of Notices** - Field correction notices and stop work orders will only be placed after consultation with the Chief Building Official instead of being solely at the inspectors discretion. Site issues will first be addressed with a phone call to the permit holder.
- **Work without permits** - Any work without permits will only be addressed on a complaint basis only OR as discovered while in transit to another inspection. Work without permits will be stopped and required to get a permit as they are discovered and verified.
- **Roof / Attic Entry** - Inspectors will no longer go into attic spaces or onto roof surfaces unless it is necessary to view equipment. Top floor apartment inspections will only require a limited view of the attic space without actually going up into the space.
- **Fire Alarm Inspection** - Inspectors will no longer routinely accompany the Creve Coeur Fire Protection District staff while performing fire alarm inspections. Special cases or where the City has an active permit are exceptions to this policy. Current Bayer project can be finished.



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Update on Staffing



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Next Meeting Date