

**BUILDING & BUILDING CODES COMMITTEE MINUTES
JANUARY 19, 2009**

The Building & Building Codes Committee meeting was held on January 19, 2009, at North Royalton City Hall, 13834 Ridge Road. The meeting was called to order at 7:41 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chair Don Willey, Larry Antoskiewicz, Mike Farrell; Council: John Nickell; Administration: Mayor Robert Stefanik, Stormwater Superintendent Nick Cinquepalmi; Other Attendees: Pat Jones, Paul Marnecheck, Joanne DuMound.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Larry Antoskiewicz, seconded by Don Willey **to approve the November 17, 2008 Minutes.** Yeas: 2. Nays: 0. (Mr. Farrell abstained from the vote.) **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Abandoned houses update report**
No report

2. **Proposal to amend grass/weed ordinance**
No report

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Housing Inspections**

Mr. Nickell discussed homes in the city that are currently for sale and in need of repair. He is concerned that when these homes are sold, there is no one enforcing that the necessary repairs are made. He said there are some homes for sale in his ward that have sidewalks and driveways that are cracked and crumbled and are being sold without these types of repairs being made. Mr. Nickell does not believe that the city is enforcing homeowners to make necessary repairs to their property. Mr. Nickell suggested that sellers and buyers purchase a Housing Sale Certificate which costs approximately \$100 and will allow a part time inspector to inspect the property and notify the buyer/seller of violations that need to be addressed prior to final sale.

Mr. Willey said that usually the financial institution funding the loan will require an inspection as well as ask the homebuyer to complete a survey. If the homebuyer is purchasing FHA, they are subject to escrow accounts and loans will not be approved until the necessary repairs are made.

Mayor Stefanik asked Mr. Nickell to forward the addresses of those residents who are not making the necessary repairs to their property and he will forward that list to Joe Hartman to enforce that these repairs are made.

Mr. Antoskiewicz discussed a report that Mr. Hartman distributed which lists homeowners who had property violations in 2008. Out of the 264 complaints that were issued, 221 of those homeowners complied. Mr. Antoskiewicz said that based on this response he believes the emphasis needs to be placed with Mr. Hartman and inspectors in asking homeowners to make necessary repairs to their property.

Mr. Nickell feels that we are missing an opportunity if we do not have the homebuyer or seller purchase a Housing Sale Certificate stating that certain items need to be fixed prior to sale.

Mr. Farrell asked if the city has the right to inspect a home upon sale. Mayor Stefanik said we do not have a pre-sale inspection ordinance in North Royalton.

Mr. Nickell is concerned that when the market rebounds and these 100 or so homes that are currently empty, vacant or in foreclosure, begin selling, who is going to make sure that the necessary repairs have been made. Mr. Willey said that it will be up to the buyer and the financial institution approving the loan.

Mr. Nickell said that most of the time the banks do not perform a full inspection of homes, they just do a drive-by appraisal. Mayor Stefanik said some people buy homes because they are in disrepair and they figure they will make the repairs themselves, therefore it may take a little longer for these repairs to be completed. Mr. Nickell said that even if the inside of the home is not considered, he is concerned about the outside of the home including sidewalks and driveways. Mr. Antoskiewicz feels the current process works in getting these types of repairs made.

Mr. Willey said that if a proposed homebuyer has a home inspection on a property and there are repairs that need to be made and he/she cannot afford to make those repairs, they have the choice not to. Mr. Nickell said that if a person is purchasing a home which requires repairs and they know they cannot afford to make the repairs, being cited by the city is not going to help get those repairs made. Mr. Nickell feels that at the point of sale when the buyer applies for financing, he/she should include the cost of the repairs in the requested loan amount.

Mr. Farrell said that even if a point of sale program is in place, there is nothing to ensure that the homeowner is going to make the necessary repairs. Mr. Nickell said that if the homebuyer applies for extra funding when they apply for their loan, they will have the money and are more likely to make the repairs. Mr. Farrell said that the city will then have to enforce that these repairs are made and asked how that revenue is going to justify the city having to enforce these repairs. Mr. Nickell said that cities that have this type of program in place typically place the money in escrow. Once the homeowner has made the repair, the city will inspect it and once it is approved, the escrow money will be released.

Mr. Nickell feels we need to have another plan put in place as far as enforcing these repairs especially as the market turns around and some of the homes that have been vacant or in foreclosure for years begin to sell. Mr. Willey said that with the current process if the homeowner does not respond after three notices from the city, the city has the right to make the repairs and place a lien on the property. Mr. Antoskiewicz said that although the current process may not be perfect, we have had success with this process. Mr. Nickell feels if we have a funding opportunity to have repairs made on a property, we should take advantage of that opportunity.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Antoskiewicz, seconded by Mr. Willey **to adjourn the meeting**. Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried**. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.