

**BUILDING & BUILDING CODES COMMITTEE MINUTES
MAY 18, 2009**

The Building & Building Codes Committee meeting was held on May 18, 2009, at North Royalton City Hall, 13834 Ridge Road. The meeting was called to order at 7:55 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Vice Chair Mike Farrell, Larry Antoskiewicz; Council: Vince Gentile, Dan Kasaris, John Nickell; Administration: First Assistant Prosecutor Donna Vozar, Building Commissioner Rito Alvarez; Other Attendees: Paul Marnecheck, Joanne DuMound.

Moved by Mr. Antoskiewicz, seconded by Mr. Farrell **to excuse Mr. Willey from the May 18, 2009 Building and Building Codes Committee meeting.** Yeas: 2. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Antoskiewicz, seconded by Mr. Farrell **to approve the April 20, 2009 Minutes.** Yeas: 2. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Abandoned houses update report

Mr. Alvarez stated that he received two new home foreclosures. One home is located at 8255 Crystal Creek Drive and the other is on Drake Road. Mr. Farrell told Mr. Alvarez that he has two additional foreclosures to add to his list. He said both are located on James Drive. Mr. Farrell asked what the total number of foreclosed homes is in the city. Mr. Alvarez said he has not yet received an updated list, but said there are approximately 15 abandoned homes and 53 foreclosures. Mr. Nickell asked who updates the list. Mr. Alvarez said the county updates the list but he has not received any updates from them.

Mr. Gentile asked about abandoned commercial properties namely the Clark station on the corner of State Road and Royalton Road. Mr. Alvarez said that occasionally there are non-city workers who will cut the grass on that property. Mr. Farrell said that he understands that Mr. Jordan is trying to get a federal grant to have the tanks on that property removed. He said he believes there is a potential buyer for the property if the tanks are removed. Mr. Farrell said apparently the government has funding available for this and he is applying for that grant money now.

Mr. Farrell asked Mr. Alvarez if his department can build their own abandoned home/foreclosed homes list. Mr. Alvarez said the only way they can make their own list is to build a list which is what he is doing.

Mr. Farrell told Mr. Alvarez that the call he received from the resident on James Drive spoke very highly of Joe Hartman.

2. Proposal to amend grass/weed ordinance

Mrs. Vozar will send the updates to Council.

Mr. Antoskiewicz asked about the sidewalk bond. Mrs. Vozar said this is a separate ordinance that she is working on.

3. Wind Turbines

Mr. Farrell said he scanned some of the websites that were discussed at last month's meeting. He said it is extremely expensive to have a wind turbine installed on a home. He said he believes we need something on the books so we do not see giant turbines being installed in the city. Mr. Gentile said we need to get something on the books that defines our restrictions. He said he has some concerns that if we allow free standing towers in our residential neighborhoods, we will have a hard time with like kind and quality that we protect with our zoning. He said if we allow them in residential areas, they should have to be attached to the structure. He said he feels the resident should have to get a permit, the company

would have to have a licensed electrician and a permit would be necessary from First Energy.

Mr. Gentile said he sees this broken down into three different zoning types -- residential, commercial and industrial. He said for residential use we would require a type of unit with a certain height restriction which would have to be attached to the building. He said for commercial businesses, we may allow them to put a wind turbine up to offset costs and for industrial he said we may allow a more lucrative type of wind power production.

Mr. Alvarez said that he knows how residents feel about radio antennas in their backyards and said they will not want large turbines in their backyards. He said as far as installing the smaller units is concerned, he feels the economy will take care of that due to the high cost. Mr. Farrell feels the prices will eventually come down and the popularity will grow and said he wants to make sure Council has this regulated so there are no surprises.

Mr. Farrell asked how we take this to the next step. Mr. Gentile said he believes we have to look at the current technology and be able to classify it at an acceptable height for each of the zoning classifications. He said the biggest concern right now is height. Mr. Antoskiewicz said the main concern is the larger turbines because they have already received applications for this type of turbine. He suggested taking care of this right of way so we do not have an issue with the larger turbines in the city then draft an ordinance to use the smaller turbines. Mr. Farrell said we already have guidelines that would restrict larger turbines. Mr. Kasaris said we would treat these as buildings.

Mr. Farrell suggested developing guidelines for this issue so that turbines do not get out of hand. He does not feel this will happen anytime soon, but as prices drop we could see an increase in turbines.

Mr. Gentile discussed the design and energy production of the turbines. He said some of these turbines are designed so that once you exceed your production on your demand, it kicks it back to the grid. He also said he read that federal regulations state that if the wind turbine is producing under a certain amount of kilowatt hours, no energy company can deny you dumping into their grid. Mr. Farrell asked if a representative from CEI would be able to attend the meeting to detail this information. Mr. Kasaris said he has someone coming to the EEE meeting on June 1 to discuss wind turbines. He said he will ask him if he knows anything about how wind turbines kick back into the grid. He will send Council members an email to let them know.

Mr. Marnecheck asked if it might be feasible, possibly through the grants that are available, to place wind turbines on city property to possibly power the lights on the City Green at Christmas. He said this would show that the city is looking at alternative solutions to the energy problem.

Mr. Gentile said he would like to add to the residential portion of this proposed ordinance a maximum height above the peak of the roof. He also said he would like to have them vertical which would be less intrusive.

Mr. Marnecheck asked if the residential portion would include all residential homes despite the size of the lot. Mr. Gentile said yes. Mr. Marnecheck asked about including a rural portion to this ordinance. Ms. Vozar said since these turbines are supposed to attach to the house, it does not matter how much land the resident has.

Mr. Farrell is going to contact someone in California to find out what their regulations are. Mr. Gentile suggested contacting Mrs. Haller to see if she can contact Council offices in various communities in California and gather the legislation.

Mr. Nickell asked if we want to do a study to test our wind. Mr. Gentile said there are free wind studies available and we may look into having this done. Mr. Gentile said we will discuss this further at the Earth Energy Environment Committee next week.

Miscellaneous Discussion

Mr. Nickell asked Mr. Alvarez in lieu of point of sale homes, if we are inspecting these abandoned homes. Mr. Alvarez said he created a list of inspections based on property maintenance orders. He said the inspectors will go out to these properties and check off on the list if they see a problem.

The committee discussed the foreclosure process on vacant/abandoned properties.

NEW BUSINESS

1. No new business.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Antoskiewicz, seconded by Mr. Farrell **to adjourn the meeting**. Yeas: 2. Nays: 0. **Motion carried**. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.