



**Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals
Approved Minutes**

**Board Meeting
June 26, 2024**

The Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals met in a Regular Meeting on June 26, 2024

Board Member, Schumann called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Ben Abzug, Ron Buys, Aubrey Brasfield, Allison Satt, Oren Mitzner, Jim Rumbo and Alan Schumann

Board Members Not in Attendance: Gary Wilks and Ashley Juraska

Staff in Attendance: Rick Arzola (DSD) and Marty Starrett (DSD)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. The minutes from the **May 22, 2024**, regular called meeting were approved as written. Board member Mitzner made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Vice Chair Brasfield second the motion. Motion passed 7-0. Board member Wilks and Juraska were absent.

DISCUSSION:

2. **2024 International Property Maintenance Code- Austin Code-** Austin Code Supervisor Moses Rodriguez presented to the board the 2024 Local amendments proposed changes to the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC).
In his presentation, staff highlighted infestation to include scorpions and bed bugs as part of their rodent infestation, which was not included previously.
Also included in the amendment of major changes is upgrading from 60 amps to 100 amps for single family dwellings only if the electrical system is defective or damaged.
Cooling facilities, to maintain a room temperature of at least 15 degrees cooler than the outside temperature but not higher than 85 degrees in each occupiable room.
Not having these changes would be considered an unfit structure for human occupancy and would be considered a hazard for the occupants of that structure and or to the public. The property owner shall then provide an action plan for repairs to the code official within two days of the initial notice.
In concerns of these changes with affordability, board inquired as to what is defined as a damaged electrical system for it to be upgraded, staff for now does not have a definition but it would be a case-by-case situation.
Austin Code will take the IPMC Code amendments to the Building and Standard commission for recommendation and hope to have council approved at the September 12 date with a January 1, 2025 implementation.
2024 International Fire Code- Austin Fire- Austin Fire engineer Ben Flick addressed the board on significant changes 2024 International Fire code and changes to the 25-12 local amendments. These changes are to address the changing technology that has outdated are previous code amendments to assist in clarification purposes and to provide a higher level of safety for properties utilizing hazardous materials.
Significant changes of the 2024 IFC includes new definitions for Ch.2 flammable gas, defined as 1A and 1B and occupiable roof. Ch. 3 storage of lithium batteries, permit is required for battery storage greater than 15 ft. and fire safety and evacuation plan is required with storage configuration options.
Ch. 9, several changes in sections 903.2, 905.3 and 4, 905.3, 907.2, 915.1, 915.2, 915.3, 915.4, 915.5, and 917.2
Ch. 27, Semiconductor Fabrication facilities, table 2704.2.2.1 set limits for HazMat in single Fabrication facility. Ch. 33 safeguards for construction during construction and demolition and Ch.50 Hazardous materials, amended to remove corrosive building materials to allow fire protection and storage arrangements which includes outdoor rooftop storage.
Chapter 25.12 Local amendments, Ch 1, AFD is reverting to model code for requirements in section106 construction documents. Ch. 2, AFD is adding definitions to correlate to animal care facilities and occupancy classification and uses. Ch. 3, new section 324 is added for required

illumination by a tertiary power system in certain locations in buildings. Ch. 5, clarified language for fire lanes, driveways and right of way to align with the new transportation criteria manual which include alternative surfaces.

Ch. 9, AFD are removing several local amendments and following model code. In 903.2.2.3, automatic sprinklers shall be provided in fire areas containing animal housing or care facilities that are not provided with constant supervision. To include fire areas containing animal housing/care facilities be provided smoke detectors, audible and visual alarm that signals in areas offices and areas where animals are housed or cared for.

Many sections in 907.2 and 907.5 and 907.6 are being removed as are sections in 909.20 and going back to model code.

909.20 Smoke barrier construction and smokeproof enclosures, updating the language and reverting to model code. Section 912.5 New and existing structures, all weather new signage shall be placed in visible locations adjacent to fire dept. connections serving sprinklers, standpipes for fire pump connections, which includes requirement in lettering.

Ch.12- freeze protection required to be provided with emergency and or standby power systems required to provide freeze protection. Ch. 50 Hazardous materials, allowing storage, use and handling of hazardous materials on roof top and canopies however shall not exceed the maximum set-in tables 5003.1.1(1) and 5003.1.1(2)

After completion of IFC presentation, board had few questions regards to fire separation between 1 and 2 family dwellings where buildings are separated by less than 10 ft as combined area, staff will evaluate this at the next meeting in which could be an impact on affordability.

2024 International Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)-Austin Fire- proposed adoption date is on track to be implemented 30 days after council adoption which could go into effect in mid-October 2024.

Goals are to clarify the previously adopted amendments and to adjust requirements on challenges of implementation of the WUI. Considerations for these amendments include support operating procedures in Wildfire operations, formalize proximity zones, align with current wildfire research and clarification the 2015 WUIC interpretations.

Significant changes to the 2024 WUI code are determination of compliance, which outlines the requirements for technical opinions, reports and alternative materials and design and methods.

503.2, ignition-resistant building materials; 505.4. Flashing, addition requirements above the IRC and 504.10, 505.10 and 506.5 Vents, performance and prescriptive requirements and mesh openings over the fence have been reduced from ¼ to 1/8-inch opening size.

Section 603.2.1, Ember Ignition Zone (EIZ) is determined that 5ft around a structure has greater impact to mitigate fire, so staff is adding a noncombustible zone to protect a building from direct flame, radiant heat and or wind-blown embers. EIZ surfaces are defined as gravel, pavers or other non-combustible materials and maintained free of all combustible materials. Protected and Heritage trees are allowed to remain in all existing conditions but encouraged in new construction to maintain appropriate distance from such trees.

Appendages in sections 504.7, 505.7 and 506.6 regarding decks, balconies, carports, pergolas, patio covers, awnings, canopies and similar structure, deck boards with gaps larger than 1/8" shall have ember protection. The underside of decks with not over a >10% slope, can be enclosed by exterior wall/skirt to allow framing to be of any building/residential code approved material. Decks over a >10% slope shall have the underside enclosed to the ground, protective ventilation openings can be provided with no storage or access points being allowed.

After the presentation, the board addressed concerns with HOA rules and technical codes, affordability in ember ignition zones, specific to areas of town where income levels are not its highest and water accessibility for areas in zone C.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Recommendations: International Fire Code.
- Recommendations: International Interface Wildland Urban Code.
- Recommendations: International Residential Building Code.
- Recommendations: International Building Code.
- Recommendations: International Existing Building Code.
- Recommendations: International Swimming Pool Spa Code.
- Discussion on Presentation: International Energy Conservation Code

3. **ADJOURN** – Vice Chair Brasfield made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:32 pm, Chairman Schumann second the motion, motion pass 7-0

The minutes were approved at the Special Called Meeting July 11, 2024 meeting on board member Satt motion, board member Schumann second the motion on a 6-0 vote. Board member Wilkes Juraska and Brasfield were absent.