

# **City of Saint Paul**

15 West Kellogg Blvd. Saint Paul, MN 55102

# Minutes - Final Legislative Hearings

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Monday, April 13, 2015

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House

# 10:00 a.m. Hearings

# **Fire Certificates of Occupancy**

1 RLH FCO 15-33

Appeal of Eric Meyer, AFS Properties (management company), to a Fire Inspection Correction Notice at 85 SEVENTH PLACE EAST.

Sponsors: Thune

Eric Mayer and Pat Wolf, HFS Properties (management company), appeared.

Information was submitted by the Appellants

## Fire Inspector Leanna Shaff:

- spoke with Angie Wiese; she had looked at the proposals and the lesser expensive proposal still isn't a great idea because in case someone does do the red pull, it will send notification to the Fire Dept and they will respond; we can't have the Fire Dept knowingly be sent out inappropriately (to something that isn't a fire)

### Ms. Moermond:

- she questions how often the red pull would be pulled compared to how often it's pulled now; what is the risk calculation in that realizing there is a charge in a false alarm?

# Ms. Shaff:

- the cost difference in the 2 proposals is a little over \$300, which isn't really significant, in her opinion, when you consider that the Fire Dept would not be responding to false alarms
- Ms. Wiese is going with Option #2 Attachment F

#### Ms. Moermond:

- asked Appellants if they could live with Option #2 Attachment F

## Ms. Wolf:

- they've had Option #1 on two of their floors for several years and they've never had a false alarm; and never had anyone pull it
- she would understand the Fire Dept's concern, particularly, if there has been a pattern but there hasn't been a pattern
- we are being asked to comply with the Fire Code and from a Fire Code perspective, they want the right to choose which system is the best one for them to comply with
- it makes more sense for them to have one single system in the building
- people know what a fire pull station is and they're not going to pull it unless there is

#### a fire

- they really like the option to choose what best fits for their building and complies with the code

#### Mr. Meyer:

- he spoke with a Ramsey Dispatch operator #18 and asked them, "If someone was in their elevator lobby and needed assistance, called from their cell phone, dialing 911, who would they send?" They said, "We would send Fire because they have the tools and equipment to deal with the issue."
- in their building, they have birth and death certificates; he doesn't know whether the Dept of Health would prefer that they dispatch Police or dispatch Fire; so having an option....
- they are more than willing to work with the departments to work thru the unique things but they want to make sure that they have the option to discuss options; the new fad seems to be "blue button" and trying to make one size fit all; they are saying, "Wait a minute!"
- their strong preference is Option #1 for this building because it's consistent with what they already have
- they are willing to discuss and are open to suggestions; they just don't want it to be a "one size fits all"

### Ms. Shaff:

- she can appreciate that they want a choice
- here, we are talking about minimum code compliance
- it's quite costly to a city to send out a whole complement for a false alarm, understanding that they haven't yet had that happen

#### Ms. Wolf:

- for them, the "blue button" is a security issue more than anything because once the word is out on the street the you can push a blue button and breach security, it will be a real problem; so she suggests that the Fire Inspections Dept really thinks thru what they are recommending because we are seeing more acts of violence in work places and it doesn't take long for somebody to figure out how to breach security, especially, when it's very easy for them to push a button and get thru a door; Fire's recommendation could have some unintended consequences

#### Mr. Meyer:

- another example on the other side
- they have Commerce Dept of Fraud in the building; they have evidence rooms and if they were to install any door release, they might weigh on the side of Police dispatch vs. Fire; so, in his opinion, having the ability to work with the tenants and Fire Inspection to discuss those options..... they are asked to do things to have secure rooms; for different groups, Fire might make sense vs. Police
- whether a blue or red button, you are pulling it for an emergency situation and that's the way it really should be treated; if I'm pulling it, someone should be coming
- they feel that both options meet the code requirement; they would not want to lose the ability to make a choice

## Ms. Shaff:

- this alarm system when it goes to dispatch, it goes to Fire; it's not a Police alarm
- she would hate to see Police dispatched to a Fire situation instead of the Fire Dept
- they have a very different view point from the building owners, at this point

# Mr. Meyer:

- only the "blue button" would be wired to Police; not a red fire pull

#### Ms. Moermond:

- it's very puzzling to her that this situation has been in place for so many years and hasn't been written up in Orders
- she will talk with the City Attorney's Office to get more information about what options they think might be available, in particular, of charges that you may agree to pay; an agreement that could be made; doesn't know if that's at all possible; if it isn't, she is leaning into Option #2 but is willing to explore some mechanism that might make Option #1 work
- perhaps, she'll have an answer in a week or two Recommendation is forthcoming. Hearing Officer to consult with City Attorney's Office.

## Referred to the City Council due back on 5/6/2015

# 2 RLH FCO 15-50

Appeal of Choua Yang to a Fire Inspection Correction Notice at 1155 CASE AVENUE.

**Sponsors:** Bostrom

Per owner's request, rescheduled to April 21.

## Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 4/21/2015

# 3 RLH FCO 15-48

Appeal of Grant Pylkas to a Fire Inspection Correction Notice at 1756 IOWA AVENUE EAST.

**Sponsors:** Bostrom

Grant Pylkas, owner, appeared.

John Hegner, retired St. Paul building inspector, hired by Mr. Pylkas Courtney Stewart and George Warner Jr. tenants in Unit #11 appeared.

## Fire Inspector Leanna Shaff:

- Fire Certificate of Occupancy Inspection conducted Apr 1, 2015 by Inspector Efrayn Franquis
- found 19 violations; (#2-fire key box has been withdrawn)
- is not sure what is being appealed

# Mr. Pylkas:

- #3-furnace room; had discussion with Kevin Chapdelaine, who apologized and said that he'd have #3 removed from the list; there is no code that calls for 30 inches of space all the way around a furnace (photos); Mr. Chapdelaine said that he would speak to the inspector and have him remove it form the deficiency list

### Mr. Hegner:

- this building was constructed in 1962; even though, this furnace has more than 30 inches worth of space in front of it; it was never an issue before

## Ms. Shaff:

- things won't look the same from inspection to inspection
- Mr. Chapdelaine did not make a note in the system regarding the removal of #3

## Ms. Moermond:

- we will look into that

### Mr. Pylkas:

- #1-electrical panels: he talked with the MN Board of Electricity on Fri; in 1962 when

these electrical panels were installed (and they have not been touched since); there was no NEC Code in the State of MN until 1963; and there is no call for the panels to be labeled and he doesn't want it forced down his throat

#### Ms. Moermond:

- if something happened, she would want to know which is for what; it's handy to have it labeled; sounds like you're frustrated because you were told to do this - thinking it should be grandfathered-in based on the fact that the NEC wasn't in existence at that time; the building code, however, was in existence at that time, also the fire code and they could be applied, currently

## Mr. Hegner:

- we know the codes were grandfathered in but he doesn't think it's a problem to get them labeled; the electrical code doesn't recommend it back then

#### Mr. Pylkas:

- the laundry room: the inspector looked at the vents and provided a report, which he handed to Ms. Moermond and Ms. Shaff (scanned); contractor removed some tape because the edges were frayed and put on new tape; the inspector looked at it on 5 separate occasions and on all 5 occasions, it was just fine; we asked if there was a problem in the laundry room and he said there wasn't; (Ms. Moermond: is satisfied with the letter that was provided)

#### Ms. Moermond:

- #5- the SW bedroom door in Unit 11 rubs on the floor when swinging open and it has an incomplete door hinge:

#### Mr. Warner:

- he fixed the door; they help out with caretaking (Ms. Moermond: the inspector will double check it)
- they discontinued using extension cord in kitchen

### Mr. Pylkas:

- on the inspector's 1st visit, he told him that he had to remove every single chain lock in the building; we complied with exactly what he asked us to do; on his 2nd visit, he told us that we had to put them back on
- there's an awful lot of that; one day it's one thing; the next day, it's another
- by the time we get to the 5th visit, he has 5 separate lists, and they have complied with absolutely everything
- this is very difficult for him; the inspector has put him thru an absolute 3 months of mess; he is frustrated; he cannot work on shifting sands

#### Ms. Moermond:

- Mr. Franquis isn't present but his supervisor is present and is hearing this
- she needs to focus on the Orders and the building conditions
- as far as personnel and behavior, refer that to DSI; then, Human Resources; then, to the Mayor's Office; she doesn't have any authority over staff behavior
- the main impact this may have is to your A or B classification
- sometimes, mistakes are made

#### Ms. Shaff:

- in this particular Fire Certificate of Occupancy Inspection, 3 appointment letters were sent and these are the only Orders; she went back to see what may have been going on at this property; she sees that there have been a lot of complaints: trash in the alley; a dumpster protrudes into alley making it unsafe; trash is all over residential alley, recycling bins, tree stumps; another dumpster one; mattress up against the

fence; dumpster from Highland Sanitation; another one for living room full of water from a pipe breaking, molding carpet, ceiling falling down in a bathroom

- it was a complaint that initiated this inspection cycle
- there were numerous complaints and typically, on a Fire C of O building, it opens up a code enforcement division folder; and depending upon who's issue it is, it will roll over to Fire Inspections
- this building was due for a fire inspection anyway; your renewal date was in Jul 2014

#### Ms. Stewart:

- she went into one of the units; it was cluttered and they were throwing the trash out the door; they had a water pipe issue, too; they had the windows open in the winter and they'd block the heat - this was a problem tenant, so she called the owner; they put ice packs on top of the thermostat; the tenants put in a complaint; and there have been no issues since they left

## Mr. Pylkas:

- what generates them to make a complaint is the Eviction Notice; he issues the Eviction Notice to these folks, and they, in turn, immediately call Inspections
- he talked about how 2 inspectors came out about the complaint about the carpet, the water and burst pipe; he was, literally, standing in the apartment taking abuse from the tenant, whom he's already thrown out (they know they're evicted) when in walked 2 inspectors; he has carpet tools in his hands, replacing the carpet and is taking a rashing from the inspectors about how he should have been more timely (the pipe burst the night before and they are in there replacing the carpet the very next day and these guys are telling him that he should have done this faster); then, they proceeded to leave the apartment; he followed them into the basement and the implication was..."you know, there is reprisal on you building owners for these kinds of things (he won't repeat the actual language they used); ... and it's too bad that you building owners have to pay for these kinds of things but we'll see to it that we move forward here, and the whole bldg will now be inspected."

### Ms. Moermond:

- a Class A building (in good shape) is inspected every 6 years
- a Class B, every 4 years
- a Class C every 2 years
- a Class D every year

#### Ms. Shaff:

- the classification depends on the deficiency list; there's a point value assessed to a deficiency

## Mr. Pylkas:

- the trash issue: he talked with a gentleman in Public Works and he assured Mr. Pylkas that it would be removed from the record, in as much as they complied and did, in fact, get the stump out of there and the door; he told him over the phone that he would take it off the record
- when the city has asked him to do something, he has always complied
- he has tried many times to call into Fire Inspections; they do not return calls and if and when they do, it may be 4-5 days later, which increases that level of frustration; he is trying his best to complete this list
- one of the reasons that he called Phil Owens on the lock box was because he couldn't get thru to anyone else down there; no one would return his call

#### Ms. Moermond:

- she would be happy to forward the minutes from this meeting to Mr. Owens so that

he understands the context of the situation; she is sure that he will look into it

#### Ms Stewart

- that water issue was taken care of that day; the boiler person came that some day, too

#### Ms. Moermond:

- let's continue with the list:
- #8-light fixture missing in Unit 2 and Unit 3 globes missing DONE
- #9-headboard obstructs egress; dresser moved DONE (photo)
- #10-molding broken; rubber base board molding has been replaced DONE (photo)
- #11-repair locks; opening around the edges of the cylinder as inspector watched, he tightened the screws DONE
- tiles in bathroom; towel bar holder; renter had pulled out soap dish DONE (photos)
- cover for phone jack; there is no phone line in the building anymore; he has a cp for it DONE
- Unit 9 bathroom GFCI outlet does not reset; an electrician wasn't necessary; was just a matter or resetting it (the inspector was wrong)
- an electrician needs to look at this in Unit 9
- #15-window repairs (Mr. Hegner: the windows would not stay in an open position; the jam liners are spring-loaded so, they made some adjustments on screws so that the window would stay open; in Unit 2 there was a latch loose and it's been corrected; also in Unit 2, now they do stay open; all these window items were done right in front of the inspectors
- he did not expect the work that was done in front of the inspectors to show up on the list again

## Mr. Pylkas:

- after they were all done with the 3rd inspection, Inspector Franquis said, "I want every window in this building replaced" and he repeated it; then, Mr. Hegner brought it to his attention that he really didn't have any authority to demand that the windows be replaced and the inspector said, "It is, in my opinion that you should replace every window in this building"

## Ms. Shaff:

- this list appears to be pretty standard and typically;
- inspection time, to her, isn't a time that I'd be accompanying you on your repairs; we would like to think that people go thru their buildings before an inspection and take care of some of these things beforehand; she can see why the inspector would write them to make sure that they are done
- she thinks that the inspector was quite fair when we are dealing with buildings where there are multiple units; typically, they separate these all out by unit

### Mr. Pylkas:

- as they are standing in the basement after the incident with the water pipe; the inspectors told him that they are going to come back and do a full inspection of the building; he asked, "You mean you're going to come thru and see the hallways, the laundry room, the storage area and the boiler room, correct?" And they answered, "Yes, that's correct, Mr. Pylkas; that's what we're going to come back and look at. OK?" Then he got a letter indicating that they're going to inspect the building so, he went thru everything that he thought they were going to inspect. When they got all done inspecting those common areas, the inspector said, "Everything's fine. This looks good." (this included the vents on the dryer); then, the inspector says, "No, I'm going to inspect absolutely every single apartment right now." There was a heated discussion about whether the letter did or did not say that he had been given notice of a complete, unit by unit inspection. He said, "There's a 24-hour requirement in state

law that says I need to give these tenants at least 24 hours notice prior to you doing this inspection. You'll have to re-schedule." He said, "No, I'm not going to do that." He was intent on getting into every single unit.

- at that point, John asked Mr. Pylkas to leave, which he did; he was not going to allow the inspector to go banging on the doors of his tenants without a 24-hour notice; it was his job to protect them and he was trying to do that
- the windows were adjusted on that inspection trip because they did not have prior notice

## Ms. Moermond:

- they were fixed and they were still on the next list
- there's contention about whether notice was provided for the entire building; you are the first person, who has come thru this hearing room and had drawn a distinction between common areas and individual units and whether those are noticed properly in the letter; that's not a common thing to be confused on or miscommunicated about; perhaps, you were speaking past one another on that point

### Mr. Pylkas:

- except precedent was - in the past, when he went thru these building inspections, they would come thru and do the common areas; then, they'd give him a notice that were going to go thru the apartments; it was always a common courtesy that they did and they were very polite about it

### Ms. Stewart:

- when the inspector came to her apartment, she opened the door and asked if there was something that she could help him with and he said that he was the Fire Marshal; she asked why he needed to come into her apartment and he said that since he was the building, he needed to check all of the units and barged right in to inspect; she pointed out to him that she had thought the inspection was just for the building, not each individual apartment

## Mr. Pylkas:

- #16-fuel burning equipment test; filled by contractor and sent to city (Ms. Shaff: inspector doesn't have it yet)
- #17- smoke detector affidavit; he provided it (DONE)
- electrical plate covers; junction boxes; etc., repair and maintain ceiling in Unit 5 (DONE)

## Ms. Moermond:

- we've gone thru the list; the vast majority of these items has been addressed with documentation
- an inspector will need to walk thru to check it
- asked the dept that Inspector Shaff do the follow-up inspection to make sure, as a supervisor, she has eyes on

## Mr. Pvlkas:

- has one more statement from one more tenant, who wanted to be heard; she sent him a letter and said that she had repaired and revised the electrical cord situation in her apartment, went looking for the inspector but the inspector refused to come back and look at the revised situation; she was quite upset about that
- this lady suffers from vertigo and chronic migraines; she has been a tenant for a long time; he respects her word; she has never lied to him; on the inspection on the 26th, she was in the back bedroom suffering from stiches in her head (she has suffered a vertigo episode, fallen and cut her head, she was sedated, stitched and was trying to take some time to recover; she has a delightful 3-year old daughter, who opened the door when the inspector knocked on the door; he was coming down

the hallway when the little girl opened the door a little; the inspector pushed the door open and pushed the little girl out of the way and proceeded with his inspection

#### Ms. Moermond:

- Ms. Shaff will re-inspect at 9:30 am, Wed Apr 29, 2015
- will lay this over to May 12, 2015 LH for follow-up conversation, if needed Recommendation is forthcoming. Supervisor Shaff will do follow-up inspection to see if all items have bee corrected.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 5/12/2015

# 11:00 a.m. Hearings

## **Vacant Building Registrations**

RLH VBR 15-24

4

Appeal of Dan Hekrdle to a Vacant Building Registration Notice at 670 BELLOWS STREET.

**Sponsors:** Thune

Dan Hekrdle, owner, appeared.

Mr. Hekrdle:

- he has 2 homes and has had a lot of problems with that issue

#### Fire Inspector Leanna Shaff:

- Fire Certificate of Occupancy
- Mar 19, 2015 inspection resulted from an ad on Craig's list looking to rent out the house, which prompted inspections to understand that the Appellant was not planning to owner-occupy the house; instead, he was looking for a renter, which would make it part of the Fire Certificate of Occupancy Program
- Inspector Hall went out to meet with the responsible party; the house was vacant and unoccupied at the time
- she read Mr. Hall's notes: I walked thru the house with the owner, who states that the home was down to studs and insulated; there's new sheet rock and that is it; he states he's done no electrical or plumbing work but he says there is electrical conduit and wiring laying on the kitchen counters; multiple violations were found and no permits for the work being done including new install of furnace; unoccupied and multiple code violations;" he sent it to the Vacant Building Program

Inspector Rich Singerhouse, Vacant Buildings:

- Inspector Senty opened up a Category 2 VB file on May 25, 2015 due to the Revocation

## Mr. Hekrdle:

- his son also lives there; his son was looking to get a roommate; he was not looking for a renter
- he has owned the house for 7 years and has never rented it out; they've discussed it but decided not to do that
- his son did put an ad in the paper at one point but Mr. Hekrdle told him not to
- he talked with Inspector Westenhofer about it and told him that if they decided to rent it, he would be the first person they'd call
- his son is 31 and has now moved out; he bought a house in Hastings
- we all live there; we spend weekends there; it's not vacant

- thought all this was settled about his having 2 homes, one in WI and one in MN
- they go there on weekends and he shovels the snow, etc.
- he told the inspector that he's already been thru this

#### Ms. Moermond:

- sounds inconsistent with Mr. Hall's statements that Ms. Shaff read

#### Ms. Shaff:

- Mr. Hall says, "I walked thru the house with the owner, who states he had the home down to studs and insulated with new sheet rock and that is it; states he has done no electrical or plumbing work; electrical conduit and wiring is laying on the kitchen counters; multiple violations found and no permits for the work being done including new install of furnace"

### Mr. Hekrdle:

- the previous owners must have done things; he hasn't done anything to the house
- at this point, he might sell the house
- he took care of these things on the list the first time; all the deficiencies are done
- he told Mr. Hall that the house is not a rental and it never was
- back in 2011, he came here and dealt with that

### Ms. Moermond:

- things noticed from the old minutes: you said that your grandfather had owned the house and died in 1980; numerous people have owned the house since then, the house was foreclosed when he bought it in 2009; and at the time, she had said that she was uncomfortable with the situation and struggling with a way to prove that he resides at the address; she reviewed the items needing correction replacing the vinyl venting with solid aluminum venting....., you must get an electrician and pull a permit for the exposed wires with the water heater; you had said that you fixed that; you said that the previous owners put up the sheet rock and you wanted to complete the work; you said that you had completed the items you needed to do; there were financial issues; she had recommended to City Council that you get out of the C of O Program and gave you an extension to Nov 30 to complete the list. DSI would either send a Fire Inspector out or turn the file over to Code Enforcement; they will go thru the list and make sure it's addressed before the file is closed
- now, here in 2015, we have a new situation with this being on Craig's List by your son, who just bought a place in Hastings

#### Mr. Hekrdle:

- this is all family; my son is family

# Ms. Moermond:

- drew a distinction: you are the owner; your son would not be an owner-occupant; he would be a non-owner occupant were he to live there and so, it would be in the Fire C of O Program, as such
- your addresses are listed here, Amery and Hugo

### Mr. Hekrdle:

- he's my son; he lives in the house
- my wife owns the house in Hugo; he owns the one in Amery and the one in Saint Paul
- he got married in 2009
- he bought this place his mom lives in West St. Paul, close by; he was working for the City of Oakdale at the time and so, he was staying there all the time; since then, he got another job; so, now, he doesn't stay at this home during the week, only on weekends

- the electrical work hasn't been done
- the wife lost her job so money is pretty tight; they have 3 small children but he doesn't have a mortgage on this place; he bought it "as is" with cash

#### Ms. Moermond:

- last time, the items on the Nov list were to be completed; it was clear that she didn't care who did the follow-up inspection to make sure the work was done; the electrical work, however, wasn't done under permit or simply wasn't done

#### Mr. Hekrdle:

- there were 14 items on the list and all were approved except for that dryer vent

## Mr. Singerhouse:

- the follow-up inspection was done by Joel Essling on Dec 7, 2012
- inspector's notes: PO appeared at LH; hearing officer gave him 1 month to get the dryer vent repaired under permit; then, 12-7-12, dryer vent permit has been closed
- the Excessive Consumption charge went out because of not getting a permit

#### Mr. Hekrdle:

- he had a contractor for the dryer vent; he pulled the permit

### Ms. Shaff:

- Inspector Westenhofer makes note that he was sending the file to Code Enforcement for follow-up

#### Ms. Moermond:

- has very little confidence that the Appellant is living there at all; he's working in WI
- sounds like your close to abandoning the structure because you can't afford to pay the bills on it

# Mr. Hekrdle:

- I just need to get caught up
- we usually spend a lot of time there; when we are there, we spend the night; in the summer, they spend a lot more time at the place
- he spoke with a lawyer, who doesn't understand why he needed to come here in the first place because there should not have been an inspection in the first place
- there have been no issues since 2011
- he grew up in West St. Paul and most of his friends are still around here; he has a friend who goes over to check things out from time to time; it's well taken care of

## Mr. Singerhouse:

- rubbish complaint Sep 18, 2014
- electrical shut-off

## Mr. Hekrdle:

- he paid the electrical bill the next day and got it going again
- he left the bagged leaves there; didn't know that he couldn't do that

## Ms. Moermond:

- the electrical items should be taken care of; a permit needs to be pulled for that; it wasn't approved; the inspector forgot about it
- is not satisfied that there's enough information to show that it's not owner-occupied but she is not satisfied that it isn't vacant, as the city defines a vacant building
- let's get a code enforcement inspector to go double check the things that were one the old list
- will put this on night checks to periodically check to see if anyone is living there at all

- she is not confident in the Appellant's statements
- close the VB file
- this will go to City Council Public Hearing May 6, 2015
- will require a Staff Report in 3 months

Grant the appeal; the vacant building file is closed; however, appellant needs to come into compliance with the Fire inspection list from August 15, 2011. VB staff will be conducting night checks of the property and report to hearing officer in 3 months.

### Referred to the City Council due back on 5/6/2015

## **5** RLH VBR 15-26

Appeal of Ericka Trinh to a Vacant Building Registration Renewal Notice at 383 UNIVERSITY AVENUE WEST.

# Sponsors: Thao

Ericka Trinh and Eric Huynh, owners, appeared. Keith Durall, friend, significant other and business partner, appeared.

Inspector Rich Singerhouse, Vacant Buildings:

- Fire Certificate of Occupancy was Revoked Apr 17, 2014
- a Category 1 Vacant Building file was opened Apr 22, 2014

#### Ms. Trinh:

- purchased building last Nov with the intent of remodeling it
- it won't be empty much longer; a bistro will be going in
- she has been getting everything ready; the floor plans should be done in the next week or two
- her architect is working with DSI; will be getting the bids in May
- she should have her loan by Jun

## Ms. Moermond:

- was put into the VB Program on Apr 22 of last year; when a building that's in good condition goes into that program, it's status is Category 1, which is turn-key; the city monitors it because it's an empty building; if a building has been empty for a full year, it turns into a Category 2, which means that there has to be a trades inspection report-a list of all the items that need to be repaired in order for it to become occupied again; you are on the cusp of that right now
- hearing that you are getting ready to pull permits and you have architectural plans tells her that she will have the code compliance issues under control
- still the building has been vacant for a year
- she wants the Appellant to be able to pull the permits and do the work on it and hopes that nothing gets in the way
- as a Cat 1, you can pull permits as you need to but if the building sits empty for 6 months, you will be charged a half year VB fee; if it sits empty for 3-4 months, she will recommend that the whole VB fee being deleted
- so, the faster you are able to get it done, the more likely that it will go away entirely
- 6 months from Apr 22, 2015
- she will deny your appeal on having to be registered but you don't have to pay the VB fee right now; you will get a letter down the line (1-2 months from now) that will say that your VB fee is being converted to an assessment on the property; when that letter comes, a yellow post card comes with it; you need to send in that yellow post card to appeal it and write on it: "I saw Marcia back in Apr 2015" that way she will be able to review the situation at that time and decrease the fee accordingly
- until you get the Certificate of Occupancy, the building is considered vacant Deny the appeal and let the VB fees go to assessment.

Referred to the City Council due back on 5/6/2015