

SPECIAL SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2006

Members of Safety Committee present: Ron Stake, Doug Joseph, Donna Shirey. Mr. Baxter was absent.

Other members of Council present: Preston Stearns, Mel Clemens, Antoinette Newman, Council President William L. Hills.

Mr. Stake: I'll call the Special Safety Committee meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Item number 2 is Continuing Discussion, International Property Maintenance Code. It was first discussed on 2-6-06, and just about every week up until now. It was held on 3-6-06. And we will continue on, Mr. Hopper.

Mr. Hopper: Good evening. As you see, I changed things around a little bit. Resubmitted our legislation for an ordinance to be passed. Trying to clean things up a little bit, clear things up a little bit. I think what I was trying to do was trying to get too much stuff done and give everybody too much information. So my proposal now is to just, let's concentrate on the Property Maintenance Code, get it adopted, and then the language that I would like to change in our ordinance, we'll be bringing that forward at a later date. So some of the things that have been discussed over the past couple of weeks, I know there were some concerns about trash, trash cans. I would like to kind of take a look at that and put that in a proposal with all the other changes that we're looking at making in the ordinance when we bring those changes back at a later date.

Mr. Stake: Okay. So what you submitted to us that we received over the weekend, you'd like to maybe discuss some of the items on here and get this passed, and then come back with changes.

Mr. Hopper: That's correct.

Mr. Stake: Okay.

Mr. Hopper: Pretty much what you see in front of you now are the nuts and bolts to the Property Maintenance Code with the changes that are necessary for us to make in the code in order, you know, it's basically the guidelines that the Property Maintenance Code gives us. Where we need to make those changes, any additions that we need to make such as, the height and inches for weeds, grass, that type of stuff. The insect screening. Some of the other things that we hadn't got to already. But as you see, those have all been addressed. So if anybody has any questions.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Are there any questions in regards to what you received over the weekend from members of the committee? Mrs. Newman.

Mrs. Newman: I hate to adopt Mr. Baxter's persona, but I do have one question. Is it normal procedure to have our maintenance codes in the Clerk's office? Or should they be in the Building Department for people to consult?

Mr. Hopper: They will be in the Building Department. From what I understand, there has to be a

copy available in the Clerk's office also.

Mrs. Newman: So according to this, you're going to refer people to the Clerk's office if they want to see it?

Mr. Hopper: Either place. Yeah. I mean, I've already had people stop in and request a copy, and we've actually loaned copies out to some of the residents to take a look at, and they've brought them back.

Mrs. Frazier: Chet, if I might, there's a section in the code that requires that a copy be on file in the Clerk's office. That's a matter just for the record. But when they come in and they talk to the guys about whatever problem they have, they go there first.

Mrs. Newman: Okay. Well, I was just concerned that you would be expected to answer all of these Building Department type questions and that sort of thing.

Mrs. Frazier: No. They might not like my answers.

Mrs. Newman: Okay. As long as that's under control. Thanks.

Mr. Stake: Mrs. Newman, anything else?

Mrs. Newman: No. That's all.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Thank you. Chet, is it possible to put this on our web site at all? Proposed changes of maybe what we're looking to enact? To let the public go on the web site and see what's there?

Mr. Hopper: I don't know that we can put the whole Property Maintenance Code on there. But we could probably put what you have in front of you. The three pages. I'd have to check with Sharon and with Bart, whether or not that would be something we could put on there.

Mr. Stake: Is there a clearing house or somebody who has the International Property Maintenance Code on their web site we could put a link to right there that they could link to and see it? Could you check into that if there is, and do that?

Mr. Hopper: I can look into that. Sure.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Mr. Stearns.

Mr. Stearns: Yes, Mr. Stake. The question that I've got for Chet is, if there are some changes that we would like to add, how do we go about that? You know, on certain things like you know, people having eyesores on their properties. Especially in residential areas. Would we be able to incorporate that in this? The issue right now while it is being in the process?

Mr. Hopper: We could certainly look into that and discuss it. And if it's something you'd like to see added, you know, I think that's entirely up to you. If you'd like us to work on that, sure.

Mr. Stearns: Okay. Well, I'll be contacting you about that then.

Mr. Hopper: Okay.

Mr. Stearns: Thank you.

Mr. Stake: Mrs. Newman.

Mrs. Newman: I'd just like to point out that one mans eyesore is another mans work of art.

Mr. Stearns: I agree.

Mr. Stake: It sure could be.

Mrs. Reichard: If I could just make one comment?

Mr. Stake: Yes, Mrs. Reichard.

Mrs. Reichard: When he was talking about the inability perhaps to put this up on the internet, I think it would really be great if we could find a way to lock into it. Or have a link to it if it's on line. Right now, one of the things that we're dealing with is the fact that it's proprietary material. It is copywrited. We're not allowed to make copies of it. So that's one of the problems we've had. Because it would have been so much simpler to just almost scan it and infuse the changes that we wanted. But we have not been allowed to do that. So that's why its made it so difficult to try to propose these things. And also why Chet was attempting to try to make this a little more user friendly for Council and for the public at large to look at the changes we're talking about. So after, just to reinforce what he said, after these changes would be made, and there could be additional ones later, but and the other ones that we have talked with you about that affect other parts of the code, that will be the second round. So what you see before you tonight, and please correct me if I'm wrong, this is the first round. If we can ask that Council would consider passing this with these few changes that we have in here, and these are just really to personalize it to Reynoldsburg. Put the proper dates, and the proper names, and etc. into it, then we'll come back again with these additional comments and suggestions for changes. If that helps.

Mr. Stake: Well I know that Chairman Baxter is running the show here on this. And obviously, I leave it to him on whether he wants to send this forward or not. So we wouldn't be doing that this evening. But we are here to discuss this. And I would imagine that any, as time goes on, we're going to find things that just aren't working or maybe we missed something. And we are going to have to make changes or adjustments to this. I mean, that's a reasonable expectation that I have. I don't think we're going to get it all right the first time.

Mr. Hopper: Right. Well, this code is also a working code. It changes every 3 years. So there's

already a new code that's just come out. It's the '06 code, and I don't want to deal with the '06 code until we've got something in place, and then we'll move forward. Because we've been dealing with this '03 for 2 or 3 years. And everybody that's seen it, has seen the '03 code. So let's just get that one done, start working with it, then we'll look at moving on to the next code cycle.

Mr. Stake: And without I guess, risking opening up a can of worms here, is the '06 code that much different from the '03 code?

Mr. Hopper: I doubt it. I haven't seen it but I doubt there's a whole lot of changes to it.

Mrs. Reichard: I don't think its been published yet.

Mr. Hopper: Yeah. It's published.

Mrs. Reichard: It has been? Okay.

Mr. Stake: It has been published? I mean, if it's not that different, and I can appreciate what you're saying Chet, but if it's not that different, maybe we ought to be talking about the '06 code right now so we don't have to come back in a month and adopt an '06 code from an '03 code.

Mr. Hopper: Believe me, I don't want to come back in a month and redo this myself. I would say if we had this on the books for a year and give us a really good opportunity to evaluate what '06 is having to offer, let's just, I feel if we just stick with '03, get it on the books, see how it works for a year, give our Property Maintenance Code Officers an opportunity to get into the code book, and then we'll come back in a year.

Mr. Stake: You're the expert. I defer to you. Okay. Are there any other questions from members of the committee or members of Council? (No response). Any questions or comments from members out there in the audience? Public? Yes.

Mrs. Wolfe: I haven't been here for the last couple of months, and I don't have any idea what the International Property Maintenance Code is. What is it?

Mr. Stake: Chet, would you like to explain that briefly to Mrs. Wolfe?

Mr. Hopper: Property Maintenance Code is a set of codes that allow our Code Enforcement Officers the opportunity to make sure that existing buildings are maintained in such a condition that it provides life safety, health, welfare issues for the citizens.

Mrs. Wolfe: What does international have to do with Reynoldsburg, Ohio?

Mr. Hopper: Well, once it's adopted, it won't be international. It will be Reynoldsburg Property Maintenance Code.

Mrs. Wolfe: Does that mean we're going to have the same Property Maintenance Code in this town that they have in London or Brussels, or some place like that?

Mr. Stake: Probably a possibility.

Mrs. Newman: I think that's the way it is.

Mr. Hopper: Very good possibility. But it's still, I mean, it gives us an opportunity to make sure that we have life safety issues, are the biggest concern.

Mrs. Shea: Let me answer that question for you. I'm Mary Shea by the way, and I served on the committee that brought this forward. The International BOCA Code has been _____ all over the United States. There was a group of builders that got together, cities that got together. Whitehall has it. Gahanna, and everyone else. It is just mainly, a means for us to use because we have so many outdated rules and regulations here in Reynoldsburg and surrounding communities. to this because it's pre-written for us and exactly what we would like to have. (Inaudible. Speaking off mike). Because we had a book this thick that had terrible _____ in it. It was so outdated that this really encompasses everything we need here in Reynoldsburg.

Mr. Stake: And if I could add, Mr. Hopper and his Building Department have gone through the International Property Maintenance Code and our code, and trying to personalize this code to Reynoldsburg. We're not going to adopt this whole International Property Maintenance Code from what I'm understanding, correct? I mean, there'll be some revisions that suit us, correct?

Mr. Hopper: There's some modifications. Yes.

Mr. Stake: Modifications that suit Reynoldsburg. So the way I see it is, it's a foundation that we're building on to suit our city. Any other questions or comments? (No response). Chet, do you have anything else you want to say this evening?

Mr. Hopper: No.

Mr. Stake: Okay. Mrs. Reichard?

Mrs. Reichard: No.

Mr. Stake: No. Okay. Well, not hearing any then, President Hills.

Mr. Hills: If I could just follow up, I'm not sure who said they had a copy of the '06 Code, but Chet, it may be worth your time to just take a look at it. If only 2 or 3 sections have changed, it may save you a revision in 6 months. If someone who had that will loan it to you. I don't think you need to go back and re-write it. But oftentimes, these codes change very minimally. And if it is, it may save everybody's time and effort. Thank you, Mr. Stake.

Mr. Stake: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? (No response).

Then I will adjourn the Special Safety Committee meeting at 7:14.

Safety Committee

March 13, 2006

- - -Nancy C. Frazier, Clerk of Council
(Transcribed - Susie Smith)