

Florida Building Commission
Rehabilitation Code Ad Hoc Committee Report

August 27, 2001
Rosen Plaza Hotel
9700 International Drive
Orlando, Florida

Attendees

Dick Browdy	Dan Shaw	Karl Thorne
Sam Walthour	Ed Carson	Christ Sanidas
Medard Kopczynski	George Wiggins	John Calpini

Committee Objectives

To Review Existing Rehabilitation Codes
To Receive Public Comment
To Identify Key Issues
To Develop a Work Plan and Time Line for Completion

Overview

The meeting was declared open at 8:20 a.m. Rick Dixon reviewed the meeting objectives and agenda; and the Legislature's charge. Buster Case discussed other national, state and model rehabilitation codes; their scope and focus; and reasons for adoption. During the meeting the Committee discussed the feasibility of adopting a rehab code; recommendations to the Legislature; review of existing codes; Florida specific codes; and a straw poll of support of the committee process and direction.

Committee Actions

Issues and Needs Identified:

Scope

- Florida specific/unique conditions and uniform requirements
- Commercial vs. residential
- Technical scope - egress, plumbing, electrical, etc.
- Change of building use
- Additions
- Intent of a rehab code - specific purpose
- Development of a mission statement
- Model vs. state specific code
- Statutory provisions/restrictions on minimum housing code - interpretation
- Address minimum housing provisions
- Local governments ability to adopt housing codes
- Rehab code, not a minimum housing code
- Fit for adoption of FBC
- Mission/purpose to include incentives, and how focused or specific the code should be.

- Identify the scope of the code
- How should the code be developed?

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Affordable Housing, Historic Buildings, Redevelopment and Urban Blight

- Siting issues for residential - rehab to create affordable housing
- Aging infrastructure
- Urban blight due to criteria of current code. Rehab code may correct this.
- Transformation of blighted areas can have a social benefit
- Affordable housing
- A tool for transformation
- Redevelopment of older areas
- Renovation of historic buildings
- Downtown redevelopment - general redevelopment
- Should code be an incentive for redevelopment?

Costs

- Costs vs. benefits
- Cost issues relative to sequencing renovation
- Historic vs. rehab, same or different codes? Funding issues to consider since federal and state funds are available for historic preservation, but not as readily available for rehab
- Cost factor/formula for per cent threshold and verification of cost determination. Develop a standard methodology for cost determination.
- Insurance cost incentives

Building Codes, Code Enforcement and Zoning

- Using a series of permits to keep percentages below the threshold
- New codes don't recognize the integrity of old methods
- Chapter 34 already covers rehab. Is Chapter 34 adequate?
- 25/50 per cent rule creates problems
- Concern over building official discretion - need guidance. A rehab code can provide guidance
- Alleviation of urban sprawl
- The standard code is weak on existing buildings
- Criteria for building officials, design professionals and property owners should be easy to understand and use.
- Criteria for developers and buyers to review and determine feasibility of a rehab project. A checklist for rehab
- Alternative to an existing code should be a minimum for rehab
- Code enforcement and zoning issues
- Accessibility, fire safety/prevention, and energy. What standards for a rehab code?

- Address flexibility and building official's discrepancy - performance/prescriptive code
- Consistency with existing codes

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Consensus Vote

- Committee members and participants voted unanimously in support of the benefits of developing a recommendation for a rehab code.

Next Steps

- Consult with renovators in practice, including multi-family developers
- Review existing code provisions relative to rehab. Uniform requirements. (Note: DCA staff to complete this task)
- Develop a straw-man of a mission statement. (Note: DCA staff to complete this task)
- Review Standard Building Code, the existing building code.
- An insurance perspective is needed.
- Develop a work plan and time line . (Note: DCA staff to complete this task)
- Final report to the Legislature is due by December meeting.
- Develop an outline of the report to the Legislature. (Note: DCA staff to complete this task)
- Define limitations/parameters in the report. (Note: DCA staff to complete this task)
- Consult with Legislative sponsors regarding the perspective on the Florida Building Commission direction.

Conclusion

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.