

Clark County Department of Development Services  
4701 W. Russell Road  
Las Vegas, NV 89118-2231

## **CLARK COUNTY COMBINED BOARD OF BUILDING APPEALS**

### **MINUTES of November 16, 2006**

#### A. Call to Order

##### 1. Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Chairman Larry Nelson, P.E. Introductions were made around the table. There were no new or prospective Board members.

2. It was determined by Chairman Nelson that a quorum was present.

#### B. Approval of Minutes from meeting of May 17, 2006

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as written, and a motion made to include the sign-in sheets with the minutes in the future that passed unanimously.

#### C. Panorama Towers Appeal

Ron Lynn, Building Official and Secretary/Ex Officio for the Board, provided background information with regard to a submittal for alternate methods and materials on behalf of Panorama Towers III, Clark County Permit Application No. 06-42776, wherein the use of combustible domestic water piping, specifically Aquapex Tubing, was requested for use on this project and further requested that the tubing be allowed to vertically protrude from the foundation by approximately 24 inches. Mr. Lynn concurred with the decision of Plans Examination staff to deny the alternate. He responded by letter to Mr. Jon DeVries, Klai Juba Architects, on October 18, 2006 to inform the appellants of his decision. The appellants elected to submit a formal request to appeal to the Combined Board of Building Appeals, in a manner prescribed by Chapter 22.02 of the Clark County Building Administrative Code, and were provided the guidelines for filing the appeal.

Clark County staff members Neil Burning, Manager of Plans Examination, James Gerren, P.E., and Jordan Krahenbuhl, Building Plans Examination Specialist, presented pertinent data and information concerning the Panorama Towers III Project, both in oral and PowerPoint presentations. Mr. Krahenbuhl referenced the Southern Nevada Plumbing Code Amendments, wherein combustible construction was defined. The Southern Nevada Plumbing and Mechanical Committee process, purpose and decisions were approved by the membership comprised of building officials throughout the Southern Nevada area.

James Gerren stated that the appeal for an alternate was submitted to Section 205 (please refer to presentation attached) and he further presented historical data concerning piping for structures three stories or less. He also explained that the decision was not based upon a bad or good product but rather code requirements.

The 2006 code amendments were discussed, and Clark County staff members indicated that they will remain the same with regard to combustible piping. Under one of the new amendments, this piping is allowed in Type I or Type II construction for equipment rooms, pool piping and horizontal waste disposal lines, but would have to be separated by a two-hour fire wall construction. The MGM fire was also discussed as a case in point for restrictive use of plastic piping.

The appellants were asked to present their appeal to the Board. Chris Yergensen, President/CEO of the corporate owners of Panorama Towers, along with Messrs. Richard McGrew of Panorama Towers, Rich Houle of Uponor-USA for the manufacturer of the product, and Keith Hubbard, Sales Representative of Southwest Sales Group. Also in attendance were representatives from Klai Juba Architects and Rolf Jensen Associates.

The request is that plastic piping be allowed for the domestic potable water only for each resident of the tower. Mounted photos and photo handouts were presented to Board members to better demonstrate their request, to show the Board where the water comes in to each riser. With the majority of tubing embedded in the slab and below the concrete and 24 inches of piping above slab, they did not believe it would be a fire hazard, although they could appreciate our concerns as pointed out in the discussion of the MGM. They are asking for the 24 inches above slab to be approved.

A question was raised as to the type of piping used in the first two towers. The response was "copper tubing." In response to the questions, the appellants responded that it was a matter of cost and ease of installation. This new process would be one continuous pipe with no soldering points. Mr. Yergensen commented that they are experiencing leaks in soldered joints in the copper piping.

Accessibility was questioned as to means of repairing any plumbing leaks to the system, i.e. would there be an access panel, along with a shut-off valve? Chairman Nelson asked for clarification as to wall exit and entrance issues.

Board member Robert Potter expressed his concerns as to whether Board approval of this application would establish a precedent. Mr. Lynn advised that it would depend upon how finely detailed the Board report would be. The decision would be used as a reference point by other developers. Neil Burning brought up a discussion on Section 603.1, No. 2 – thermal insulation.

Chairman Nelson clarified where Clark County concern begins, i.e. above the slab, to which Mr. Gerren added from slab to wall location.

Mr. Lynn clarified the limitations on authority of the Board with regard to appeals by quoting the ordinance.

Mr. Yergensen stated they would prefer to research and get back to the Division on their findings for further discussion and presentation. They asked to reserve the right to a return hearing until after the holidays, when they have had sufficient time to investigate possible assemblies to meet the two-hour fire assembly requirements. The applicant requested to withdraw his appeal with the hopes a modified alternative may be more palatable.

The Board voted to delay a determination per the appellant's request.

D. Receive Updates from Clark County Department of Development Services – Building Division

Mr. Lynn provided an update on plans exam time frames and statistics pertaining to Clark County Development Services. The major new projects were briefly discussed, such as the City Center project and impending implosion of the Stardust. Mr. Lynn spoke about the growth of the division and the fact that we have outgrown our building to the point of needing to double the amount of space required for the department to operate efficiently.

E. Public Comment

The meeting was open for public comment. No comments were forthcoming.

F. Set Next Meeting Date and Location

Chairman Nelson called for a meeting to be scheduled sometime in April 2007, or after the first of the year in the event the Panorama Tower appellants wanted to come back before the Board with an alternate assembly.

G. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:20 p.m. by Chairman Nelson.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald L. Lynn  
Building Official  
Ex-Officio Member, Combined Board of Building Appeals

RLL:gjs