

Pikes Peak Regional Building Department

2880 International Circle
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 6, 2023 – Wednesday - 9:00 a.m.

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Micah Langness, Master Plumber
Andrew Baturevich, Structural Engineer
Thomas Lysne, Architect
Brian Braaten, Electrical Contractor
Jason Leimkuhl, Mechanical Contractor
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** Vice Chair Philip Lasarre, Building Contractor A or B
Michael Finkbiner, Building Contractor C or D1
- RBD STAFF:** Roger Lovell, Regional Building Official
Virginia Koulchitzka, Regional Building Attorney
Jay Eenhuis, Deputy Building Official – Plans
John Welton, Deputy Building Official – Inspections
Gina LaCascia, Executive Administrative Assistant

PROCEEDINGS:

The meeting was conducted in a hybrid form, allowing Committee members, Department staff, and the public to attend in person at the Pikes Peak Regional Development Center, 2880 International Circle, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910, Hearing Room on the Upper Level, or virtually via Microsoft Teams live events, as accessible via Pikes Peak Regional Building Department's website Boards & Committees' page at: <https://www.pprbd.org/Information/Boards>.

The Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) was not present. However, CSFD did send an email indicating that it does not take any exceptions to the variance requests as listed on the Agenda based on provisions from the International Fire Code.

1. **CALL TO ORDER: DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

Chair Micah Langness called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. **CONSIDERATION OF THE AUGUST 2, 2023 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

A motion was made by Andrew Baturevich to **APPROVE** the August 2, 2023 Technical Committee Minutes, as written; seconded by Jason Leimkuhl; the motion carried unanimously.

3. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

There were no Consent Calendar variances.

4. **ITEMS CALLED OFF CONSENT CALENDAR**

There were no items called off the Consent Calendar.

5. **VARIANCE REQUESTS**

- a) 1102 S. Nevada Avenue – Scott Schuster, Architect with Echo Architectures, requests a variance, prior to plan submittal, to Section 1004.5, International Building Code, 2021 Edition, based on Item 2 of Section RBC111.2.3, Pikes Peak Regional Building Code, 2023 Edition, (the “Code”), to allow an actual occupant load of 12 occupants to be used for design purposes, where a calculated occupant load per Table 1004.5, results in 20 occupants.

Andrew Baturevich recused himself from hearing this variance due to a business relationship with the applicant; a quorum remained.

Scott Schuster appeared in person and stated that the renovations on the hotel his company is working on are regulated as an R1 for purposes of occupancy, but wants to change that to an R2 or R3 for transitional housing facilities. He indicated that there will be twelve residents at this hotel who will be there from twelve to eighteen months; and each individual is assigned a room that is approximately 250 square feet and includes a private bathroom. He said that there will be a counselor living on-site as well.

Terry Anderson, Springs Rescue Mission, appeared in person and stated that the intention of this program is to create an independent living situation for persons transitioning from a shelter environment and is not intended for multiple residents in each room. He said that the kitchen area is the only area that will have multiple persons at one given time.

A motion was made by Jason Leimkuhl to recommend to the Board of Review **APPROVAL** of the variance request to allow an actual occupant load of twelve residents for design purposes; seconded by Brian Braaten; the motion carried unanimously.

- b) 9097 Bugaboo Drive, Permit N92646 – Yousef Babaie, property owner, requests two variances:

Andrew Baturevich rejoined the Committee and a quorum remained.

- i) a variance to Section R311.7.2, International Residential Code, 2015 Edition, based on Item 3 of Section RBC111.2.3, Pikes Peak Regional Building Code, 2017 Edition, as amended (the “Code”), to allow a stairway headroom of 6'4" where a minimum of 6'8" is required; and

Yousef Babaie appeared in person and stated that his home was built in 2022, and while he was remodeling, he had to add a walk-through and the bottom of the stairs to a mechanical room without a door. This made a T-Shape at the bottom of the stairwell where a person could either turn left or right. But once completed, the height of the walk-through is only 6'3".

A motion was made by Jason Leimkuhl to table this variance request, part (i) to hear and discuss variance request, part (ii); seconded by Brian Braaten; the motion carried unanimously.

- ii) a variance to Section R311.7.6, International Residential Code, 2015 Edition, based on Item 3 of Section RBC111.2.3 of the Code to allow a middle landing to remain as constructed, where it does not meet Code requirements.

Yousef Babaie explained the second part of the variance, part (ii), consists of the stairwell landing that is not measured to Code because when he remodeled the area to add a walk-through to the left of the main stairwell to the mechanical room, he cut down the step in attempt to reach Code required height compliance. The outcome was a winder tread for any direction of travel at the lower portions of the staircases with life safety issues. The Code requires a compliant landing. The homeowner was directed to work with RBD staff via a special inspection to determine head height at the newly created opening based on a Code compliant landing level.

A motion was made by Jason Leimkuhl to recommend to the Board of Review **CONTINUANCE** of the variance requests until the next Technical Committee meeting when the property owner can return with the requested measurements, which should include comments by the inspector; seconded by Andrew Baturevich; the motion carried unanimously.

- c) 214 N. 14th Street, Unit #101, Permit O69627 – Damon Winters, contractor and property owner, requests a variance to Section RBC303.4.1, Definition of a Crawl Space, Pikes Peak Regional Building Code, 2017 Edition, as amended (the "Code"), based on Item 3 of Section RBC111.2.3 of the Code to allow an underfloor space between the bottom of a floor and the earth under a building with an average height of 8'4", where not more than 5' is allowed by Code.

Damon Winters appeared by telephone and stated that the crawl space on Unit 101 of the duplex project he is working on is much deeper from north to south, which is about four feet. However, the floor levels remain the same. He said he is requesting a variance to allow for the deeper crawl space.

Andrew Baturevich asked the applicant what the exterior grade is relative to the crawl space grade, as proposed. Mr. Winters indicated that it consists of a wall of 36 inches on the low side. He further stated that the exterior grade is about six feet on the alley side of the building, with a retaining wall in the front that parallels the foundation.

He said that the grade will come up using the retaining walls that match the exposed foundation on the downhill side. Mr. Winters said that he did submit a splice to the Department.

John Welton shared the splice drawings with the Committee for review. The members reviewed the splice drawings submitted on this project with Mr. Winters. Mr. Welton indicated that the splice included a change to allow for a higher wall and center wall, but the floor system level did not change nor did the crawl space height, which shows a conditioned crawl space of 24 inches.

A motion was made by Andrew Baturevich to recommend to the Board of Review **DENIAL** of the variance request because the lateral forces of the exterior soil pushing against the walls without any backfill create a life safety concern; seconded by Thomas Lysne; the motion carried unanimously.

- d) 14982 Longwall Drive, Permit O16035 – Douglas Strecker, Strecker Home Builders, requests a variance to Section RBC303.4.1, Definition of a Crawl Space, Pikes Peak Regional Building Code, 2017 Edition, as amended (the “Code”), based on Item 3 of Section RBC111.2.3 of the Code to allow a crawl space with an average height of 5’11” where no more than 5’ average height is allowed by Code.

Douglas Strecker appeared in person and stated that the house he is working on has a crawl space of 5’11” after installing an interior wall of the mechanical room of the house. He said that after backfilling the space, he realized that it was higher and did not match Code. He further stated that his after-thought regarding the interior foundation wall was that he should have built it a foot taller.

A motion was made by Andrew Baturevich to recommend to the Board of Review **APPROVAL** of the variance under the condition that the applicant provide a letter from the foundation engineer stating that the current design is acceptable; seconded by Thomas Lysne; the motion carried unanimously. For this conditional variance request approval to be considered by the Board of Review on September 20, 2023, the requested documentation must be submitted to the Department no later than September 13, 2023.

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no Unfinished Business to discuss.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no New Business to discuss.

8. **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Roger N. Lovell
Regional Building Official

RNL/gml

Accommodations for the hearing impaired can be made upon request with forty-eight (48) hours' notice. Please call (719) 327-2989.

Pikes Peak Regional Building Department (PPRBD) meeting agendas and minutes, as well as archived records, are available free of charge on PPRBD's website at <https://www.pprbd.org/Information/Boards>. Audio copies of the record may be purchased by contacting PPRBD at (719) 327-2989.