

PROPERTY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 26, 2024

Present: Chairman Bill Schmidt, Jim Hilborn, Paul Gasiiecki, Gyanila Naqvi, Jim Sullivan

Also Present: *Staff liaison:* Tom Bialas, Trustee Chester Pojack, Mayor Chodri Ma Khokhar, Steve Kalish (excused)

Absent: Michael Ontiveroz (excused), Trustee Mohammad Siddiqi (excused)

Chairman Bill Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Minutes

The May 22, 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

Discussion Items:

Code Enforcement – Fire Pit Codes and Safety. Operations Supervisor Tom Bialas presented information regarding Village code requirements related to open burning, recreational fires and fire safety.

Discussions included:

- Local Ordinance: Title 6, Chapter 3, Section 6-3A-1: Adoption of Code: There is hereby adopted by the village and incorporated herein by reference the 2006 edition of the International Fire Code, as promulgated by the International Code Council, Inc., as the fire code of the village for regulating and governing the safeguarding of life and property from fire and explosion hazards arising from the storage, handling and use of hazardous substances, materials and devices, and from conditions hazardous to life or property in the occupancy of buildings and premises in the village...
- Title 5, Chapter 3, Section 5-3-6: Burning Waste: It shall be unlawful for any person to burn any garbage, refuse, waste or other substance within the village unless specifically authorized by the provisions of this code.
- ICC Fire Code, Chapter 3, Section 307: Open Burning and Recreational Fires: 307.1.1 Prohibited open burning. Open burning that is offensive or objectionable because of smoke or odor emissions or when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous shall be prohibited.
- Open Burning: 307.2 Permit required. A permit shall be obtained from the fire code official in accordance with Section 105.6 prior to kindling a fire for recognized silvicultural or range or wildlife management practices, prevention or control of disease or pests, or a bonfire. Application for such approval shall only be presented by and permits issued to the owner of the land upon which the fire is to be kindled.
- 307.3 Extinguishment authority. The fire code official is authorized to order the extinguishment by the permit holder, another person responsible or the fire department of open burning that creates or adds to a hazardous or objectionable situation.
- 307.4 Location. The location for open burning shall not be less than 50 feet from any structure, and provisions shall be made to prevent the fire from spreading to within 50 feet of any structure.
 - Exceptions: 1. Fires in approved containers that are not less than 15 feet from a structure.
 - 2. The minimum required distance from a structure shall be 25 feet where the pile size is 3 feet or less in diameter and 2 feet or less in height.

Committee Member Naqvi inquired what constitutes an approved container. OSS Bialas advised a fire pit which has been manufactured for such a purpose that has been tested by an approved agency, such as products that have been approved by Underwriters Laboratories. (UL Rated.) Masonry fire pits are also acceptable and require a building permit to ensure code requirements are met. Approved in the Fire Code refers to “acceptable to the fire code official”. Placement of fire pits away from structures is stressed in the codes.

- 307.4.1 Bonfires. A bonfire shall not be conducted within 50 feet of a structure or combustible material unless the fire is contained in a barbecue pit. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 50 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.
- 307.4.2 Recreational fires. Recreational fires shall not be conducted within 25 feet of a structure or combustible material. Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.
- Fire Safety: The May 2018 incident involving 12 people having a back yard recreational fire in a fire pit was reviewed. A member of the group reportedly added flammable liquid to the fire resulting in a large flareup that injured multiple members of the group. This event emphasized the importance of practicing sound safety measures with any fire pit activity.
 - Before lighting your fire pit, take a look at the area surrounding it. Is there anything that could potentially catch fire if sparks blew in that direction? Sweep twigs or other flammable debris out of the way to prevent the fire from spreading. A five-foot radius is a good rule of thumb. Additionally, double-check what you and others near the fire pit are wearing. Don't wear clothing with long, loose parts (such as ties or scarves) that can hang into the fire pit if you lean too close. Make sure all the furniture you use for this is either flame-retardant or made of entirely fireproof materials.
 - In general, there are a few flammable items that you should never use as fuel for your fire pit: Gasoline or other flammable liquids: These can splash out of the fire pit and present a serious hazard. Paper or trash: Burning paper has a tendency to pop and throw sparks out of the fire pit. Soft woods (cedar, pine, etc.): Like paper, these woods can pop and spark in a fire.
 - When you're ready to put out the fire, douse the fire pit in water and stir the ashes with a shovel to make sure every coal is extinguished. As you clean the ashes out, be mindful of their temperature and how to properly dispose of them. Ashes can still retain enough heat to start a fire if exposed to flammable materials even after a couple of days. When you dispose of the ashes, avoid packing them in a cardboard box or paper bag to prevent spontaneous combustion.
- Open burning and recreational fires have regulations that protect life and property. Fire pits are constructed with basic safety precautions in mind. However, managing a fire safely also depends on people to exercise caution and keep everything under control. The May 2018 incident is a reminder that when things go wrong, it can be tragic. With a little care and regards for fire pit safety, a fire feature can be a safe and enjoyable addition to a backyard.

Topic of Discussion – Miscellaneous Discussion by Committee

- None presented.

Next Meeting:

Reminder provided by Chairman Schmidt, there is no Property Enhancement Committee Meeting in July.

The next Property Enhancement Committee Meeting will be August 28, 2024 at 6:30 PM. This will include the third of the quarterly Landlord Managers meetings held in the Council Chambers at Village Hall.

Adjourn: Chairman Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 7:06 PM.