

Notes of

B.O.I.E.A. (BCBO) Round Table meeting, September 15, 2011 hosted by Mike Weymouth and Heiko Dobrikow, the Riverside Hotel

Chaired by BCBO President Steve Pizzillo

Co-moderated Jeff John and John Alvarez, Revolution/America's Backyard.

Present were: 42 participants

In no particular order:

Jorg Hruschka, Gerry Smilen, Steve Pizzillo, Jerry Sanzone, Joe Feinberg, Magen Odell, Jeff John, John Alvarez, Chris Augustin, Ron Centamore, Gaia Calcaterra, Joe Feinberg, Allan Kozich, , Courtney Crush, Mike Weymouth, Steve Einhorn, Robert Stewart, David Raines, Jerry Jordan, Paula Nasta, Kelly Brown, Yvette London, Jordy Sopourn, Stan Schachne, A Lee Martin, Matt Rohan, Dave Dinkel, Caldwell Cooper, Brian Dillon, Steven Chess, Steve Bassett, Art Bengochea, Chris Swain, Pete

Updates:

1. Update by permit application committee: Joe Feinberg and Magen Odell

Purpose: Standardize and Create a Generic Permit application for Broward County and its municipalities that is accessible online.

- a. Magen compiled a complete booklet of permit forms by all building departments
- b. She also created a comparative spread sheet of all building permit applications
- c. Based on findings of the spreadsheet, she created a draft of a comprehensive permit application that can be used by all disciplines and addresses the categories of all applications.
- d. After reviewing the draft for completion, the committee will talk to individual Building Officials to get a consensus.

Please note: The committee is open to anyone.

2. Steve Bassett:

Steve set up a yahoo group discussion site. Any one is encouraged to sign up and share their thoughts in a blog format. This specific group allows participants to share thoughts

documents, pictures etc. specifically relevant to the topic. Each blog is instantly shared with other users. A benefit is that all information is collected at a central location accessible to all members and it does not clog up the e-mail system with continuous “reply – all “ messages.

Please join us at yahoogroups.com BOIEA_round_table

Topics / Concerns discussed:

3. Plan review:

Co-moderator Jeff John is the owner of Revolution / America's backyard, one of Fort Lauderdale's leading nightclub and concert venues. One of the components of a successful entertainment venue is to update the theme and décor of a venue quickly and frequently.

Discussion topics

- a. On site plan reviews: Create a new plan review option allowing business owner, developers and their design professionals meet the Chiefs of all required disciplines on site to compare site conditions with the proposed changes. A night club is an unique, unusual structure that might raise a lot of questions by a plan reviewer that could easily be explained and addressed by the design professional on site. However, it should be noted that zoning requirements have a greater impact on the design of the venue.
- b. Oftentimes terminology and definitions are not the same in the varying codes, which can lead to misunderstanding and different interpretations. I.e. tent vs. awning.
- c. Many cities already provide preliminary meetings to discuss overall site specific concerns to guide the design professionals through the planning stage. However, presently there is no official city or county tracking mechanism to allow the outcome of these preliminary meetings to become a part of permanent permit records. It was recommended to contact the building official to ensure that all the required departments including zoning and engineering are included in any preliminary meetings.
- d. There seems to be a disconnect or a communication breakdown during the planning stages between the zoning and building departments. At times Zoning and Building codes can be contradictory and multiple regulatory agencies can have an effect on the issuance of a permit, i.e. building, zoning, engineering, fire.

- e. The review process starts with zoning to determine, if the proposed use is permissible in the district. This is an important distinction, especially for commercial real estate brokers. Several examples were mentioned, when a tenant signed a lease and improved the leased space only to find out during a business tax inspection that the business use is not allowed at this particular location or that more stringent fire requirements have to be met.
- f. The local political environment has a major impact on a business decision to locate in a particular municipality. A business friendly building department that can efficiently and expeditiously guide new businesses through the permit review and construction phases will help city economic developments groups to attract new enterprises. A high educational standard, and consistency among plan reviewers and inspectors are key to a smooth process.
- g. Expired permits. Frequently new businesses move into a location where a previous tenant made improvements without obtaining the required permits. This might create a serious hardship, if the new tenant chose to lease the space with the existing improvements and made the financial commitments with the false understanding that the work was done legally.

Recommendation:

- a. Provide additional education to commercial realtors to focus on zoning and fire regulations including free, downloadable power point presentations, seminars, and presentations at association meetings.
 - b. Create a specially designed Business Lease Checklist that includes a recommendation to speak to building, zoning and fire plan reviewers to establish a definite list of business use and construction issues that need to be addressed before the business opens it's door to the public.
 - c. It is recommended to check with the building department for open permits and code cases before entering into a lease.
4. Other

For further information, please contact Jorg Hruschka at 954 709-3197 or jhrusch@hotmail.com

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