

December 22, 2005

City Commission  
City of Lawrence  
6 East 6th  
P.O. Box 708  
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Re: Building Code Adoption

Dear Mayor and Commission,

The Building Code Board of Appeals has completed its review of International Building Code (IBC) and International Residential Code (IRC) consistent with the direction of the City Commission.

It is the recommendation of the Building Code Board that the City of Lawrence move forward in it's adoption of the IRC. The IRC is a stand-alone code if adopted in its entirety as recommended by this Board. If it is the intent of the City Commission to adopt the IRC as a blended set of codes, then it could move forward for adoption once the plumbing, electrical and mechanical codes are amended into it.

The Board strongly recommends the adoption of the IBC be delayed until the International Fire Code (IFC) and Mechanical Code can be reviewed by the appropriate boards and amended to coordinate with the IBC. Until that time it is not prudent or professional to move forward in attempting to amend and integrate past codes into a new building code.

The Building Code Board members are licensed professionals and are on the Board representing those professions. The canons of those professions require them to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The Board feels that a blended code and the hundreds of amendments required to coordinate them will place an untenable burden on design professionals, contractors and building officials attempting to work in the City of Lawrence. Additionally, such a blended code would almost certainly increase the probability of misinterpretation. Creating confusion is not in the interest of promoting the public safety and welfare.

The Codes must be designed to be consistent. The process of putting together a consistent code is a very tedious operation and is certainly beyond the capacity of a local volunteer board. The Board feels that to try to marry Codes is neither wise nor professional.

The Building Code Board of Appeals feels that the IBC is integrated and tightly woven with the Fire Code and the Mechanical Code. The Board believes that it is a rational approach for all the commercial codes to be put together and proposed for adoption concurrently. We therefore adamantly recommend that the City not move forward with adoption of the IBC until such time as all reviews by the appropriate boards have been completed and a complete unified code is submitted for adoption.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Queen'.

Lee Queen  
Chairperson Building Code Board of Appeals

CC: Mike Wildgen - City Manager  
Dave Corliss - Assistant City Manager, Legal Services Director  
Victor Torres - Neighborhood Resources Director  
Barry Walthall - Codes Enforcement Manager  
Tom Waechter - Chairperson Fire Code Board of Appeals  
Jim Sparkes - Chairperson Mechanical Board of Appeals  
Larry Frost - Chairperson Board of Electrical Examiners  
Jim Carpenter - Chairperson Board of Plumbers and Pipe Fitters