

Industry Working Group

October 26, 2016 Meeting Notes

Purpose of Working Group: To provide a regular venue for vendors, contractors, homeowners and others who frequently do business at Community Services' permitting counter to share concerns/identify solutions.

Goal: To improve service delivery and strengthen relationships with the community.

Discussion/Concerns/Ideas

- **Review of purpose (above), goals (above) and Rules of Engagement:**

Rules of Engagement

1. Share the airtime
2. Listen to understand and for the future to emerge
3. Disagree without being disagreeable
4. Share your experience (not others)
5. Stay open to new ways of doing things; all ideas are valid
6. Respect each other's thinking and value their contributions
7. Speak your truth, without blame or judgment
8. Ask what's possible?" not "what's wrong"? Keep asking.
9. Seek common ground and understanding (not problems and conflict)
10. Stay focused on the topic at hand; out of the weeds and swamps

- **Received written concerns about the Building Division**

- **Concerns of Retribution**

- There was general discussion about concern by industry of retribution by the building division in certain situations.
- There was discussion about a certain situation where a contractor was investigated by the District Attorney's Office for allegedly doing work without permits. The District Attorney's effort to address unlicensed contractors / unpermitted work; and the obligation of the Department of Community Services to assure work is properly permitted was discussed.

- **Concerns Direction & Guidance from the Building Division**

- Some contractors feel direction and guidance from the Building Division changes over time resulting in increased time and costs.
 - Community Services is proactively working to minimize confusion. Community Services Director Taro Echiburu provided examples of materials being drafted to provide clear direction during the pre-application period on the general permitting process as well as activity-specific guidance, fees and timelines.
- A request was made that complex building permit issues be explained in the context of what is possible along with what cannot be done.
 - Community Services is committed to being solutions-oriented, and is working to improve in that regard; however there are restrictions due to legal liability for building officials to engage in designing a project.

- **Concerns about Strict Requirements**

- Concerns were voiced regarding requirements that industry felt were unduly onerous. However, one contractor felt the restrictions in Yolo were similar to other jurisdictions throughout California and in other states.
- An industry representative stated the pre-application meeting useful but had concerns about the third party plan check as described at the last meeting.
- There was general discussion about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) (FEMA requirements), including:
 - The negative impacts to all residents when NFIP regulations are not adhered to.
 - The need for guidance on what is and is not allowed, as well as specific NFIP regulations for Ag exempt buildings.
 - The status of the project and corrections currently under-way to meet NFIP regulations were provided.
- ACTION ITEM: *Provide regular updates on changes in building cod; provide clarity on FEMA requirements*
- **Relationship Between Fire and Building Division**
 - Confusion about who defines fire-related restrictions and requirements was voiced. Jurisdiction and past practices were described. Chief Burns explained that relationship is improving and that there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the works between Fire and the Building Division to avoid conflicts and confusion. ACTION ITEM: *The draft MOU will be shared at the next meeting.*

Next Meeting: Early December, specific date yet to be determined. Future agenda topics include the Fire-Building MOU and FEMA requirements.