

Queens Chapter New York State Society of Professional Engineers *The Drawingboard*

November 2010

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President's Message

*By George Tavoulares, P.E.
President
gltpe@msn.com*

In July 2010, New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg announced that he wanted to improve the efficiency of City government, cut red tape, consolidate and modernize back-office operations and make government user friendly and transparent. The goal was for the City to do more with less. You can read the Mayor's press statement at

http://www.nyc.gov/html/hra/downloads/pdf/back_office_operations.pdf.

Deputy Mayor of Operations, Stephen Goldsmith is spearheading this endeavor and several agencies are updating their procedures and are attempting to become more user friendly to the customer, us, the licensed design professionals. The DEP has begun focusing on the review and processing of Engineering Approvals, starting with the House Connection Proposal (HCP) and Site Connection Proposal (SCP). New DEP forms and procedures are currently being drafted and can be viewed at

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/forms_and_permits/sewer.shtml
It is DEP's goal to have the status of their filings online in the near future. Several weeks ago I attended a presentation at DEP outlining these new procedures and was told that more procedures are to be revised. A DEP presentation pertaining to these new procedures will be held at DOB's 280 Broadway office on Wednesday, November 17, 2010 at 3pm and at DEP, 59-17 Junction Blvd, 3rd Floor cafeteria, on November 19, 2010 at 12pm. You can contact DEP's Caroline Forger at 718.595.3237 for further details.

On November 9, 2010 I attended a NYC Fire Dept. (FDNY) seminar in Brooklyn. The seminar was well attended with more

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than several hundred people in attendance. The Chapter's **Miles Fisher, PE** and **Zygmunt Staszewski, PE** also attended the seminar and provided feedback to the FDNY. The topic of the seminar was the FDNY's new filing procedures for fire alarm systems and yes, their attempt to become more **user friendly and transparent** to the licensed design professionals and the public. FDNY currently processes approximately 500 fire alarm applications per month. In upgrading their services, they have hired four additional plan examiners and purchased new scheduling software for the fire alarm inspection unit. Sometime in the future, Engineers will be able to call 311 and schedule a fire alarm inspection. Applications and requests for inspections will one day become automated. A new Application for Plan Examination, form TM-1 has also been drafted and will be issued shortly. Will these two agencies streamline their application procedures and become more transparent and user friendly or will it turnout to be more red tape, bureaucracy and confusion? As the saying goes, the more things change the more they stay the same? Only time will tell but it appears that they are both moving in the right direction. We commend them on their attempt and I have offered our services to assist them in revising their procedures.

I am pleased to announce that **Louise Doyle, PE President of the New York State Society of Professional Engineers** will be attending our general membership meeting on November 18, 2010 and discussing the State of Affairs in the Engineering community. I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and I look forward to seeing you on November 18, 2010 at 6:30pm at Ft. Totten.

Next Meeting

Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday the next general membership meeting will be held on the 3rd Thursday of the Month, November 18 at 6:30PM

Ms. Deborah Taylor, AIA; Chief Sustainability Officer of the NYC Department of Buildings will present a lecture on the new NYC Energy Conservation Code.

There is a \$20 charge for AIA & NYSSPE members; \$25 for non-members.

The NYC Energy Conservation Code amends the 2007 New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code. This presentation is designed to inform the professional engineering community of the specific changes to the energy code and how it will impact filings. It will include a review of energy code requirements, progress inspections rule requirements, new submission requirements and the new forms supporting this initiative.

Fire Department Alarm Inspections

*By: Miles Fisher, PE
Fire and Building Code Services
516.256.7780*

There was a meeting held at NYC Fire Department on Tuesday, November 9, 2010 to update the industry on the process for filing and approval of plans, professional certification, scheduling of FDNY inspections and High-Rise Unit inspections. The following are highlights of the items introduced and discussed at the meeting and handouts received:

- An updated filing procedure was handed out with an overview of steps required to file and obtain approval of fire alarm plans. See copy of "Fire Alarm Plan Submission at FDNY". The main changes are as follows:
 - More flexible hours for submission of plans at FDNY for review.
 - A new TM-1 form was introduced which will be required to be used as of January 1, 2011. See copy of latest attached of TM-1 application or go to http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/units/fire_prevention/otmb.shtml for the latest TM-1 for a copy as well as other Bulletins from the Office of Technology Management at FDNY.
 - Review or professional certification of additions to existing approved systems was reviewed again. This will allow the applicant to inspect the additions and obtain an FDNY Letter of Approval without having an inspection done by FDNY. This is applicable for minor additions of notification devices and non-core area smoke detectors. If a booster power supply, duct detector, fan shutdown, waterflow or tamper switch is added they cannot be professional certified. For details of this procedure and filing the applicant and licensed electrician need to complete a TM-3 application available at the link listed in item b.

- The electrical unit reviewed the scheduling of inspections and elimination of certification of Letters of Defect. The memo from Chief Jensen dated October 1, 2010 detailing the elimination of certification was in last month's drawing board. Items discussed by this unit was as follows:
 - As part of the Mayors initiative scheduling of FDNY inspections will eventually be done using 311. This has yet to be worked out and more information will follow as soon as it becomes available.
 - DCI Barrington Brown stated that inspections are running approximately 3 to 4 weeks.
 - DCI Brown stated that after December 31, 2010 any open Letters of Defect must be re-inspected except for administrative items. If the inspector returns to the site and finds additional deficiencies besides the ones written on the FDNY Letter of Defect he stated that they will be written up but will not holdup approval of the system that was inspected. The details of this new procedure were not discussed and still need to be worked out. More information will follow as soon as it becomes available.

- DCI Benjamin of the High-Rise Unit spoke about what his unit does and how many buildings they cover. They conduct yearly inspections of all High-Rise Buildings and Hotels throughout the five Boroughs. He stated that if they find deficiencies or incorrect systems installed they will be issuing Violation Orders.

In general it appears that FDNY is trying to streamline many of the processes but it will not happen overnight. They are in the process of obtaining a new computer system from IBM, but it will not be on-line and operational for at least another 3 years. If you have any questions or require additional information please feel free to email Miles Fisher, P.E. from Fire and Building Code Services at miles@firecodeservices.com.

Agency Rule Proposals

Rules affecting the City of New York can be located at the following address.
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycrules/html/home/home.shtml>

New Proposed Asbestos Abatement Rule (NYCDEP)

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection has issued a proposed rule pertaining to asbestos abatement. A public hearing will be held at DEP, 59-17 Junction Blvd 6th floor at 10am on December 6, 2010. The proposed rules can be found at http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycrules/downloads/rules/P_DEP_12_6_10_A.pdf , please note that the text in brackets has been deleted.

New Proposed Façade Inspections Rule (NYCDOB)

The new proposed façade rule modifies/eliminates several other rules. You can view this proposed rule at

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dob/downloads/rules/rule_facade_proposed.pdf

A public hearing will be held at DOB, 280 Broadway, 6th floor on Nov. 15, 2010 at 4pm.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dob/downloads/rules/1_RCNY_32-04.pdf

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dob/downloads/pdf/rule_32-03_facade_insp.pdf

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NSPE Lecture Series

2-10

Lecture

Date: November 18, 2010 Queens Chapter meeting
Time: 6:30PM to 9:00PM

At

422 Weaver Ave. Fort Totten, Bayside, Queens

1 Continuing Education Credit

Admission fee is \$20 for AIA & NYSSPE members; \$25 for non-members.

PRESENTED BY:

Deborah Taylor, AIA; NYC DOB, Chief Sustainability Officer

THE PROGRAM

NYC Energy Code

The NYC Energy Conservation Code amends the 2007 New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code. This presentation is designed to inform the professional engineering community of the specific changes to the energy code and how it will impact filings. It will include a review of energy code requirements, progress inspections rule requirements, new submission requirements and the new forms supporting this initiative .

Buffet dinner 6:30 pm-7:00pm

Chapter business with NYSSPE President Louise Doyle, PE 7PM-8:00 PM

Energy code presentation w/Deborah Taylor from 8pm-9pm

Contact George Tavoulaareas, PE at 347-387-1649 for further information



Queens Chapter

New York State Society of Professional Engineers

272 Clinton Road Garden City, NY 11530

tel no: 516.742.5360 fax: 516.877.1029

e-mail: gltp@msn.com

www.nspe.queens.org

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November 11, 2010

James Roberts, PE
Deputy Commissioner
NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection
59-17 Junction Blvd
Flushing, NY 11373

RE: Long term Plan to Improve Customer Service

Dear Mr. Roberts:

The Queens Chapter of NSPE is in receipt of your letter dated October 1, 2010 and I want to commend you and Commissioner Holloway's efforts in attempting to improve customer service at the NYC Department of Environmental Protection. DEP has made and continues to significantly impact the lives of everyday New Yorkers. Many New Yorkers take for granted the great engineering feats that have been accomplished by the Department and the work that is performed on a daily basis.

Several members of our society attended both meetings at DEP and we have notified all of our members to review and comment on the proposed HCP/SCP procedures. We also notified our members about the upcoming seminars scheduled for next week. As you are aware, professional engineers provide engineering design services to the public that require filings at multiple City agencies including DEP. These engineering design services at DEP include design, inspection and approval of boilers, back flow preventers, grease traps, house and site connections, asbestos abatement to mention a few. Although the proposed procedures and goals by the Department are a step in the right direction, much work needs to be done. Boiler filings and inspections at the Air Resources Division take an inordinate amount of time to complete due to bureaucracy, lack of manpower and resources. Telephoning DEP employees to check the status of filings is not an efficient nor productive means of service to the licensed design professional nor the public at large. We look forward to the day that all filings and approvals can be submitted expeditiously, viewed and tracked online.

Our society again commends you for your attempt to make the system user friendly and transparent. We also would like to offer our services to help improve the design, filing and inspection procedures that are being revised. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 516.742.5360.

Sincerely,

George Tavoulareas, PE
President, Queens Chapter NYSSPE
cc: Comm. Holloway



WELCOME TO THE NEW YORK CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

9 Metrotech Center • Brooklyn, New York 11201

Fire Alarm Inspection Unit

**Seminar Concerning
The Fire Alarm Approval Process**

PLANS FOR STREAMLINING THE FIRE ALARM INSPECTION SCHEDULING PROCESS



Planning is underway to minimize the inconvenience of client visits to the 3rd floor for scheduling an inspection.



Inspection applications will soon be transmitted to the FAIU scheduling desk from the “311” website. The Bureau of Fire Prevention and the Mayor’s Office’s Business Process Reengineering team are working on this project.


THE CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE FIRE ALARM INSPECTION SCHEDULING FORM



The inspection application contains elements of the B-45 Form (the application for scheduling inspections), the A-433 Form (the electrical contractor's affidavit) and the riser diagram.



This will allow the scheduling supervisor to assess the scope of work, schedule the inspection in a timely manner and assign an inspector with the appropriate experience and skill level to the project.



The Availability of Plans and Riser Diagrams

- Inspectors no longer carry plans or riser diagrams to premises.
- An inspection will be cancelled if plans are not on-site.
- A defect will be cited if an “As Built” riser diagram is not provided on the project site.

What is included in the “As Built” Riser Diagram?



The seal of the R.A. or P.E. of record.



The DOB PW-1 and the bar code sticker.



The functional matrix.



The riser must be stamped “As Built”



A functionality statement.

Staffing Increases will Improve the “Letter of Approval” process



Four inspectors, one supervisor and two clerks have been selected



Scheduling efficiency will be further improved



Re-inspections on “Letter of Defect” may be expedited upon request



Record Keeping to be Automated

- Two heavy duty scanners have been ordered.
- Loss of account records will be minimized.
- Client access to records will be greatly facilitated.



New scheduling software to be installed.

- ❑ Management and supervisory staff will have information at their fingertips.
- ❑ Scheduling information may be easily shared by as many as 10 employees.
- ❑ Rescheduling, cancellations and tactical planning will be more integral to administrative operations.
- ❑ Pertinent information will be more readily communicated to the public.

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