

City of Fairlawn  
Zoning, Housing & Residential Building Department

# ANNUAL REPORT

2017

*Enclosed you will find the annual report outlining the activities and programs of the Zoning, Housing & Residential Building Department as prepared by Christopher Randles, Zoning, Housing & Residential Building Commissioner.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Contents

Permits/Certificates Issued _____	2
Code Enforcement _____	3
Inspections Performed _____	4
2017 Neighborhood Inspection Program _____	4
Landlord Licensing _____	5
Single Family Housing Market _____	6
Council Chambers Audio/Visual Aides _____	6
Personnel & Training _____	6
Residential Demolition Program _____	8
Residential Foreclosure Registration Program _____	8
Boards & Commissions _____	8

## Permits/Certificates Issued

In 2017 the Department completed transactions for 612 permits and certificates totaling \$139,376.78. The total revenue is equal to approximately 35% of the Departments operating costs. The reported value of all construction in the City for the year was \$17,762,368 and 319 new jobs have been added to the City in 2017. Additionally, the Department certified a total of \$100 to the County Fiscal Officer for collection for a fine issued to bring a property into compliance with the Property Maintenance Code. Following is a breakdown of all the transactions:

Residential Add. /Alt.	6	240.00
Bond		
Invoice for bond	26	58,610.80
Foreclosed Property		
Foreclosure Registration	15	3,000.00
Vacant Structure Inspection	6	600.00
Online Permit Fee		
Online Permit Application	12	24.00
Penalty		
Administrative Penalties	14	970.00
Landlord Licensing Fee		
1 unit	90	4,500.00
2-3 units	77	4,620.00
4-5 units	29	1,890.00
6-25 units	37	3,885.00
26-100 units	3	600.00
<b>Licensing Fee totals</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>\$15,495.00</b>

#### Permits by Type

Res. New Construction	2	404.00
Over 20 ft	2	50.00
Res. Addition/Alteration	11	2,047.00
Res Deck or Other	9	810.00
Res. Residing	13	520.00
Re-Roofing	47	1,880.00
Swimming Pool	2	60.00
Res. 150% Fine	4	159.00
Com. Alteration/Addition	3	1,821.70
New Commercial	4	8,132.30
Com. Tap-In Fee	1	25,000.00
Demolition	4	160.00
Earth Hauling	12	600.00
Excavation	18	900.00
Fence/Wall over 36"	23	460.00
Res. Accessory Structure	11	440.00
Res. Deck or Other	8	160.00
Res. Repair	2	180.00
Res. Single Family	2	80.00
Res. Swimming Pool	2	80.00
Res. Tap-In	2	2,000.00
Special Event Fee	8	800.00
Temporary Sign	15	975.00
Wall/Ground Sign	32	3,822.98
Zoning Use Certificate	69	9,380.00
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>\$139,861.78</b>

## Code Enforcement

In 2017 the Department issued 258 violations to 163 properties. Based upon the violation letters sent, follow-up inspections were performed as well as second notices sent in order to gain compliance. The compliance rate was 96% for remediating violations with 4 properties forwarded to the Real Property Maintenance Board for remediation and 14 administrative penalties being issued for \$970. **As a result of**

**the orders issued, an estimated \$140,319 was expended by owners to make repairs in order to gain compliance.**

## Inspections Performed

The Department performed a total of 1,630 inspections for the year. This amount equates to approximately 6.3 inspections per working day. Following is a breakdown of the inspections performed:

Property Maintenance	407
Building Inspections	165
Neighborhood Inspection Program	774
Misc. (Temp. Sign Removal, Gen. Insp., Vacant Homes)	284

## 2017 Neighborhood Inspection Program

The Inspection program consisted of inspections of the exterior of 774 residential properties distributed throughout the City in each Ward. A total of 109 single family dwellings were flagged with violations and 16 rental properties. Inspections were performed with tablets which allow for electronic input of violations in the field thereby reducing staff hours to perform this task. Following is a breakdown of the Program Inspections:

Total owner-occupied properties inspected	717
Total owner-occupied properties with violations	109
Rentals inspected	57
Rentals with violations	16

<b>Types of Violations</b>		
	<b>Owner Occupied</b>	<b>Rentals</b>
Clean/Repair exterior walls	54	3
Roof / Gutter / Downspout issues	9	7
Paint required for structure	35	3
Fence Acc. Structure issues	11	0
Trash / Rubbish	14	4
Garage door issues	6	1
Windows & Doors	3	1
Outdoor Storage	6	1
Misc.	18	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>28</b>

## Landlord Licensing

The Department mailed notices to landlords in late November of 2016 with invoices for the required 2017 Landlord Licenses. The majority of Landlords complied with the licensing requirement but the Department did need to issue 2 summonses to Mayor's Court for Landlords who did not comply. This is a drop from 2016 where 10 summonses were required to gain compliance for the licensing requirements. After the summonses were issued, 100% compliance was obtained.

Additionally, in 2015, 82 single family dwellings were registered as rentals and in 2016 the number dropped to 80. In 2017, the number registered as rentals has dropped to 72 which indicates that as the housing market improves, the number of single family rentals is decreasing in the City.

## Single Family Housing Market

Data obtained from the Akron Cleveland Association of REALTORS show that there was an 8.5% increase of the median sold price from the previous year and the average days on the market decreased by 3.5%. Additionally, the number of new properties for sale decreased by 1.6%. This data illustrates that the single-family housing market continues to strengthen. Foreclosure filings remain low as well as the number of vacant dwellings that result from this.

## Council Chambers Audio/Visual Aides

In 2017, the Department was able to upgrade the ability to give presentations in Council Chambers. Two 80” presentation quality monitors were installed on the wall facing the audience in Council Chambers and four monitors facing the Council seating positions were installed. All of the monitors are interconnected and can be utilized to project presentations on the screens so that everyone in the room can see it. This has enabled the Department to start receiving electronic only plans for Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals applications. This has been a significant advantage for the Department as less time is spent on filing and archiving paper plans as all electronic submittals are filed electronically.

In addition to the presentation monitors, we were able to install listening devices for the hearing impaired in the room. Five battery operated listening devices have been connected to the audio system. A t-loop system was installed which allows anyone with the correct technology installed in their hearing aides to connect to the audio system as well as several different types of head phones. By installing this equipment, we have been able to make government meetings more accessible to citizens with hearing difficulties.

## Personnel & Training

Continuing Education continues to be an important asset and Christopher Randles and Bill Arnold attended several education seminars during the monthly FBOA meetings and the annual OBOA conference. Both Mr. Randles and Mr. Arnold passed the International Code Council Commercial Mechanical Inspector Exam. Mr. Randles completed his first year as an Active Director of the FBOA for 2017 & 2018. The City was able to host the State of Ohio Board of Building Standards for mandatory training on three days in November. Following is a list of courses attended by the staff of the department:

Christopher Randles:

1. 2015 IMC Significant Changes with Ohio Amendments (1.5hrs)
2. 2015 IBC Significant Changes with Ohio Amendments (3hrs)
3. 2015 IPC Significant Changes with Ohio Amendments (1.5hrs)

4. 2017 National Electric Code Training (6hrs)
  5. Multiple Venting Methods (2hrs)
  6. Review of the IFGC (3hrs)
  7. Significant Changes to IECC and ANSI/ASHRAE/IES (4hrs)
  8. Deck, Porch, Balcony Framing Connection (2hrs)
  9. Ohio Building Code Academy (24hrs)
  10. Ohio Ethics Commission (1hr)
  11. Fireplace, Wood & Coal Heaters (3hrs)
  12. 2017 MC Significant Changes (1hr)
  13. 2015 IBC Allowable Heights and Areas (3hrs)
  14. Electronic Plan Review (2hrs)
  15. Temporary Door Locking Devices in School Buildings (1hr)
  16. Chapter 1 OBC (2hrs)
  17. BBS Updates (2hrs)
- Total Continuing Education – 62 hours

William Arnold

1. Understanding Masonry Tolerances (1hr)
  2. Masonry Movement Joints (1hr)
  3. Understanding the UL fire Resistance Directory (1hr)
  4. 2015 IMC Significant Changes with Ohio Amendments (1.5hrs)
  5. 2015 IBC Significant Changes with Ohio Amendments (3hrs)
  6. Review of the IFGC (3hrs)
  7. Fireplace, Wood & Coal Heaters (3hrs)
  8. 2017 MC Significant Changes (1hr)
  9. IFG-Safe Installation of Gas Piping & Appliances (3hrs)
  10. Electronic Plan Review (2hrs)
  11. Chapter 1 OBC (2hrs)
  12. BBS Updates (2hrs)
- Total Continuing Education – 23.5 hours



BBS Training at the Community Center



## Residential Demolition Program

In 2017 the Department demolished 2440 Sand Run Parkway which was formerly a single-family rental. This property will be utilized in the future for storm water improvements in the area. On Riviera Drive, five four-unit apartment buildings were demolished by the owner of the property and are currently vacant land. One single family dwelling at 260 Ghent was demolished by the owner as a result of code enforcement by the Department. The amount of properties that require demolition continues to decrease in the City.



Former house at 2440 Sand Run Parkway



Riviera Apartment Razing

## Residential Foreclosure Registration Program

The City issued 15 Foreclosure Registrations of which 5 dwellings were vacant at some time during the year. In 2017 only five properties were scheduled for Sheriff's Sale with two being sold at auction. The department collected a total of \$3,500 in registration fees for this program.

## Boards & Commissions

### **Planning Commission**

In 2017 the Planning Commission reviewed 22 projects with requests for approval and collected \$7,400 in fees. Notable projects approved include a new building at 4099 Embassy for Northeast Ohio Eye Surgeons,

the redevelopment of the former Wyant Buildings into a new multi-tenant building and the refacing of the existing buildings at 2635, 2840 & 2850 West Market Street. With the improvements along West Market Street, the Market/Shiawassee corridor continues to be redeveloped with three properties targeted for improvements in 2018. The value of all construction approved in 2017 by the Planning Commission is \$11,710,000.

### **Board of Building & Zoning Appeals**

In 2017 the BZA decided on 20 requests for variance. The Board collected \$5,000 in fees and had 9 meetings during the year.

### **Real Property Maintenance Board**

The Board conducted two meetings and heard six cases. Four cases were brought to the board by Zoning Staff pursuing orders to make repairs in order to remove code violations and two cases were appeals by property owners. Three of the cases gained code compliance by owner action and one case had to be remedied by hiring a contractor board a vacant structure. The work performed, totaling \$5,999.08, will be assessed to the tax bill of the real property for reimbursement. One appeal was granted as the property owner made repairs and one appeal was not granted.

### **Community Improvement Corporation**

The CIC met 7 times during the year and discussed numerous projects. The CIC was able to purchase 7 properties that once contained a total of 23 substandard residential rental units. The properties consisted of one single family house, one duplex and five four-unit apartment buildings. The single-family house was razed in early December and the duplex will be razed in the first quarter of 2018 by the Department. The apartment buildings were razed prior to purchase in November. **A grant of \$25,000 was awarded** to the CIC for the purchase of the duplex and the single-family lot will be transferred to the City for a future storm water enhancement project. The purchases of the duplex and former apartment building parcels are the first steps being taken by the CIC in conjunction with the City in implementing a strategic redevelopment study that was completed in 2016.

Additionally, the CIC entered into a workforce development agreement with Risk International on Embassy Parkway which makes it possible for the company to expand the existing parking lot and add office space to accommodate new jobs at their current location.