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10-17-09

City of Alexandria
City Council

Code amendment

Mark Grello

September 12, 2009

RE: Code fees

Reference: Council resolution #2275 and #2347

In resolution #2347, Code section 2601.2, include in the "Description" section of (Table 107.2) For Operational Permit Requirements;

Exemption:

Certified Contractors, (Plumbing, HVAC, Welding) Licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia;

And a Certificate of Insurance to the city of Alexandria:

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10-17-09



John D. Catlett
Director

OFFICE OF BUILDING AND FIRE CODE
ADMINISTRATION
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January 15, 2010

Mr. Mark A. Grello
G & G Plumbing and Heating
1829 Dalmatian Drive
McLean, Virginia, 22101

Dear Mr. Grello,

This letter is in response to your requested modification of City Code regarding the application of the Fire Prevention Permits (FPP) program. The activities that require an FPP are established by the Virginia Fire Prevention Code (VFPC).

The Virginia Fire Prevention Code, 2006 edition, establishes the following requirements relating to local amendments to the state regulation:

101.5 Local regulations. Any local governing body may adopt fire prevention regulations that are more restrictive or more extensive in scope than the SFPC provided such regulations do not affect the manner of construction or materials to be used in the erection, alteration, repair, or use of a building or structure, as provided in the USBC, including the voluntary installation of smoke alarms and regulation and inspections thereof in commercial buildings where such smoke alarms are not required under the provisions of the SFPC.

The Virginia Fire Prevention Code prohibits a locality from lowering the requirements of the code as adopted at the state level. The VFPC establishes activities related to fire prevention that are to be regulated. The code does not allow us to lower the intended levels of safety. Therefore the City of Alexandria cannot establish a local amendment to the VFPC to exempt a particular group from regulated activity.

The action taken by City Council under Council Resolutions 2275 and 2347 were to establish the fees for local enforcement of the VFPC and to change the process of adopting those fees from ordinance to resolution. The fee schedule, which had not been revised in many years, was updated to reflect information received in a cost of services analysis conducted last year. The SFPC authorizes a locality to charge fees based on the following:

107.12 Local permit fees. Fees may be levied by the local governing body in order to defray the cost of enforcement and appeals under the SFPC.

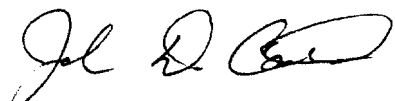
A change to the Virginia Fire Prevention Code to exempt certified contractors and require a certificate of insurance would need to be directed to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Office of Building Codes Regulation as part of the building and fire regulation change process. You can contact the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development through the following information:

Department of Housing and Community Development
State Building Code Administrative Office
600 East Main Street
Suit 300
Richmond, VA 23219-1321
(804) 371-7160

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or need assistance with the code change process. I would be happy to assist you in understanding the process.

In the interest of building and fire safety, I am . . .

Sincerely,



John D. Catlett, MCP, CBO, MCP

Director

Office of Building and Fire Code Administration

CC: The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council
James K. Hartmann, City Manager
James Banks, City Attorney
Robert Rodriguez, Chief Fire Marshal
Adam Thiel, Fire Chief
Jannine Pennell, OBFCA Deputy Director
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