

City of Fairlawn
Zoning, Housing & Residential Building Department

ANNUAL REPORT

2015

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.

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Permits/Certificates Issued

In 2015 the Department completed transactions for 575 permits and certificates totaling \$113,095. The reported value of all construction in the City for the year was \$26,092,891 and 568 new jobs have been added to the City in 2015. Additionally, the Department certified a total of \$17,183 to the County Fiscal Officer for collection for repair work that was completed under orders of the Real Property Maintenance Board in order to bring properties into compliance with the Property Maintenance Code. Following is a breakdown of all the transactions:

Residential Add./Alt.	7	341.60
Bond		
Invoice for bond	17	31,466.00
Foreclosed Property		
Foreclosure Registration	10	2,000.00
Vacant Structure Inspection	2	200.00
Online Permit Fee		
Online Permit Application	17	34.00
Penalty		
150%	7	54.50
200% Penalty	5	840.00
Penalty	1	100.00
Penalty totals	13	994.50
Registration Fee		
1 unit	91	3,297.00
2-3 units	44	2,440.00
4-5 units	21	1,400.00

6-25 units	22	2,033.00
Late Fee	7	70.00
Registration Fee totals	185	9,240.00

Permits by Type

01. Res. New Construction	2	335.00
0-12 ft	1	25.00
05. Res. Addition/Alteration	8	444.00
06. Res Deck or Other	12	300.00
08. Res. Residing	6	210.00
09. Re-Roofing	49	1,715.00
12-20 ft	2	80.00
13. Res. 150% Fine	4	64.00
150% Fine	5	65.00
Com. Demolition	1	200.00
Com. New 10,000 sq. ft. or less	3	1,262.30
Com. New 10,000 to 30,000 sq. ft.	2	4,656.53
Com. Tap-In Fee	3	37,000.00
Demolition	1	40.00
Earth Hauling	6	300.00
Excavation	16	800.00
Fence/Wall over 36"	26	520.00
Res. Accessory Structure	12	480.00
Res. Deck or Other	10	250.00
Res. Repair	1	25.00
Res. Single Family	2	200.00
Special Event Fee	8	800.00
Temporary Sign	26	1,950.00
Wall/Ground Sign	47	4,846.93
Zoning Use Certificate	71	12,250.00

Grand Totals	575	\$113,094.86
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Grants Awarded

In 2015, the Department was able to secure three grants with a total value of \$125,956.85. Two grants were awarded for projects administered by the Community Improvement Corporation from the Summit County Land Bank and one grant was awarded from ODOT Jobs and Commerce for new roadway installation in the Fairlawn Corporate Park. The grants are as follows:

- Summit County Land Bank grant in the amount of \$5,956.85 for the demolition of the structure and landscaping of the property at 3076 Bancroft Road.
- Summit County Land Bank grant in the amount of \$20,000 for the acquisition of real property located at the end of Winchester Extension. This property will be utilized to improve storm water drainage in the area.
- ODOT Division of Jobs and Commerce grant in the amount of \$100,000 for the construction of Southwestern Blvd. in the Fairlawn Corporate Park.

Code Enforcement

In 2015 the Department issued 415 violations to 222 properties. Based upon the violation letters sent, several follow-up inspections were performed as well as second notices sent in order to gain compliance. The compliance rate was 97% for remediating violations with 7 properties forwarded to the Real Property Maintenance Board for remediation and 4 administrative penalties being issued for \$850.

Inspections Performed

The Department performed a total of 1454 inspections for the year. This amount equates to approximately 5.8 inspections per working day. Following is a breakdown of the inspections performed:

Property Maintenance	394
Building Inspections	143
Neighborhood Inspection Program	737
Misc. (Temp. Sign Removal, Gen. Insp., Vacant Homes)	180

2015 Neighborhood Inspection Program

The Inspection program consisted of inspections of the exterior of 737 residential properties distributed throughout the City in each Ward. More properties with violations were noted this year (234) as compared to the same area in 2012 (144). This year was the first time the inspections were performed with the aid of camera equipped tablets and although more violations were noted, the technology led to a reduction of staff time by approximately 40 staff-hours. Following is a breakdown of the Program Inspections:

Total properties inspected	737
Total properties with violations	234
Rentals inspected	127
Rentals with violations	71

	Types of Violations	
	Owner Occupied	Rentals
Clean/Repair exterior walls	60	19
Roof / Gutter / Downspout issues	20	19
Paint required for structure	107	59
Fence Acc. Structure issues	21	7
Trash / Rubbish	10	9
Garage door issues	32	20
Windows & Doors	5	2
Structural issues	8	8
Misc.	32	22
TOTAL	295	165

Landlord Licensing Legislation

In May, after several months of investigation and deliberation by Fairlawn City Council, ordinances 73S and 74S were approved. The new legislation replaces the current Landlord Registration with Landlord Licensing requirements and added additional mandatory inspections for Landlords that have two or more notices of violation issued within a two-year period. By enacting this legislation, the City now has the authority to revoke the license for non-compliant landlords and force the forfeiture of monthly rents. Additionally, mandatory semi-annual inspections are required for a three year period at properties that are repeat offenders of the Property Maintenance Code.

The legislation was originally scheduled to go into effect on July 1, but a referendum on the ordinances was filed to the City. The referendum was defeated at the November general election and the legislation is scheduled to become effective on January 1, 2016. The Department mailed notices to currently registered landlords in late November, informing them of the changes and duty to obtain licenses and we are currently issuing licenses as required by the new code. Unfortunately, because of the referendum, the City is approximately 6 months behind schedule in implementation of the new stricter Landlord requirements.

FEMA Task Force Meetings

In the third and fourth quarters of the year, department staff participated in several FEMA task force meetings for updates to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The department is responsible for enforcing the City's Special Purpose Flood Reduction Code and utilizes the FIRM maps to determine areas required to be in conformance with the code. As a result of the meetings, no changes to the hazard areas have occurred and new FIRM maps covering the City will become effective on April 19, 2016.

Website

In the first and second quarter, a new map section was added to the City Website (<https://fairlawn.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>). Currently, this new mapping feature enables residents and businesses to geographically view City information such as ward boundaries, zoning districts and street and address information. The available maps are interactive and the viewer has the ability to zoom in and out, pan, measure distances, change base map layers, retrieve ordinance numbers for zoning districts and search data by address.

During the third quarter the City website was supplemented by the addition of an economic development section. With this new section, businesses now have the ability to search for available commercial

properties that are for sale or lease in the City of Fairlawn. Additionally, the City has the ability to post properties to the search page. Furthermore, pages have been added that highlight community facts, available incentives, links for traffic counts and links for other important Economic Development Organizations in the region and State.

Personnel

In April, the Department added Shannon Szittai as a part-time administrative assistant. This position is a part-time administrative support position that has shared duties in the Building & Zoning Department as well as City Hall and was previously filled by Cindy Hall.

Continuing Education continues to be an important asset and Christopher Randles and Bill Arnold attended the 2015 ICC EduCode Conference in the first quarter of the year and attended the State of Ohio Code Academy in the third quarter. Mr. Randles obtained an Interim Commercial Building Official Certification and Mr. Arnold obtained an Interim Commercial Building Inspector Certification. Following is a list of courses attended by the staff of the department:

Christopher Randles:

1. Inspector Skills (6hrs)
 2. 2014 National Electric Code Training (4hrs)
 3. Good Service is Good Code Business (3hrs)
 4. Navigating the Product Certification Maze (3hrs)
 5. Industrialized Units (2hrs)
 6. Foreclosures and Abandonment (8hrs)
 7. First Five Steps to a Graffiti-Free City (4hrs)
 8. Second Five Steps to a Graffiti-Free City (4hrs)
 9. Maintaining the Integrity of Fire Rated Construction (2hrs)
 10. BBS Updates (2hrs)
 11. Ohio Building Code Academy (24hrs)
- Total Continuing Education – 62 hours

William Arnold

1. Inspector Skills (6hrs)
2. 2014 National Electric Code Training (4hrs)
3. Good Service is Good Code Business (3hrs)
4. Navigating the Product Certification Maze (3hrs)
5. Industrialized Units (2hrs)
6. Foreclosures and Abandonment (8hrs)
7. First Five Steps to a Graffiti-Free City (4hrs)

8. Second Five Steps to a Graffiti-Free City (4hrs)
 9. Maintaining the Integrity of Fire Rated Construction (2hrs)
 10. BBS Updates (2hrs)
 11. Inspecting Brick Structures (3hrs)
 12. Review of International Fuel Gas Code (3hrs)
 13. Ohio Building Code Academy (24hrs)
- Total Continuing Education – 68 hours

Residential Demolition Program

In 2015 the Department administered the demolition of 3 vacant residential homes and 1 detached multifamily garage. Two of the homes were demolished through orders issued by the Real Property Maintenance Board with all costs assessed back to the land owner and paid in full. One home was demolished by the Community Improvement Corporation and the vacant property was transferred back to the City and added to Fort Island Park. The garage was razed with property owner cooperation through orders issued by the Department. The amount of homes razed is a reduction from 5 the previous year and currently there are no homes that are being investigated for demolition. This is a positive trend, as the amount of home foreclosures in the City continues to decrease.



Residential Foreclosure Registration Program

In May of 2015, City Council enacted new registration requirements for residential foreclosures. The intent of the newly enacted legislation is to give the City notice of foreclosure filings and provide contact information of responsible parties that the City can contact in case of emergency or to remedy property maintenance issues. The City issued 10 Foreclosure Registrations of which 4 are currently vacant structures. In 2014 there were approximately 27 foreclosure filings in the City and all indications are that the housing continues to stabilize after the effects of the Great Recession.

Commissions

Planning Commission

In 2015 the Planning Commission reviewed 17 requests for approval and collected \$5,375 in fees. Some notable projects reviewed and approved included the approval of a new technical research lab and office building for Stemco, which will be located in Fairlawn Corporate Park. Also approved is a new branch bank building for Huntington Bank which will include the razing of the existing Mogen Real-estate building in order to accommodate the new branch bank building. The value of all construction approved in 2015 by the Planning Commission is \$19,008,000.

Board of Building & Zoning Appeals

In 2015 the BZA decided on 27 requests for variance. The Board collected \$3,300 in fees and had 11 meetings during the year.

Real Property Maintenance Board

The Board conducted 2 meetings and heard 7 cases all of which were brought to the board by Zoning Staff pursuing orders to make repairs in order to remove code violations. Two cases were a request by the City for demolition of structures, which were granted by the Board. One of the houses was able to be preserved with cooperation of the owner and has been remodeled and is currently on the market for sale, the other structure was razed. With the orders issued by the board, the Zoning Commissioner was able to raze a dilapidated accessory structure and repaint the exterior of a vacant foreclosed home. All work performed, totaling \$4,840.92, has been assessed to the tax bill of the real property for reimbursement and only \$1,750 remains outstanding.

Community Improvement Corporation

The CIC met 12 times during the year and discussed numerous projects. The CIC purchased one vacant residential property on Winchester Extension and was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Summit County Land Bank to be used towards the purchase of the lot. The lot will be transferred to the City and used to make storm water improvements to the area and added to Fort Island Park. Additionally, the CIC razed an existing residential structure on Bancroft Road and transferred the vacant land to the City which was added to Fort Island Park. The CIC was awarded a \$5,956.85 grant by the Summit County Land Bank to demolish the structure. The CIC sold vacant residential lots on Erie Drive for \$50,000 and Corunna Avenue for \$39,900 and new home construction is underway on both lots with a total construction value of \$337,621. In addition to residential lots, the CIC has entered into a land lease/purchase agreement with Stemco in the

Corporate Park. The CIC was able to work closely with the City and offer attractive lease terms in order to attract this new business entity to the Corporate Park. Additionally, the CIC has hired contractors to install a new road to serve this new business. The construction for the roadway will be completed in 2016 and will also make additional acreage in the Fairlawn Corporate Park shovel ready for future buildings. The building which is underway, is a new technical research lab and office building and has a construction value of \$6,000,000.

In addition to these important projects, the CIC hired planning firm OHM to conduct a study of the existing multi-family residence district around the intersection of Chamberlain and South Miller Roads. The CIC has conducted two task-force meetings with OHM and will conduct two to three more meetings in 2016.



Exterior Rendering