

DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS CODE BULLETIN OF INFORMATION No. A-0703		CODE OF GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA <hr/> TITLE 4 — BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND OCCUPANCY CODE
SUBJECT OF BULLETIN: SELF-CERTIFICATION OF CONSTRUCTION PLANS FOR ONE- OR TWO- FAMILY DWELLINGS		REFERENCE CODE SECTION(S): A-301.6, A-301.8, A- 302.1, A-302.5.2, A- 302.9 and A-304.3
ISSUED BY		ISSUE DATE
NAME: Robert F. Murray P.E.	SIGNATURE:	November 27, 2007
TITLE: Chief Code Official, Dept. of Licenses and Inspections		PAGE 1 OF 4

BACKGROUND

Pennsylvania Act 157 of 2006 amended the Uniform Construction Code to allow for the self-certification of limited types of construction plans under specific conditions.

Self-certification is limited to construction plans for one-family and two-family dwelling units and utility and miscellaneous use structures. The plans must be prepared and certified by a design professional licensed or registered under the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Qualifying plans must be submitted to the Department for review. They will be approved or denied within a limited length of time as set by the Act.

POLICY

Within five business days of the filing date, the Department's Permit Services Unit shall approve or deny self-certified construction plans, in whole or in part, if submitted in accordance with the following direction. This time limit may not be extended, even upon agreement between the parties.

The time limit for a property designated historic or located in a designated historic district shall be extended by the amount of time the application is under review by the Historical Commission.

Construction plan approval is only one component of the permit process. A permit shall not be issued before all other requirements have been met by the applicant.

DIRECTION

1. Designation of a Design Professional in Responsible Charge
 - a. The owner of the property, for which construction plans are submitted for self-certification, shall designate on the permit application the certifying design professional as the design professional in responsible charge.
 - b. Later designation of a substitute design professional in responsible charge, if necessary, shall be done in accordance with Section A-304 of the Philadelphia Administrative Code. The new registered design professional is required to either:
 - i. review and re-certify the previously certified plans with a new letter (See 2.b) or,

- ii. submit new plans for approval. (To qualify for self-certification, new plans must be accompanied by a self-certification letter from the new registered design professional.)

An amended permit will be required and an amended permit fee will be charged.

2. Design Professional in Responsible Charge

- a. In self-certifying plans, the design professional doing so accepts the designation as the registered design professional in responsible charge of the project.
- b. Self-certification Letter - To be eligible for self-certification, the application and plans must be accompanied by a separate letter that:
 - i. certifies the plans unconditionally (See Appendix A for the required wording of the self-certification letter.); and
 - ii. is on the design professional's letterhead; and
 - iii. includes the design professional's name, business address, phone number and fax number; and
 - iv. is signed, sealed and dated in accordance with the professional licensing and registration laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Applications that are otherwise eligible but lack the self-certification statement shall not qualify for the reduced timeframes for approval or denial.

- c. False Self-Certification - False statements of self-certification may result in:
 - i. disapproval of the plans;
 - ii. revocation of the permit(s);
 - iii. work being ordered stopped;
 - iv. the imposition of fines and other penalties;
 - v. the design professional being reported to his/her licensing/registering agency for action;
 - vi. sanctions on the design professional imposed by the Department.

3. Plans and Self-Certification Letter

- a. Plan Submission - Plans and the self-certification letter are to be submitted at, or mailed to, the:

Permit Services Unit
Concourse Level of MSB
1401 JFK Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19102
- b. For plans submitted for self-certification, no deferred submittals of portions of the design shall be allowed. Only complete designs shall be accepted.
- c. The filing date is the date plans are received and accepted by the Department.

4. Other Requirements

Qualifying plans will be approved or denied within five business days, however, a construction permit can not be issued until all other requirements are met. A list of these pre-requisites is available at the Permit Services Unit and on-line at www.phila.gov/li (under "Services" select "Permits").

Note: It is recommended that all pre-requisites be obtained in advance and be submitted with the plans. Later submission of pre-requisites may delay permit issuance as previously approved construction plans are checked for conformance to any requirements in the pre-requisites.

5. Revisions

Any proposed revisions or changes to approved self-certified construction plans shall necessitate an additional plan review and shall be accompanied by a new self-certification letter along with a completed permit application for an amended permit.

Revisions shall not be eligible for the reduced timeframe for approval or denial if a new self-certification letter is not submitted.

REQUIRED WORDING
DESIGN PROFESSIONAL’S LETTER REQUESTING SELF-CERTIFICATION

As a [enter design profession(s) for which licensed/registered], I have prepared¹ the [enter Building, Electrical, or Plumbing] plans accompanying the permit application for [enter the property address]², I certify that these plans for a [one or two]-family dwelling unit and/or its utility and miscellaneous use structures, if any, meet the applicable standards of the following [enter the year of the Code] Philadelphia Codes [Initial all that apply]:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Conservation Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Existing Building Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel Gas Code | <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Performance Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Property Maintenance Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Residential Code |
|--|--|

I have accepted the responsibility of being the registered design professional in responsible charge for this project and will be available to the Department’s examiners and inspectors should issues arise during this project.

Note:

Any additional wording that may be construed as limiting these certification conditions will disqualify the plans for self-certification.

Letter shall be on the design professional’s letterhead; and include name and business address, phone and fax numbers.

Letter shall be signed, sealed and dated in accordance with the professional licensing and registration laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

See 2.c of Code Bulletin 0703 for consequences of false self-certification.

¹ A later substitute registered design professional in responsible charge who is re-certifying plans shall replace “prepared” with “reviewed”.

² Use the complete, official Philadelphia Board of Revision of Taxes address for the property. You may find assistance in confirming the correctness of the address by going to WWW.BRTWEB@PHILA.GOV and selecting Property Search. You may add other identification of the submitted plans, such as a design number that you have put on the plans.