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| DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS<br><b>CODE BULLETIN</b><br><br><b>No. PM-1801</b>               |  | CODE OF GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA<br>TITLE 4 — BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND OCCUPANCY CODE |
| SUBJECT OF BULLETIN:<br><br><b>PERMITTING OF REPAIRS TO IMMINENTLY DANGEROUS AND UNSAFE STRUCTURES</b> |  | REFERENCE CODE SECTION(S):<br>PM-108 and PM-110<br>A-304<br>IBC 1710 (2009)<br>IBC 1704.6 (2018)             |
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| TITLE(S):<br>Building Code Official, Department of Licenses and Inspections                            |  | PAGE 1 OF 2  |

## ISSUE

Structures declared by the Department to be imminently dangerous or unsafe must be demolished or repaired by the responsible owner. The repair of such structures often requires the services of a professional engineer to analyze the structural defects and to design the remediation to ensure public safety. This Bulletin serves to capture the varied code requirements which regulate such repairs.

## DISCUSSION

Building Inspectors of the Department are entrusted to apply their knowledge of structural components in performing inspections of buildings which pose a public safety risk. When defects are observed through visual inspection, the owners of such properties are notified that conditions were found to be either structurally unsafe or imminently dangerous pursuant to the Property Maintenance Code and ordered to repair or demolish the structure. Where the visual inspection is unable to identify the full scope of the structural defects, the owner is also required to secure the services of a professional engineer to analyze the defects and causes and to design the necessary removal and replacement of structural elements necessary to restore the structure to a safe condition if the owner chooses to repair the structure.

## DIRECTION

### A. Professional Engineer Required

When imminently dangerous or structurally unsafe conditions are observed, and such conditions are, in the opinion of the Department, not easily corrected, the violation notice issued to the property will include a requirement to obtain the services of a professional engineer who is licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, where the owner intends to repair the structure in question. The professional engineer shall be employed as the design professional in responsible charge of the remediation pursuant to Administrative Code Section A-304, and maintain, at a minimum, the following responsibilities:

- 1) Immediately assess the structure to determine the extent of the structural defects and submit those findings along with a timeline of corrective actions to the owner and the Department.
- 2) Design and observe the immediate installation of temporary protections of the public way and adjacent properties as determined to be necessary by the professional engineer.

- 3) Develop a remediation plan, detailing the extent of the required removal and replacement of structural components and temporary shoring required for the remediation. The remediation plan must contain adequate construction details to confirm code compliance as well as provide the responsible contractor with necessary direction in approaching and completing the necessary repairs.
- 4) Submit such remediation plan with details to the Department along with an application for a building permit.
- 5) Provide periodic structural observations of the remediation work throughout the repair process as required by the Building Code.
- 6) Inform the Department if, at any time, a condition arises which poses an immediate threat to the public way or adjacent properties.
- 7) Upon completion of the repairs, submit a sealed statement to the Department that the structure has been made safe.
- 8) Inform the Department if oversight responsibilities are terminated by the owner.

The Department will issue a building permit based upon the remediation plan developed by the professional engineer upon confirmation of code compliance. A copy of a contract with a licensed contractor responsible for the scope of work detailed in the remediation plan shall be required.

Except where the Department has determined the issuance of additional permits is acceptable to mitigate other risks, building permits for further improvements of the structure will not be issued until the professional engineer has determined that the existing structure has been repaired and made safe.

## **B. Professional Engineer Not Required**

When imminently dangerous or structurally unsafe conditions are observed, and such conditions are, in the opinion of the Department, easily corrected, the violation notice issued to the property will not include a requirement to obtain the services of a professional engineer where the owner intends to repair the structure in question.

In such cases, the responsible contractor shall submit sufficient details regarding the scope of work to confirm code compliance with the building permit application. The Department reserves the right to require construction plans developed and sealed by a registered design professional to capture the full scope of the repairs and to confirm compliance with the codes. A copy of the contract detailing the repairs shall also be submitted with the permit application.

Except where the Department has determined the issuance of additional permits is acceptable to mitigate other risks, building permits for further improvements of the structure will not be issued until the Department has determined that the existing structure has been repaired and made safe.