Department of
Licenses and Inspections
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

FAQ:
I would like to relocate lot lines, but the proposed lot configuration may create a condition that does not comply with the building code. Can I relocate lot lines?

Background:

A zoning permit is required for all lot adjustments (also knowns as lot line relocations per 14-304(6)). The Philadelphia Zoning Code has specific provisions for yards, setbacks and open area but those provisions do not take into account the safety related issued that arise when buildings are built in close proximity to one another.

The International Building Code, Residential Building Code and Existing Building Code all address the requirements for fire ratings and allowable openings on exterior walls based on their proximity to property lines.

It is possible to receive a zoning permit that creates a condition that is not compliant with the building code.

Answer:

Yes, you can receive a zoning permit to relocate lot lines regardless of the building code issues that may result from that relocation. It is, however, the owner's responsibility to obtain a building permit to make any required alterations prior to recording the deeds of the new lots. If the department determines that the new configuration is not compliant and no alterations were performed to bring the building into compliance prior to recording the deed, a violation will be issued.

Questions?

Call 311 or (215) 686-8686 (if outside Philadelphia) or submit an online form via http://www.phila.gov/li/get-help.

Disclaimer:

This interpretation, policy or code application is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code application to specific projects may vary. There may be other ways to comply with the Code. If so, you are not required to use this method. You may want to investigate other options or consult with a professional identifying an equally code compliant solution.