



Official Proceedings

Of the City of Peoria, Illinois

Thursday, July 9, 2026

Roll Call

Roll Call

Roll call showed the following commissioners were present: Chairperson Dennis Shoemaker, Steve Ciciarelli, Brad Hall, Todd Claerhout, Adam Maurer, Bill Goad, and David Marron, Jr. Absent were Jason Snyder and Johnny Jorden.

City Staff present: Rich Storm, Building Safety Manager; Assistant Chief of Fire Prevention Josh Harris; Kaylee Drea, Community Development Engagement Manager and Staff Liaison; Issac Garcia, Building Inspector; Matt Ziller, Building Inspector, Craig Reid, Building Inspector; Julio Garcia, Building Inspector; and Shane Wooden, Building Inspector.

Approval of Minutes

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A. Approve the minutes for May 15, 2025

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The first order of business was introduced by Chairperson Shoemaker to approve the minutes of the Thursday, May 15, 2025 meeting.

Commissioner Ciciarelli moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hall.

The motion passed unanimously by a viva voce vote.

Regular Business

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A. Review and Discussion of 2024 International Building Code (IBC) Significant Changes

Review and Discussion of 2024 International Building Code (IBC) Significant Changes

Building Safety Manager Rich Storm introduced the building inspectors present at the meeting and Assistant Chief of Fire Prevention Josh Harris. Storm explained that the City of Peoria is currently operating under the 2018 building codes, except for the 2024 Energy Code, and that

the State of Illinois requires the City to adopt 2021 building codes at minimum.

Storm shared that City staff is recommending that the City of Peoria adopt the 2024 building codes. He explained that he has spoken with building officials and managers across the region, including Springfield, Bloomington, Normal, Pekin, East Peoria, Morton, and Washington. All listed municipalities agree that adopting the 2024 international building codes promotes safety and reduces confusion for contractors and design professionals working across central Illinois. Storm noted that Peoria County is planning to follow the City's lead.

Chairperson Shoemaker asked if the Commission should extend an invitation to the County. Storm indicated that Peoria County lacks the staff to attend this meeting but that he is in contact with the County and will assist with their code update as needed.

Storm outlined the overall process of code adoption. Today's meeting covers the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Existing Building Code (IEBC). The next meeting will cover the International Residential Code (IRC), the Mechanical Code, Plumbing, National Electric Code (NEC), and Fuel Gas. The following meeting will cover Fire and Property Maintenance.

Chairperson Shoemaker asked Storm to share a summary of significant changes in the IBC.

Change in Building Occupancy Limits

Storm said that most significant changes lay within codes regarding emerging technologies in battery storage for solar panels and electric vehicles. He pointed to how the 2018 IBC fails to reach the level of compliance and safety required by the insurance agency. Storm explained that the 2024 IBC provides clarification on how building occupancy is determined by considering that if there is a significant change in use that increases the hazard level, the occupancy limits and requirements can be viewed through a higher building classification.

The Commissioners discussed concerns that this change could burden businesses from opening in existing buildings, particularly in the Downtown and central business districts. Storm further clarified for the Commission that adhering to the newest building codes would only be required if the change in use increased the occupancy level increases, raising the hazard level, or to new additions and alterations in the building.

Storm shared that Staff is seeking to require a Change of Occupancy Permit due to recent changes in insurance requiring a new Certificate of Occupancy for businesses to obtain liability insurance for new businesses in existing buildings. Insurance companies require that the insured is listed on the Certificate of Occupancy. If implemented, staff would be looking at life-safety code requirements, including up-to-date sprinklers, egress lights, and clear paths to exit doors. Storm assured the Commissioners that transitioning a building with a similar use from one owner to another under this kind of permit would not trigger additional code requirements beyond a general life-safety inspection.

Commissioner Claerhout asked if a Change of Occupancy Permit would be a hurdle for expanding office spaces downtown. He commented on the high vacancy rates in some existing buildings in Downtown Peoria. Storm reiterated that additional code requirements would only be triggered by a change of use or a change in hazard class. Storm explained that when walls are opened, the work is considered an alteration. Alterations must comply with current building codes. Storm noted that complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Energy

Code would be required if the alteration is a level 2 or level 1.

Staff Liaison Kaylee Drea added that the Change of Occupancy Permit will go to City Council for approval along with all the code upgrades.

Chairperson Claerhout asked about the intent for dwelling unit size definition changes in the 2024 IBC. Storm explained that the changes mainly apply to efficiency apartment units, crate buildings, and tiny homes where the dwelling sizes fail to meet the 2018 standards. Storm added that this addition to the IBC clarifies dwelling unit sizes, particularly for short-term rentals.

Storm highlighted that the 2024 IBC change of definition of dwelling unit contradicts the BUILD Act (HB 5626). Until the BUILD Act becomes law, the 2024 IBC provides clarification.

Battery Storage

Chairperson Shoemaker noted that lithium batteries are discussed as part of the code update and inquired whether the code specifically addressed electrical vehicles. Storm replied that this particular part of the code only discusses the battery storage itself. He explained that the 2024 International Residential Code (IRC) would require a dedicated circuit for an electrical vehicle charger in new construction homes and garage alterations.

Commissioner Goad and Chairperson Shoemaker discussed the increased cost of installing the conduit. Storm added that renewable energy is being pushed by the state of Illinois in commercial and multifamily construction as well and that he personally finds part of

Commissioner Claerhout asked about battery storage for solar panels. He inquired if the storage area itself is required to have sprinklers and additional fire mitigation measures or if those measures would apply to the entire building under the 2024 IBC. Storm confirmed that this is still the case under the 2024 IBC.

Sprinkler Systems and Carbon Monoxide Detectors and Alarms

Commissioner Goad inquired about whether a sprinkler system is intended to stop the spread of fire. Storm explained that the 2024 IBC is not designed to protect equipment or to extinguish a fire. It is a life-safety feature intended to provide additional time to allow people to exit the building. Chief of Fire Prevention Josh Harris confirmed that the 2024 IFC requires sprinklers with the same intent: preservation of human life.

Chairperson Shoemaker asked if staff had consulted insurance agencies for their perspective on the updated 2024 IBC. Storm confirmed that he spoke with representatives from State Farm and explained that the ICC conferred with the insurance agency in designing these codes to provide more

Commissioner Goad asked about carbon monoxide detectors and fire alarms and pointed to vague language in the code. Storm agreed that the updated code provides a possibility for an increase in nuisance alarms, or false alarms, due to more sensitive CO monitors and alarms. He explained that the insurance industry found that prior practices of having a separate CO detector on each floor did not adequately reduce risk because of human error in replacing batteries and failing to confirm that each detector was operational. He explained that the current code would require a mechanical means to mitigate the risk to people in higher hazard classification, so HVAC would send in fresh air.

Clarification on Temporary Structures

Storm explained that the building inspectors have encountered several groups who have attempted to use tents in a permanent capacity. This has provided a way to avoid complying with sprinkler and fire safety requirements that would come into play for a permanent structure. This code update provides clarification on the timeline of how long a temporary structure can stand before it is considered permanent and becomes subject to the IBC.

Commissioner Maurer asked for Storm to provide an example of how this works if the service time needed to be extended.

Storm elaborated and shared an example of a tent that was erected on the side of a building with a heater and other items that were not designed to be in a tent. To qualify as a temporary structure, the business only had to contact the Peoria Fire Department and the Community Development Department to request an extension and schedule a basic inspection to confirm fire safety and safe exits. Storm explained that the code upgrade does not prohibit the City from continuing to operate in this way, but it provides clarity on the definition of a temporary structure.

Commissioner Hall stated that he believes the City is making a smart decision in updating building codes to 2024 and added that the upgrades appear to provide a benefit to the builders, design professionals, and inspectors.

B. Recommendation to the City Council to Adopt the 2024 IBC Including Local Amendments

Recommendation to the City Council to Adopt the 2024 IBC Including Local Amendments

Commissioner Hall motioned to adopt the 2024 International Building Code. Commissioner Goad seconded. The motion passed unanimously by viva voce vote.

C. Review and Discussion of 2024 International Existing Building Code (IEBC) Significant Changes

Review and Discussion of 2024 International Existing Building Code (IEBC) Significant Changes

The commissioners discussed whether the code upgrade would require every existing building to install sprinklers or to add additional sprinkler heads. Commissioner Cicciarelli expressed concern that required updates to sprinkler systems in existing buildings could require updates to hydraulic systems and other plumbing updates.

Storm explained that this would only be required if the change in occupancy led to a higher hazard classification due to either the use of the building or what was being stored in the building. Storm provided an example of an office building transforming into a nightclub or a warehouse transitioning from storing porcelain toilets to brewing and storing alcohol.

Commissioner Cicciarelli inquired about sprinkler requirements when a supply house stores items above 12 feet from the ground. Storm explained that the 2024 IEBC considers the type of item that is being stored when calculating the hazard classification and the code requirements for that building. He explained that this threshold only applies to existing buildings under the 2024 IEBC. He conceded that a business may need to upgrade their hydraulics as well, but that it is not inherently required.

Chairperson Shoemaker asked for clarification on when the hazard classification crosses the threshold to require the installation of updated fire alarms and sprinkler systems in an existing building. Storm responded that it depends on what is changing. He provided an example of a design professional who drafts their site plan according to the 2024 IEBC for a warehouse but increases the storage height from 12 feet to 25 feet. In this instance, the increase in storage height leads to an increase in the hazard classification which would trigger Chapter 9 of the 2024 International Building Code. The 2024 IBC would require this design professional to install additional sprinklers to mitigate fire risk wherever new work is completed in the existing structure.

Commissioner Hall discussed with Chairperson Shoemaker and Storm that the code may not fully address every scenario and administrative discretion may be required at times.

Chairperson Shoemaker inquired about sprinklers in residential developments, acknowledging that it has been exempted from the City of Peoria's code adoptions in previous years. Storm and Chief Harris shared that staff recommends adopting the 2024 IRC. The commissioners expressed concern over the increase in construction costs. Storm admitted that the cost would likely be passed on to the consumer and that it's a use that is only valuable if disaster strikes and a house fire occurs. He added that he consulted with insurance companies, and they provided a cost benefit analysis of 15% lower insurance premiums for houses with residential sprinkler systems.

The commissioners expressed concern about water damage from the sprinkler system and agreed that the water damage was once a main concern of the insurance industry, as well. Commissioner Huber remarked on the maintenance requirements for sprinkler systems and expressed concern that many families were ill-equipped to manage the maintenance given that so many households struggle to change batteries on smoke detectors and CO detectors. Storm explained that the water damage from residential sprinklers would be limited to local damage where the fire was located and that the sprinklers would not go off in other parts of the home.

Returning to discussing the 2024 IEBC, Commissioner Hall asked if egress paths factor in to whether or not a building is subject to the 2024 IEBC or the 2024 IBC in terms of sprinkler requirements. Storm responded that it has more to do with the level of alteration in a space and an egress path alone does not necessarily require additional alarm and sprinklers to be added.

Commissioner Hall remarked that the 2024 codes seems to provide more clarity on the codes for the inspectors and design professionals alike. Brad discussed how it better describes building inspector's role.

Chairperson Shoemaker asked staff to reach out to Peoria Area Association of Realtors (PAAR) and the Homebuilders Association to get their input and let them know these meetings are occurring. Chairperson Shoemaker inquired about getting paper copies of the code books to review. Staff advised that the cost was prohibitive, and the in-print versions were rendered unusable due to the use of QR codes to designate changes in the code updates.

D. Recommendation to the City Council to Adopt the 2024 IEBC Including Local Amendments

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Commissioner Hall motioned to adopt the 2024 International Building Code. Commissioner Goad seconded. The motion passed unanimously by viva voce vote.

Public Comment**Public Comment**

There were no members of the public present to address the commission.

Adjournment**Adjournment**

Commissioner Ciccierelli moved to adjourn. Commissioner Goad seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by a viva voce vote. The special meeting of the Construction Commission was adjourned at 4:08 P.M.