



HEARING NOTES

Bill: 25-0003

Title Historic Preservation – Conservation Districts – Establishment

Committee: Housing & Economic Development Committee
Chaired by: James Torrence

Hearing Date: 03/11/2025
Time (Beginning): 4:55 PM
Time (Ending): 7:45 PM
Location: Du Burns Council Chamber / Webex Virtual Hearing
Total Attendance: Approximately 56 people
Committee Members in Attendance:
James Torrence, Odette Ramos, Zach Blanchard, Jermaine Jones,

Bill Synopsis in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Attendance sheet in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Agency reports read?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded?.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Final vote taken at this hearing?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Motioned by:	Ramos		
Seconded by:.....	Jones		
Final Vote:	Favorable w/ Amendment		

Major Speakers
(This is not an attendance record.)

Major Issues Discussed

1. Chairman Torrence called the hearing to order, introduced the committee members in attendance.
2. The floor was open to comments from Chair
3. The floor was open to comments from the Council President

4. The floor was open to comments from Sponsor Vice Chair Ramos
5. The floor was open to agency reports
 - a. Presentation from administration (include in the bill file)
6. Questions from Members
 - a. How does Fire Marshal Staff compare (4 in city)
 - i. Often 6 or more in other jurisdictions
 - ii. Creating plan review reclassifications
 - iii. Pins are being reclassified – no exact timeline for completion.
 - iv. Looking for a youth workforce but also to bring in retired workforce from other jurisdictions.
 - v. Reclassifications have been approved by finance and moved to HR then BOE by ideally by May 7.*
 - b. How many additional personnel are needed for the current workload
 - i. BCFD looking at this with the Administration
 - ii. Hoping that the 3rd party review can help with the volume – conservatively 25% of workload could go there
 - c. Will there be additional funding for additional staff in budget
 - i. *Asking for follow up in 2 weeks for ideal staffing number for:
 1. Cause determination (investigators)
 2. Inspections
 3. Permit review
 - ii. How will these pins be added (budget mods?)
 1. 31 FTE in marshal
 2. 3 vacancies
 3. Reclassifying for 3
 - iii. Thus far only 4 projects have met the threshold for 3rd party review
 1. *Follow up requesting comms campaign to advertise that option* Bmore FAST v building code – admin committing to comprehensive comms plan to Bmore FAST follow up by budget hearings with overview and timeline
 2. *Follow up from administration in 2 weeks on the ability to issue 3rd party review plan*.
 - iv. How do we validate these 3rd party reviewers?
 1. Currently under review – reviewer needs credentials – fire protection engineer credential
 - d. Public Dashboard for the permit system
 - i. *Dashboard live by budget hearings
 - ii. *List of reports and metrics to be included in the dashboard in one month
 - e. *Establish integrity testing – work with law & ethics to see about the establishment
 - f. Capacity to support permit czar?
 - i. Still being looked at

- g. Are we asking for budget enhancements for this?
 - i. Not at this time – looking to prioritize other issues like at the Fire Dept first.
- h. Timelines for permit review – looking for standardization –
 - i. *Timeline of Bmore fast implementation before budget hearing*
- i. What will staffing look like to support this?
 - i. Hoping this can be done in-house
- j. Are permit staff full-time in the office?
 - i. Yes
- k. * How much is the Bmore fast program going to cost – follow up by first week of April - consolidated cost – director, pins,*
- l. Inspections v inspectors
 - i. Qualifications v what they do
 - ii. Certification from fire academy for permit plans review (could be as much as 6 months)
- m. 3rd party inspection – clarification of Bmore Fast v plan review
 - i. Bmore fast will be more building, electric, mechanic, plan review is more fire?
 - 1. Bmore fast will be a city-wide initiative – will include fire permitting & review?
- n. How long for a use and occupancy permit?
 - i. 5-10 days
- o. Can we delineate between time spent waiting for the applicant (to upload plans, or resubmit updates, ect...) & time for the city to review
- p. What kind of improvements can we expect from the fire dept
 - i. Hard to say at this point – (check record with Wallace & Ames)
 - ii. Use of 3rd party inspectors – very mixed bag
- q. Will this add additional cost to permits
 - i. No developers to pay cost for 3rd parties
- r. Who will be eligible
 - i. Still being flushed out
- s. What are the next top 3 priorities for Bmore fast
 - i. Recruit director
 - ii. Recruit advisory board
 - iii. Legislative priorities from the admin to the council
 - 1. Several in admin report (see bill file)
- t. Do we have a sense of issues solved v. calls answered by phone line for permits
 - i. Yes and can get more info on this from BCIT
- u. *What % of calls are being resolved at call center v referred to a technician March 24-Feb 25 follow up with BCIT for a timeline*
- v. Help to navigate new system
 - i. Trainings coming in march
 - ii. Call center

- iii. Tutorials online
- 7. Public testimony (see record & recording in bill file)
- 8. The floor was open to the sponsor Vice Chair Ramos for closing remarks
- 9. The floor was open to the Council President for closing remarks
- 10. Chairman Torrence recessed the meeting.

Further Study

Was further study requested? **Yes** **No**

If yes, describe.

- follow up in 2 weeks for BCFD Staffing Numbers for: 1. Investigations, 2. inspections, 3. Permit/Plan Review
- Reclassification of 3 BCFD pins to civilian status
- A public-facing dashboard for the permit system
- list of reports & metrics in the public dashboard for the permit system
- follow up with Law & Ethics & respond to request to establish integrity testing
- Timeline for Bmore Fast implementation with phases and full implementation
- Cost of the Bmore FAST initiative consolidated cost including Director & PINS
- What % of calls are being resolved at the 311 permit call center v referred to a technician March 2024- Feb 2025

Committee Vote:

J. Torrence:

O. Ramos:

J Jones:.....

Z. Blanchard:

A. Glover:

Tony Leva, Committee Staff

Date: March 12, 2025

Cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File