

Number: 2003 - 5
Date: December, 2003

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Subject: **Expansion of the Fast Track Program**

General Considerations: Boston Inspectional Services Department in performing its legal obligation to accept and review applications and issue building permits has a significant economic development role in the City of Boston in effecting the timely issuance of permits for an expanded number of buildings. In this regard, the Fast Track program will be expanded to include permit applications submitted pursuant to 780 CMR. 110.1 which meet the eligibility criteria noted below.

Note: For the purpose of clarity and brevity, the pronouns "He" and "His" are used editorially throughout this bulletin and should be interpreted as gender neutral.

Determination and Authorization:

Commissioner's Bulletin, No. 86-5 as amended, is hereby rescinded and replaced by this bulletin. Under the authority of the Massachusetts State Building Code, Section 102.2 and the City of Boston Code c. 9-1, as amended, there is hereby established within ISD a procedure to be known as the "Fast Track Program" to facilitate approval of permit applications meeting the eligibility criteria set out in this bulletin.

I. ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN FAST TRACK PROGRAM

All permits for proposed work which are in substantial compliance with all applicable building regulations and standards and do not require:

- a. a zoning determination.
- b. a change of use or occupancy or an expansion of existing use.
- c. substantial alterations to the building structure.

II. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR FAST TRACK PROGRAM:

Applicants for the FT program shall submit a fully completed long form application (Form BD2/BD2A). The application must be accompanied by the following documentation:

1. A check for the permit fee. The applicant may also indicate intention to pay the permit fee by debit or credit card.
2. Two sets of complete plans and specifications, including, if relevant, layout of sprinkler heads and compliance with other applicable fire prevention requirements.
3. A letter from the building owner(s) or authorized agent indicating approval of the plans as submitted.
4. A signed affidavit from the approved independent architect or engineer who is required to visit the work site periodically to ensure that construction is consistent with the permit as issued and all applicable laws and requirements. The designated

independent professional shall keep a log of visits which shall include comments and instructions given regarding construction conformance. This independent professional shall meet the requirements as outlined in Section III below.

5. All affidavits signed by those professionals associated with the proposed project (e.g. architects, engineers, mechanical/electrical engineers, etc.) shall make the following assurances as applicable:
 - a. the submitted plans conform to all applicable building, zoning and fire codes;
 - b. the proposed construction does not constitute a "substantial alteration" of the building structure or a change in the use or occupancy of the building as defined in applicable codes;
 - c. structural alterations and floor loading complies with applicable building and fire codes;
 - d. installation of fire alarms, smoke detectors, etc, as required by applicable codes have, or will be, provided;
6. The name, address, day-night phone number, and license information of builder in charge of work-site operations.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted for the Fast Track Program.

III. REQUIREMENTS OF THE INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL:

The Inspector of Buildings or his designee must approve any professional associated with the project who is required to submit an affidavit. A written request must be submitted by the independent professional for such approval. The written request shall state at a minimum the name, contact information and professional certifications, the scope of responsibility of the professional, permit number and the address for the project. The Inspector of Buildings or his designee shall legibly sign and date the written request as either approved or denied. A copy of written requests shall be stored in the application and then the building jacket.

The designated independent professional shall keep a log of visits which shall include comments and instructions given regarding construction conformance which shall be kept under his professional seal. The professional shall be independent of the contractor(s) doing the work. The professional shall not be an employee or associate of the architect/engineer of record unless requested by the owner and approved by the Inspector of Buildings or his designee. Such records and logs of the independent professional shall be made available to the Inspector of Buildings or his designee upon request.

IV. PROCESSING FAST TRACK APPLICATIONS:

FT applications shall be submitted in the same manner as long form applications and shall be initially examined at the time of submission to assure that basic criteria have been met and that all required documentation is included. If these requirements have been met, the submission shall be stamped as received under the FT program and will be assigned to a plan reviewer.

If the submitted application, with all documentation is in order, the applicant will be notified within seven (7) working days that the building permit is ready for issuance.

No work under the FT Program may begin until a building permit has issued.

No FT permit application may be amended if the amendment will take the scope of the proposed project outside the criteria of the FT program. Any amendment to a FT application shall reference the application number and scope of work of the original FT application. Any amendment that fails to meet the FT criteria will result in the issuance of a stop work order, if the work has started, until the entire proposed project has been reviewed in the context of the proposed amendment.

The plan examiner to whom the application is assigned may also reject the application as ineligible or incomplete after submission if the facts warrant. ISD reserves the right, and has the obligation, to make a more detailed review of the FT application at any time after the permit has been issued.

Should violations be identified, these will be brought to the attention of the builder. Construction work may, at the discretion of the Inspector of Buildings, be required to stop until the required items are corrected. Failure to stop work or correct violations will result in withdrawal of the permit and forfeiture of deposits and all permit fees.

V. CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY:

When the work is completed, the owner or the owner's representative shall file an application for a Certificate of Use & Occupancy ("CO") for the completed construction accompanied by fee payment. The application must be accompanied by an affidavit signed by the independent professional attesting that:

- a. the site has been visited periodically during the construction, giving dates and time of these inspections;
- b. the work was completed, except for minor punch-list items, in conformance with the approved plans;
- c. the finished construction conforms to all of the FAST TRACK PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS identified in this Bulletin;

Any approved amendments to the original plans must be reflected in any affidavit submitted and bear the similar certification as noted above.

All of the current requirements and timeframes for obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy are applicable to FT program applications.

Signed:

Kevin J. Joyce
Commissioner
Inspectional Service Department

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Date: _____

12-11-03

Gary P. Moccia
Inspector of Buildings

(Gary P. Moccia)
Date: _____