

**CITY OF URBANA  
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE BOARD OF APPEALS  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2008**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Don Keeler, Tom Welch, Dick Halberstadt, Kevin Fahey and Gary Stebbins

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Clay Baier, Stephen Chrisman and Vivian Petrotte

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Fred Heinrick, attorney representing the owner and Rod & Tim Mosely, contractors.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Gary Stebbins at 4:00 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Gary Stebbins asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held Wednesday, October 3, 2007. Tom Welch made the motion to approve the minutes and Gary Stebbins seconded the motion. All agreed and the minutes were not only approved as read, but signed by Donald Keeler.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

PMCBA-08-V-1, 705 W. Ohio St. in Urbana. Mr. Stebbins explained that he normally asks the owners/representatives to make a brief statement but the brief statement needs to be on two issues as there are two issues before the board which is the issue of the bedroom and bathroom height and the stair height. He said that the fact that the pipe broke, etc. is not relevant.

Mr. Heinrich introduced himself as the owner's counsel. The owners live in California and cannot be here. He pointed out that the owners did not create this problem. They bought the home in the condition that it is in which is why they attached the listing to the variance application.

Mr. Heinrich stated that they have focused their attention on the ceiling height issue at the top of the stairs. Rod and Tim Mosely, who will be remodeling the house, met with Steve (Cochran, Urbana Building Inspector) at the property yesterday and discussed the possibility of addressing the headroom issue by the installation of a skylight. Mr. Heinrich then passed around pictures of the top of the stairway and the upstairs with the measurements drawn in. What they would like to do is install a skylight in the ceiling at the top of the stairs which would actually raise the headroom. One of the pictures had the skylight drawn in. Mr. Stebbins asked how much room it would be possible to get.

Mr. Rod Mosely said that he wasn't sure what the thickness of the roof joist were there yet, but the skylight box has about a four inch lip on it and they can build the skylight box up a

foot or eighteen inches, flash it, wrap it up with roofing material and then you would have a light shaft. Similar to if you had a angled roof and a flat ceiling. Mr. Mosely said they could make it whatever height they needed.

Mr. Heinrick said they would start it back a little to increase the head room. They would cover the full width of walking up.

Mr. Fahey said that the key is to maintain an agreed upon minimum height at any point along the exit way of the stairs. It was important to place the skylight where the inner juncture of the sloped ceiling and the well of the skylight at the top meets an agreed upon minimum from the floor. Placement of the skylight is critical. Mr. Mosely assured them they could do that.

Mr. Keeler asked would it be possible to put a dormer there? The drawings were studied and that would not be possible.

After studying the drawings again, Mr. Fahey said that it probably would not be possible for the skylight to go higher than 6'7".

Mr. Heinrick stated that this is how they would like to deal with the headroom issue around the stairs, which is the major issue.

Mr. Stebbins asked Mr. Fahey, who has an architectural background, if what they proposed would work. Mr. Fahey said that it should. Mr. Stebbins asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Halberstadt asked if they could make 6'8" at the stairs. Mr. Mosely said he didn't think he could get right up to the edge. Mr. Halberstadt said that was the key. Mr. Mosely proposed setting it at 6'4". Mr. Heinrick said that setting it at 6'4" would cover the majority of the population. Mr. Halberstadt said that the house would be sold one of these days. He asked if the house, which had been remodeled, was done with or without permits. Mr. Baier said it was done without. Mr. Halberstadt said that was the problem with houses in that area. Mr. Heinrich stated that the VanBlaricum's did not do the remodeling. Mr. Halberstadt said that he understands that, but that they bought a house in that condition. And that it doesn't mean anything that they didn't do the work, as they bought it and didn't check to see if the remodeling was done legally. Mr. Halberstadt stated that the board normally tries to work with people who are trying to do things the correct way. Normally, if someone is trying to do things the right way, the board is willing to work with them. We need to come up with a height at that junction that we can live with. The rest of the ceiling height has been granted before but you need adequate ceiling height for entrance/exit. Mr. Stebbins asked what ceiling height we could live with. Mr. Halberstadt asked what the lowest height we have granted on egress. Mr. Baier thought it was 6'6". Mr. Halberstadt thought that 6'4" was too low. Mr. Welch thought that 6'6" was as low as we had granted and that was with a beam. Mr. Halberstadt asked if they could go to 6'8". Mr. Mosely said they would get the maximum they could. Mr. Fahey thought they could get more if they used the skylight frame. Maybe shave off a little roof. Mr. Stebbins asked if they could get 6'6". Mr. Halberstadt stated that he didn't like that height but that he would be willing to go to that. Mr. Fahey made a motion to grant a variance to maintain a minimum height of 6'6" anywhere along that egress route. Mr. Halberstadt seconded the

motion. It passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Stebbins said the next issue was the ceiling height of the upstairs bedroom, study and bathroom. Mr. Welch said that he thought we had already addressed that issue. Mr. Stebbins said we had discussed it but wanted to clarify. Mr. Welch made a motion to grant a variance of the existing height of those rooms for the life of the building. Mr. Fahey seconded the motion. It passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Stebbins thanked Mr. Heinrich and the Moselys' for coming.

There was no other business to discuss.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Stebbins adjourned the meeting at 4:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved:

Vivian Petrotte

Don Keeler, Secretary

PMCBA:vp