

**OKLAHOMA UNIFORM BUILDING CODE COMMISSION**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONSOLIDATED DWELLINGS TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**UNIFORM BUILDING CODE COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM**

**2401 NW 23<sup>RD</sup> STREET, SUITE 82**

**OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73107**

**MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026 – 1:30 P.M.**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Amber Armstrong, Chad Denson, Anthony Faddis, Bradley Flatt, Mitchell Hort, Kyle Melson, Tyler Parette, and Mike Willson

**ALTERNATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Adan Chapa, Darryl Beebe, and Sam Day (arrived at 1:33 p.m.)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Todd Booze, Roger Gose, Matt Hayes, Matthew Peacock, Chad Williams, and Mark Zitzow

**ALTERNATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

David Adcock (OUBCC Staff), Kathy Hehnly (OUBCC Staff), and Caitlin Redding Taylor (OUBCC Staff), John Moore (City of Piedmont), John Treadwell (City of Edmond), Anthony Reed (Oklahoma State Fire Marshal's Office), and James Fullingim (Oklahoma State Fire Marshal's Office)

**VIRTUAL ATTENDEES:**

Matthew Peacock, Christina Selby, and Roger Gose

**CALL TO ORDER AND RECORDING OF MEMBERS PRESENT AND ABSENT:**

Ms. Amber Armstrong called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and requested the roll be called.

**CONFIRMATION OF ALTERNATES**

Ms. Hehnly confirmed after the roll call that Mr. Chapa could motion and vote as Mr. Gose was not present. She added Mr. Beebe could take part in discussions but could not motion and vote as Mr. Willson was present. Mr. Day was not present for the confirmation of alternates, but was able to motion and vote as Mr. Hayes was absent from the meeting.

**ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

Discussion and possible approval of the February 4, 2026, technical review committee meeting minutes

MR. TYLER PARETTE MADE A MOTION WITH A SECOND BY MR. BRADLEY FLATT TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 4, 2026, TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

VOTING AYE:	Amber Armstrong Adan Chapa Chad Denson Anthony Faddis Bradley Flatt	Mitchell Hort Kyle Melson Tyler Parette Mike Willson
VOTING NAY:	None	
ABSTAIN:	None	
ABSENT:	Todd Booze Roger Gose Matt Hayes	Matthew Peacock Mark Zitzow

Presentation by Housing Forward:

*Housing Forward Consolidated Dwellings Policy Brief (February 2026)*

There was some discussion on the order in which the Housing Forward policy briefs would be presented. The final outcome was to present the policy brief on consolidated dwellings and have that discussion prior to the presentation of the other policy brief.

Mr. Parette with Housing Forward reviewed the policy brief on Consolidated Dwellings noting that it was not designed to make policy recommendations rather it was to frame up what the issues were and what decisions other states had made around those issues. He added he hoped it would help the committee on a pathway to resolve those issues. He reviewed the following topics: that in older building construction it was not uncommon to find just a single stairway; decisions other states had made such as Tennessee which allowed municipalities to opt into the code requirements as well as increase the threshold for suppression requirements; the different capabilities of local municipalities to respond to fires; rent thresholds; and land costs.

Discussion and possible action on Chapter 10 of the 2024 International Building Code® (IBC), International Fire Code® (IFC) and Chapter 8 of the 2024 International Existing Building Code®

*Discussion and possible action on Proposed Code Change Form AHCDTC-1 on Table 1006.3.4(1) – Stories and Occupiable Roofs With One Exit or Access to One Exit for R-2 Occupancies in the IBC and IFC and Table R804.5.1.1(1) - Stories With One Exit or Access to One Exit for R-2 Occupancies in the IEBC*

- Cost

The committee discussed the costs for elevators in the US; and that in the proposal from Mr. Day each floor was restricted to four (4) units to limit what was allowed without an elevator; that the impact of the proposed change on housing affordability would be long term viability of densification of lots within communities that were already seeing rent and land pressure; that while those units would be at market rate, it would impact affordability across housing; and ways to make more pathways for development to be viable and productive. There was further discussion on how the single stair option would allow for more competitive bidding

on infill lots; as it would allow for more units to be built; and that it allowed for more family oriented units.

- History and Statistics

There was discussion on what information was available from New York City and Seattle as they had been dealing with the issues the longest; how many units had actually been built based off similar code changes; NFPA 13 vs. NFPA 13D or NFPA 13R sprinkler systems; on the impacts of the changes approved by the other states mentioned in the policy brief; and what those changes were.

- Jurisdiction Enforcement

The committee noted, that it was easier if there was only one code in the state that didn't change from municipality to municipality; as that was harder for architects and builders to work with; local control; issues and costs associated with design of a project that then gets rejected by a local city council, building or fire official; and how most local jurisdictions had one building official who made the final decisions and assigned out duties to inspectors and plan reviewers. They discussed that a city could not make the code more lenient than the minimum set by the OUBCC; and educating the cities on the options the change would allow or that they could remove the change from the code if their jurisdiction did not have the infrastructure to handle it.

- Structure Design

The committee discussed square foot usage size and price differences between single-stair and double stair structures in the US and elsewhere in the world and the lower costs in places utilizing different building codes than what was required in the IBC; different ways lot size configurations could affect the gross square footage with a single or double stair; and if corridors could be enclosed or open-air.

They discussed access travel requirements; what the average height a fire truck ladder could reach; and the issue was not how high a ladder could reach based on the ladders length, but the height the ladder could reach at the angle the ladder could be deployed and reach the building due to set-backs; that for infill housing a fire truck would probably only be able to access the front side of the building; and if the fire was on the back side in apartments there, the truck would be irrelevant. It was noted the committee was relying on the assumption that these types of buildings were not going to be built in rural locations as the economics were not there but that it may not be true forever.

There was further discussion on emergency egress openings; how to handle egress if the fire was in the single stairwell; tradeoffs to make the structures safer; amending the width of the stairwell to make sure egress of people was not impeding the progress of firefighters; and limiting the structure to four stories.

They discussed that the table in Chapter 10 only required egress windows up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor so if the change was approved up to 4 floors the table in Chapter 10 would need to be modified as well; that other areas of the code might need to be looked at and changed as the original modification could affect other areas; that there was legislation out there that would require the OUBCC to create guidelines for a single stair option in the IBC for R-2 occupancies; and looking at how the changes could affect and impact all the other codes.

There was discussion on the requirement in NFPA 13 to require a pressurized stairway; the minimum width of the stairwell; response times for fire fighters; evacuation times; that Mr. Day's change limited the number of units and total square footage per floor to limit the total number of people in the structure and to make sure they were not shared common space apartments with lots of bedrooms and one larger common space. They discussed NFPA research that standard egress requirements were 22 inches for shoulder width for the average person but that did not account for fire fighters with their equipment; if there should be a separate six-floor single stairway proposed change or wait and see how things went for a few years with just a change from three to four floors; two-hour rated stairwells; and making amendments to the proposal.

- Amending Proposal

The committee discussed having the proposed language be an opt-in clause; that an opt-in clause put the onus on smaller municipalities to be proactive rather than making it an exception that said it was permissible for a municipality to opt into the path. There was further discussion on how to make the change in the code; that it would allow the local jurisdiction to determine if it was appropriate; the difference between cities and towns; scoping requirements in Chapter 10 of the IBC in Table 1006.3.4, and a request from the audience to add language to the change to require approval by the code official for the first few years so that there was time to evaluate and figure out if any other changes needed to be made to the code.

At the end of the discussion the committee tabled the form for amendment.

*Discussion and update on Oklahoma legislation related to single stair code*

Discussion of the legislation related to single stair code took place in the item above.

*Discussion and call for any further discussion on Chapter 10 of the IBC and IFC and Chapter 8 of the IEBC*

There was no further discussion on Chapters and approval was tabled until the proposed change was addressed.

*Discussion and possible action on Chapter 3 of the 2024 International Building Code® (IBC) and Chapter 2 of the International Fire Code® (IFC)*

Discussion and possible action on Proposed Code Change Form AHCDTC-2 on Section 310.4 Residential Group R-3 in the IBC and Section [BG] 203.9.3 Residential Group R-3 in the IFC

Ms. Armstrong noted she was not sure if there was any further information on the topic from last month's meeting but she would open it for discussion, adding she was working to have someone at the next meeting to discuss sprinkler systems.

Mr. Parette gave a presentation on the Housing Forward Single Stair Policy Brief. He started the review with a discussion on the article from Vox entitled "The hidden double standards driving our housing crisis." He noted the differences in cost per square foot for an average single-family home and a multi-family home in the United States and elsewhere in the world and pointed out it was much less expensive in places that did not utilize the same building codes. He noted the IBC made multi-family homes both low and high rise 30% to 50% more expensive on a per square foot basis and was one of the reasons there was such an affordability crisis. He reviewed reasons for sprinkler system failures in fires, which included a lack of maintenance or the systems being turned off; issues with inspecting 13D systems once installed to confirm they were not shut off; and that it was the owner's responsibility to provide the maintenance for the system. He discussed possible options to modify requirements for the systems such as reducing the number of heads; requiring some kind of minimum monitoring for water flow; issues with strobes or audible alarms that people may hear but not associate with a fire or issue with a sprinkler head failure if it is not in their unit or if they are outside of the building; and making sure both the owner and the fire department are notified if an alarm is triggered.

- Life Safety

The committee discussed that the NFPA 13D sprinkler system was there as a life safety device to suppress fires long enough for people to evacuate noting that it worked well in putting a lot of fires out; concerns that utilizing the 13D system in multi-family homes would violate the standard and it would not work properly; requirements for sprinkler heads in the 13R and 13D systems; and that sprinkler systems were a life protection system not a property protection system.

- History and Statistics

There was discussion that outside of human error most fires were electrical in nature; who was qualified to redefine the scope of the IRC and how to make it align with the other codes; available research data on the safety of the different sprinkler systems; political pressures; how unsafe single family homes actually were; and the regulatory cliff in cost differences between a duplex and triplex. They discussed the more people living together in multi-family housing, the more opportunity there was for a fire to start; that housing stock in some areas of Oklahoma were 25% to 45% mobile homes; and if people were moved from mobile homes that were not sprinkled to multi-family that were sprinkled, even with a 13D system it would be a safer option; and that one of the reasons sprinklers were not required in single-family homes was there would be more control over the people in the home and in a multi-family home the occupants did not have control over who would be in the other units.

They discussed there was not much oversight on multi-family housing; that single-family housing built the newest codes had five times the fire death rate as new modern apartments; and the question was, was the code overboard on multi-family housing or underboard on single-family home requirements?

- Structure Design

The committee discussed electrical disconnects and where they were required to be located; concern with requiring sprinklers in garages where the pipes and sprinklers may be subject to freezing conditions; and issues with having two-hour fire walls that end up with holes poked into them and that do not maintain the two-hour separation. There was further discussion on how the proposed changes could affect means of egress; what other states had done related to consolidated dwellings; where the committee felt comfortable with the 13D versus 13R crossover; and a dual pathway of expanding the scope of the IRC up to four units under one threshold and augmenting the IBC up to 12 units.

They discussed the need to have additional safety requirements if the IRC was modified to address more than one- and two-family structures; that the IRC did not have provisions for mixed use and if those types of structures would be allowed under the IRC; other items in that could not be modified in urban infill lots; prescriptive framing and if the IBC provided that path; and that modifying the IRC would need to address a lot more than just change the number of units allowed and the IBC already had that laid out.

There was further discussion on the differences between the R2 and R3 occupancies and what types of residences were allowed in each; The committee discussed the number of units allowed by the proposal; square footage requirements; structure caps; the differences between a fire wall and fire barrier; examples of how the changes could be utilized; and that it could be cost prohibitive from impact fees and base meter fees.

There was further discussion on how the water would be distributed to the units in a multi-story building; concerns were expressed about combined systems where the water for the sprinkler system could be turned off and no one would know; that a lot of fires happen in vacant structures; that there was no one paying for water in those vacant structures; concerns that future owners could decide to stop maintaining systems; and that there may not be a risk with the sprinkler systems at year four but could be at year 35 without maintenance.

At the end of the discussion the form was tabled.

*Discussion and call for any further discussion on Chapter 3 of the IBC and Chapter 2 of the IFC*

There was no further discussion on Chapter 3.

*Discussion and possible approval of Chapter 3 of the IBC and Chapter 2 of the IFC*

No action was taken.

### Discussion and possible assignments of tasks for the next committee meeting

Ms. Armstrong stated she wanted to skip ahead to item "f" and to address some of the things that came out of the last meeting that needed to be worked on. She added if someone had any information on them, to please volunteer to provide some information to the committee.

### Costs of 2-hour fire-rated walls

The committee discussed what would be involved in developing a cost for a 2-hour rated fire wall; if it would include fire partitions, fire walls and fire barriers; what kinds of separation were needed between units; just walls or floors and ceilings as well; restrictions on the fire walls; partitioning; and if they were talking about fire walls for a three, five or six story structure; perforations within the fire walls; if light fixtures and other penetrations were allowed in them. There was further discussion whether a cost could be calculated due to all the variables for each specific project; creating a case study plan for what would be allowed to determine costs; how the City of Dallas amended their code; and issues with waiting to see what ICC came up with as that could take a long time.

There was discussion on the need to compare the differences between one and two hour walls; how much more a two-hour wall would be; an evaluation of what level of safety that provides as there would be no notification to occupants in the other units regardless of the fire wall type; and what the fire wall was meant to accomplish which was to increase the time for occupants to exit the structure in a fire scenario; that a 13D system with a one hour wall was safer than a two-hour wall without a sprinkler system with a comparable cost; the need to make the code affordable and within reason, as safe as possible and serve the biggest need; address needed infrastructure; clarify they were talking about fire barriers not fire walls; and if there were UL tested systems that could be utilized within the fire walls.

### Information on what other jurisdictions were allowing, to include the number of units per floor

Mr. Parette stated he felt some of that information had been provided within the Housing Forward briefs. Ms. Armstrong stated she'd like to expand that to what had other jurisdictions done as far as total units per structure. Mr. Parrette noted Mr. Day's proposal was unique and there were not any cross comparisons with other jurisdiction changes. He added as far as consolidated dwellings most of the other recommendations went up to 4 units in the IRC with Memphis and Dallas being the outliers.

### If any of those structures had a history yet of any failures due to fires

There was discussion that most of the legislation around the issue had been passed in 2024 so there was not a lot of structures built or data available yet to see if there were any failures yet.

### Insurance costs

Ms. Armstrong noted the question there was if there were different costs tied to sprinkled buildings based on the different types of sprinkler systems. Mr. Flatt volunteered to look into insurance costs. Mr. Faddis added he had more claims on broken sprinkler heads than fires, noting most broken heads were from people using them as hangers. Mr. Flatt noted most of the claims he dealt with were from freezing pipes.

### Possibly having a Fire Marshal Presentation

The committee discussed the State Fire Marshall Association Conference scheduled for the next day that had a course on the differences between sprinkler systems.

### Status of ICC ad-hoc committee and their study of the issue

The committee discussed the ICC ad-hoc committee had commissioned a study from three different universities on the issue of affordable housing and ways to amend the IRC to include more than one- and two-family dwellings; and that they thought the studies would look at how the changes would increase costs of construction due to the code. Several committee members volunteered to reach out to ICC contacts to see where the ad-hoc committee was in the process.

### Any additional topics as necessary

Ms. Armstrong noted if there were any changes to be submitted from today's discussion, they would need to be submitted to Ms. Hehnlly no later than March 30<sup>th</sup>, so that they could be added to the April 6<sup>th</sup> agenda.

### Discussion on modifications made by other states related to consolidated dwellings

Ms. Armstrong asked if anyone had anything they would like to discuss regarding any of the articles that had been provided to the committee members. Mr. Willson noted he would like some time to review the Dallas modifications. Mr. Day encouraged everyone to review the Pew study and the Vox article listed in item 2. He discussed from the Pew study the death rates for single family homes versus both old un-sprinkled and newer sprinkled multi-family housing. There was further discussion on the fact that in Oklahoma single-family homes were built without sprinklers even though the national code required them; that the argument was the same that they would not be built if sprinklers were required as it would be too expensive; and that was the reason three-to-eight multi-family homes were not built. Mr. Day argued if it was required in single family homes, it would lower the cost of land and more multi-family homes would be built. He added single-family builders were able to bid higher for land because the requirements were so much lower on fire safety than multi-family home requirements.

There was further discussion that builders were building what the public would buy; zoning issues for multi-family housing; what the City of Oklahoma City was allowing for multi-family housing; that a lot of single family housing was being built for rental not for ownership and should not have lower standards; affordability and demographics of the what the committee should be looking at and how the changes may deal with them; what was the committee trying to accomplish to address the market rate or the greatest need which was subsidized housing; that a builder will not build if he cannot make a profit of some kind; what people want are things that up the cost of housing but those were not code items and the committee was to look at the code to see if there was anything in the code that was causing excessive cost that could be achieved with some other type of safety factor; that the legislature did not specify reducing fire safety in the proposed legislation; that there were things that were out of the control of the committee that would cost more like carpet and finishes; and concern with taking away safety aspects to reduce costs.

They discussed the challenge was they were looking at things from really expensive homes to starter homes all in one piece; what had caused the code to come into effect; that sometimes the code enacted was an overaction but would be reduced in subsequent editions; what some fire marshal's required that was beyond the minimum code; that the goal should not be to reduce single-family housing as the savings would go towards additional land value or savings; that the costs savings should be about making multi-family housing more affordable and more in line with the rest of the world; as the more units available the lower rents would be; the less vehicle miles driven if those units were located closer to where people worked, reducing auto deaths and crashes and also reducing costs on municipalities in terms of fire service area; school areas; and cost per tax payer.

Discussion on article – Beyond Zoning – Hidden Code Barriers to Middle-Scale Housing

The item was discussed with previous topics.

Discussion on article – Dallas Code

The item was not addressed at the meeting.

Discussion on article – NFSA Applying the IRC to 3- and 4- Unit Residential Buildings

The item was not addressed at the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There were no public comments.

**ADJOURNMENT: (4:34 P.M.)**

MR. KYLE MELSON MADE A MOTION WITH A SECOND BY MR. TYLER PARETTE TO ADJOURN

VOTING AYE:	Amber Armstrong	Bradley Flatt
	Adan Chapa	Mitchell Hort
	Sam Day	Kyle Melson
	Chad Denson	Tyler Parette
	Anthony Faddis	Mike Willson

VOTING NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT:	Todd Booze	Matthew Peacock
	Roger Gose	Mark Zitzow
	Matt Hayes	

Minutes approved in the regular meeting on the 6th day of April, 2026.

AMBER ARMSTRONG

Amber Armstrong, Chair

Affordable Housing Consolidated Dwellings Technical  
Code Review Committee

PREPARED BY: KATHY HEHNLY

Kathy Hehnly, Affordable Housing Consolidated Dwellings Technical Code Review Committee  
Secretary

*Official Copy: Original with signatures in agency file.*