

Advisory Committee for the South Carolina Building Codes Council, Loss Mitigation Grant Program and South Carolina Comprehensive Hurricane Damage Mitigation Grant Program

Draft Meeting Minutes
August 1, 2007

Director Scott Richardson called the meeting to order at approximately 1:10 p.m. The following Advisory Board members were present: Todd Hiott, Eric DeMoura, Frank Hodge, Pradeep Talwani, Shawn Putnam, Ed West, Allison Dean Love, Frank Sheppard, Tim Reinhold, Ernie Dorsey, John Reich, and Amanda Loach. Three members of the public attended the meeting.

Following a brief welcome and introduction of the Advisory Committee members and meeting attendees, Director Richardson provided an overview of the purpose of the meeting. He explained that the purpose of this meeting today was to discuss the plans for the SC Safe Home grant program and to reorganize the Advisory Committee. By South Carolina law, the Advisory Committee was established to advise the Department and help administer this and other mitigation programs. While other mitigation activities fall under the auspices of the group, the Advisory Committee's focus is on the SC *Safe Home* grant program. Members of the Committee were given an opportunity to introduce themselves and tell their affiliation.

Ann Roberson, Executive Assistant for Media Relations and Special Projects, will serve as the Administrator for this program. Joseph McDonald has been hired as a temporary employee to assist her. The other members of the Department's staff that Committee Members may see from time to time are Gwen McGriff, Deputy Director and General Counsel and Rachel Chaplin, Executive Assistant and Legislative Liaison.

The Director explained that it was the intent of the Governor and the members of the General Assembly that the grant program be established as soon as possible. The legislation was signed on June 11, 2007. Florida is the only other state in the country that has a mitigation program of this type. The Director explained that the Department contacted Florida and received a lot of valuable information about the conduct of this program. The most important thing they shared with the Department was the need to conduct the grant program in two phases: A pilot phase and then full implementation. Given the fact that South Carolina is already in the midst of hurricane season, the Department decided to take Florida's advice and conduct a pilot program as the first phase of this project. The pilot phase will give the Department an opportunity to correct any problems in the program. Full implementation of the program will be slated for next Spring.

The enabling legislation for this program provides that the Advisory Committee shall assist the Department in administering the program. Accordingly, the Department needs the Committee to:

- Review the grant application and guideline materials and to help us perfect these documents for full implementation of the program
- Review and act on grant applications through a subcommittee.
- Help the Department identify alternate sources of funding for the program.

The Director further explained that based upon the statutory role of this Committee, his staff was in the process of drafting some operational guidelines or bylaws for this Committee to review. Additionally, he asked that the Committee review and approve a schedule of upcoming meeting dates. Both of these items will be discussed at the upcoming conference call meeting scheduled for August 22, 2007.

Ms. McGriff gave a brief overview of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and its applicability to the Advisory Committee. Ms. Roberson discussed proposed guidelines and application procedures. During the review of the draft application procedures, Director Richardson requested the Committee members to begin to think about the various different subcommittees that they would be interested in working with. He suggested the following four subcommittees: advertising /public relations, fundraising, committee on specifications and the grant application review committee.

Ms. Roberson completed the overview of the application guidelines and procedures to include a discussion of the 6-8 month Pilot Phase of the project in which the grant program would focus on the retrofits of those homes that are the most vulnerable to the effects and damages caused by the high winds associated with hurricanes. She added that the procedures included an Inspection Report that will be completed a Certified Wind Examiner and that courses for both the Wind Examiners and Certified Contractors (those that would be allowed to complete the improvements to the individual homes) would be taking place the 2nd full week of August. Ms. Roberson also thanked Gary Wiggins and the staff at Labor, Licensing and Regulation for working with the Department and FLASH to allow the wind certification courses to be considered for continuing education credits for building inspectors and officials.

Ms. McGriff then provided a brief overview of the budget and outlined the amount of dollars allowed by the legislation. She added that we are actively seeking additional dollars through both public and private sponsorship to leverage against the \$2 million dollars that we currently have in place. She concluded her discussion by requesting the Committee review a forthcoming sample sponsorship letter that would be distributed among the Committee members prior to the next meeting. A member of the Committee suggested that the Department consider allowing local governments to apply for the grant funds as matching funds for dollars they have. The Director indicated that was a good idea, but that the Advisory Committee may need to put a cap on the amount of funds. Otherwise, most of the funds might go one local government of municipality. Members of the Advisory Committee were asked to assist the Department in finding other possible funding sources.

The members of the Committee were asked to review the application and guidelines and to forward any suggestions for revision to Ms. Roberson's attention. Following a brief question and answer period, Director Richardson thanked everyone for their interest and support. August 22, 2007 at 2:30 p.m. was set as the next meeting date and time, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m.

The August 1, 2007 Meeting Minutes were approved and accepted at the August 22, 2007 Advisory Board Meeting.