

# CITY OF PITTSBURGH

## DEPARTMENT OF PERMITS, LICENSES, AND INSPECTIONS

200 Ross Street, Suite 320, Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Phone (412) 255-2175, fax (412) 255-2974



## BOARD OF APPEALS

Joel Bernard, David Price,  
Yoko Tai, Edward Wunderley,  
John Schneider, Darryl Jones  
Christopher Skertich, David Green

### Board of Appeals Review Meeting Minutes

November 18th, 2025 8:30 a.m.

Via Zoom Conference Call

- I. **Board Members present:** Joel Bernard (Chair), Ed Wunderley, Yoko Tai, David Price, John Schneider, Christopher Skertich (Representing Pittsburgh Bureau of Fire)
- II. **PLI/Administrative Staff Present:** Apoorva Juneja, Kurt Schaefer, Paul Warlop, Peter Leeman, Anthony Loverher, Akil Henderson, Court Reporter – Missy Fenster (Court Reporter)
- III. **Call to Order:** Joel Bernard, 8:30 AM

#### **New Appeals:**

Permit #	Address	Presented by	What was presented
PLI-BAP-2025-00272 (New)	708 Jacksonia St, Pittsburgh, 15212	Ryan England (Architect)	<b><u>Alternative Equivalent</u></b>  Per 2018 IEBC 1011.1.1, IBC 903.3.1.2, & IBC 508.4, an NFPA 13R sprinkler system is required for the proposed residence above the horizontal separation with a 2-hour horizontal separation provided between the B & R-3 occupancies.  A 2-hour, horizontal separation will be provided as required per 2018 IEBC 1011.1.1, IBC 903.3.1.2, & IBC 508.4. However, per the appellant, an NFPA 13R sprinkler system would be cost prohibitive.  The appellant is proposing to provide automatic fire & smoke detection per 2018 IBC 907 & 907.4.3 as an alternative equivalent approach to the 13R sprinkler system requirement.
PLI-BAP-2025-00281 (New)	1700 Beechwood Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15217	John McAdoo (Contractor), Rabbi Altein (Rabbi)	<b><u>Alternative Equivalent</u></b>

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			<p>Per 2018 IECC 405.2.1, Automatic Lighting Controls are required for identified rooms &amp; areas.</p> <p>The appellant explained that occupancy sensors for automatic lighting controls would be in conflict with religion.</p> <p>The appellant requested that this religious facility be granted an exemption from the Automatic Lighting Requirements of 2018 IECC 405.2.1.</p>
PLI-BAP-2025-00284 (New)	2037 Forbes Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15219	Kento Ohmori (Architect, Fukui Architects), Michael McAllister (Owner & Developer)	<p><b><u>Alternative Equivalent</u></b></p> <p>Per 2018 IEBC 1011.2.1, a change in occupancy subject to a different fire protection threshold in 2018 IBC Chapter 9 is required to be installed with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with per 2018 IBC Chapter 9.</p> <p>Per 2018 IBC Chapter 9, the proposed R-3 use requires an NFPA 13D system since it is an attached, 2-family residence. The appellant believes that installation of an automatic sprinkler system would be cost prohibitive.</p> <p>The appellant is proposing to install a monitored Residential Fire Alarm System as an alternative equivalent approach to providing the required NFPA 13D automatic sprinkler system.</p>
PLI-BAP-2025-00287 (New)	333 N Negley Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15206	Geoff Campbell (Architect), Rebecca Griffith (Architect), Johnathan Iams (Engineer), Richard Swartz (Bloomfield	<p><b><u>Alternative Equivalent</u></b></p> <p>The existing Rotunda building is currently a Vacant with no approved use. The existing building has historic designation by the City. The appellant is proposing to</p>

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		/ Garfield Corporation)	<p>renovate the existing building for use as a Community Building with A-3 Occupancy.</p> <p>The appellant is proposing an alternative equivalent approach for (3) code deficiencies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. With a Change of Occupancy to a higher-hazard category (Vacant to A-3), the height and area of the building shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 5 of the IBC for the new occupancy classification per IEBC 1011.5.1. IBC Chapter 5 Table 504.3 states the building shall not exceed 55' for Type IIIB, Assembly occupancy, buildings not equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system.</li></ol> <p>The existing building height is 77' (measured to the average height of the dome above Grade Plane.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Per IEBC 1011.2.1, a change of occupancy from Vacant to A-3 requires an automatic fire sprinkler system to be provided based on the new occupancy in accordance with Chapter 9 of the IBC. IBC 903.2.1.3 states an automatic sprinkler system shall be provided for Assembly Group A-3 where one of the listed conditions exists.</li></ol> <p>The appellant believes that an automatic sprinkler</p>
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			<p>system is not feasible for this historic building and that the size &amp; height of the main space would present coverage challenges. The appellant also believes that the existing building does not have sufficient water pressure to provide an automatic sprinkler system without a fire pump.</p> <p>3. Per 2018 IEBC 1011.1.1.2, change of occupancy classification with separation requires the portion of the existing building with a change of occupancy to comply with all the requirements of Chapter 9 for the most restrictive occupancy classification if the building does not have the required fire barriers as required in the IBC for the separate occupancy.</p> <p>For Occupancy groups A and R, IBC Table 508.4 requires either a 2-hour separation, or a 1-hour separation with the building equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system.</p> <p>The existing separation between the multi-unit residential building and the existing building is 1-hour, but the automatic sprinkler system only exists on the R occupancy portion of the building.</p> <p>The appellant proposed the following as part of an alternative</p>
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			<p>equivalent approach for the above (3) deficiencies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Installation of an automatic fire alarm system in accordance with IBC 907.2.1.1. This is required for "Group A" occupancies with an occupant load of 1,000 or more. The proposed building has 396 occupants.</li> <li>2. Provide an emergency voice/alarm communication system in accordance with IBC 907.5.2.2.</li> </ol>
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### IV. **Board Decisions:**

Following Executive session:

Permit #	Address	Voted By	Decision
PLI-BAP-2025-00272 (New)	708 Jacksonia St, Pittsburgh, 15212	Joel Bernard (Approved), John Schneider (Approved), Edward Wunderley (Approved), Yoko Tai (Approved)	<b>APPROVED</b>  The Board of Appeals decided on November 18, 2025 to APPROVE the appeal for case PLI-BAP-2025-00272 as presented.
PLI-BAP-2025-00281 (New)	1700 Beechwood Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15217	Joel Bernard (Continued), John Schneider (Continued),	<b>CONTINUE</b>  The Board of Appeals decided on November 18, 2025 to

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		Edward Wunderley (Continued), Yoko Tai (Continued)	CONTINUE the appeal for PLI-BAP-2025-00281 to allow the appellant time to review alternative energy code compliance options.
PLI-BAP-2025-00284 (New)	2037 Forbes Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15219	Joel Bernard (Denied), John Schneider (Denied), Edward Wunderley (Denied), Yoko Tai (Denied)	<b>DENIED</b>  The Board of Appeals decided on November 18, 2025 to DENY the appeal for case PLI-BAP-2025-00284 as presented.
PLI-BAP-2025-00287 (New)	333 N Negley Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15206	Joel Bernard (Continued), John Schneider (Continued), Edward Wunderley (Continued), Yoko Tai (Continued)	<b>CONTINUED</b>  The Board of Appeals decided on November 18, 2025 to CONTINUE the appeal for PLI-BAP-2025-00287 to allow the appellant time to discuss with PLI and strengthen their case.

### V. **Review and Approval of Minutes from Previous Hearings:**

Month	Reviewed By	Comments
October 2025 Minutes	Joel Bernard (Approved), John Schneider (Approved), Edward Wunderley (Approved), Yoko Tai (Approved)	N/A

### VI. **Public Comment:** The floor was opened for public comment, and there was none.

### VII. **Adjournment:**

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM