ARTICLE III. BUILDING CODE[1]

Sec. 8-13. Title and definitions.

(a) *Uniform Codes Act.* Building permits shall be issued in conformance with the technical codes adopted and amended by Columbus under the Georgia Uniform Codes Act.

(b) The provisions embraced within this article along with the latest available edition of the International Building Code, as amended and adopted by the State of Georgia, published by the International Code Council, a copy of which is on file in the office of the clerk of council, are hereby adopted as "The Building Code of Columbus, Georgia," for the purpose of regulating the erection, construction, enlargement, alteration, repair, moving, removal, demolition, conversion, occupancy, equipment use, height area, and maintenance of all buildings and/or structures in Columbus, Georgia; providing for issuance of permits and collection of fees therefor; providing penalties for violations of such code; and, hereinafter referred to as "this code."

(c) Detached one-and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses) not more than three stories above grade plane in height with a separate means of egress and their accessory structures shall comply with the latest available edition of the International Residential Code, as amended and adopted by the State of Georgia.

(d) Pursuant to Ga. L. 1996, p.1632, § 3, Columbus, Georgia, is hereby exempted from the provisions of said Act codified as O.C.G.A. Section 8-2-26(d).

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14. Code remedial.

(a) *Generally.* This code is hereby declared to be remedial and shall be construed to secure the beneficial interests and purposes thereof, which are public safety, health, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress, facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment, including alteration, repair, removal, demolition, use and occupancy of buildings, structures, or premises, and by regulating the installation and maintenance of all electrical, gas, mechanical and plumbing systems, which may be referred to as service systems, and to provide safety to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.

(b) The scope of this code shall include and apply to all new electrical installations, alterations, additions, repairs and maintenance to all electrical wiring, electrical construction, apparatus, fixtures, equipment or appurtenances thereto for the transmission, distribution or utilization of electrical energy for light, heat or power, including appliances, signs and elevators, within or on public and private buildings or structures,

[1]Editor's note(s)—Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, adopted May 9, 2017, amended Art. III in its entirety to read as herein set out. Former Art. III, §§ 8-13—8-14.1, pertained to similar subject matter, and derived from Ord. No. 95-85, §§ 1—12, 9-12-95; Ord. No. 98-51, 6-16-98; Ord. No. 06-46, § 1, 6-20-06; Ord. No. 11-34, § 2, 6-28-11.

including the premises or yards, tents, carnivals, parking lots or similar use of premises, within the jurisdiction of Columbus, Georgia.

(d) *Quality control.* Quality control of materials and workmanship is not within the purview of this code except as it relates to the purposes stated herein.

(e) *Permitting and inspection.* The inspection or permitting of any building, system or plan by any jurisdiction, under the requirements of this code, shall not be construed in any court as a warranty of the physical condition of such building, system or plan, or their adequacy. No jurisdiction nor any employee thereof shall be liable in tort for damages for any defect or hazardous or illegal condition or inadequacy in such building, system or plan, nor for any failure of any component of such, which may occur subsequent to such inspection or permitting.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.1. Applicability.

(a) *Generally.* Where, in any specific case, different sections of this code specify different materials, methods of construction or other requirements, the most restrictive shall govern. Where there is a conflict between a general requirement and a specific requirement, the specific requirement shall be applicable.

(b) *Technical codes.* Any reference hereinafter to "technical codes" throughout this chapter of the Columbus Code includes to the International Building Code, International Residential Code, International Fuel Gas Code, International Mechanical Code, International Plumbing Code, International Energy Conservation Code, Minimum Fire Safety Standards, International Swimming Pool and Spa Code, and National Electrical Code, as may be adopted and updated by the state.

(c) *Building.* The provisions of the technical codes shall apply to the construction, alteration, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal and demolition, of every building or structure or appurtenance connected or attached to such buildings or structures.

(d) *Federal and state authority.* The provisions of this code shall not be held to deprive any federal or state agency, or any applicable governing authority having jurisdiction, of any power or authority which it had on the effective date of the adoption of this code or of any remedy then existing for the enforcement of its orders, nor shall it deprive any individual or corporation of its legal rights as provided by law.

(e) ~~*Appendices.* To be enforceable, the appendices included in this code must be referenced in the code text or specifically included in the adopting ordinance.~~ Appendices. To be enforceable, appendices must be referenced in the code text, adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, or specifically adopted by Columbus, Georgia.

Appendix BB, "Tiny Houses," of the International Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings, in the latest edition adopted and made effective by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, together with all applicable Georgia State Amendments, is hereby adopted by reference and incorporated into the Building Code of Columbus, Georgia. The Department of Inspections and Code shall administer and enforce Appendix BB in accordance with this article. All applicable zoning and other land-use requirements shall remain in effect.

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(f) *Referenced standards.* Standards referenced in this code shall be considered an integral part of the codes without separate adoption. If specific portions of a standard are denoted by code text, only those portions of the standard shall be enforced. Where code provisions conflict with a standard, the code provisions shall be enforced. Permissive and advisory provisions in a standard shall not be construed as mandatory.

(g) *Existing structures.* The legal occupancy of any structure existing on the date of adoption of this code shall be permitted to continue without change, except as is specifically covered in this code, the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards or as is deemed necessary by the building official for the general safety and welfare of the occupants and the public.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.2. Building department.

(a) *Establishment.* There is hereby recognized a department of inspections and code, the department head thereof being known as the chief of inspections and code, hereinafter referred to as the building official.

(b) *Employee qualifications.*

(1) *Building official qualifications.* The building official shall have at least ten years' experience or equivalent, as an architect, engineer, inspector, contractor, or superintendent of construction, or any combination of these, five years of which shall have been in responsible charge of work. The building official should be certified as a building official through a recognized certification program.

(2) *Deputy building official qualifications.* The building official may designate the assistant director of the department of inspections and code as the deputy building official who shall assist the building official in administering the provisions of the Building Code and during the absence or disability of the building official, exercise all the powers of the building official. Such deputy building official shall have at least ten years' experience or equivalent, as an architect, engineer, inspector, contractor, or superintendent of construction, or any combination of these, five years of which shall have been in responsible charge of the work. The deputy building official should be certified through a recognized certification program for the appropriate trade.

(3) *Inspector qualifications.* The building official may appoint or hire such number of officers, inspectors, assistants, and other employees, as shall be authorized from time to time. A person shall not be appointed or hired as inspector of construction who has not had at least five years' experience as a building inspector, engineer, architect, or as a superintendent, foreman, or competent mechanic in charge of construction. The inspector should be certified, through a recognized certification program, for the appropriate trade.

(c) *Restrictions on employees.* An officer or employee connected with the department shall not be financially interested in the furnishing of labor, material, or appliances for the construction, alteration, or maintenance of a building, structure, service, system, or in the making of plans or of specifications thereof, unless he is the owner of such. This officer or employee shall not engage in any other work which is inconsistent with his duties or conflict with the interest of the department.

(d) *Department records.* The building official shall keep official records of applications received, permit and certificates issued, fees collected, reports of inspections, and notices and orders issued. Such records shall be retained in the official records for the period required by the legally applicable records retention schedule.

(e) *Liability.* Any officer or employee, charged with the enforcement of this code, acting for the applicable governing authority, in the discharge of his duties, shall not thereby render himself personally liable, and is hereby relieved from all personal liability, for any damage that may accrue to persons or property as a result of any act required or permitted in the discharge of his duties. Any suit brought against any officer or employee or member because of such act performed by him in the enforcement of any provision of this code shall be defended by the city attorney until the final termination of the proceedings.

(f) *Reports.* The building official shall submit annually a report covering the work of the building department during the preceding year.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.3. Power and duties of the building official.

(a) *Generally.* The building official is hereby authorized and directed to enforce the provisions of this code. The building official shall have the authority to render interpretations of this code and to adopt policies and procedures in order to clarify the application of its provisions. Such interpretations, policies and procedures shall be in compliance with the intent and purpose of this code. Such policies and procedures shall not have the effect of waiving requirements specifically provided for in this code.

(b) *Right of entry.*

(1) Whenever necessary to make an inspection to enforce any of the provisions of this code, or whenever the building official has reasonable cause to believe that there exists in any building or upon any premises any condition or code violation which makes such building, structure, premises, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems unsafe, dangerous or hazardous, the building official may enter such building, structure, or premises at all reasonable times to inspect the same or to perform any duty imposed upon the building official by this code. If such building or premises are occupied, he shall first present proper credentials and request entry. If such building, structure or premises are unoccupied, he shall first make a reasonable effort to locate the owner or other persons having charge or control of such and request entry. If entry is refused, the building official shall have recourse to every remedy provided by law to secure entry.

(2) When the building official shall have first obtained a proper inspection warrant or other remedy provided by law to secure entry, no owner or occupant or any other persons having charge, care or control of any building, structure or premises shall fail or neglect, after proper request is made as herein provided, to promptly permit entry therein by the building official for the purpose of inspection and examination pursuant to this code.

(c) *Stop work orders.* Upon notice from the building official, work on any building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, that is being done contrary to the provisions of this code or in a dangerous or unsafe manner, shall immediately cease. Such notice shall be in writing and shall be given to the owner of the property, or to this agent, or to the person doing the work, and shall state the conditions under which work may be resumed. Where an emergency exists, the building official shall not be required to give a written notice prior to stopping the work.

(d) *Revocation of permits.*

(1) *Misrepresentation of application.* The building official may revoke a permit or approval, issued under the provisions of this code, in case there has been any false statement or misrepresentation as to the material fact in the application or plans on which the permit or approval was based.

(2) *Violation of code provisions.* The building official may revoke a permit upon determination by the building official that the construction, erection, alteration, repair, moving, demolition, installation, or replacement of the building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems for which the permit was issued is in violation of, or not in conformity with, the provisions of this code.

(e) *Unsafe buildings or systems.* All buildings, structures, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems which are unsafe, unsanitary, or do not provide adequate egress, or which constitute a fire hazard, or are otherwise dangerous to human life, or which in relation to existing use, constitute a hazard to safety or health, are considered unsafe buildings or service systems. All such unsafe buildings, structures, or service systems are hereby declared illegal and shall be abated by repair and rehabilitation or by demolition in accordance with the procedures for requiring the abatement of unsafe buildings, as outlined in articles V and VI of this chapter.

(f) *Requirements not covered by code.* Any requirements necessary for the strength, stability, or proper operation of an existing or proposed building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems, or for the public safety, health, and general welfare, not specifically covered by this or the other technical codes, shall be determined by the building official.

(g) *Alternate materials and methods.* The provisions of the technical codes are not intended to prevent the use of any material or method of construction not specifically prescribed by them, provided any such alternate has been reviewed by the building official. The building official shall approve any such alternate for the purpose intended is at least the equivalent of that prescribed in the technical codes, in quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability and safety. The building official shall require that sufficient evidence or proof be submitted to substantiate any claim made regarding the alternate.

(i) *Modifications.* Wherever there are practical difficulties involved in carrying out the provisions of this code, the building official shall have the authority to grant modifications for individual cases, upon application of the owner or owner's representative, provided the building official shall first find that special individual reason makes the strict letter of this code impractical and the modification is in compliance with the intent and purpose of this code and that such modification does not lessen health, accessibility, life and fire safety, or structural requirements. The details of action granting modifications shall be recorded and entered in the files of the department of inspections and code.

(j) *Flood hazard areas.* The building official shall not grant modifications to any provision required in flood hazard areas.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.4. Permits.

(a) *Permit application.*

(1) *Required.* Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by this code, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application to the building official and obtain the required permit.

(2) *Work exempt from permit.* Permits shall not be required for the following. Exemption from permit requirements of this code shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in any manner in violation of the provisions of this code or any other laws or ordinances of this jurisdiction.

a. Building:

1. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.

2. Temporary motion picture, television, and theatre stage sets and scenery.

3. Prefabricated swimming pools that are less than 24 inches (610 mm) deep.

4. Swings and other playground equipment.

5. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.

b. Electrical:

1. Listed cord and plug connected temporary decorative lighting. Temporary electric power and lighting installations shall be permitted for a period not to exceed 90 days.

2. Reinstallation of attachment plug receptacles but not the outlets, therefore.

3. Replacement of branch circuit overcurrent devices of the required capacity in the same location.

4. Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment operating at less than 25 volts and not capable of supplying more than 50 watts of energy.

5. Minor repair work, including the replacement of lamps or the connection of approved portable electrical equipment to approved permanently installed receptacles.

c. Gas:

1. Portable heating, cooking or clothes drying appliances.

2. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.

3. Portable fuel cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

d. Mechanical:

1. Portable heating appliances.

2. Portable ventilation appliances.

3. Portable cooling units.

4. Replacement of any minor part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.

5. Portable evaporative coolers.

6. Self-contained refrigeration systems containing 10 pounds (4.54 kg) or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motors of 1 horsepower (746 W) or less.

7. Portable fuel cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.

e. Plumbing:

1. The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe; provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drainpipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with new material, such work shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be obtained and inspection made as provided in this code.

2. The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures, and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.

f. Repairs:

1. Ordinary minor repairs may be made without a permit, provided that such repairs shall not violate any of the provisions of the technical codes. Such minor repairs shall not include the cutting away of any wall, partition or portion thereof, the removal or cutting of any structural beam or loadbearing support, or the removal or change of any required means of egress, or rearrangement of parts of a structure affecting the egress requirements; nor shall ordinary repairs include addition to, alteration of, replacement or relocation of any water supply, sewer, drainage, drain leader, gas, soil, waste, vent or similar piping, electric wiring or mechanical or other work affecting public health or general safety. The building

official or his designee shall be available to determine whether the proposed repair is exempt.

2. Emergency repairs. Where equipment replacements and repairs that otherwise require a permit must be performed in an emergency situation, the permit application shall be submitted within the next working business day to the building official.

(3) *Temporary structures.* The erection of temporary structures such as construction sheds, seats, canopies, tents and fences used in construction work or for temporary purposes such as reviewing stands shall not require a permit as long as such structures shall be completely removed in a timely fashion.

(4) *Work authorized.* A building permit shall carry with it the right to construct or install the work, provided the same are shown on the drawings and set forth in the specifications filed with the application for the permit. Where these are not shown on the drawings and covered by the specifications submitted with the application, separate permits shall be required.

(5) *Information required.* Each application for a permit, with the required fee, shall be filed with the building official on a form furnished for that purpose and shall contain a general description of the proposed work and its location. The application shall be signed by the owner or his authorized agent. The building permit application shall indicate the proposed occupancy of all parts of the building and of that portion of the site or lot, of any, not covered by the building or structure, and shall contain such other information as may be required by the building official.

(b) *Drawings and specifications.*

(1) *Requirements.* When required by the building official, two or more copies of specifications, and of drawings drawn to scale with sufficient clarity and detail to indicate the nature and character of the work, shall accompany the application for the permit. Such drawings and specifications shall contain information, in the form of notes or otherwise, as to the quality of materials, where quality is essential to conformity with the technical codes. Such information shall be specific, and the technical codes shall not be cited as a whole or in part, nor shall the term "legal" or its equivalent be used as a substitute for specific information. All information, drawings, specifications, and accompanying date shall bear the name and signature of the person responsible for the design.

(2) *Additional data.* The building official may require details, computations, stress diagrams, and other data necessary to describe the construction or installation and the basis of calculations. All drawings, specifications, and accompanying data, required by the building official to be prepared by an architect or engineer, shall be affixed with their official seal.

(3) *Design professional.* The design professional shall be an architect or engineer, legally registered under the laws of this state regulating the practice or architecture or engineering, and shall affix his official seal to said drawings, specifications, and accompanying data, for the following:

a. All group A, E, and I occupancies.

b. Buildings and structures three stories or more high.

c. Buildings and structures 5,000 square feet (465 m) or more in area.

For all other buildings and structures, the submittal shall bear the certification of the applicant that some specific state law exception permits its preparation by a person not so registered.

(4) *Structural and fire resistance integrity.* Plans for all buildings shall indicate how required structural and fire resistance integrity will be maintained where a penetration of a required fire-resistant wall, floor or partition will be made for electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing and communication conduits, pipes and

systems and also indicate in sufficient detail how the fire integrity will be maintained where required fire-resistant floors intersect the exterior walls.

(5) *Site drawings.* Drawings shall show the location of the proposed building or structure and of every existing building or structure on the site or lot. The building official may require a boundary line survey prepared by a qualified surveyor.

(6) *Hazardous occupancies.* The building official may require the following:

a. *General site plan.* A general site plan drawn at a legible scale which shall include, but not be limited to, the location of all buildings, exterior storage facilities, permanent access ways, evacuation routes, parking lots, internal roads, chemical loading areas, equipment cleaning areas, storm and sanitary sewer accesses, emergency equipment, and adjacent property uses. The exterior storage areas shall be identified with the hazard classes and the maximum quantities per hazard class of hazardous materials stored.

b. *Building floor plan.* A building floor plan drawn to a legible scale which shall include, but not be limited to, all hazardous materials storage facilities within the building and shall indicate rooms, doorways, corridors, exits, fire rated assemblies, with their hourly rating, location of liquid tight rooms, and evacuation routes. Each hazardous materials storage facility shall be identified on the plan with the hazard classes and quantity range per hazard class of the hazardous materials stored.

(c) *Examination of documents.*

(1) *Plan review.* The building official shall examine, or cause to be examined, each application for a permit and the accompanying documents, consisting of drawings, specifications, computations and additional data, and shall ascertain by such examinations whether the construction indicated and described is in accordance with the requirements of the technical codes and all other pertinent laws or ordinances.

(2) *Affidavits.* The building official may accept a sworn affidavit from a registered architect or engineer stating that the plans submitted conform to the technical codes. For buildings and structures, the affidavit shall state that the plans conform to the laws as to egress, type of construction and general arrangement and, if accompanied by drawings, show the structural design and that the plans and design conform to the requirements of the technical codes as to strength, stresses, strains, loads and stability. The building official may, without any examination or inspection, accept such affidavit, provided the architect or engineer who made such affidavit agrees to submit to the building official copies of inspection reports as inspections are performed and upon completion of the structure, electrical, gas, mechanical, or plumbing systems a certification that the structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system has been erected in accordance with the requirements of the technical codes. Where the building official relies upon such affidavit, the architect or engineer shall assume full responsibility for the compliance with all provisions of the technical codes and other pertinent laws or ordinances.

(d) *Issuing permits.*

(1) *Action on permits.* The building official shall act upon an application for a permit without unreasonable or unnecessary delay. If the building official is satisfied that the work described in an application for a permit and the contract documents filed therewith conform to the requirements of the technical codes and other pertinent laws and ordinances, he shall issue a permit to the applicant.

(2) *Refusal to issue permit.* If the application for a permit and the accompanying contract documents describing the work do not conform to the requirements of the technical codes or other pertinent laws or ordinances, the building official shall not issue a permit but shall return the contract documents to the applicant with his refusal to issue such permit. Such refusal shall, when requested, be in writing and shall contain the reason for refusal.

(3) *Special foundation permit.* When application for permit to erect or enlarge a building has been filed and pending issuance of such permit, the building official may, at his discretion, issue a foundation only permit. The applicant may proceed at his own risk and without assurance that a permit for the remainder of the work will be granted or that corrections will not be required in order to meet provisions of the technical codes.

(4) *Public right-of-way.* A permit shall not be given by the building official for the construction of any building, or for the alteration of any building where said building is to be changed and such change will affect the exterior walls, bays, balconies, or other appendages or projections fronting on any street, alley or public lane, or for the placing on any lot or premises of any building or structure removed from another lot or premises of any building or structure removed from another lot or premises, unless the applicant has made application at the office of the director of the Department of Engineering identifying the public street on which he proposes to build, erect or locate said building; and it shall be the duty of the building official to see that the street lines are not encroached upon except as provided for in this code.

(e) *Contractor's responsibilities.* It shall be the duty of every contractor who shall make contracts for the installation or repairs of building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems, for which a permit is required, to comply with state or local rules and regulations concerning licensing which the applicable governing authority may have adopted.

(1) *Electrician's license.*

a. No person, firm or corporation shall engage in the electrical construction, installation or repair business, within the corporate limits of the City of Columbus, without obtaining a business license as required by the ordinances of the City of Columbus.

b. No person shall engage in the business of electrical contractor unless such person holds a valid license issued by the State Construction Industry Board, Division of Electrical Contractors. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of electrical contractor unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons actually engaged in the performance of such business on a fulltime basis who have valid licenses issued by the State Construction Industry Board, Division of Electrical Contractors.

c. Any person, partnership or corporation making application for a license to engage in the business of electrical contracting in Columbus, Georgia, shall furnish the Revenue Collections Division of Columbus, Georgia, a copy of the license issued by the division of electrical contractors.

d. No person shall engage in alarm system, general system, or telecommunication system, low-voltage contracting unless such person has a valid license issued by the state construction industry licensing board, division of low-voltage contracting. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of low-voltage contracting unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons, actually engaged in the performance of such business on a fulltime basis and supervising the low-voltage systems installation, repair, alteration, and service work of all employees of such partnership or corporation, who have valid licenses issued by the state construction industry licensing board, division of low-voltage contracting.

e. Any person, partnership or corporation, making application for a license to engage in the business of low-voltage contracting in the city shall furnish the revenue collections division of the city a copy of the license issued by the division of low-voltage contracting of the state construction industry licensing board.

(2) *Plumber license.* No person shall engage in the business of plumbing contractor unless such person holds a valid license for master plumber issued by the state construction industry board, division of

master plumbers and journeyman plumbers. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of plumbing unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons actually engaged in the performance of such business on a full-time basis who hold a valid license for master plumber issued by the state construction industry board, division of master plumbers and journeyman plumbers. Any person, partnership or corporation making application for a license to engage in the business of plumbing in Columbus, Georgia, shall furnish the revenue collections division of Columbus, Georgia, a copy of the license issued by the division of master plumbers and journeyman plumbers.

(3) *Mechanical license.* No person shall engage in the business of conditioned air contractor unless such person holds a valid license for conditioned air contractor issued by the state construction industry board, division of conditioned air contractors. No partnership or corporation shall have the right to engage in the business of conditioned air contractor unless there is regularly connected with such partnership or corporation a person or persons actually engaged in the performance of such business on a full-time basis who hold a valid license for conditioned air contractor issued by the state construction industry board, division of conditioned air contractors.. Any person, partnership or corporation making application for a license to engage in the business of conditioned air contractor in Columbus, Georgia, shall furnish the revenue collections division of Columbus, Georgia, a copy of the license issued by the division of conditioned air contractors.

(f) *Conditions of the permit.*

(1) *Permit intent.* A permit issued shall be construed to be a license to proceed with the work and not as authority to violate, cancel, alter, or set aside any of the provisions of the building official from thereafter requiring a correction of errors in plans, construction, or violations of this code. Every permit issued shall become invalid if the work authorized by such permit is not commenced within six months after its issuance, or if the work authorized by such permit is commenced within six months after its issuance but then is suspended or abandoned for a period of six months after the time the work is commenced. One or more extensions of time, for periods not more than 90 days each, may be allowed for the permit. The extension shall be requested in writing and justifiable cause demonstrated. Extensions shall be in writing by the building official.

(2) *Permit issued on basis of an affidavit.* Whenever a permit is issued in reliance upon an affidavit or whenever the work to be covered by a permit involves installation under conditions which, in the opinion of the building official, are hazardous or complex, the building official shall require that the architect or engineer who signed the affidavit or prepared the drawings or computations shall supervise such work. In addition, they shall be responsible for conformity with the permit, provide copies of inspection reports as inspections are performed, and upon completion make and file with the building official written affidavit that the work has been done in conformity with the reviewed plans and with the structural provisions of the technical codes. In the event such architect or engineer is not available, the owner shall employ in his stead a competent person or agency whose qualifications are reviewed by the building official.

(3) *Plans.* When the building official issues a permit, he shall endorse, in writing or by stamp, both sets of plans "Reviewed for Code Compliance." One set of drawings so reviewed shall be retained by the building official and the other set shall be returned to the applicant. The permit drawings shall be kept at the site of work and shall be open to inspection by the building official or his authorized representative.

(g) *Fees.*

(1) *Prescribed fees.* A permit shall not be issued until the fees prescribed herein have been paid. Nor shall an amendment to a permit be released until the additional fee, if any, due to an increase in the

estimated cost of the building, structure, electrical, plumbing, mechanical or gas systems, has been paid.

(2) *Work commencing before permit issuance.* Any person who commences any work on a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system before obtaining the necessary permits shall be subject to a penalty of 100 percent of the usual permit fee in addition to the required permit fees.

(3) *Accounting.* The building official shall keep a permanent and accurate accounting of all permit fees and other monies collected, the names of all persons upon whose account the same was paid, along with the date and amount thereof.

(4) *Fee schedule.*

a. *Building.* For all buildings, structures, or alterations requiring a building permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:

1. The permit fee for new construction and substantial renovation of one- or two-family residential structures shall be $0.35 per square feet of the structure. All areas under a roof shall be included in the total square feet of the structure. The minimum fee shall be $250.00.

2. The permit fee for new construction and substantial renovation of commercial structures shall be calculated per square foot and type of occupancy below:

• Assembly and Educational Occupancies = $0.65/square foot

• Business and Mercantile Occupancies = $0.50/square foot

• Residential Occupancy = $0.55/square foot

• All other occupancies = $0.40/square foot

All areas under a roof shall be included in the total square feet of the structure. The minimum fee shall be $250.00.

3. For renovation projects under $25,000, the permit fee shall be $100.00.

4. For renovation projects over $25,000.00, up to and including $50,000 the permit fee shall be $150.00.5. For renovation projects over $50,000.00, up to and including $75,000 the permit fee shall be $250.00. Renovation projects over $75,000.00 shall be deemed substantial renovation projects and fees will be calculated per paragraphs 1 and 2 above.

6. A plan review fee for commercial construction shall be one-fourth the permit fee to be submitted with permit application, $75.00 minimum. Plan review fee is a separate fee from the permit fee and shall not be deducted from the permit fee.

7. For the moving of any building or structure, other than a portable building, the fee shall be $150.00.

8. For moving of any portable building, the fee shall be $150.00.

9. For the demolition of any residential building or structure, the fee shall be $75.00.

10. For the issuance of any certificate of occupancy, the fee shall be $60.00.

11. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a reinspection shall be as follows:

i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.

ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be $75.00.

12. Where any building permit has been expired less than 24 months, the reactivation fee shall be $75.00

13. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shutdowns, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be $75.00, for the first hour, plus $50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.

b. *Gas.* For all gas systems requiring a permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of gas piping, appliances or appurtenances, the fee shall be $75.00 per meter.

2. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a reinspection shall be as follows:

i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.

ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be $75.00.

3. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shutdowns, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be $75.00, for the first hour, plus $50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.

c. *Electrical.* For all electrical systems requiring a permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of electrical work the fee shall be $75.00 per meter.

2. For temporary electrical service, the fee shall be $75.00 per meter.

3. For construction power permits the fee shall be $75.00 per meter.

4. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a re-inspection shall be as follows:

i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.

ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be $75.00.

5. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shutdowns, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be $75.00, for the first hour, plus $50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.

6. Construction power approval shall be issued for a period of no more than 180 days. If it is necessary for temporary work to remain for more than 180 days, request for such extension of temporary approval shall be made in writing by the person, firm or corporation holding the permit.

d. *Plumbing.* For all plumbing work requiring a permit a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition to any plumbing system, fixture, or appliance the fee shall be $75.00 per meter.

2. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a re-inspection shall be as follows:

i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.

ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be $75.00.

3. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shutdowns, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be $75.00, for the first hour, plus $50.00 for each additional hour thereafter.

e. *Mechanical.* For all heating and air conditioning work requiring a permit, a fee shall be paid as required at the time such permit is issued, in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the installation, repair, alteration or addition of heating, ventilating, duct, air conditioning and refrigeration systems, the fee shall be $75.00.

2. Where any work or installation has been disapproved, the fee for a re-inspection shall be as follows:

i. For first occurrence there will be no charge.

ii. For subsequent occurrences the fee shall be $75.00.

3. Where inspections are required after hours for approved shutdowns, or other emergency needs, the fee shall be $75.00, for the first hour, plus $50.00 for each additional hour thereafter

f. *Building permit valuations.* If for substantial renovation projects, in the opinion of the building official, the valuation of building, alteration, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing systems appears to be underestimated on the application, permit shall be denied, unless the applicant can show detailed estimates to meet the approval of the building official. Permit valuations shall include total cost, such as electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing equipment and other systems, including materials and labor.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17; Ord. No. 18-24, § 1, 6-12-18, eff. 7-1-18; Ord. No. 24-034, § 1, 6-11-24)

Sec. 8-14.5. Inspections.

(a) *Existing building inspections.* Before issuing a permit, the building official may examine or cause to be examined any building, electrical, gas, mechanical, or plumbing systems for which an application has been received for a permit to enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, install, or change the occupancy. He shall inspect all buildings, structures, electrical, gas, mechanical and plumbing systems, from time to time, during and upon completion of the work for which a permit was issued. He shall make a record of every such examination and inspection and of all violations of the technical codes.

(b) *Manufacturers and fabricators.* When deemed necessary by the building official, he shall make, or cause to be made, an inspection of materials or assemblies at the point of manufacture or fabrication. A record shall be made of every such examination and inspection and of all violations of the technical codes.

(c) *Inspection service.* The building official may make, or cause to be made, the inspections required by this section. He may accept reports of inspectors of recognized inspection services, provided that after investigation he is satisfied as to their qualifications and reliability. A certificate called for by any provision of the technical codes shall not be based on such reports unless the same are in writing and certified by a responsible officer of such service.

(d) *Inspections prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy or completion.* The building official shall inspect, or cause to be inspected, at various intervals all construction or work for which a permit is required, and a final inspection shall be made of every building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system upon completion, prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy or completion.

(e) *Posting of permit.* Work requiring a permit shall not commence until the permit holder, or his agent, posts the permit card in a conspicuous place on the premises. The permit shall be protected from the weather and located in such position as to permit the building official or representative to conveniently make the required entries thereon. This permit card shall be maintained in such position by the permit holder until the certificate of occupancy or completion is issued by the building official.

(f) *Required inspections.* The building official, upon notification from the permit holder or his agent, shall make the following inspections and such other inspections as necessary, and shall either release that portion of the construction or shall notify the permit holder or his agent of any violations which must be corrected in order to comply with this code:

(1) *Building.*

a. *Foundation inspection.* To be made after trenches are excavated and forms erected.

b. *Frame inspection.* To be made after the roof, all framing, fire-blocking, and bracing is in place, all concealing wiring, all pipes, chimneys, ducts and vents are complete.

c. *Final inspection.* To be made after the building is completed and ready for occupancy.

(2) *Gas.*

a. *Rough piping inspection:* To be made after all new piping authorized by the permit has been installed, and before any such piping has been covered or concealed or any fixtures or gas appliances have been connected.

b. *Final piping inspection:* To be made after all piping authorized by the permit has been installed and after all portions which are to be concealed by plastering or otherwise have been so concealed, and before any fixtures or gas appliances have been connected. This inspection shall include a pressure test.

c. *Final inspection:* To be made on all new gas work authorized by the permit and such portions of existing systems as may be affected by new work or any changes, to ensure compliance with all the requirements of this code and to ensure that the installation and construction of the gas system is in accordance with reviewed plans.

(3) *Electrical.*

a. The building official, or his duly authorized representative, shall inspect or cause to be inspected at various intervals all electrical work or installations for which an electrical permit is required, and upon completion of all work or installation, notice shall be given the building inspection department and a final inspection made.

b. Before any electrical work or installation is concealed, the building official, or his duly authorized representative, shall be notified. It shall then be his duty to inspect such work or installations, and, providing all the requirements of this code have been complied with, issue an approval to conceal the work or installation. It shall be unlawful for any individual, firm or corporation, their agents or employees, to cover or conceal any electrical installation before such inspection has been made.

c. The utility company shall not provide electrical service to any installations until the work to which service is to be provided has been approved by the building inspection department and the utility company so notified.

(4) *Plumbing.*

a. *Underground inspection.* To be made after trenches or ditches are excavated, piping installed, and before any backfill is put in place.

b. *Rough-in inspection.* To be made after the roof, framing, fire-blocking and bracing is in place, and all soil waste and vent piping is complete, and prior to the installation of wall or ceiling membranes.

c. *Final inspection.* To be made after the building is complete, all plumbing fixtures are in place and properly connected, and the structure is ready for occupancy. NOTE: See the applicable section of the International Plumbing Code for required tests.

(5) *Mechanical.*

a. *Underground inspection.* To be made after trenches or ditches are excavated, underground duct and fuel piping installed, and before any backfill is put in place.

b. *Rough-in inspection.* To be made after the roof, framing, fire-blocking and bracing are in place and all ducting, and other concealed components are complete, prior to the installation of wall or ceiling membranes.

c. *Final inspection.* To be made after the building is complete, the mechanical system is in place and properly connected, and the structure is ready for occupancy.

(g) *Reinforcing steel and structural frames.* Reinforcing steel or structural framework of any part of any building or structure shall not be covered or concealed without first obtaining a release from the building official.

(h) *Plaster fire protection.* In all buildings where plaster is used for fire protection purposes, the permit holder or his agent shall notify the building official after all lathing and backing is in place. Plaster shall not be applied until the release from the building official, or his designee, has been received.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.6. Certificates.

(a) *Certificate of occupancy.*

(1) *Building occupancy.* A new building other than a one- or two-family residence that is not a home occupation shall not be occupied or a change made in the occupancy, nature or use of a building or part of a building, business license name or description change until after the building official has issued a certificate of occupancy. Said certificate shall not be issued until all required electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing and fire protection systems have been inspected for compliance with the technical codes and other applicable laws and ordinances and released by the building official. An existing building other than a one- or two-family residence that is not a home occupation shall not be occupied or a change made in the occupancy, nature or use of a building or part of a building, business license name or description change until after the building official has issued a certificate of occupancy.

(2) *Issuing certificate of occupancy.* Upon satisfactory completion of a building or structure and installation of electrical, gas, mechanical, and plumbing systems in accordance with the technical codes, reviewed plans and specifications, and after the final inspection, the building official shall issue a certificate of occupancy stating the nature of the occupancy permitted, the number of persons for each floor when limited by law, and the allowable load per square foot for each floor in accordance with the provisions of this code.

(3) *Temporary/partial occupancy.* A temporary/partial certificate of occupancy may be issued for a portion or portions of a building which may safely be occupied prior to final completion of the building.

(4) *Business license.* No business license shall be issued for any occupancy or change of occupancy for a building or part of a building until after the building official shall have issued a certificate of occupancy therefore.

(b) *Certificate of completion.* Upon satisfactory completion of a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical, or plumbing system, a certificate of completion may be issued. This certificate is proof that a structure or system is complete and for certain types of permits is released for use and may be connected to a utility system. This certificate does not grant authority to occupy or connect a building, such as a shell building, prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

(c) *Service utilities.*

(1) *Connection of service utilities.* No person shall make connections from a utility, source of energy, fuel or power to any building or system which is regulated by the technical codes for which a permit is required, until released by the building official and a certificate of occupancy or completion is issued.

(2) *Temporary connection.* The building official may authorize the temporary connection of the building or system to the utility source of energy, fuel or power for the testing of building service systems or for use under a temporary certificate of occupancy.

(3) *Authority to disconnect service utilities.* The building official shall have the authority to authorize the disconnection of the utility service to the building, structure, or system regulated by the technical codes, in case of emergency where necessary to eliminate an immediate hazard to life or property. The building official shall notify the serving utility, and whenever possible the owner and occupant of the building, structure, or service system, of the decision to disconnect prior to taking such action. If not notified prior to disconnecting, the owner or occupant of the building, structure or service system, shall be notified in writing, as soon as practical thereafter.

(d) *Posting floor loads.*

(1) *Occupancy.* An existing or new building shall not be occupied for any purpose which will cause the floors thereof to be loaded beyond their safe capacity. The building official may permit occupancy of a building for mercantile, commercial or industrial purposes, by a specific business, when he is satisfied that such capacity will not thereby be exceeded.

(2) *Storage and factory-industrial occupancies.* It shall be the responsibility of the owner, agent, proprietor, or occupancy of Group S and Group F occupancies, or any occupancy where excessive floor loading is likely to occur, to employ a competent architect or engineer in computing the safe load capacity. All such computations shall be accompanied by an affidavit from the architect or engineer stating the safe allowable floor load on each floor in pounds per square foot uniformly distributed. The computations and affidavit shall be filed as a permanent record of the building department.

(3) *Signs required.* In every building or part of a building used for storage, industrial, or hazardous purposes, the safe floor loads, as reviewed by the building official on the plan, shall be marked on the plates of approved design which shall be supplied and securely affixed by the owner of the building in a conspicuous place in each story to which they relate. Such plates shall not be removed or defaced, and if lost, removed or defaced, shall be replaced by the owner of the building.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.7. Tests.

Whenever there is insufficient evidence of compliance with the provisions of this code, or evidence that a material or method does not conform to the requirements of this code, or in order to substantiate claims for alternative materials or methods, the building official shall have the authority to require tests as evidence of compliance to be made at no expense to the jurisdiction. Test methods shall be as specified in this code or by other recognized test standards. In the absence of recognized and accepted test methods, the building official shall

approve the testing procedures. Tests shall be performed by an approved agency. Reports of such tests shall be retained by the building official for the period required by the legally applicable records retention schedule.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.8. Appeals.

Whenever the building official shall reject or refuse to approve the mode or manner of construction proposed to be followed, or materials to be used in the erection or alteration of a building or structure, or when it is claimed that the provisions of this code do not apply, or that an equally good or more desirable form of construction can be employed in any specific case, or when it is claimed that the true intent and meaning of this code, or any of the regulations thereunder, have been misconstrued or wrongly interpreted, the owner of such building or structure, or his duly authorized agent, may appeal from the decision of the building official to the Council of Columbus, Georgia.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.9. Severability.

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this code is for any reason held to be unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this code.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17)

Sec. 8-14.10. Violations and penalties.

Any person, firm, corporation, or agent who shall erect, construct, alter, install, demolish, or move any structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, or has erected, constructed, altered, repaired, moved or demolished a building, structure, electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, in violation of any requirements set forth in this article or any permits or plans submitted or issued in accordance with this article, or shall fail to obtain a certificate of occupancy or otherwise comply with the requirements of this article shall be guilty of an offense, punishable as set forth in section 1-8 of the Columbus Code. Each such person shall be considered guilty of a separate offense for each and every day, or portion thereof, during which any violation of any violation of any of the provisions of this code is committed or continued, and upon conviction of any such violation, such person shall be punished as set forth in section 1-8 of the Columbus Code. Any person violating any provision of this article shall be fined a minimum of $500.00 for the first offense and shall be fined a minimum of $1,000.00 for a second and each subsequent offense at the same property location.

(Ord. No. 17-19, § 2, 5-9-17; Ord. No. 21-059, § 1, 11-9-21)