

Greetings to all stake-holders in the construction industry providing services in the Town of Estes Park,

The third public meeting in the process to propose adoption of the 2009 International Codes occurred on April 9, 2009. People attending the meeting received a lot of excellent information demonstrating the highly technical processes involved in designing (engineering) structures to comply with specific structural design criteria. Minimum structural design criteria are established to ensure structures perform to a minimum level of serviceability. Staff appreciates the assistance and feedback from all who participated in the meeting. Special thanks are extended to the following Licensed Design Professionals (architects and engineers) who shared their time and expertise to assist in making decisions establishing minimum climatic and geographic design criteria for the Town of Estes Park: Joe Calvin with Thorpe and Associates, John Spooner with Van Horn Engineering and Wayne Thompson with Landmark Engineering.

At the meeting, no final decisions were made; but, a solid foundation was placed. At the next meeting, to be facilitated on April 16, 2009, we will continue the discussion to determine proposed minimum structural design criteria. The discussion of these technical and impacting issues has just begun; and, at the meeting on April 9th, participants identified several issues requiring additional dialogue. These include but are not limited to the following issues.

1. The possible need to identify the design basic wind speed to the nearest mile per hour.
2. The definite need to determine the default wind exposure.
3. The need to identify all resources, options and alternate methods available, to address construction requirements in special (high) wind regions.
4. The need to determine and recognize pre-engineered prescriptive requirements.
5. The need to consider the value of historical performance of existing buildings.
6. The need to re-evaluate residential deck minimum design live load requirements.

The next meeting will be on April 16, 2009, in the Town Board room, from 3 p.m.-5 p.m. At that meeting, we will continue the process by building upon the excellent information the Licensed Design Professionals shared with us and attempt to reach consensus on the minimum structural design criteria for the Town of Estes Park. This criterion includes but is not limited to minimum design ground snow load, minimum design basic wind speed and minimum design wind exposure. Once the necessary requirement of determining these criteria is achieved, we will begin the identification and discussion of alternate methods, including prescriptive requirements that may be accepted as pre-engineered design. This includes examining Larimer County's prescriptive requirements adopted by amendment.

All stakeholders and other interested parties are encouraged and welcome to attend and to participate in this and all future meetings.

Will Birchfield,
Chief Building Official, Town of Estes Park