City and County of San Francisco
Department of Building Inspection

London N. Breed, Mayor
Patrick O'Riordan, C.B.O., Director

PRE-APPLICATION PLAN REVIEW MEETING

ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN NO. AB-028

(Cost revised effective March 23, 2023)

1. All requests for Pre-application Plan Review Meeting are to be addressed to:

   Plan Review Supervisor for Pre-application Meeting
   Department of Building Inspection
   49 South Van Ness Ave, Suite 590
   San Francisco, CA 94103

2. Review fees for Pre-application meeting:

   - Department of Building Inspection (DBI):
     - Building review (Structural and or architectural) $347.82 (for up to 2 hours)
     - Mechanical (MECH) review: $347.82 (for up to 2 hours)
     - Over two hours: $173.91 per hour or fraction thereof

   - San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) if review is required:
     - SFFD Initial fees: $544
     - Additional charges may apply at a rate of $136 per hour for research time prior to the meeting.

   - San Francisco Planning Department (SFDCP) if review is required for ADU projects:
     - Five or fewer proposed units $515
     - Six or more proposed units $1,218

   - The pre-application meeting will not be conducted until payment is received. DBI accepts check, wire transfer and ACH. All checks payable to CCSF-DBI. Write the project address on the check. There is a cost for wire transfers and ACH payments that individual banking institutions charge.

3. Submit pdf file of your pre-application meeting request letter and meeting materials to dbi.preapprequests@sfgov.org.

4. Pre-application scheduling:

   - Please allow at least 10 working days for a response to your request. You will be contacted by email to schedule the pre-application meeting date after senior plan examiner completes screening the submitted meeting materials. rev 11/2/2021

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Request for a Virtual Pre-application Meeting

https://sfdbi.org/request-virtual-pre-application-meeting

ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN

NO. AB-028 :

DATE : April 3, 2013(Updated 01/01/14 for code references)
(Supersedes Administrative Bulletin AB-028 dated 9/18/2002, Updated 01/01/11 for code references.)

SUBJECT : General Administrative Procedures

TITLE : **Pre-application and Pre-addendum Plan Review Procedures**

PURPOSE : To establish policies and procedures allowing for review and comment of specific design issues by the Department of Building Inspection (DBI) prior to application for a permit or prior to the submittal of addenda to a Site Permit.

REFERENCE : 2013 San Francisco Building Code
- Section 106A.4.9 Pre-application Plan Review or Inspection
- Section 110, Table 1A-B, Other Building Permit Application and Plan Review Fees
- DBI Administrative Bulletin AB-032, Site Permit Processing

DISCUSSION : A preliminary verbal interpretation of a code requirement or alternate method of construction is considered informal information and may not always be accepted by the Department of Building Inspection plan reviewer or supervisor who has been assigned to check the submittal documents for a project. Rather than wait for the plan review to reveal requirements of specific design issues, it may be advantageous to project sponsors to verify code requirements with a formal DBI interpretation prior to completion of project drawings and before submitting an application for a building permit or an addendum to a Site Permit.

This bulletin sets out the procedure for requesting, conducting and concluding such a Pre-application or Pre-Addendum Plan Review Meeting. It is not intended that a general, non-directed plan review of a project will be made during this meeting, but that specific code issues will be addressed and resolved. Formal written confirmation of decisions agreed upon will be issued to the project sponsor following the meeting.

Request For Pre-Application or Pre-Addendum Plan Review Meeting

1. Submit requests for a pre-application or pre-addendum plan review meeting in writing as follows:

a. List the items to be reviewed in the form of specific questions. The applicant shall propose a solution or provide a statement of position regarding each question asked, and shall include pertinent code references. Each item should be numbered. This list of questions or items will then form the agenda for review and response.

b. Include applicable drawings, documents, and other information as necessary to describe the conditions under question.

c. On the submitted drawings, highlight or "cloud" the areas to be reviewed, and provide cross-references to the questions. Where questions pertain to means of egress, indicate the path of egress on the drawings with arrows.

2. To cover fees, include a check made out to the Department of Building Inspection (See FEES below).

3. Address requests to:

Manager, Permit Services
Department of Building Inspection
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103-2414

Indicate on the outside of the envelope: **Pre-Application/Pre-Addendum Plan Review Request**

4. Provide several acceptable meeting times of your choice. Allow at least 10 working days for a response to the request for a meeting appointment.

Meeting and Response

5. The Manager, Plan Review Services, will assign your pre-application or pre-addendum plan review request to one of the following section supervisors:

a. Structural Plan Review

b. Mechanical Plan Review

c. Premium Plan Review

d. Other Department staff as required

6. The request for a pre-application or pre-addendum plan review meeting may result in a meeting or it may result in a letter of response, if that is determined to be appropriate by the responsible Supervisor.

7. The review will be conducted by the Supervisor of the appropriate section or by other staff as assigned. One or more plan reviewers from Department of Building Inspection staff may be assigned to participate in the pre- application or pre-addendum plan review meeting depending on the complexity of the project and the issues raised. When necessary, representatives from other agencies such as the San Francisco Fire Department, Department of Public Works, Department of Public Health, Planning Department, or the Redevelopment Agency may be requested to attend.

8. The Department representative will have final authority to determine which questions are addressed. Questions which are determined to be too broad in scope may be deleted from the agenda. Discussion will be limited to the items on the agenda.

9. The Department may request additional information from the project sponsor in preparation for a pre- application or pre-addendum plan review meeting or as a follow-up to such a meeting.

10. At the beginning of a meeting the project sponsor will be advised of the time allowed before additional plan review fees will be charged. A typical pre-application or pre-addendum plan review meeting, depending on the complexity of the project or issue, can be covered adequately in 2 hours or less of meeting time.

11. A Department of Building Inspection staff member or the project sponsor will be designated to take notes during the meeting. If the size or location of the meeting warrants, the Department representative may request that a third party take the notes. Notes shall be taken on a standard form provided by DBI. At the conclusion of the meeting a copy of the notes taken during the meeting will be provided to the principal attendees. Those notes, which record the findings and agreements of the meeting, are to be signed by a Department of Building Inspection representative, by representatives of other departments as applicable, and by the project sponsor. Questions or topics not acknowledged in these notes will not be considered as part of the pre-application or pre-addendum plan review agreements. Alternatively, the Department may choose to issue a letter following the meeting. Such letter or other written communication shall be prepared by Department staff or the project sponsor within 10 working days of the conclusion of the meeting. Within 10 working days of receipt of such letter, the DBI staff will review and return the letter, signed, as "approved," "approved with

conditions," or "disapproved." The letter shall state the reasons for such determinations. DBI will track the time of issuance and approval of such letters to confirm that the above time limits are met.

12. For clarity, each item number of the written response shall correspond to the item number on the agenda.

13. Any notes, annotated drawings and other documents from the meeting may be attached to the notes or letter of agreement and submitted by the project sponsor for reference at the time of permit or addendum application.

14. The project sponsor shall attach a copy of the signed conclusions of the pre-application or pre-addendum plan review meeting, or the letter of response in lieu of meeting, to the permit application or addendum drawings. **These decisions will be honored by the responsible plan reviewer during the plan review process and subsequently by field inspection staff.**

15. The project sponsor may request a review of the determination of the staff of the Department of Building Inspection by the Manager of Plan Review Services or the Director. Determinations of the Director may be appealed to the Building Inspection Commission. Certain issues related to alternate methods and materials and technical equivalencies may be appealed to the Board of Examiners.

16. In the event the code provisions referenced by the application are substantively revised prior to filing for permit, the applicant will be required to submit for a new pre-application plan review meeting.

FEES:

16. Fee Schedule:

a. Fees for initial and each subsequent meeting for a pre-application or pre-addendum plan review meeting are as noted in the 2010 San Francisco Building Code Fee Schedule, Table 1A-B, Item 5, Pre-application Plan Review Fee. This fee covers a review of the submitted documents, research, formulating a response, and the meeting itself. The meeting time shall not exceed a total of two hours under this base fee.

b. Additional meeting time beyond two hours for both pre-application and pre-addendum meetings is to be charged on a per person, hourly basis per San Francisco Building Code, Table 1A-D, Item 1.

c. The San Francisco Fire Department charges plan review fees in addition to the above fees when Fire Department personnel are included in a meeting.

17. Fees, in addition to the pre-application plan review fee paid in advance, will be calculated at the conclusion of the meeting. Notes or letters of agreement will not be released by the Department until all pre-application or pre- addendum plan review fees are paid.

18. If the initial pre-application or pre-addendum plan review fee is paid but no such meeting is subsequently held and no preparatory work has been done, the fee may be refunded upon written request by the project sponsor and agreement by the Department.

Revision signed by:

Tom C. Hui, S.E., C.B.O, Acting Director April 3, 2013

Revision signed by:

Thomas Harvey, Fire Marshal March 28, 2013

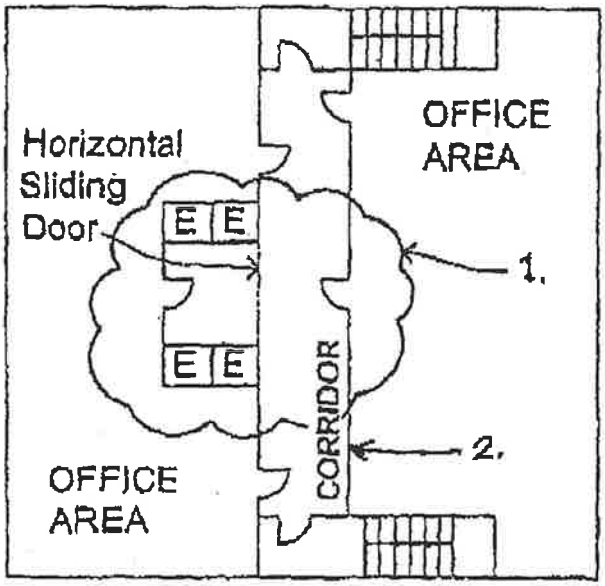
Originally approved by the Building Inspection Commission on September 18, 2002, revision approved March 20, 2013

Attachment: Sample Question

SAMPLE QUESTION
AB-028

1. Regarding the typical 56 foot square floor plan of a four-story, fully sprinklered office building as shown, would the elevator lobby be permitted to open onto the corridor? The floor is occupied by a single tenant of less than 30 occupants. The elevator hoist way and stair enclosures are not pressurized. (San Francisco Building Code Section 708.14.1

2. Is a fire-resistance rated corridor required to connect both exit enclosures? (San Francisco Building Code Section 1015, Section 1016, and Section 1018.)



TYPICAL PLAN @ UPPER FLOORS