

Construction Certificate Management Procedure (CCMP) for Terrebonne Parish/City of Houma, LA

The Planning and Zoning Department is responsible for the administration of all development issues within the Parish including permitting, inspection, and review of all construction along with the creation of and maintenance of all building permit files and administrative documents (ordinances, building guides, applications, forms, outreach materials, etc.) related to building and development. All inspections and permit/plan reviews are conducted by the Planning and Zoning Department as well as all permit approvals and floodplain management reviews.

The purpose of this document is to explain our management procedures for review of Elevation Certificates (ECs) and all other floodplain-related construction certificates required including, but not limited to, Floodproofing Certificates, V Zone Certificates, and Engineered Opening Certificates. These procedures outline the types of certificates required, the collection and review of all certificates, how corrections should be made, where the certificates are stored/archived and how the department makes these certificates available to the general public.

Types of Certificates Required

When any new construction, substantial improvement or repair for a substantially damaged building is conducted in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) or Advisory Base Flood Elevation area, the Planning and Zoning Department shall require an EC, and any other floodplain-related certificate that is appropriate (Floodproofing Certificate for Non-Residential Buildings, V Zone Design Certificate and/or Engineered Opening Certificate) for the development.

Certificates required

Certificate Requirements

The applicant shall submit an EC marked "Construction Drawings" or "Building Under Construction" during the Building Permit Application process. This EC shall be used to determine if the proposed design is in compliance with the TPCG Code of Ordinances, specifically Chapter 9 Flood Damage Prevention and Chapter 6 Buildings and Structures. Once construction on the building is finished and all adjacent grading is finalized, a complete and correct "Finished Construction" EC must be submitted by the applicant to show the as-built characteristics of the building. A "Finished Construction" EC must be received, reviewed and corrected (if necessary) before final inspections are performed and a Certificate of Occupancy is issued. At this point, all other required certificates must also be submitted and reviewed.

When required

If a Floodproofing Certificate for Non-Residential Structures is required for a floodproofed non-residential building, an EC is not required. A complete and correct Floodproofing Certificate is required to be submitted to the Building Department once construction is finished on the building and prior to issuing a CO.

A V Zone design certificate is required for all new construction and substantial improvement/substantial damage within an identified V Zone on our FIRM and ABFE map. The

V Zone certificate is required before granting the initial building permit, as it certifies the structural design and the proposed methods of construction for the building. An initial EC before construction as well as a complete and correct final EC once construction is finished on the building are also required.

Specifically, the Planning and Zoning Department requires:

- Elevation certificates for properties in the SFHA on the FIRM and ABFE maps, both before and after construction
- V Zone Design Certificates for properties in the V Zone before construction
- Floodproofing Certificates for Non-Residential Structures

Departmental Review Plan

Who collects

All Finished Construction ECs shall be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Department Permits Division for tracking and review. The certificates will be delivered to the Permit Clerks, Floodplain Manager, Planner II, and/or Assistant Director. Upon receipt, the certificates will be reviewed by the Floodplain Manager, Planner II, and Assistant Director, or at least two of the three if one person is absent using the CRS EC Checklist. The reviewers will review the EC and supporting documentation, along with all other required certificates, to ensure all applicable building and development ordinances and standards are met. If the certificates contain errors, the Floodplain Manager, Planner II, and/or Assistant Director will reach out to the certificate creator via email to request that the errors be fixed. If the certificate creator does not respond in 48 hours, the Floodplain Manager, Planner II, and/or Assistant Director will make a follow up phone call. If the final elevation certificate contains errors, power may not be released to the property and final inspections and the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy may be delayed until the errors are fixed – the Floodplain Manager, Planner II, and Assistant Director will determine this possibility on a case by case basis. When the certificate is deemed correct, it will be uploaded to the Z Drive, saved in the master CRS Permit List Template, and marked complete in the permit system.

Who reviews

Corrections

Certificate Corrections

The reviewers should consult the CRS EC Checklist when reviewing an EC to ensure all required fields are completed correctly. When an error is noticed on an EC, there are three ways to correct it:

1. For any inaccurate or incomplete information in Section C2, the Floodplain Manager should request a new certificate from the applicant or their representative (surveyor/engineer/architect) who certified the form.
2. If incomplete or inaccurate information is found in the other sections, the local official can do the following. As a general rule, and as law in some states, the local official SHOULD NOT mark up a signed and sealed form.
 - a. The forms may be returned to the applicant (or their representative) with instructions on what needs to be changed or corrected;

- b. The reviewer can prepare a separate memo with the correct information and attach the Memo of Correction. When the certificate is provided to an inquirer, the memo must be included with it; or
- c. The reviewer can note the changes or corrections in Section G.

All “Finished Construction” ECs which had errors on them should be returned to the applicant or surveyor within 48 hours for immediate correction. In no case shall we accept a “Finished Construction” EC until all corrections deemed appropriate by the reviewers are addressed.

If corrections are completed after the Certificate of Occupancy, the Planning and Zoning Department must ensure the homeowner receives a copy of the corrected EC in case the correction(s) would affect their insurance rating. All Elevation Certificates and updated Elevation Certificates are uploaded to the permit file in the online My Permit Now database, which is accessible to each applicant.

Certificate Maintenance

Maintenance

All ECs and all required construction certificates, as well as all other permit application documentation shall be uploaded to the corresponding permits in the permit system, marked complete in the permit system, and saved digitally in the departmental Z Drive. All ECs in the SFHA will be noted on the CRS Permit List Template.

Certificate Availability

Made available

The Planning and Zoning Department Permits Division provides certificates to inquirers upon request – this is advertised on tpcg.org/floodplain. The Permits Division supplies the requested certificate to the inquirer within 10 business days.

Annual Recertification

The Assistant Director will provide the requisite certificates for new construction and substantial improvement in the SFHA (no accessory structures) from August 2nd through July 31st of the recertification year at each annual recertification.