



CITY OF EVANSTON • FIRE & LIFE SAFETY SERVICES

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April 16, 2008

Mr. Ron Nayler, V.P. for F.M.
Northwestern University
2020 Ridge Avenue
Evanston, Il. 60208

Re: Charles Dawes House
Evanston History Center
225 Greenwood, Evanston

Dear Mr. Nayler:

At the request of Northwestern University, the owner of the property, a fire inspection of the above named premise was conducted on Friday, April 4, 2008. Present at the inspection were members from Northwestern University as well as members from the Evanston History Center. Northwestern University presented a copy of an assessment report of the building performed by WMA Engineering. The report concentrated on mechanical, electrical and plumbing but did address fire protection topics, and in particular, the need for sprinklers.

The applicable codes for this inspection would be the 2003 NFPA Life-Safety 101 and the International Fire Code. The Life-Safety Code takes into consideration existing structures as well as historical buildings. Section 4.6.3 of the Code states, "The provisions of this Code shall be permitted to be modified by the authority having jurisdiction for buildings or structures identified and classified as historic buildings or structures where it is evident that a reasonable degree of safety is provided." The Code continues under Annex A, "In existing buildings, it is not always practical to strictly apply the provisions of this Code... In such cases, the authority having jurisdiction should be satisfied that reasonable life-safety is ensured."

The Dawes House, under its current use is an A-3 Assembly Use Group. This is based upon its use, floor area and the potential for the number of people it can accommodate. Therefore, Chapter 13 of the Life-Safety Code would apply. "Existing Assembly." Under the strictest application of this section, The following areas were identified:

1. Sprinkler would be required throughout the entire structure based upon the Life-Safety Code.
2. Exiting is inadequate in many areas of the building, especially on the upper levels.
3. There is no fire or smoke separation between floors.
4. Storage is in excess on the upper floor.

However, there are several factors that I have taken into account in providing the restrictions listed below. The building has a fire alarm system and typically has a very low number of occupants in it at any one time. All patrons are generally escorted by a staff. Based upon the fire inspection, my observations and review of the applicable codes, I would impose the following restrictions on the use of the building until improvements are made:

1. Limited the use of the first floor to less than 50 people at any one time.
2. Properly mark the west exit from the first floor with exit signs (on battery backup) and remove curtains from exit door.
3. Properly mark the main entrance with an exit sign.
4. Limit the use of the basement to business use and not more than 5 people. Any person other than the staff must be escorted.
5. Properly mark the north exit in the basement to provide a visible second exit.
6. Significantly reduce or eliminate storage on the upper floor or provide sprinkler protection or enclosed the area with 1-hour fire-resistive assemblies. (NFPA 101, 13.3.2.1.2)
7. The upper floors should not be accessible to the public.
8. Provide functioning emergency lighting in the public areas.
9. No open flames, smoking or other heating devices shall be used unless permitted by the Fire Department.

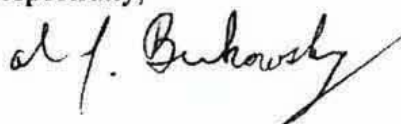
I feel with these measures a reasonable degree of life-safety is being provided. The Code also provides an alternative for these structures by allowing an architect or engineer to determine an equivalency for some or all of the life-safety deficiencies noted. This approach would be up to the History Center's Board. Lastly, there is apparently a wedding planned for May 4th. According to Mr. Ken Smith, they are expecting 55 people and plan to use only the first floor. I would allow this wedding to continue with the stipulation that they hire an Evanston Firefighter for "Firewatch" for this specific function.

You are hereby ordered to remove or remedy said conditions and/or fire hazards that are in violation of the Fire Prevention and Life Safety Codes of the City of Evanston. Please reply by April 29, 2008 with a plan of action.

In accordance with City Ordinance, these violations may be appealed to the Fire Chief of Evanston provided that you notify me within 5 days upon receipt of this order. If you fail to do so, you shall waive all rights of appeal.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (847) 866-5918.

Respectfully,



Alan J. Berkowsky
Fire Chief
City of Evanston

Cc: Eden Juron Pearlman, Director, Evanston History Center
Julia Carroll, City Manager
James Wolinski, Director Of Community Development