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Panel hunts down conflicts in Rhode Island codes

March 13, 2014 - Rhode Island

Have you run up against inconsistencies in various codes in your day-to-day work? Now's the time to speak up!

That's the word from Eric Wishart of Civil CADD Services Inc., who represents the Rhode Island Builders Association on the new Code Consistency Council (CCC), authorized by the Rhode Island General Assembly in 2013. The purpose of the CCC is to review the state's codes, including building, fire, environmental, mechanical, and even elevator, for conflicts.

"We won't be the ones to resolve the conflicts, but our task is to identify the conflicts and make recommendations for the state to adopt a single version," Wishart said. "For example, if one code says a handrail has to be 2 inches off the wall and another says it has to be 1½ inches, we want that brought into consistency."

The CCC is mandated to present a report by March 31st. The panel's first meeting was in mid-January. So there isn't much time. RIBA members are asked to report to Wishart as soon as possible with any code conflicts they've encountered.

He said he has received few comments from members so far.

"Two of these were about inconsistencies in inspections. I know that's a problem, but that's not what CCC is about. We're looking for inconsistencies in the building and design requirements."

The CCC has 15 members. Along with Wishart, there are engineers, architects, contractors, building and fire officials, and inspectors. The panel plans to meet every two weeks until its report is ready, according to Wishart.

"I'd like members to let me know their three top pet peeves when it comes to code inconsistencies," he said.

Paul Eno is the owner and editor-in-chief of New River Press, Woonsocket and is the editor of the monthly RIBA newsletter, The Rhode Island Builder Report.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540