

The Liberty Letter

Liberty Tower Condominiums

April 2005



Liberty Tower Owners Association

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Building's Systems To Get Evaluation

The functional systems that serve Liberty Tower may be getting a professional analysis in the coming months to determine their current condition.

The review would be an initial step to determine compliance issues related to the Tulsa Fire Marshal's February violation notice.

In the notice, the Fire Mar-

shal noted concerns that alterations to the building's walls, fire stops, shaft enclosures, partitions and floors over the years may have diminished its ability to contain the spread of fire.

Such alterations are not uncommon in older buildings.

After recent discussions with design professionals, LTOA Board President Scott Williams said the evaluation is a logical place to start.

"We have to take this one step at a time," he said.

A team of inspectors from the City of Tulsa visited LT the last week of March to develop a list of specific fire-safety concerns. LTOA's evaluation would coincide with the city's efforts in working toward a correction plan.

"We need to get on the same page with them," Williams said.

Fire Sprinkler Appeal Process Moving On

Tulsa's City Council will likely hear Liberty Tower's appeal for exemption from automatic fire sprinkler requirements in the near future.

The initial appeal was not granted by the city's Building, Housing and Fire Prevention Appeals Board following a lengthy hearing March 17.

All high rise buildings are required by city ordinance to have automatic sprinkler systems installed by Jan. 1, 2010.

Attorney Floyd Walker, representing 81 owners in LT argued extensively during the hearing that the cost of retrofitting automatic fire sprinklers in the building would represent an unconstitutional taking of property by the government without fair compensation.

"My clients are not saying that approved automatic sprinkler systems in each and every taller building in this city would not lend itself to avoiding a rapid

"... The only thing that has changed here is that we have a new ordinance."

— Joe Miller

spread of fire throughout the taller building," Walker said. "However, does the benefit outweigh the cost?"

Citing a letter written by LT resident Dennis Zigrang which described the plight that would result from installing safety air bags in older cars, Walker argued new safety technology may be impractical or unfeasible for older existing buildings

Walker was assisted by LT Board Member Joe Miller, who is chairing the 2010 Fire Code Committee. Miller highlighted the building's 40-year safety record and the limited incomes of many residents.

"Many of the people who would have to kick in for the cost to (install fire sprinklers) do not have the money to do so," Miller said.

"We have been living in the building for 40 years without distinct hazards, and we can go on living there

safely another 40 years," he added. "The only thing that has changed here is that we have a new ordinance."

Fire Marshal Paul Gallahar explained his office has been working actively with the 30 affected high-rise building owners to make them aware of the sprinkler compliance deadline. Each building is being encouraged to prepare a plan of action.

He acknowledged the order from his office that sparked the appeal lacked specificity in existing fire code violations in LT. His staff would work to develop a more detailed list.

"My clients plan to comply with the Fire Marshal's violations as soon as possible," Walker said. "However, we need specific violations."

Gallahar concluded the bottom line issue is life safety.

"We are doing what needs to be done to protect the citizens of Tulsa," he said.

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(Maintained by Bill Johnson)

Happenings ...

SPEAKING OF FIRE SAFETY

Fire safety starts in each resident's unit. Each unit is required to have an operating smoke detector. It should be tested regularly, and batteries should be changed with each time change — which happens to be this month. Residents also need to be very careful with candles and other flammables. Items cooking on the stove should never be left unattended, and irons and other appliances should be turned off when their use is finished. If the building's fire alarm sounds, feel the unit's front door for heat before opening it. If hallways or stairwells are filled with smoke, remain in the unit, place towels under the door to block smoke and wait for the Fire Department.

POOL BOILER ORDERED

In preparation for the coming swimming season, a new boiler has been ordered to heat water in the 7th floor swimming pool. The old boiler provided inconsistent heating last year and required replacing.

PENTHOUSE REDECORATING

Residents on the 24th floor have selected materials and colors to renovate their hallway. They are the latest floor to take advantage of LT's \$1,200 allotment for new carpet. Work should take place this month.

WINDOW WORK GOES NORTH

Work has wrapped up sealing the exposed windows on the building's south face — just in time for the spring storm season. Crews have now moved to the north side and will be working on M and A unit windows. Leaks of another kind were also being addressed at month's end. Heavy rains March 24 caused a leak in the elevator room and rendered the No. 2 elevator unusable until the components could dry out and be repaired. The leak was also corrected.

H&G Plants Busy '05 Agenda

The outside of Liberty Tower is changing as much as the inside thanks to efforts of the House and Grounds Committee.

Two small fountains and numerous spring flowers have brightened the building's exterior and entrances thanks to some hard work by several H&G members.

Two committee recommendations approved by the LT Board will help keep things green and clean in the coming months. A yard maintenance service will begin maintaining the beds, bushes and grassy areas over the next year at a cost of \$2,200.

An additional \$1,500 was allotted to make repairs to the sprinkler sys-

tem — primarily along the south side of the building on 16th Street.

The board also approved the committee's request for \$500 in painting supplies so volunteers can paint areas of the lobby, clubroom and the building's other common elements.

The committee also recommended that the large decorative mirrors be returned to the lobby area until a suitable security alternative can be found.

Other items being looked at include refinishing the wood benches and rebuilding the front desk in the lobby, installing a new sign on the corner of 15th and Boulder, and improving security lighting around the building's exterior perimeter.

Commentary ...

What A Fool Believes

In my newspaper career, April Fool's Day was looked upon as a creative holiday.

The objective was to come up with an outlandish story and see if you could make people believe it. It was all done in good humor and usually poked fun at the institutions, events or controversies of the day.

My first effort involved a story about tearing down the Keystone Dam. I must admit it was not an original idea. In 1973, my hometown paper had run an April Fool's story about tearing down a nearby dam. Its believability prompted hundreds of concerned calls and letters to local officials.

I tried to make my story less believable. A Mr. Drydup was quoted extensively explaining how dismantling the dam would provide jobs. The fertile lake bottom would be great for agriculture.

To add effect, I borrowed a toy crane and set it next to the dam. Since it was before the days of photo enhancement, I had to lay on my side with a

wide-angle lens to make the photo appear real.

Needless to say, the readers got a chuckle.

The next year, we touched on the divisions between Sand Springs and Prattville.

The headline read "Prattville De-annexes from Sand Springs." The story related how a group of citizens stormed City Hall demanding a separate city.

A photo of the iconic Charles Page statue with a sign "Welcome to Prattville" on it accompanied the story.

An obscure paragraph stated Mr. Page's statue was slightly damaged when it was bumped against the Keystone Expressway overpass while being carried to Prattville. A few days later, a reader called to say those people should have taken better care of the statue while they were carrying it.

P.T. Barnum would have been proud.

Many of us tend to take life too seriously. Those who can't have a good laugh are the true fools. *Andy Templeton*