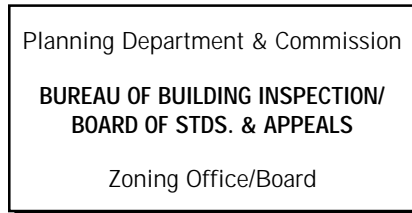
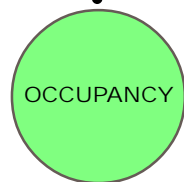
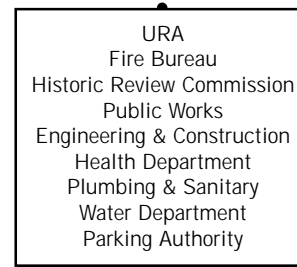


DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESS



SECONDARY OR INDIRECT PROJECT APPROVALS:
*depending on the project a developer will be affected by decisions
 made in the following departments:*



BOARD REVIEW SCHEDULE

Plan Submittal:
 Submit the appeal by the **FIRST TUESDAY** in advance of the appeal.

Appeals hearings:
 The Board normally is scheduled to meet in the first floor Hearing Room of the John P. Robin Building at 200 Ross Street on the **THIRD TUESDAY** of each month, beginning at 9am. Be sure to contact the Bureau of Building Inspection to schedule appointments for reviews prior to submittals or appeals.

PLEASE REMEMBER!
 This pamphlet is only a guide for project development feasibility. It is **NOT** a guarantee of project approval. Consulting an architect is highly advised for a successful review. This checklist represents conditions where an appeal to the Board of Standards and Appeals is necessary due to the lack of a second means of egress in an existing "sliver" building. Buildings/projects that meet these criteria **MAY** be aided by the use of this checklist in requesting a variance.

PRODUCED FOR THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH
 PITTSBURGH DOWNTOWN PLAN BY PFAFFMANN + ASSOCIATES



Department of City Planning
 Eloise Hirsh
 Michael Stern

Bureau of Building Inspection
 Dom Cimino
 Ron Graziano
 Dennis Moulton

Board of Standards and Appeals
 Bernard Liff, FAIA, Chairman
 Dennis Roth, PE
 Ana Guzman, AIA
 Ed Wunderly, PE
 Greg Calabria

Fire Bureau
 Asst. Chief Peter J. Michelli, Jr.

CONTACTS

You can also visit Pittsburgh's website (www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us) to get additional contact information and all forms required from the BBI website.

CITY OF PITTSBURGH CONTACTS

BUREAU OF BUILDING INSPECTION & PLAN REVIEW 255-2181
 Building Permits & Plan Reviews; Applications for the Board of Standards & Appeals can be obtained here.

Licenses & Permits (Contractor Registration, FA Systems) 255-2858
 Electrical Permits 255-2160

Bureau of Fire Prevention tests and maintains all fire alarm systems.
 Review of proposed system design is by the Bureau of Building Inspection.

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING 255-2200
 All of downtown is in C-5 District (Sub-districts relate primarily to height limits on new construction).
 Zoning Office 255-2246
 Zoning Administrator 255-2241
 Zoning Board of Adjustment 255-2658
 Planning Commission 255-2219

Zoning process includes City Planning Commission approval of Project Development Plan (greater than \$50,000 external alteration requires Development Plan approval by Planning Commission).

Historic Review Commission 255-2243
 Certificate of appropriateness required for exterior alterations if a property is a city-designated historic structure or in a city-designated historic district.

DEPT. OF ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION 255-8850
 This department designs and build public improvements downtown and has a wealth of information about street and sidewalk construction standards.

Curb cuts: Division of Streets 255-8626
 Street Permits: Division of Traffic Engineering 255-2793

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS 255-2737
 This department maintains streets, lighting, etc. It reviews and approves curb cuts and side walk modifications. The downtown area is subject to specific design/engineering standards for granite curbs and sidewalk materials.

OTHER AGENCY CONTACTS

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY 255-6550
 Streetface program is administered by this department

ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
 Restaurants/food services 578-8161
 Environmental conditions (lead, asbestos, air quality) 578-8010
 Plumbing Inspection 578-8036

PARKING AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH 456-2770
 Parking meters, public garages, lots

UTILITY COMPANIES & DEPARTMENTS
 Water & Sewer Authority: Planning Modules (load calculations) are required to allow the city to plan impacts on the systems. 255-8987

Electric: Duquesne Light has very specific service design standards that can be obtained by contacting the Utility.

Gas: Similar to Electric. Remember that the utilities to a building must be easily shut down in the event of fire. Older structures may be inadequate in this regard.

SLIVER BUILDING

A GUIDE TO REUSE OF PITTSBURGH'S OLDER BUILDINGS

BUILDING CODE GUIDE



INTRODUCTION



This guide focuses on a relatively small but important group of single exit building types that are currently underutilized in prime locations downtown—the so-called sliver buildings. As part of a new Downtown Plan, the City of Pittsburgh examined strategies to encourage reuse of older structures in the Golden Triangle. In part, this brochure is a response to confusion by building owners and developers over application of the building code to some older downtown buildings. More broadly, the checklist enclosed addresses the fact that the reuse of many downtown buildings—particularly above the first floor level—has been deterred by a number of issues, including the safety and access provisions of the building code.

The City of Pittsburgh is committed to strategic flexibility in the application of its codes to ensure the continued viability of the downtown building stock. The Board of Standards and Appeals is empowered to approve reasonable variances from the code, and can grant such variances, while vigorously safeguarding the interests of the public welfare. While maintaining these standards of safety, the city seeks to communicate the process of seeking construction code variances for occupancy of single-exit “Sliver” buildings as clearly as possible.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact a design professional due to the complex and varied circumstances of each single exit “Sliver Building” project.

NAVIGATING THE DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESS FOR AN ADAPTIVE REUSE:

The City of Pittsburgh has adopted (with amendments) the BOCA (Building Officials & Code Administrators) National Building Code. The code is administered by the City’s Bureau of Building Inspection (BBI). According to the provisions of the code, any alteration of an existing building must comply under one of the following two processes:

1. CONVENTIONAL REVIEWS

Conventional reviews are approved by BBI staff as conforming to the BOCA standards for new construction or change of use.

2. EXISTING STRUCTURE REVIEWS

Alternative reviews are encouraged by BBI staff under the provisions of Article 34 of the BOCA Code. However, Article 34 provides no means to mitigate lack of a second means of egress in a multistory building, making it impossible for such buildings to be approved under this part of the code.

APPEAL TO BOARD OF STANDARDS & APPEALS

ONLY when the above approval approaches cannot be used, should an applicant seek approval by appealing to the Board of Standards and Appeals. This is a variance from the strict application of the code, permitting use of an alternative or equivalent measure which will not reduce the level of safety required by the code. Such an appeal requires a showing that the strict application of the code would result in undue hardship.

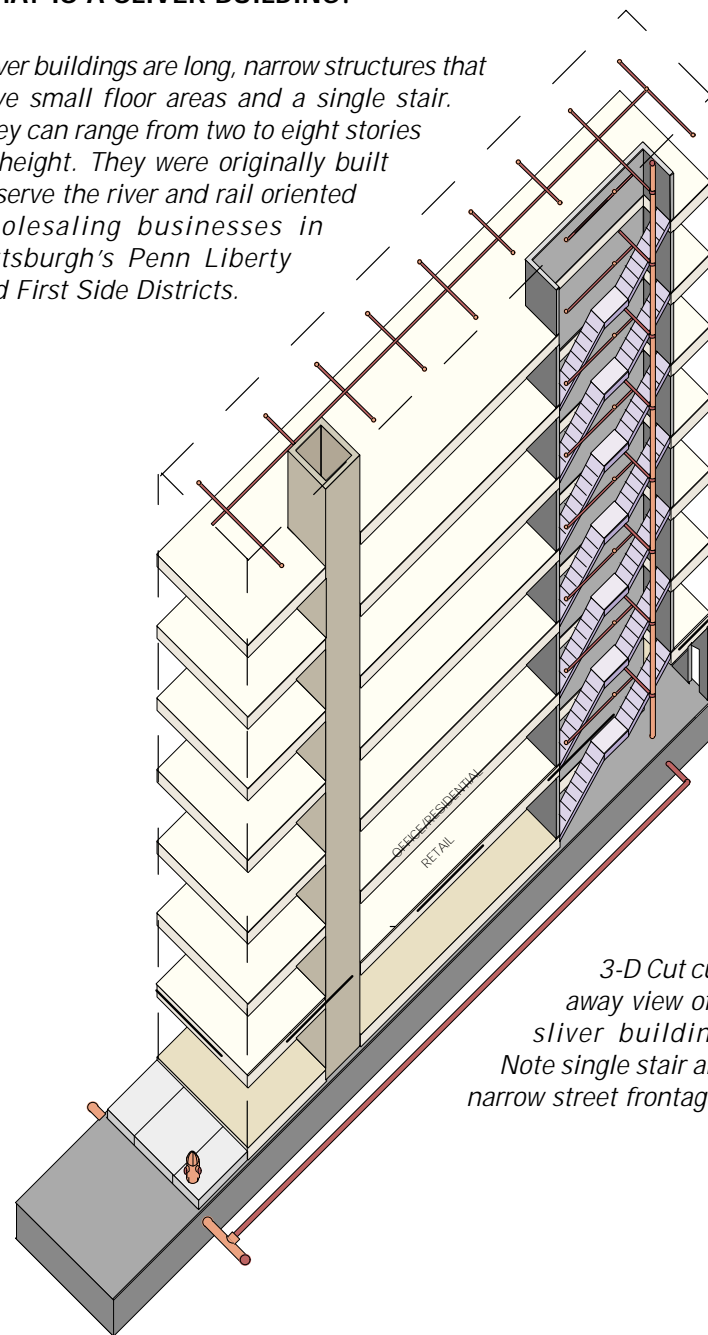
An appeal based on cost is not allowed.



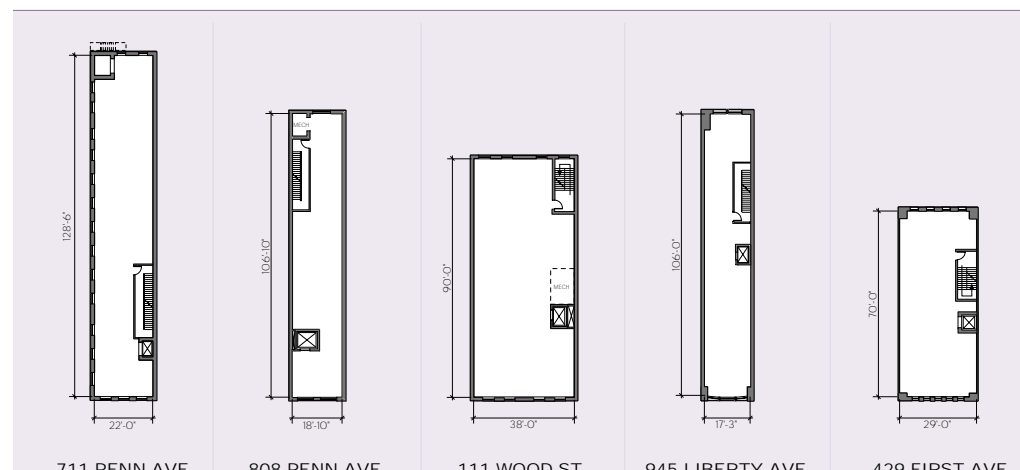
TYPICAL SLIVER BUILDING CONDITIONS

WHAT IS A SLIVER BUILDING?

Sliver buildings are long, narrow structures that have small floor areas and a single stair. They can range from two to eight stories in height. They were originally built to serve the river and rail oriented wholesaling businesses in Pittsburgh’s Penn Liberty and First Side Districts.



3-D Cut cut-away view of a sliver building. Note single stair and narrow street frontage.



TYPICAL PROJECTS PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

SLIVER BUILDING CHECKLIST

ABOUT THIS CHECKLIST

This checklist includes items that are typically considered by review staff and the Board of Standards & Appeals. Some items will be found to be mandatory and others a condition for variance depending on the circumstances of the proposed project.

BUILDING HEIGHT

Buildings reviewed are either low rise or high rise. High rise approvals are typically limited to 7 and 8 story structures. Note some items below that apply only to High Rise approvals.

SINGLE MEANS OF EGRESS

Proposed renovation cannot reasonably add a second means of egress, due to footprint or “landlocked” condition.

BUILDING AREA

Building may not exceed 3,500 s.f per floor (gross), recognizing that larger floor areas present greater risk of overtaxing a single stair.

AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEM

The entire building must be provided with an automatic sprinkler system.

VERTICAL OPENINGS

All vertical exit enclosures, elevator shafts, other shaft enclosures, and all openings between two or more floors must have a fire resistance rating of 2 hours or more.

STANDPIPE SYSTEM

Standpipe systems must be installed in accordance with BOCA and amended by the City of Pittsburgh.

ELEVATOR CONTROL

Fireman’s operation and recall, requiring emergency back-up system for high rise conditions.

EMERGENCY LIGHTING

Means of egress lighting must be provided with independent emergency power in accordance with BOCA.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

A fire alarm system in accordance with the BOCA code shall be installed throughout the building, with a voice/alarm signaling system and a fire command station.

AUTOMATIC FIRE DETECTION

Smoke detectors must be installed throughout the entire building.

SMOKE CONTROL

The exit stair and elevator shaft shall be sealed and pressurized. Where there is only one means of egress, the safety of that means of egress is vital.

MEANS OF EGRESS CAPACITY

The capacity of the means of egress must meet or exceed the BOCA requirements, with a minimum stair width of 36”.

DEAD ENDS

No dead end corridor over 10’ long will be permitted on any floor.

TRAVEL DISTANCE

Maximum travel distance to an exit shall not exceed 75’.

MIXED USE GROUPS

Where a building has two or more occupancies that are not in the same use group classification, the separation between the mixed use groups shall be a minimum 2 hour fire separation assembly.

TENANT SEPARATION

Floors and walls separating tenants must provide a smoke barrier and have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour or greater.

CORRIDOR WALLS

Corridor walls must have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour or greater.

HVAC SYSTEM

HVAC systems must be independent for each tenant, or provide central boiler/chiller system without ductwork connecting two or more stories.