

# EIMA Voice Heard at the ICC Code Development Hearings

Every three years, the International Code Council updates its 15 codes. These codes, known as the “I-Codes,” cover real property categories ranging from the well-known International Building Code to the International Energy Conservation Code to the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code.

The process for amending the I-Codes starts with code development hearings. Prior to these hearings, code proposals to amend a particular I-Code are solicited by ICC from interested parties who submit the proposals to ICC for first review. They are then placed in order, depending on what part of the particular code they would amend. The code change proposals are then aired before an ICC committee that has jurisdiction over that particular code. The code development hearings for the 2015 version of the I-Codes were held in Dallas from April 29 to May 6. After these hearing in Dallas, most of the proposed code changes, even some of those that were disapproved during the code development hearings, will be reviewed by the full ICC Assembly when it next meets in Portland, Ore., Oct. 24–29, 2012. The Portland hearings are known as the “Final Action Hearings.”

The EIFS Industry Members Association’s Technical and Research Committee has a practice of reviewing the proposed changes submitted for both the code development and final action hearings. Following its review, which occurred during the committee’s meeting held at the EIMA Annual Meeting in April, the committee directed EIMA to voice its opinion on several code change proposals, either expressing support or encouraging disapproval of them.

All of the Technical and Research Com-

mittee identified items were heard by the ICC Fire Safety Committee on April 30 and May 1. In sum, EIMA had much success at these hearings. Below is a recap of the items that EIMA addressed.

The code change proposal numbered FS 145 had the intent to add a method of measuring drainage to the requirement for a means of drainage for high rainfall areas. The EIMA Technical Committee was opposed to this change since the threshold for drainage was less than that already in the code. If passed, it would allow less-effective water-resistive barriers to be included in the wall system. The change was disapproved following EIMA testimony presented by Tina Cannedy of Parex USA.

The code change proposal numbered FS 148 essentially would, if adopted, eliminate the NFPA 285 fire test requirement for certain water-resistive barriers “that are available, tried and tested by long-term proven history of performance as weather barriers (but) that are not able to meet the standards in this test” (NFPA 285). Right now, Section 1403.2 of the IBC requires weather-resistive barriers while Section 1403.5 requires them to be tested to a standard if they contain a combustible water-resistive barrier that many materials that are traditionally used and have proven their value can’t meet. Manufacturers of these non-285 compliant barriers have persuaded the American Institute of Architects and the National Institute of Building Sciences to be proponents for this change. The change was disapproved by a vote of 7-6 following testimony by EIMA codes consultant, Jess Beitel. This was a major victory for EIMA.

In FS 161, the proposal’s intent was to add new requirements to the code for

self-adhered membranes and fluid-applied membranes, which comprise growing segments of the flashing material market, but no material property or performance requirements for these materials are currently included in the code (substandard peel and stick). Standards developed by the American Architectural Manufacturers Association, AAMA 711 and AAMA 714, were developed with the intent to ensure that these types of material meet minimum performance specifications. This proposal incorporates these industry standards by reference into the code. Because these standards were developed in a non-consensus process, the EIMA Technical Committee opposed the adoption of this proposal. Following EIMA testimony, the Fire Safety Committee voted to disapprove this proposal by a vote of 13-0—another EIMA victory.

The code change proposal numbered FS 187 would accomplish the same, if adopted, as FS 148. It was submitted by the same proponents, too: AIA and NIBS. While this proposed change did not call for exemption from NFPA 285, it would offer competing material manufacturers options of how to comply. Following testimony by Jess Beitel, EIMA Executive Director Dave Johnston and ally Jerry Phelan of Bayer, the committee voted 13-0 to disapprove this change—an EIMA victory.

FS 200, a change that would bar exterior insulation and finish systems and vinyl siding from being used in hurricane prone regions of the United States as well as in high wind areas, was considered. A similar proposal, also sponsored by the Portland Cement Association and the Masonry Alliance for Codes and Standards, was defeated by EIMA and its allies when it was considered during the code development hearings for the International Green Construction Code in August 2010. Following testimony by Johnston and several other allies, the committee voted to disapprove this change, 13-0.

—information provided by the  
EIFS Industry Members Association,  
[www.eima.com](http://www.eima.com), (800) 294.3462