



Special Events Task Force Meeting Notes

January 13, 2020

Updated 1/23/2020

Load/Capacity

Tony Hernandez with DSD explained which temporary structures would fall under the purview of Development Services (DSD) and which would fall under Austin Fire Department (AFD) for inspection/permit approval. Loads on a structure are determined by DSD.

The task force is submitting the following questions to AFD: (AFD answers in red)

- **What are the criteria used to determine whether an event at a private venue falls under a special event or remains within the scope of the venue/buildings permanent use—is a change in language regarding number of attendees needed (from 100 to 50)?**
 - The fire code does not differentiate between public property and private property. If a venue's certificate of occupancy indicates that the venue is not an Assembly occupancy then there would be a permit required to host an Assembly event. Currently, the fire code requires permits at 50+ attendees and the SEO requires a permit at 100+ attendees. These should be aligned for the sake of the applicant.
- **What changes within an existing private venue does the Fire Department need/want to know about?**
 - If the venue is not an Assembly then we need to issue a permit before the venue can host an Assembly event. If the venue is an Assembly then (together with DSD) we would need to issue a Temporary Occupancy Load Adjustment if the applicant wanted to deviate from the approved occupant load and/or layout.
- **How can we redefine the definition of a special event that isn't in conflict with the International Fire Code?**
 - I would need more information to be able to answer this.
- **How can we make this clearer and easier to understand for applicants?**
 - Changing the definition of a Special Event to include 50 people instead of 100 would eliminate the gap between the fire code and the SEO.
- **When/Why is an ACE application required?**
 - This is covered in detail by the SEO. I'm happy to try to clarify any of the finer points which may be confusing.
- **How can we build a contingency/process for avoiding the triggering of a Special Event Application for an event when only a tent permit is needed? If there is a process how can we make it easier to understand?**



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- This process is already in place. We have a stand-alone tent permit application which can be used when only a tent permit is needed. We caution people against using it unless they are absolutely sure that a tent permit is all that is required. If the applicant needs an ACE application and misses the deadline, the stand-alone application is not a substitute. Submitting an ACE by the required deadline is the safest option. We're always available for consultation beforehand if there are questions.

Proposed Recommendation Language

Provide clearer process/method for helping applicants understand whether or not their event on private property will fall under the category of a special event and require an ACE application.

For tier 2 events (SEO Section 4-20-21, B1 & 2)

Modify language for event tier designation to more closely align with venue occupancy. Remove language that refers to an assembly of 2500 and replace with not exceed maximum load/occupancy/capacity for a venue at any one time.

Reasoning:

Members of the task force don't want the 2500 number of attendees per day to be the sole determining factor for designating a tier, if/when an event venue's capacity is greater than 2500.

Next meeting:

Date: Feb. 3, 2020 @ 2:30 p.m.

Location: One Texas Center conference room 325, 505 Barton Springs Road

The task force identified the following agenda items for the February meeting:

- AFD Load/Occupancy follow up
- Data reporting subcommittee report
- Notifications
- For discussion and possible action: revisions to list of draft recommendations

The task force also agreed to add the March meeting back to the schedule. The date will be March 30. The time, location, and agenda items are to be determined.