

Official Report
TO
CHIEF OF THE DEPARTMENT

From: Fire Prevention

Date: July 15, 2010

RE: Masonic building suitability for School District use.

Chief;

The Masonic building at Chestnut St has a number of deficiencies including: no sprinkler system, no standpipe system, inadequate fire alarm system, inadequate exits, lack of adequate emergency lighting and exit signs, and the interior stair and elevator are unprotected vertical openings. Remedy of the sprinkler, standpipe and fire alarm systems is self-explanatory. I have been told that the most cost effective remedy for emergency lighting may be to install an emergency generator which may be required for the elevator too. The inadequate exits and unprotected vertical openings will need a creative solution which may address them all or one at a time.

The inadequate exiting is due to the only interior stair, which is unprotected from fire travel and the building is inaccessible for ADA. This stair will have to be fire protected including fire doors. It will also require a standpipe. Likewise, the elevator will have to be brought to code to prevent the spread of fire and provide ADA accessibility.

The number of exits required starts at 2 for every floor, mezzanine or room with an occupant load exceeding 49. If the occupant load for the floor, mezzanine or room is 600 to 1000 it requires 3 exits; if the occupant load is over 1000 it requires 4 exits. The large upstairs lodge room has a mezzanine with a high occupant load which will require two independent remote exits.

Sky bridges to the Portland High School can work. A sky bridge is considered a horizontal exit if designed correctly. Remember that each floor, mezzanine or room must have the number of exits as stated above. The exterior wall of each building facing each other would have to be fire rated for 2 hours, which most likely is not a problem with the Masonic building.

Another option may be to enter into an agreement to reopen access to the front half of the office building on the Congress Street side. It too may have the same egress issue. The lodge room mezzanine will still have to be addressed. If the Chestnut and Congress Street sides of the building are not separated by fire barriers they will have to share the same sprinkler and fire alarm systems. I am pretty sure the Congress Street side does have ADA access and an ADA elevator all ready.

Respectfully Submitted