



Bracken Engineering
Structures • Disasters • Forensics

DECLARATORY STATEMENT
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
I, the undersigned, with the designated
authority, hereby acknowledge that the
contents of which is hereby

PETITION FOR DECLARATORY STATEMENT
BEFORE THE
FLORIDA BUILDING COMMISSION

Paul P. Ford
Commission Clerk
Date *10/27/10*

Dear Ms. Ford:

Please consider this letter as a request for a petition for a declaratory statement before the Florida Building Commission. My request involves the need for a uniformly understood meaning for the term "structural damage" as it relates to the Florida Existing Building Code section 202.

The question I pose is whether the Florida Building Code intends the term "structural damage" to be locally determined as "damage to that which is built or constructed" or a definition more in-keeping with other definitions in the code such as "damage to the primary structural members and /or systems."

In the course of our business it is often necessary to communicate the intent of repairs to the local Building Official / Plans Examiner, and a common vocabulary is highly beneficial to this communication. The potential for misunderstandings and delays in the processing of plans and permits because of these differences needs to be reduced and/or eliminated where possible. While the Florida Existing Building Code defines "structural determination" and "substantial structural damage" and the Florida Building Code defines "structure", "structural composite lumber", and "structural glued laminate timbers", both Codes leave the term "structural damage" undefined and open to varying interpretations.

Our firm is seeking a declaratory statement adopting the definition of the term "structural damage" when used in the Florida Building Codes as being: Damage that adversely impacts or prevents the primary structural members and/or systems from conveying and/or supporting in-service and/or reasonably anticipated loads and forces.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,
Bracken Engineering

Gary D. Pailthorp

Gary D. Pailthorp, PE, CBO, CFM
Senior Project Engineer
October 15, 2010
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