

Board Resolution to Return Access Between Stairwell and Lobby

Background:

The RSA building was constructed such that the north stairwell **originally contained a door allowing access to and from the lobby**. A separate door in this same stairwell allowed access to and from the rear parking area. The south stairwell contained only a single door allowing access to and from the rear parking area. This “as built” configuration from 1969 remained in place until the sole door to the lobby was closed off as part of a lobby renovation circa 2005.

Although a search of the RSA records mentions a permit for the lobby renovations, the actual permit with its detailed approvals cannot be found. Nor can an alleged approval to seal off the door by the Fire Marshall be found. It seems illogical that a Fire Marshall would allow a critical emergency egress point to be eliminated.

Current Situation:

Recently, Hurricane Ian exposed a significant safety risk in not having emergency access to the lobby from a stairwell. This was an agenda item for the Oct. 18, 2022 board meeting during which many residents agreed this was a safety issue that must be rectified.

In the event of any emergency, residents are advised not to use the elevators and instead are instructed to use the stairs when descending from the upper floors. **This forces everyone to exit the rear of the building, potentially into an unsafe environment, such as a hurricane, fire, or flood.** This may not be the safest option depending on the hazardous situation. **In some cases, it may be better to shelter in the lobby or to exit the building via the lobby through the front door or pool door.** These options do not currently exist when using the stairs. The only way to get directly to the lobby is to use the contraindicated elevators. Even then, the elevators may not work if there is a power outage and the backup generator fails or if they must be shut down for other safety reasons.

Resolution:

Therefore, based on the facts stated above, **the Board resolves to rectify the situation by returning to the original “as built” condition to enhance the safety of all occupants.**

Specifically, this entails putting back the door in the same location that it was originally.

According to FL statute, a safety related material alteration does not require an owner vote. The cost will be approximately \$5,000 and will be paid from the operating funds.

Resolution Passed at the Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday February 21, 2023