



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

RECEIVED
CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
CITY CLERK

2008 OCT -3 AM 8:56

TO: Mayor & City Council

FROM: John G. Clamp, Councilman District 10

COPIES TO: Sheryl Sculley, City Manager; Leticia Vacek, City Clerk; Pat DiGiovanni, Deputy City Manager; Chris Callanen, Assistant to the City Council; Michael Bernard, City Attorney; Leticia Callanen, Special Projects Manager; Ramiro Gonzales, Special Projects Coordinator

SUBJECT: Restricting Construction Material for Retaining Walls in Residential Developments

DATE: October 1, 2008

Issue Proposed for Consideration

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

I respectfully request staff to review current standards and materials used in the construction of retaining walls in residential developments and restrict the use of wooden material for walls that are more than 3 feet in height. These materials deteriorate and create a hazard for property owners who abut the retaining wall.

Brief Background

Retaining walls are built to support changes in ground elevation and are long term features to protect the abutting property owners from shifting or collapsing earth. In some cases, the walls were built using railroad ties or other similar wooden materials. This practice has led to a potential hazard as the wood deteriorates where the elevation variance is greater than three feet.

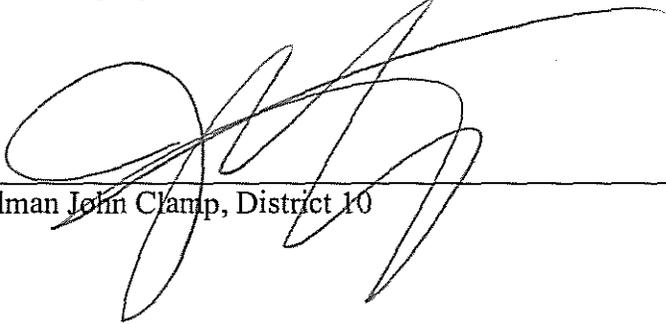
The current city code regarding retaining walls, Art IX, Sec. 6-188 does not specify the materials used for this purpose. The code states that the wall "shall be designed, constructed and maintained to resist the maximum lateral pressure of the retained material, in accordance with accepted engineering practice, when the supported land is being subject to the maximum load which case be put upon it during its present or intended use, whichever is greater". The current ordinance does not address the longevity of the material used for the wall.

Once the wall is built and the property is sold, the responsibility for maintenance falls on the property owner as stated in Article IX, Sec. 6-195 Expenses of Construction, Repair or Demolition "The entire expenses of the construction, repair or demolition of any retaining wall located on premises subject to this article shall be borne by the owner of the premises. The city is under no obligation to pay any part of the costs of the construction, maintenance or demolition of such retaining wall".

The purpose of this request is for staff to review this issue and take into consideration the long-term effects of the material when reviewing the walls soundness over time. This issue

has created a hazardous situation for residential property owners without the means to repair or replace the wall.

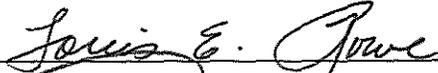
Submitted for Council consideration
by:



Councilman John Clamp, District 10

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (4 only)

District No.

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1. |  | 9 |
| 2. |  | 7 |
| 3. |  | 8 |
| 4. |  | 4 |

