

Facilities Planning

Newsletter 94 – December 2007

Project approval backlog - important notice

We are experiencing a massive influx of projects, and it is expected to continue for this entire construction season. In an attempt to quantify the numbers, for the first six months of this year, we have received 78% more projects than the first six months of last year, and we have received 25% more projects than the first 6 months of our worst year ever during the height of the 10% incentive. The main reason for the influx is EXCEL projects.

The next project up for review has been here approximately 15 weeks, however, we expect that for projects received today, the wait will be 25 weeks or longer. We understand what impact this has on school district construction operations, and will do our best to keep the approvals coming. Obviously your help is needed to make certain project submissions are complete, compliant, and ready to bid. This will minimize the comment period and speed up the process for all involved.

We are continuing to expedite single trade, modular, and emergency projects, and will consider site work packages for new construction or additions, if they will save a construction season for the district. This does not include expediting site work for athletics! Talk to your project manager if you believe your project qualifies.

Proposed revision to Manual of Planning Standards

We are approaching completion of the revisions to the "Manual of Planning Standards". The following is a "sneak preview" of the draft for the proposed Acoustic Environment section. Manual applies to new construction. Please send any comments to Martin Doyle at mdoyle@mail.nysed.gov

"S304 ACOUSTICAL ENVIRONMENT

S304-1 Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing Noise Control

- Achieving the proper level of ambient noise in an academic space is critical. If the level is too high, communication between teachers and students will be partially or fully masked. If too low, the slightest noises (pencils dropping, rustling of papers, etc.) will appear to be intensified in their level of disturbance. The intent of this section is to require the design of mechanical / electrical / plumbing systems to meet the sound standards of ANSI S12.60-2000 in classrooms with K-6 occupancy and Large Group Instruction spaces used by any grade level. It is highly recommended that all general classrooms in 7-12 occupancies meet the sound standards of ANSI S12.60-2000. Sound levels do not apply to mechanical / electrical / plumbing systems used solely for emergency purposes such as fire alarm notification devices or emergency generators.
- Table S304-1 is a table of ambient noise criteria for mechanical equipment based on the single number room criteria "RC" curves. The values and ranges represent general limits of acceptability for typical building occupancies. Designs shall not exceed upper values stated in Table for instructional spaces. Lower values may be more appropriate and should be based on a careful analysis of economics, space usage and user needs.
- Locations of mechanical and electrical equipment must be carefully chosen to not have an adverse impact on the ambient noise level in the adjacent spaces. To avoid excessive

vibration of the building structure by mechanical air-handling units, chillers, compressors, transformers, etc., locate equipment rooms on grade whenever possible. Exterior equipment must be installed in locations such that the sound generated by the equipment will not intrude on instructional spaces at levels that exceed interior HVAC sound levels. Rooftop units, while having certain economical benefits, require very complex and costly solutions to eliminate noise and vibration, and should be avoided whenever possible near sound-critical rooms.

- Noise attenuation and vibration isolation should be achieved for piping and ductwork through the use of vibration isolation hangers/mounts, flexible sleeves and joints, and sound attenuators.
- Avoid routing main ductwork and piping over classrooms and other sound-critical spaces. Route ducts in the corridors and tap into each room separately. Ductwork serving highly sound-critical spaces (such as an Auditorium) should not be routed over any other noisy spaces after leaving the equipment room.
- Penetrations of sound-critical partitions by ductwork, piping and conduit should be sealed airtight with acoustical caulking (fire-rated, where necessary). Resilient sleeves should be used for large ductwork and piping as they pass through a partition.
- Plumbing piping and equipment in gang, toilet rooms and custodial closets shall be designed to be inaudible in adjacent spaces when HVAC equipment is operating at sound levels in accordance with design criteria in Table S304-1.
- When locating electrical receptacles for switches and outlets, no back-to-back boxes shall be installed in sound-critical rooms. Offset boxes at least two stud cavities from each other.
- All electrical equipment (lighting, clocks, transformers, etc.) shall be designed to be inaudible when HVAC equipment is operating at sound levels in accordance with design criteria in Table S304-1.

Table S304-1

Design Requirements for HVAC System Noise in Occupied Spaces

Space	RC Level
Classrooms, K-6	25
Classrooms, 7-12	25-30
Lecture Halls/Large Classrooms for more than 50 (unamplified speech)	25
Lecture Halls/Large Classrooms for more than 50 (amplified speech)	25-30
Libraries	30-40
Gymnasiums/Natatoriums	40-50
Cafeterias	40-50
Laboratories/ shops (group teaching)	35-45

Theaters/Auditoriums	25
Multi-purpose Rooms / Gymnasium / Auditorium / Cafeteria / Classroom	25-50
Music Teaching Studios	25
Music Practice Rooms	35
Halls, Corridors, Lobbies	35-45
Private Offices	25-35
Conference/Meeting Rooms	25-35
Offices	25-35

Farewell to Joe Levy and announcement of future vacancy

Joseph Levy has accepted a new opportunity with the NY State University Construction Fund. We wish him well in his new position and wish to thank him for his service to SED. Joe was instrumental in bringing many new processes to Facilities, including this newsletter, and the Electronic review system we are currently testing.

Joe's departure will create a future opportunity for an architect in facilities planning. We are currently seeking permission to fill the vacancy....watch this site for updates if you have an interest in working with us.

American Flag Protocols

Each year we receive questions surrounding the protocols for displaying the American flag at school – including times for flying the flag at half-staff. The following memo was first published in June 1997 and provides many of the answers associated with this issue.

www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/socst/leadersguide/EdLawlersFlag.pdf 

Building aid on paving reconstruction projects

Building aid is paid for newly constructed paving or where pavement is replaced. The project must include base, binder and top. Scarifying and top coat only are not eligible for building aid. Under certain circumstances, where top coat and binder are removed and the base is reconstructed and tamped before installing new binder and top coat, we will consider for building aid. Please note that all such projects fall under incidental expenses and are subject to maximum cost allowance.

Housekeeping Items

Collating and stapling – many project submissions are sent with forms loose, not collated and not stapled, resulting in a lot of hand labor by project managers. We are currently experiencing a

major influx of EXCEL projects and the additional work is extremely time consuming. If possible, please remember to collate and staple your forms, project-by-project. Your cooperation is appreciated!

Faxing and mailing – if your project manager calls for a revised form or to send a missing form, we accept faxes as “legal tender.” Frequently, we will subsequently receive a “hard copy” in the mail several days later. Given the volume of paper that passes through the office daily, it happens that we sometimes process the same paperwork twice, having forgotten we processed the fax copy several days earlier. If you feel more comfortable with hard copy and certified mail, please feel free to use that method of delivery, skipping the fax.

An Index of our Newsletters is available on our website at

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/NewsLetters.htm>.

If you would like to have this Newsletter sent directly to you by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to Curt Miller at hmler2@mail.nysed.gov.

Please continue to send in your comments and requests. If you have a subject you would like addressed, feedback on the material you read, input or general comments we are happy to hear from you.