



## DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103

### Memorandum

**Date:** April 1, 2019

**To:** **Municipal Building Officials**

**From:** Joseph V. Cassidy, P.E., State Building Inspector

*Joseph V. Cassidy*

**Subject:** Architectural Plan Requirements

The purpose of the memo is to clarify when sealed architectural plans are required and when they are not. This information was prepared in conjunction with the Architectural Licensing Board, the Connecticut AIA and the Connecticut Building Official's Association.

The attached flowchart is derived from the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) section 20-298, which defines exempt activities, that is, activities that do not constitute architectural practice under the architectural licensing statutes. The following is a brief explanation of the chart.

The first decision point is **Exempt Activity?** The "yes" branch brings you to a list of activities which are found in subsections (1) – (3) and (6) of CGS 20-298. These activities do not require sealed drawings.

Following the "no" branch, the second decision point is **SBC Use Group?** On either side of this point are lists containing the occupancy classifications defined in the State Building Code. This point begins the breakdown of subsection (8) of CGS 20-298.

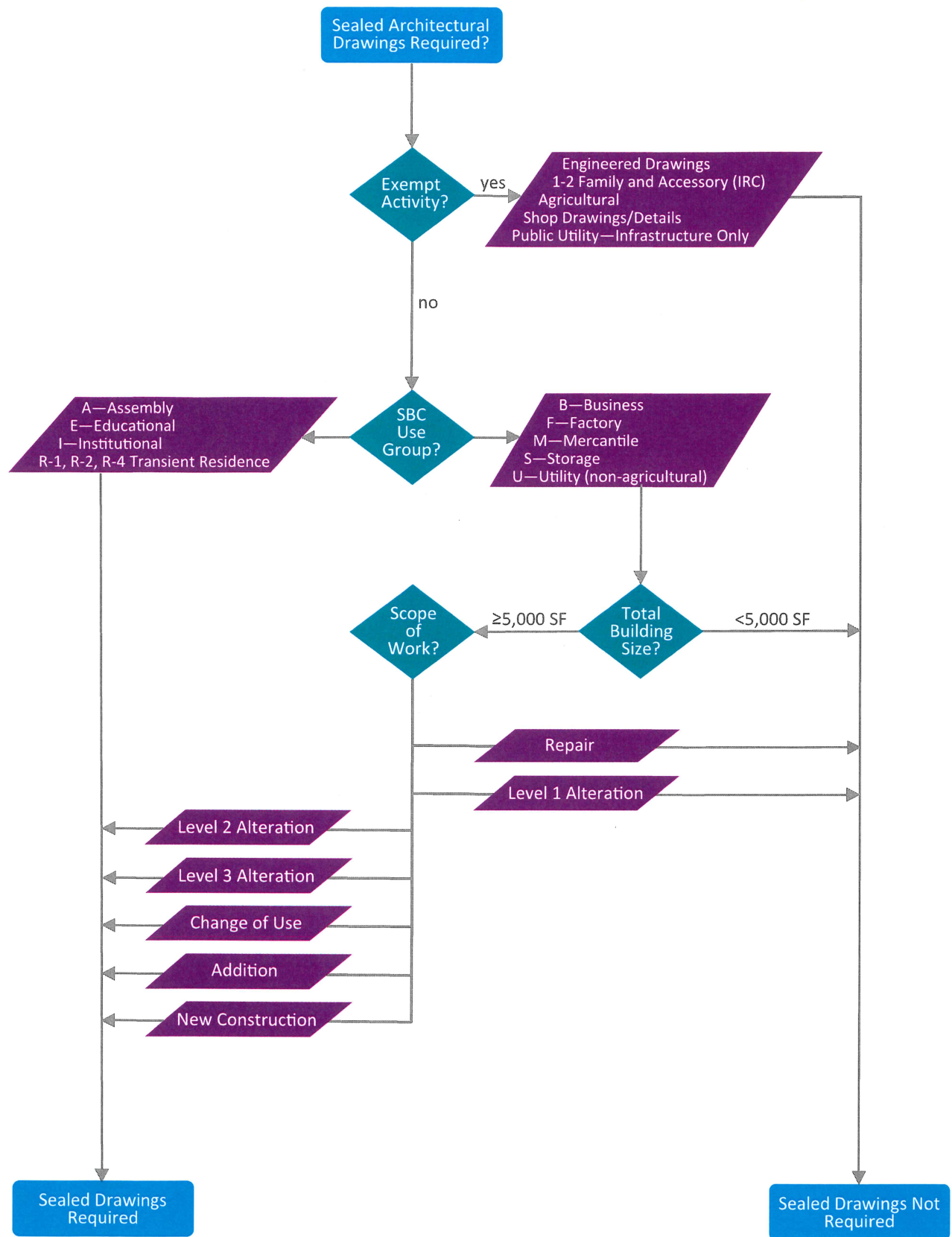
To the left are the use groups listed in (8)(A) that require architectural plans regardless of the size of the building. To the right are the other use groups that would fall to (8)(B).

The next decision point under this group is **Building Size?** Subsection (8)(B) sets a floor of 5,000 SF under which architectural plans are not required. This 5,000 SF is the **total building size**, not the size of the work area for a specific project. In accordance with the statute, the building area is calculated from the exterior dimensions of the outside walls of the building and includes all occupiable floors or levels.

Buildings 5,000 SF and greater move to the next decision point **Scope of Work?** Under this decision point is a breakdown of the classification of work defined in the International Existing Building Code. The work involved in Repairs and Level 1 Alterations is generally minor in nature – repairing existing materials or replacing them with similar materials - which would not necessarily require architectural

plans to properly complete the work. Level 2 and 3 alterations, changes of use, additions and new construction are of a nature where architectural plans prepared by a licensed architect are needed to properly complete the work.

This breakdown is based on the types of work typically found under each of these classifications. The Building Official has discretion under the State Building Code (IBC 107.1) to require, or to waive, submission of plans based on the complexity of a specific scope of work presented in a permit application.



**Sec. 20-298.** Exempted activities. The following activities are exempted from the provisions of this chapter: (1) The practice of engineering by a professional engineer licensed under the provisions of chapter 391, and the performance by such professional engineer of architectural work for which such professional engineer is qualified by education and experience and which is incidental to such professional engineer's engineering work; (2) the construction or alteration of a residential building to provide dwelling space for not more than two families, or of a private garage or other accessory building intended for use with such residential building, or of any farm building or structure for agricultural use; (3) the preparation of details and shop drawings by persons other than architects, for use in execution of the work of such persons, when buildings are designed in accordance with the requirements of this chapter; (4) the activities of employees of architects licensed in this state acting under the instructions, control or supervision of their employers; (5) the superintendence by builders, or properly qualified superintendents employed by such builders, of the construction or structural alteration of buildings or structures; (6) the activities of officers and employees of any public utility corporation whose operations are under the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority; (7) the activities of officers and employees of the government of the United States while engaged in this state in the practice of architecture for said government; and (8) the making of plans and specifications for or supervising the erection of any building, any building addition or any alteration to an existing building, where the building, including any addition, contains less than five thousand square feet total area, provided (A) this subdivision shall not be construed to exempt from the provisions of this chapter buildings of less than five thousand square feet total area of the use groups as defined in the State Building Code as follows: Assembly, educational, institutional, high hazard, transient residential, which includes hotels, motels, rooming or boarding houses, dormitories and similar buildings, and (B) the area specified in this subdivision is to be calculated from the exterior dimensions of the outside walls of the building and shall include all occupiable floors or levels.



Sec. 29-276c. Architect or engineer to seal plans and specifications, review implementation of design of certain buildings and issue statement of professional opinion re completed structure. Use groups. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of chapter 390, if a proposed structure or addition is classified in any use group specified in subdivisions (1) to (3), inclusive, of subsection (b) of this section, the plans and specifications for such structure or addition shall be sealed by the licensed architect of record or professional engineer of record responsible for the design of the structure or addition. Such architect or engineer of record shall be retained and be responsible for the review of the implementation of the design of such structure or addition including the review of shop drawings and the observation of construction. In the event such architect or engineer of record is unable to fulfill such review responsibilities, an additional architect or engineer shall be retained and the local building official shall be informed, in writing, of such retainer. If fabricated structural load-bearing members or assemblies are used in such construction, the licensed professional engineer responsible for the design of such members or assemblies shall be responsible for the implementation of said engineer's design by reviewing the fabrication process to ensure conformance with said engineer's design specifications and parameters.

(b) Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for a proposed structure or addition classified in any use group specified in subdivisions (1) to (3), inclusive, of this subsection, the local building official shall require a statement signed by the architect of record or the professional engineer of record responsible for the design of the structure or addition or the additional architect or professional engineer retained pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, and by the general contractor involved in the construction of such structure or addition affirming their professional opinion that the completed structure or addition is in substantial compliance with the approved plans and specifications on file with such building official. The use groups referred to in this section, as defined in the State Building Code, shall include: (1) Assembly, educational, institutional, high hazard, transient residential, which includes hotels, motels, rooming or boarding houses, dormitories or similar buildings, other than residential buildings designed to be occupied by one or more families, without limitation as to size or number of stories, (2) business, factory and industrial, mercantile, moderate and low hazard storage, having three stories or more or exceeding thirty thousand square feet total gross area, and (3) nontransient residential dwellings having more than sixteen units or twenty-four thousand square feet total gross area per building.