

Law On Time Limit To Clear Building Proposals Ignored Manual Had Been Brushed Aside, Online System Failed

'Flat buyers pay more due to delayed approvals'

Nauzer K Bharucha | TNN

Times View

Housing, a basic necessity, will continue to remain off-limits for most Mumbaiers even for reasons other than the per square foot cost. The plethora of permissions required for a real estate project not only acts as an entry barrier for developers, but the red tape and the consequent delay in getting a project off the ground adds to the developer's cost — which the common man ultimately bears. The only solution is for the BMC to designate one single, fast-track window for granting of all the various requisite permissions. And, this new system must be brought in on a priority basis, without any dilly-dallying.

lead to buyers having to cough up more money.

Sukhatme added that the very first step, which involves submission of the building plans to the BMC, could be a long-drawn-out process. "The BMC will ask for various NOCs and government documents, such as the property registration card within the last three months, city survey number, Development Plan remarks, clearance from the housing authority etc," he said.

Industry sources said architects have to fulfill 90 to 100 conditions before a certificate to commence

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work is granted. "The law states that a full commencement certificate (CC) should be given to the developer, however the BMC gives it only in parts," said Sukhatme, adding that each CC could take up to a month.

The BMC's former director, A N Kale, said that over the years the administration has tried to streamline the building proposal approval system and computerize it. But vested interests have been opposed to these efforts.

"The only solution is for the municipal building proposals department to be made responsible for procuring all the permissions from various BMC departments instead of letting the builder run around," said Kale.

Old-timers said that things were much simpler decades ago, like in the 1970s and 1980s. "It would take around just three months to procure all the permissions required back then," said Kale. "But there were few high-rise proposals in those days," he added.

Said Daisaria, "Three decades ago, it used to take just a week for procuring initial approvals like the IOD (intimation of disapproval). But over the years, things have become more stringent. Ideally, approvals should not take more than 10% of your construction time. For instance, if the project takes 30 months to complete, the approvals process should be three months."



Hurdle 1

Submission of plans and payment of scrutiny fees

Present process involves getting Development Plan remarks, DP release letter, CRZ clearance, Heritage, Mhada and MMRDA NOCs, and CTS plan



Hurdle 2

Report writing

Reports are written by BMC staff from sub-

engineer level, to assistant engineer, executive engineer. A major hurdle is inexperience, untrained staff



Hurdle 3

Journey of project file

From the time it is seen by the sub-engineer till it reaches the municipal commissioner, the file has to pass through nine officials



Hurdle 4

Unending list of conditions and NOCs

A huge list of conditions have to be met and NOCs from at least 20 departments including storm water drains, hydraulic engineer, tree authority, railways, roads, heritage committee and ministry of environment and forests, have to be obtained

Illustration:
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Source: PEATA

