

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 12 ("FIRE PROTECTION")
OF THE CARRBORO TOWN CODE

THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF CARRBORO HEREBY
ORDAINS:

Section 1. Section 12-14(f)(3) is amended to read as follows:

- (3) Subject to the following sentence, all portions of a building under a continuous roof structure shall be regarded as a single building, regardless of the existence of fire walls or separate ownership. Notwithstanding the foregoing, for purposes of this section, each space within a non-residential building shall be considered a separate building if such space is completely separated from other spaces by a four hour fire wall of masonry construction that is established on its own footing, and extends at least three feet through and above the roof on each side and has sufficient structural stability to allow collapse of construction on either side without collapse of the wall itself for at least four hours under fire conditions.

Section 2. A new Section 12-14(h) is established to read as follows:

- (h) Whenever sprinkler systems are installed, either due to an ordinance requirement or installed voluntarily, then sprinkler heads shall be installed to provide protection to decks, balconies, storage areas and breezeways to the extent the same is practicable. Such sprinklers shall be installed to provide adequate sprinkler coverage in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Section 3. Section 12-17 is rewritten as follows:

Section 12-17. Mulch Piles and Pine Straw

- (a) No person may cause, suffer, or permit any mulch pile to be created or maintained on any premises if such mulch pile (i) is larger than eight feet in height, or (ii) covers more than 400 square feet of ground area.

- (b) Any mulch pile for which a permit is required under Section 105.6.47 (i.e. one comprising 200 cubic feet or more) shall be separated from any other mulch pile for which such a permit is required by a distance of at least fifty feet. In addition, each such pile must be accessible by an approved fire apparatus access road capable of withstanding the imposed loads of a fire truck (60,000 lbs.) and have an all-weather driving surface.

- (c) No pine straw or any other decorative ground cover or material with a fire rate of spread more than 12 inches per minute shall be placed, kept, or stored within ten feet of any building with combustible exterior construction and/or combustible doors, windows or other openings. This subsection shall apply to all buildings with combustible

exterior construction in existence upon the effective date hereof, upon thirty (30) days notice hereof, and to all new construction with combustibles exteriors.

Section 4. A new Section 12-19 is established to read as follows:

Section 12-19. Fire Extinguishers Required

All multi-family buildings containing three or more dwelling units shall be required to have at least one portable fire extinguisher in all exterior stairwells, mounted between three and five feet above finished floor on every level. Portable fire extinguishers shall be installed in all enclosed stairwells, at the same height, on every level. For multi-family buildings not incorporating stairwells, portable fire extinguishers shall be installed mounted on 4 x 4 posts or similar devices that make the extinguishers accessible to all occupants. Fire extinguishers shall be installed and maintained per National Fire Protection Association Standard #10 (Standard of Portable Fire Extinguishers) as referenced in the North Carolina Fire Code.

Section 5. A new Section 12-20 is established to read as follows:

Section 12-20. Stove Top Fire Suppression Units

New residential construction (both single and multi-family) shall contain stove or range top fire suppression units where installation of the same in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications is practicable.

Section 6. Section 12-12 is amended by adding a new subsection (c) to read as follows:

(c) Within the Primary Fire District, all new buildings for which a building permit is issued after the effective date of this subsection, and all existing buildings upon a change of occupancy classification, shall have installed a fully automatic fire alarm system capable of notification of the 911 Center without human recognition.

Section 7. All ordinances in conflict with Sections 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7 above are hereby repealed. All ordinances in conflict with the above Sections 3 and 6 shall be considered repealed as of the date(s) each Section is approved by the North Carolina Building Code Council. Any Section(s) requiring Building Code Council approval for which approval is not given shall be considered void and of no effect.

Section 8. Sections 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7 above shall become effective upon adoption. Sections 2, 3, and 6 above shall become effective upon approval, if given, of the Building Code Council and for any section(s) for which approval is not given, those same section(s) shall be void and of no effect.

REPORT FROM THE FIRE-RESCUE DEPARTMENT ON FUTURE FIRE PROTECTION MEASURES ATTACHMENT B

Due to the number of fires that have occurred recently within the Town of Carrboro, the Carrboro Fire-Rescue Department proposes several enhancements to the Town Code. This is an effort to reduce the number of fires that have greatly impacted the safety of all citizens and town emergency responders. These recommendations target the specific problems that have killed 7 citizens from the 29 major incidents that have occurred since 1975.

Travis Crabtree, the town's Fire Chief, made the presentation. He made the following recommendations:

1. Enhance code enforcement of the NC Fire Code by performing inspections on all commercial buildings and businesses annually. In addition, we would request to increase the fire inspections of multi-family dwelling common areas to an every six month schedule.
2. On all newly built multi-family dwellings or those damaged by fire, we should require additional sprinkler heads to cover the decks, balconies, storage areas and breezeways. This cost is minimal (\$75-150 per unit) and is completely on the builder while under construction or renovation.
3. Multi-family buildings shall be required to have fire extinguishers in all exterior stairwells. These portable fire extinguishers shall be mounted between 3 and 5 feet above finished floor on every level of the stairwells.
4. All kitchen range hoods shall have Stove Top Fire Stops installed. About \$50 per home or apartment.
5. Require a 1-hour fire resistant rated ignition-resistant outer covering on all multi-family dwellings. This would include a Class A roof covering or a Class A roof assembly whenever a new building is built or maintenance is required to replace any outer sheathing.
6. Restrict the use of pine straw and other highly flammable decorative ground cover within 10 feet of any structure.
7. Mandate two (2) ways of access and egress into all new apartment complexes and subdivisions.
8. Install fully automatic fire alarm systems in the primary fire district and all multi-family dwellings.
9. Buildings built 20 feet or closer to each other shall be required to be sprinkled.
10. Finally, in 1997 Carrboro, Chapel Hill and Greenville all made a reactive move to have all fraternities and sororities retrofit fully automatic sprinkler systems. If we want to prevent future tragedies in our community, sprinkler systems should be required in all new residences as an engineering strategy. This can be accomplished at about 1% of the cost of a new home

Bob Kirschner spoke in favor of requiring sprinkler systems in new single-family homes and suggested that required alarm systems be relaxed in owner-occupied multi-family homes.

Mayor Chilton stated that he had reservations about not allowing builders or homeowners to use vinyl siding and spoke in favor of choosing between fire alarm systems and sprinkler systems. In addition, he asked for the staff's opinion on the value of carbon monoxide detectors.

Mr. Stewart stated that the town staff would prepare a follow up report on the Fire Chief's recommendations for the Board's consideration.

MOTION WAS MADE BY JOAL HALL BROUN AND SECONDED BY DAN COLEMAN TO ACCEPT THE STAFF'S REPORT AND REFER IT TO THE TOWN MANAGER TO PREPARE RECOMMENDED TOWN CODE CHANGES AND REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL LEGISLATION. VOTE: AFFIRMATIVE FIVE, ABSENT TWO (HERRERA, HAVEN-O'DONNELL)
