

Town of Long Island Planning Board
2023-03-06 Annotated Public Hearing Agenda - DRAFT

====>Secretary's Note

The secretary's annotations in this document are shown in italicized text.

This document, along with the video and audio recordings of the meeting and the meeting information packet constitute the official record of the minutes of this meeting. This material is available for public inspection at Town Hall or on the town website.

Board actions, in the form of motions and the resulting votes, are shown in this document as secretary annotations.

The times, in square brackets expressed as [hh:mm:ss], associated with the various items in this document are offsets from the beginning of a recording when discussion of the associated items occurred.

PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA

====> PB Members Attending: Steve Hart, Doug McCowan, Paul Thornton, Peter Thornton, Mike Lingley (207-766-3332) and Curt Murley

====> PB Members Absent: Justin Papkee

====> Members of the Public Attending: Cyrus Hagge, Joe Donovan, Matt Steele, Ralph Sweet, Matt MacAleney, Wes Wolfertz (Camille), Ed McAleney (Jeannie) John Lortie, John Wallace (JOHN W), Karen (?) and iPhone (?)

====> Meeting called to order at 5:31PM [00:12:00]

====> Secretary's Note: There was no Planning Board business conducted at this meeting.

Agenda Item #1 [00:12:30]

Proposed amendment would make changes to Chapter 10 FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION to require one- and two-story residential dwelling units, detached accessory dwelling units, and one- and two-story seasonal residential dwellings being converted to year-round dwellings to have an automatic fire sprinkler system starting in 2024.

Links to text of proposed amendment:

https://www.google.com/url?q=http://134.209.66.176/LIPB/2023_Proposed_Ordinance_Change_s/02-21-2023_Sprinklers_DRAFT%25234.pdf

https://www.google.com/url?q=http://134.209.66.176/LIPB/2023_Proposed_Ordinance_Change_s/02-21-2023_Sprinklers_DRAFT%25234.pdf

Agenda Item #2 [00:41:20]

Proposed amendment would make changes to Chapter 14 LAND USE ORDINANCE necessary to comply with L.D. 2003, "An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to

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Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions” (the Act) enacted in 2022. Certain provisions of the Act affecting municipal zoning and land use ordinances become effective on July 1, 2023. The proposed amendment would eliminate the current limit of one single-family residence per lot in in the IR-1 residential zone, the IR-2 residential zone, and the I-B business zone. The amendment would also make changes to the ordinance regarding accessory dwelling units.

Links to text of proposed amendment:

https://www.google.com/url?q=http://134.209.66.176/LIPB/2023_Proposed_Ordinance_Change_s/02-21-2023_Housing_DRAFT%25234.pdf

https://www.google.com/url?q=http://134.209.66.176/LIPB/2023_Proposed_Ordinance_Change_s/02-27-2023_Housing_S-B-S_DRAFT%25234.pdf

====> **Secretary” Note:** *The following two documents related to the items discussed as this hearing were submitted as part of the record of this meeting*

Public Hearing Re: Proposed Sprinkler Requirements for New Home Construction

From Brian Dudley <sjglynn3@gmail.com>

To Steve Hart <planningboard@townoflongisland.us>

Cc Town Selectmen <selectmen@longislandmaine.org>, Ralph Sweet <rfsweet@aol.com>, Mark Greene LI <mlongreene2@aol.com>

Date 2023-03-06 13:28

I write in advance of your public hearing today as I will not be able to attend as I am traveling. I am a property owner and lifelong member of the Long Island community. Please distribute copies of this email to the board members. My list is lengthy and I am not expecting a reply to these questions/comments, just your consideration.

The proposal to require an internal sprinkler fire suppression system for new home construction on Long Island is flawed in several areas.

1. We are an island that depends upon wells. There is no public water system. Our town is already underway with a ground water study committee concerned about the existing and future water supply. This ordinance disregards those important efforts.

2. The additional cost (\$12,000 to \$20,000 estimates I am told) to include a sprinkler system during construction may be prohibitive for some property owners and flies in the face of our proposed intent to add to the housing stock and population of our island.

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3.If the purpose is to protect lives, then why isn't this being proposed for the existing housing stock as well? Are not the lives of these homeowners equally as important as new home owners? Please don't tell me that the cost would be too prohibitive for them, but it is acceptable to financially burden new home owners.

4. Modern home construction uses state of the art materials and building techniques such as fire-rated doors, proper sized windows for emergency egress,the design of electrical systems with breakers and ground faults, fire blocking in soffits, between floors, fire proof foaming of all construction holes where pipes and wiring pass through, pre-fabricated metal framed walls, ands the list goes on. I'd say that most existing homes on the island today are not built to the same safety standards as a new home.

5.Annual maintenance could add another \$500 to \$1,000 to those homes required to have an internal sprinkler system. Try suggesting that increase in the property tax at the next town meeting and see what reaction you receive.

6.Accidental discharge of the system will add additional expense to a homeowner and their insurance premiums. The impact of frequent power outages on the island could affect the system.

7.Aesthetics: Let's face it there is no way to incorporate fire sprinkler pipes and heads into a home without it impacting the interior appearance of the home.

8. This proposal can only lead to further impediments to the creation of new year round housing that the island so desperately needs to support our quality of life and school.

9. Mortgage rates are at an all time high for the past ten years. This additional cost for a sprinkler system could prevent some property owners from moving forward with construction that is needed on the island. Add to this the skyrocketing cost of construction materials since the pandemic further increases the financial burden for new home construction. While I'm at it, I'm sure the Planning Board is painfully aware that getting anything done on the island already adds another 20% to 30% to the total cost due to barging and time in transit for materials and labor.

10.As I could not find recent minutes from your meetings on the town website, correct me if I am wrong, but am I to understand that before the public hearing the Planning Board has already voted to approve such a new ordinance? I trust that is not the case, because that would be like a jury deliberating and passing judgement before the closing statements!

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11. Who will enforce this new requirement? The Code Enforcement Officer who works 3 hours a week, frequently not even on the island? What about the record keeping for the monitoring and recoding of required maintenance and certifications?

12. Doesn't this proposed sprinkler ordinance fly in the face of the efforts by many in the State of Maine to establish more affordable housing?

13. Wouldn't it make more sense to start with less expensive mandated smoke detector systems that will warn the occupants of a fire danger faster than a sprinkler system will?

14. Finally, there are close to 500 cities and towns in Maine. Have you researched how many of them have a similar mandate?

I am well aware that in this forced age of political correctness, it is not appropriate to speak out against a measure that for all intensive purposes is meant to do well. However, far more study and input needs to be done and received prior to this proposal becoming the "law of the land". My questions and suggestions are informed by my current experiences with designers and builders for a planned new home on the island. (Hence my sources to the references above to fire rated doors, blocking and GFI outlets!)

I'm also well aware that your proposal is supported by fire officials, including the State Fire Marshal's Office. I get it. These are good people doing their jobs. However, what answer do you get from a surgeon for a medical issue???? "...I recommend surgery!!!..."

Hopefully, the totality of these questions/comments will point you in the direction of slowing down this process for further deliberation.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts and volunteerism as well as consideration of my comments. I have also copied the Board of Selectmen, as well as the Chairs of the Water Study and the Year Round Housing Committees.

Sandra Glynn

Public Hearing Tonight Re: Proposed Sprinkler Requirements for New Home Construction

*From <njordan@long-island.lib.me.us>
To <planningboard@townoflongisland.us>*

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Date 2023-03-06 16:08

Hi Steve,

Bob and I were planning to attend the Hearing tonight, but I'm writing instead. In regard to the proposed Ordinance regarding the requirement for sprinklers in all new construction: We are both totally opposed to this ordinance for 2 reasons: 1) is the shortage of water on the island, and 2) is the desperate need for AFFORDABLE Housing on the island.

Why would the town ever want an ordinance that would jeopardize both our scarce water supply AND our attempts to keep construction affordable? Sprinkling a new house would NOT be affordable. I've heard it said that smoke detectors save lives, sprinkler systems save buildings. Let's concentrate on the lives and on educating our population about fire safety.

Nancy and Bob Jordan

Adjournment [00:45:18]

==>*The meeting adjourned at 6:04 PM. The next regular meeting will be 2023-03-20 at 5:30PM.*

==>*Prepared by Secretary Curt Murley*