



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Michael Santa, CBO, Code Administrator

DATE: July 16, 2013

SUBJECT: Updating of the City's Housing Code

Recommendation

Accept this report recommending that the City Council amend the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 27, Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code.

Background

The current Code of Ordinances, Chapter 27, Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code was last updated in March of 2011. The Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code is based on the 2009 International Property Maintenance Code. Staff is proposing amendments to the Housing and Maintenance Occupancy Code because recent State of New Hampshire changes to the smoke detector and carbon monoxide requirements in residential structures has created a conflict between standards. Staff is also proposing other amendments to the Housing and Maintenance Occupancy Code to provide clarification regarding the requirements of certain sections.

Discussion

The City's Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code was last updated in 2011. Since the Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code is specifically tailored to the City of Concord, situations are encountered that occasionally require the amending of the code. The proposed amendments have been written to provide consensus between State and local law, as well as to provide clarification in sections of the code to prevent any ambiguities about the requirements.

cc: Thomas J. Aspell, City Manager
Carlos Baia, Deputy City Manager, Development
Gloria McPherson, City Planner
Craig Walker, Zoning Administrator
Sean Toomey, Deputy Fire Chief

Proposed changes to Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code 2012

(Red font = additions to code)
(Deletions)

101.3.1 Licensed Trades: To further ensure the public health, safety and welfare, any new installations or major repairs in residential rental property to plumbing, mechanical or electrical, work must be performed by State of NH licensed tradesmen who shall obtain the necessary permits for such work. The Code Official may require a licensed tradesman to correct non-compliances to plumbing, mechanical or electrical work performed by the property owner or his agent.

104.3.1 Access by owner/operator/agent: Every occupant of a structure or premises shall give the owner or operator thereof, or agent or employee, access to any part of such structure or its premises at reasonable times for the purpose of making such inspection, maintenance, repairs or alterations as are necessary to comply with the provisions of this code.

704.2 Smoke alarms. ~~The minimum standard pursuant to the City Housing Code, Article 27 of the Municipal Code of Ordinances and a July 1, 1999 amendment to the State of NH Smoke Detector Law Rules (RSA 153:10-a) requires that~~ Existing battery powered smoke detectors located within single family rental housing and multi-family (two or more dwelling units) housing, must be replaced with hard wired*, electrically powered battery back-up smoke detectors, which incorporate a "false alarm silencing" feature. The electrically powered smoke detector(s) must be installed by a New Hampshire licensed master electrician. An electrical permit must be obtained prior to installation. This code standard applies to the installation of smoke detection where none were previously provided ~~but~~ or additional units are required.

***Remote Smoke Detectors.** In existing buildings, wireless remote, battery-back up smoke detectors may be installed. Installation must be performed by a State of NH licensed electrician.

102.3 Application of other codes. Repairs, additions or alterations to a structure, or changes of occupancy, shall be done in accordance with the procedures and provisions of the most recently adopted versions of the following codes: International Building Code, International Fuel Gas Code, International Mechanical Code, International Plumbing Code, NFPA 70, International Existing Building Code, NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, International Building Code, International Fuel Gas Code, International Mechanical and NFPA 70. Nothing in this code shall be construed to cancel, modify or set aside any provision of the Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 28.

~~**302.4 Weeds.** All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of ten (10) inches in height. All noxious weeds shall be prohibited. Weeds shall be defined as all grasses, annual plants and vegetation, other than trees or shrubs provided; however, this code term shall not include cultivated flowers and gardens.~~

~~Upon failure of the owner or agent having charge of a property to cut and destroy weeds after service of a notice of violation, they shall be subject to prosecution in accordance with Section 106.3 and as prescribed by the authority having jurisdiction. Upon failure to comply with the notice of violation, any duly authorized employee of the jurisdiction or contractor hired by the jurisdiction shall be authorized to enter upon the property in violation and cut and destroy the weeds growing thereon, and the costs of such removal shall be paid by the owner or agent responsible for the property.~~

Weeds on all exterior premises shall be maintained at a height that does not obstruct sight distance when entering or exiting a roadway or has the potential to create a fire hazard.

SECTION 202 - GENERAL DEFINITIONS

Public Nuisance: Includes, but is not limited to, the following:

7. Any premises that is unsanitary, or that is littered with rubbish or garbage ~~or that has an uncontrolled growth of weeds;~~ or

Rooming House: A detached dwelling unit containing sleeping accommodations for ~~individuals other than~~ more than three (3) unrelated

individuals ~~other than members of the resident family~~ and having common kitchen and dining facilities.

Weeds: All grasses, annual plants and vegetation, other than trees or shrubs or cultivated flowers and gardens.

SECTION 406 – ROOMING HOUSES

406.1 A person shall not operate a rooming house, hotel or motel unless that person holds a valid rooming house permit per Article 27-1-3 of the City of Concord Code of Ordinances.

406.2 A detached dwelling housing three (3) or more unrelated individuals other than members of the resident family is classified as a rooming house and is subject to an annual inspection.

Section 307 – Handrails and Guardrails

307.1 General. ~~Handrails and guardrails in residential occupancies shall comply with the minimum standards established by the appropriate of the most recently adopted version of NFPA 101 Life Safety Code.~~ Every exterior and interior flight of stairs having more than four risers shall have a handrail on one side of the stair and every open portion of a stair, landing, balcony, porch, deck, ramp or other walking surface which is more than 30 inches above the floor or grade below shall have guards. Handrails shall not be less than 30 inches high or more than 42 inches high measured vertically above the nosing of the tread or above the finished floor of the landing or walking surfaces. Guards not less than 30 inches high above the floor of the landing, balcony, porch, deck or ramp or other walking surface.

Exception: Guards shall not be required where exempted by the most recently adopted building code.

Under Chapter 6 Mechanical & Electrical Requirements:

605.4 Branch circuits in buildings with more than one occupancy. Branch circuits in each dwelling unit shall supply only loads within that dwelling unit.