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BOARD OF BUILDING
REGULATIONS AND
STANDARDS VIRTUAL
MEETING
Solar Setback Subcommittee

Meeting called to order at 9:03 am.

Meeting Minutes

1) Roll Call

John Couture – Absent
Mark Durrenberger – Present
Luke McKneally – Present
Ian Finlayson – Present
Darrien Crimmin – Absent
Patty Sheehan – Present
Jacob Nunnemacher – Present
Sam Pillsbury – Present
Jason Ferschke - Present

2) Approval of Minutes from 08/27/24 and 09/27/24

The minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

3) Work product to be created by this subcommittee

- a) **Review solar setback language used/proposed in non-building codes.**

Luke McKneally focused on addressing access pathways first. Jacob Nunnemacher reviewed the areas of access pathway regulations that he believes need to be reviewed starting with access pathway obstructions / hazards with respect to fire department ground ladders. Mark Durrenberger and Sam Pillsbury questioned some of the proposed changes with respect to construction done after the solar installation is installed and the regulations specific to homes with wrap around porches. Ian Finlayson pointed out that these proposals will not work for every residential design especially with homes being built in “marginal areas”.

Jacob Nunnemacher spoke on these issues and agreed to provide pictures of residences that show the challenges they are currently facing in the fire service.

Sam Pillsbury believes that the current ICC Language is based on California geography, they are still preferred by some installers but starting with NFPA language would likely be more favorable to the greater industry. Sam Pillsbury also questioned if there was a standard ladder size that the fire service uses that can be used to attempt to standardize the regulations. Jacob Nunnemacher stated that the fire service is not standardized with respect to ground ladders carried on engines, and instead have ladders relative to the sizes of buildings seen in their communities.

Luke McNeally suggested listing where possible exceptions to the regulations may be allowable, and which regulations do not allow for exceptions. Jacob Nunnemacher stated that the fire service would be fine with allowing exceptions to some of the suggested regulations.

Patty Sheehan stated that the way these regulations are being reviewed now is that the fire departments come out and review permit applications on a case-by-case basis for residences that cannot comply with normal regulations. Sam Pillsbury agreed that fire departments are assessing residences on a case-by-case basis but would like to see better regulations so that less of the permit applications must be reviewed for not being able to comply with current regulations. He indicated the solar industry would like to see consistency.

Mark Durrenberger reviewed some illustrations that he created to show the proposed regulations for access pathway obstructions / hazards with respect to fire department ground ladders.

Luke McKneally reviewed his proposed language document that incorporates 780 CMR language, BFPR proposal language and notes added during the Solar Setbacks Subcommittee meetings. Sam Pillsbury noted that access to access pathways needed to be included in this document. Luke will add the notes from this discussion to this document.

Board members had a lengthy discussion on the current regulations relative to Perimeter Pathways and possible changes to those regulations.

A member of the public voiced a concern about confusion with current wording of the R324.6.4 Perimeter Pathways with respect to roofs with 2 in 12 pitch or less. Board members agreed that some clarification of that language could be beneficial. Sam Pillsbury suggested possibly amending the current definition for "Plan View Roof Area" to include "a birds eye view of an entire surface or

structure”

b) Draft guidance clarifying permitting requirements for solar installations

This agenda item was not reached

4) Other matters not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting.

None

Items Relied Upon

- Agenda
- Recording
- Language from 527 CMR and 780 CMR

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