

# **Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC) Sub-Workgroup Meeting**

**September 26, 2025**

**10:00 AM**

Location: 4224 Cox Rd, Glen Allen, VA 23060 - **Virginia Housing Center**

## **Attendees:**

### **VA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Staff:**

- **Jeff Brown** – Deputy Director of Building and Fire Regulation
- **Florin Moldovan** – State Building Codes Office Director
- **Paul Messplay** – Code and Regulation Specialist, State Building Codes Office
- **Travis Luter** - Code and Regulation Specialist, State Building Codes Office
- **Chris Scott** – Code and Regulation Specialist, State Building Codes Office

### **Sub-Workgroup Members:**

- **Mike O'Connor** – Virginia Propane Gas Association (VAPGA), Virginia Petroleum & Convenience Marketers Association (VPCMA)
- **Steve Shapiro** – Apartment & Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA), Virginia Apartment and Management Association (VAMA)
- **Perry Weller** - Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB)

### **Interested Parties:**

- **Greg Cavalli** – Policy Analyst, Virginia Department of Fire Programs
- **Chris Barfield** – University of Virginia, Building Official's Office
- **Christian Tucker** – Virginia Cable Telecommunications Association (VCTA)
- **Ernie Little** – Virginia Fire Prevention Association (VFPA)
- **Andrew Milliken** – Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB)

## **SFPC Base Document Update**

**Florin** provided an update on the SFPC base document, expressing gratitude to Andrew M. and the VFSB for their assistance in reviewing and updating the document.

## **Proposal Discussions**

**FP6112-24** – Lee Stoermer. Moved to the beginning of the agenda at the request of Mike O’Connor.

**Florin** provided an overview of the proposal.

**Mike O’** spoke with the proponent ahead of the meeting and disseminated the proposal to members of the Petroleum Gas Association. **Mike O’** will be meeting with the proponent in the subsequent week to further discuss the proposal.

**Florin** encouraged other interested parties to participate in the meeting to share their insights, as well.

**FP112.5-24** – Andrew Milliken

**Andrew M.** provided an overview of the proposal.

No further discussion from the group occurred.

**FP405.5-24** – Delegate Elizabeth Bennet-Parker

**Florin M.** provided an overview of the proposal.

**Andrew M.** raised concerns about occupant notification and instructions during the 14-day period testing window. VFSB expressed significant concerns about occupants ignoring the alarms during that time. The UK requires a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for those with special needs. This might be something of interest to the proponent. This proposal may have come about due to fire alarm servicing companies not adequately notifying building occupants.

**Florin M.** asked if **Andrew M.** would be interested in meeting with the proponent to learn more about the intent of the proposal, offered to connect him with the proponent if interested, and noted that staff would also be interested in being part of the conversation, if possible.

**Andrew M.** is interested in meeting with the proponent and expressed the intent of reaching out to further discuss the proposal.

#### **FP601.2-24 – Gerry Maiatico**

**Florin M.** provided an overview of the proposal.

**Christian T.** shared that VCTA has concerns with the definition of “utilities,” which VCTA presumes to include communication systems, alarm systems, and other types of low voltage wiring. From an industry perspective, VCTA is unaware what the specific fire hazards would be. Suggests that cabling and alarm systems be an exception.

**Christian T** raised concerns about the subject matter expertise of those officials inspecting low-voltage systems. **Christian T** questions the proponent’s floor modification of changing, “When in the Fire Code Official’s opinion,” to, “When the Fire Code Official deems,” and whether it provides any substantive change. This issue can be solved through a revision of the definition.

**Steve S.** shared that AOBA supports the exception for communication systems.

**Christian T.** noted that there is a potential for creating more risk when communication systems are offline during an emergency.

**Perry W.** stated that utility systems are not exempt from having issues that could cause a fire. Cable boxes and fire alarm boxes have been the cause of fires. **Perry W** agreed that addressing the terminology to consider all parties is a good idea.

**Steve S.** reminds the group that there are currently exemptions in the code for low-voltage wiring, so there is precedent for an exemption like what is being discussed in the proposal.

**Andrew M.** stated that there may be a need to revise the proponent’s floor modification to not strike the word “Official,” because the fire code does not determine nor “deem” anything – it is the Official’s decision. Noted VFSB’s recommendation for the language stricken in 110.1 regarding Exception 7 and that “electrical wiring” should be left in the section. Encouraged VCTA to reach out to the proponent to create an exception for specific utilities.

#### **FP807.2-24 – Andrew Milliken**

**Andrew M.** provided an overview of the proposal.

**Florin M.** asked the proponent if he intentionally used “doorways” instead of “doors.” If there is an opening that could be considered an exit access doorway, how would this apply?

**Andrew M.** The reason for using “exit access doorways” is because it’s a defined term. Does not believe there is a functional difference or technical issue because it is a defined term.

**Steve S.** noted uncertainty about how you would take the measurement of 50% of the surface area of something that does not have a surface.

**Florin M** clarifies that the definition of exit access doorways is “a door or an access point.” If it is an access point, then it’s not a door.

**Chris B.** asks if correlation needs to be made between “doors” in Sections 807.2 and 807.3 and “doorways” in Exception 5 Section 807.2.

**Andrew M.** notes that 807.3 and the beginning of 807.2 address all doors. This exception is with regard to exit access doorways.

#### **FP901.6.3-24 – Andrew Milliken**

**Andrew M.** provided an overview of the proposal.

**Steve S.** asked what the Library of Virginia’s retention schedule calls for with respect to this documentation.

**Andrew M.** does not believe that the Library of Virginia retention policy applies to this, since it’s a document that is retained by the owner of the property.

**Steve S.** inquired whether these documents would be required to be kept for a government building and, if they are, would the Library of Virginia retention policy apply.

**Andrew M.** stated that if this documentation becomes a government document, then the Library of Virginia retention policy would apply.

**Perry W.** noted that most documents are retained for 5-15 years and that this proposal would not create a conflict.

**Florin M.** shared the analogy of the Virginia Construction Code requiring construction documents to be kept on site for the inspector to reference. This proposal appears to require the owner to keep the records of system inspections, tests and maintenance onsite for reference as needed.

**Andrew M.** agreed with Florin’s statement.

**Christian T.** asked if “approved location” is a defined term and if there is a process for getting that approval?

**Andrew M.** “Approved” is a defined term. Noted that the language is intended to have a lot of flexibility to allow for electronic records, paper records, and other types of records.

**Perry W.** clarified that the Library of Virginia requires a 3-year retention period from the last action on that document.

**Florin M.** qualified that the Library of Virginia retention policy is regarding the retention of documents associated with government buildings.

**FP906.1-24 – Morgan Hurley**

**Florin M.** provided an overview of the proposal including the proposed floor modification shared on the screen.

**Steve S.** noted that striking A, B, and E occupancies has been proposed to be stricken for the past 5 code cycles and that the Board of Housing has rejected it every time. AOBA will be speaking again in opposition at the Board of Housing and Community Development meeting.

**Andrew M.** stated that the VFSB supports the proposal to address this section but that they disagree on a couple items in the proposal. **Andrew M** further noted that this proposal brings the SFPC in line with the model code, which has had these requirements for many years. VFSB supports bringing additional flexibility to certain occupancies or uses that are not currently in Virginia. Andrew shared that he is not aware of projects that would otherwise not be required to have a fire sprinkler system that would now require one instead of providing portable fire extinguishers. **Andrew M.** noted that we have at least 15,000 qualified fire fighters throughout the Commonwealth who are trained to use portable fire extinguishers. They are now rendered helpless in the absence of these portable fire extinguishers where a fire could otherwise be fought.

**Steve S.** stated that AOBA's comments are the same for this proponent's companion proposal B906.1.

**FP1208-24 – Ernie Little**

**Ernie L.** provided an overview of the proposal including the proposed floor modification shared on the screen.

**Steve S.** asked what the building code requires for distances to an emergency shut off.

**Ernie L.** responded that the requirements are no less than 20 ft and no more than 100 ft, which is the same requirement that exists for self-service stations.

**Florin M.** shared the proponent's companion proposal for the Virginia Construction Code.

**Andrew M.** noted that VFSB supports this proposal and that this proposal stands on its own, regardless of the outcome of the companion proposal. Andrew also noted that Item #4 in the proposal is intended to be a part of Item #3, which was confirmed by **Ernie L.**

**FP4101.9-24 – Andrew Milliken**

**Andrew M.** provided an overview of the proposal.

**Steve S.** asked for clarification on where the 10 ft measurement is taken.

**Andrew M.** clarified that his proposal revises this section so that it only applies to tents and membrane structures, not buildings.

**Steve S.** asked if the measurement is taken from the nearest edge.

**Andrew M.** stated, “Yes.”

**Steve S.** asked which definition of combustible materials 4104.3 is referring to.

**Andrew M.** noted that the definition to be used would be the common definition since “combustible” is not defined in the SFPC.

**Ernie L.** noted that “combustible” is not defined in any of the codes except for the Mechanical Code.

**Florin M.** shared that the Virginia Mechanical Code defines “combustible material” as any material that is not defined as “noncombustible.”

*NOTE: Further staff review revealed that the VMC defines “Noncombustible materials” as: “Materials that, when tested in accordance with [ASTM E136](#), have not fewer than three of four specimens tested meeting all of the following criteria:*

- 1. The recorded temperature of the surface and interior thermocouples shall not at any time during the test rise more than 54°F (30°C) above the furnace temperature at the beginning of the test.*
- 2. There shall not be flaming from the specimen after the first 30 seconds.*
  - 1. The recorded temperature of the surface and interior thermocouples shall not at any time during the test rise more than 54°F (30°C) above the furnace temperature at the beginning of the test.*
  - 2. There shall not be flaming from the specimen after the first 30 seconds.*
  - 3. If the weight loss of the specimen during testing exceeds 50 percent, the recorded temperature of the surface and interior thermocouples shall not at any time during the test rise above the furnace air temperature at the beginning of the test, and there shall not be flaming of the specimen.*

#### **FP4106.1.3-24 – Gerry Maiatico**

**Florin M.** provided an overview of the proposal and shared an email from the proponent regarding the potential use of definitions in the Virginia Construction Code, Appendix G (Flood-Resistant Construction), modified slightly to meet the intent of “mobility”.

**Andrew M.** shared that VFSB has not reviewed the definitions in Appendix G suggested by the proponent.

**Ernie L.** noted that mobile fuel vehicles have been a discussion since the SFPC came about and shared situations where mobile food vehicles are staying in place for multiple months and providing outdoor seating. “Mobile vehicles are morphing.”

#### **FP5001.7-24 – Andrew M.**

**Andrew M.** provided an overview of the proposal.

No further discussion by the group occurred.

**Assignments and Next Steps**

- Ron Clements' tent-related proposals FP3101.1-24 and B3102.1-24 have been withdrawn by the proponent from the next General Stakeholder Workgroup meeting.
- Staff are considering extending the deadline for proposal submission from October 10<sup>th</sup> to a later date in October to give stakeholders ample opportunity to review the information and collaborate towards reaching consensus on as many proposals as possible.

**Next Meeting Date:**

**Florin M.** noted that a third SFPC SWG meeting may be necessary depending on the outcomes of the General Stakeholder Workgroup meeting on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and whether additional SFPC proposals will be submitted. Staff will follow up with more information once available.

***Meeting adjourned at 11:53 AM***