

**SFPC Sub-Workgroup
First Meeting Summary
Date: July 8, 2025
Location: Tuckahoe Library
Time: 10:00 AM – 1:07 PM**

Attendees:

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

- **Florin Moldovan** – Code and Regulation Specialist, State Building Codes Office
- **Paul Messplay** – Code and Regulation Specialist, State Building Codes Office
- **Chris Scott** – Code and Regulation Specialist, State Building Codes Office

Study Group Members:

- **Mike O'Connor** – Virginia Propane Gas Association, Virginia Petroleum & Convenience Marketers Association
- **Steve Shapiro** – Apartment & Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington, Virginia Apartment and Management Association
- **Andrew Milliken** – Filling in for Perry Weller, Virginia Fire Services Board
- **Tommy Herbert** – Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association
- **Chris Barfield** – University of Virginia, Building Official's Office
- **Billy Hux** – State Fire Marshal's Office
- **Gerry Maياتico** – Virginia Fire Prevention Association
- **Todd Spruill** – Virginia Fire Chiefs Association

Interested Parties:

- **Nicholas Bowles** – Nottoway County
- **Greg Cavalli** – Policy Analyst, Virginia Department of Fire Programs

Purpose

The Statewide Fire Prevention Code Sub-workgroup (SFPC SWG) evaluates proposed amendments to the SFPC and applicable regulations, reconciles model-code language with Virginia-specific amendments, and seeks consensus before deliberations by the General Stakeholder Workgroup. Members represent fire services, building officials, industry associations, building owners, and local jurisdictions, ensuring that public safety objectives, enforceability, and field practicality are all considered.

Background

Florin provided an overview of the code development process, the background and development of the base documents, and examples of the types of changes shown in the base documents. Specific examples of changes to the SFPC were provided.

Discussion

Proposal B105.1-24 (Appointment of Building Official)

- Florin – Gives an overview and background of the proposal.
Andrew – (Notes that the Virginia Fire Service’s Board (VFSB) has not reviewed the item yet and that he is not speaking on the VFSB’s behalf.) Personally, I think it is a better approach than setting a fixed term.
Florin – Reiterates that no concerns have been raised; may even be “some positives.” No further comments.

Proposal FP202-24 (Mobile Food Preparation on Boats/Watercraft)

- Florin – Turns the floor over to proponent Gerry.
- Gerry – This Virginia Fire Prevention Association (VFPA) proposal is aimed at boats and watercraft where mobile food preparation activities take place. This has become prevalent on bodies of water, such as Lake Ana and Smith Mountain Lake. Clarifies that boats and watercraft used for food service must meet mobile food preparation vehicle provisions.
- Steve – Boats are a subset of watercraft, right?
- Gerry – Yes; Cites statements and questions he has received, “I’m not a boat because I have no motor,” and “If I’m being towed, am I a trailer?”
- Florin – As I understand this, the change enables the code official to apply existing mobile food preparation vehicle requirements to these vessels.
- Andrew – Supports.
- Billy – State Fire Marshal’s Office also supports; they receive similar calls.
- Todd – Virginia Fire Chiefs Association supports as well.

Proposal FP601.2-24 (Authority to Disconnect Utilities)

- Florin – Turns the floor over to proponent Gerry.
- Gerry – This proposal attempts to address local concerns in Warren County and was sent through the VFSB for consideration. The proposal provides explicit authority for

fire officials to order the disconnecting of utility services (primarily electrical) to a building, equipment, or portion thereof. Modeled after International Fire Code (IFC) Chapter 1 language that is amended out in Virginia. Adds parallel language to Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC) Chapters 1 & 6.

- Florin – Notes that this proposal aligns the SFPC with the model code; notes the Virginia Property Maintenance Code (VPMC) already grants similar power, but not every locality enforces VPMC.
- Steve – Struggles with the newly defined word “utilities” and the qualifier “essential.” Wonders about solar power and whether that fits into the understanding of “utilities.”
- Gerry – Considered listing each service but feared omitting one, open to edits.
- Andrew – VFSB has discussed this topic generally but has not reviewed the specifics of the proposal. Suggests deleting “essential,” restoring “electric wiring,” and using “including but not limited to” followed by a list of applicable equipment and appliances. “If it’s not an essential service, then it’s not a utility.”
- Gerry – Agrees that if it’s not an essential service, then it’s not a utility.
- Florin – Proposal will appear as-is at the July 29 General Stakeholder Workgroup meeting; floor modifications can be submitted ahead of time. Encourages Gerry and Andrew to reach consensus and send a red-line Word file to staff.

Proposal FP3101.1-24 (Temporary Special Event Structures)

- Florin – Provides an overview of the proposal.
- Steve – Notes a typo after “this chapter” in Section 3103.7; also suggests replacing “performance” with “results” in Section 3103.7.1.
- Gerry – Questions deletion of the sentence in Section 3103.5 that defines “temporary,” and why “temporary special event structures” (TSES) is removed from the chapter title but left in scoping language.
- Andrew – Explains the proponent’s position: fire code would no longer regulate TSES; the building code would.
- Gerry – Worried about losing maintenance language once permits are issued.
- Florin – Directs Gerry to Section 3103.7 for maintenance requirements.
- Andrew – Thanks the proponent for outlining the sections and providing background information. Considering the amount of work involved, he may have underestimated the effort. Although it may fall under the Virginia Construction Code (VCC), it is not part of it. It would be more helpful to specify the exact VCC section addressing the issue rather than just saying “it’s construction so the VCC handles it.” The scope

might include it, but the VCC may not explicitly reference it. He requests to table the issue until the next meeting for review and wants “temporary” defined in Section 3103.5, somewhere else, or removed from the chapter.

Florin clarifies that the proposal is anticipated to be on the agenda for the July 29 GSW meeting, unless the proponent requests it to be tabled. Members are encouraged to continue to review the proposal and reach out to the proponent ahead of the GSW meeting with any suggestions for modifications.

Proposal B3102.1-24 (Companion to FP3101.1-24)

- Florin – Provides an overview of the proposal - included on the agenda for context.
- Andrew – Disagrees with removing the provisions related to construction documents from 3103.2.
- Florin – Provides an overview of the order of precedence set forth in Chapter 1 of the VCC. Section 109 provides the building official the ability to require detailed construction documents based on the specific of a given project. It appears the proponent proposes to delete the construction documents provisions from Section 3103.2 of the IFC/SFPC on the premise that Section 109 of the VCC takes precedence.
- Andrew – Agrees permit authority lies in VCC and that there is no code-language conflict; however, he sees Section 3103.2 of the SFPC as providing additional specificity for construction documents required for tents. Losing the tent-specific list may remove clarity. Recommends maintaining these tent-specific items and adding the label provisions in a new section.
- Florin – Acknowledges Andrew’s point of view and surmises that perhaps he and the proponent view Section 109 of the VCC and the VCC order of precedence differently.

Proposal FP3303.1-24 (Fire-Safety Plans During Construction)

- Florin – Provides an overview of the proposal.
- Andrew – VFSB supports requiring a plan but wants clear triggers: “when required by the fire code official or when a fire watch is required in accordance with Section 3305.5.”
- Florin – Asks Andrew for clarification as to whether the language is related to fire watch or additional thresholds beyond that.

- Andrew – That’s the recommendation for the threshold, to keep it as minimum as possible and still allowing, “Where required by the Fire [Code] Official,” because certain jurisdictions may have specific requirements, but at least there would be a minimum across the board as to when a plan is required instead of leaving it entirely up in the air; same request for companion Proposal B3301.1-24.
- Florin – If you were to change, “Where required by the Fire Code Official, or where needed for a fire watch in accordance with Section 3305.5,” you would be supportive of the proposal?
- Andrew – That’s right.

Proposal B3301.1-24 (Companion to FP3303.1-24)

- Andrew – Requests a review of the companion proposal and asks if feedback is requested.
- Florin – We are looking for feedback on whatever you have to offer.
- Andrew – We have not looked at this specifically, but we have the same feedback that we’ve had before. When we are deleting sections or, in this case, deleting the IFC entirely, there should be some explanation as to where that is located in the VCC. The scoping in 3301.1 deletes the entire reference to the IFC, so there are a lot of construction provisions in the IFC that, if they are removed from the SFPC, are no longer enforceable. You would only have the VCC as specifically amended. In the SFPC, we’ve removed construction language from Chapter 33, for example, standpipes. If we remove the IFC reference in the VCC, then that section about when you need to provide standpipes is not connected. That would specifically need to be said in the VCC as an amendment.
- Florin – Is your concern that if you remove the reference to the IFC from this section and if you are operating under the purview of the SFPC, “the applicable building code” as referenced in the SFPC would no longer include Chapter 33 and all of the subsequent provisions from the IFC?
- Andrew – Yes. There are other sections in the VCC in Chapter 33 that address, for example, fire extinguishers, means of egress, sprinklers, etc., which the proponent does not intend to delete. Are these intended to remain?
- Florin – The proponent is suggesting that those sections referenced in the IFC are operational and maintenance provisions and, under the purview of the USBC, there’s no authority to enforce operational or maintenance provisions in the IFC. Therefore, in the proponent’s opinion, those should be removed from the IFC

because those should already be covered under the SFPC as operation and maintenance provisions. That's what I understand his reasoning to be.

- Andrew – Suggests the proponent provide more clarity in the reason statement as to whether all or only some of the IFC Ch. 33 provisions are being removed; expresses similar concern for the Virginia Existing Building Code (VEBC) correlations. There are many provisions regarding fire safety during construction in the VCC that would remain.

Proposal FP4106.1.3 (“No-Longer-Mobile” Food Vehicles)

- Florin – Recaps the move of former Section 319 of the SFPC and IFC to 2024 IFC Section 4106.
- Gerry – Increasing number of food trucks permanently parked, placed on blocks, skirted, porches added, and connected to utilities of an existing building, and therefore are no longer mobile. At what point do they cease to be a Mobile Food Preparation Vehicle (MFPV) and become a fixed structure under the purview of the Building Official and not the Fire Official for those connections and modifications, making them a fixed structure?
- Mike – If the vehicle is still licensed as a trailer and movable, does this rule apply? Concerned about defining propane as a “utility.”
- Gerry – Language says if it cannot be “easily transported or relocated without excessive effort,” it is no longer an MFPV.
- Florin – Distinguishes between integral propane tanks vs. hard-piped connections to large external tanks; the latter may be considered a utility connection.
- Andrew – Section 319.9 already regulates tanks “attached to the vehicle”; non-attached tanks would be considered a permanent utility.
- Florin – Sounds like there are a few members interested in working on the definition of “utility.” Mike, would you be interested in joining them?
- Mike – I can't give a yes or no on that, but I can pass it along to the association and they can determine whether they would like to be represented in that discussion.
- Florin – Is your position that these types of units should not be regulated under this section? Or is your suggestion that there should be clarification so everyone understands where this applies?
- Mike – My first concern is that defining propane as a utility could be problematic.
- Andrew – We have other sections in the SFPC that discuss utility shutoffs. Is the suggestion that propane is problematic if it's not included as a utility? From my

perspective, propane—whether it’s any type of tank—meets the threshold of “utility” in a general sense. If we exempt it as not being a utility, we must be cautious.

- Mike – Reiterates that he is not advocating for propane to be excluded from being considered a utility.
- Florin – Thanks, everyone, for the feedback and conversation. We look forward to any further improvements or modifications to this proposal.

Assignments and Next Steps

- The group will continue to work and collaborate on proposals.
- Staff will draft the summary, and once it’s available, will share it with the group and post it online.
- Staff will review the list that Andrew sent, which recommends changes to the base document. Staff plan to use a spreadsheet similar to previous cycles, which will show what is in the base document, the recommended edits, and what the group agrees on, as applicable. The goal once these items have been discussed is to reach consensus. Staff can then draft a proposal on behalf of the Sub-workgroup for consideration during the general workgroup meetings.
- Staff will send a placeholder calendar invite for the group’s next meeting

Meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.