

Fire Department Review | Rice Pond Village

Date: Friday, December 29, 2023
To: Steven M. Kosiba, Millbury Fire Chief, Millbury Fire Department
Millbury Board of Appeals
From: Steve Stearns
Reference: **Fire Department Review | Rice Pond Village**

To ensure clarity and open communication for both the Millbury Board of Appeals and the public, I, as the designated spokesperson for our neighborhood and community, respectfully request the assessment of the proposed Rice Pond Village project plans by the Millbury Fire Chief or their appointed representative. This evaluation aims to gauge the project's alignment with the outlined fire regulations and other pertinent statutes. These regulations, drawn from various sources including a neighboring community's assessment of a similar project by the same developer facing similar site challenges, will serve as vital benchmarks. If the submitted plans do not meet compliance standards, we seek clarification on the corrective measures in place or planned to ensure adherence. Additionally, if any regulation is deemed inapplicable, an explanation for such determination would be greatly appreciated for better understanding.

527 CMR Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code

18.1.1.4 The fire apparatus access road plans must include an analysis and evaluation of fire apparatus maneuvers throughout the access roads created by swept path analysis and turn simulation software.

18.1.3.1 Fire Apparatus Access. Plans, where required, for fire apparatus access roads shall be submitted to the fire department for review and approval prior to construction.

18.2.2.1.1 Approval of access roads shall be subject to the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) and capable of supporting the imposed loads of fire apparatus and shall be provided with an all-weather driving surface and shall be maintained as provided.

18.2.3.1.4 When fire department access roads cannot be installed due to location on property, topography, waterways, nonnegotiable grades, or other similar conditions, the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) shall be permitted to accept alternatives proposed by the owner of the building to allow additional fire protection features, up to and including the installation of an approved fire sprinkler system installed in accordance with the Building Code, cistern(s), additional fire hydrant(s), or similar devices or systems.

18.2.3.2.2.1 When buildings are protected throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system that is installed in accordance with NFPA 13: Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems the distance in Section 18.2.3.2.2 shall be permitted to be increased to 250 feet.

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18.2.3.3 More than one fire department access road shall be provided when it is determined by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) that access by a single road could be impaired by vehicle congestion, condition of terrain, climatic conditions, or other factors that could limit access.

18.2.3.4.8 Travel in the Opposing Lane. The use of the opposite travel lane is prohibited in the design of all new fire apparatus access roads.

18.2.3.5.1.1 Fire department access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6.1 m). Fire department access roads constructed in the boulevard-style shall be allowed where each lane is less than 20 feet but not less than ten feet when they do not provide access to a building or structure.

18.2.3.5.3.1 The minimum inside turning radius of a fire department access road shall be 25 feet. The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) shall have the ability to increase the minimum inside turning radius to accommodate the AHJ's apparatus.

18.2.3.5.6.1 The gradient for a fire department access road shall not exceed 10%, unless approved in writing by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).

780 CMR Massachusetts State Building Code

427.9 Fire Department Access Roadways. Fire department access roadways shall be provided on at least two sides of the building with such access to be approved by the head of the fire department prior to any construction. Fire hydrants shall be provided in locations approved by the head of the fire department.

Furthermore, after reviewing the initial comments made by the Millbury Fire Chief regarding the proposed Rice Pond Village project, we wish to highlight that Rice Pond, being primarily a seasonal pond with limited depth and volume, experiences a reduction in water levels during summer, sometimes nearly drying up. As a result, it is not a viable resource for supplemental firefighting water of any significant volume. These insights stem from firsthand experience and a deep understanding of the area due to long-standing residency.