

FIRE & LIFE SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT

Date: August 6, 2014

Inspection #: 2140355

Location: Chatham Town House
Main Road

Owner: Town of Chatham
1681 Main Road
Chatham, NH 03813

Contact: William Perry
Selectman

Dear Mr. Perry,

The New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's Office conducted a Fire and Life Safety inspection on above date at the Chatham Town House with the purpose to determine if the current Town House meets the current adopted codes and can be used as assemble space for town business.

This report reflects violations that were observed at the time of the limited visual inspection. Other violations may exist that were not observed at the time of this inspection. State adopted codes that apply to this occupancy are but not limited to NFPA 1 Fire Code and NFPA 101 Life Safety Code 2009 editions and the NH fire code Saf-6000. Under these codes your structure is defined as an Existing Assembly Occupancy in NFPA 101 Chapter 13.

The Chatham Town House is a one story wood construction building. The original section of the structure was built in 1830, with some sections added on to the rear of the building. These sections are two bathrooms, a wood shed and a small office/storage room. Exact dates for the additions were not provided although it was thought the small office occurred in the late eighties.

The assembly occupancy section is an open concept room with a fixed bench attached to the exterior walls on the left and right of the room. There is a wood stove in the center of the room with metal piping extending straight up from the stove and turning 90 degrees and running to the rear of the room to a chimney. Behind the wood stove is a half wall that creates approximate quarter separation with in the room.

The assembly occupancy section of the structure has a foot print of 30 feet and 5 inches by 36 feet. This would give a maximum occupant load of 172 people.

During our conversation we discussed how the town wanted to use the Town House a regular meeting place to conduct town business and meeting and possible the use the small office for daily town business until another location can be developed and or built.

Below is a list of the violations that were present during the inspection.

NFPA 101 13.2.9 Emergency Lighting: No emergency lighting exists for the exits and egress and are required.

NFPA 101 13.4.7.7 Exit Marking: Exit signs need to be clearly marked illuminated and in contrast with the interior finish. Exit signs must be visible and indicate direction to the exit if not immediately recognizable.

NFPA 101 13.3.4 Detection, Alarm and Communications System: A fire alarm system does not exist within the building. Section 13.3.4.1.4 gives the authority having jurisdiction the ability for an alternative provision. Based upon our conversations, the singularity of use (assembly meetings only with town offices and the understanding town employees to be house elsewhere) of the building and its limited square footage (total building based on dimensions give is 1452 ft²) interconnected smoke detectors are acceptable. If the Town House is added onto and increased a fire alarm system will be required.

NFPA 1 13.6 Portable Fire Extinguishers: A fire extinguisher is required in the assemble space that is maintained annually and inspected monthly.

NFPA 101 13.2.2.2 Doors: Egress doors for an occupant load over 100 people shall have panic hardware.

NFPA 211: The wood stove in the Town House needs to comply with all relative sections of NFPA 211 *Standard for Chimneys, Fireplaces, Vents and Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances 2006 Edition*, if it is to remain as the fuel source. It is recommended that it be replaced with a modern heating system.

Any electrical working conducted must be done by a New Hampshire licensed electrician.

In closing NH RSA 153:24 Penalty for Violation of Regulations states *Whoever shall violate any rule or regulation of the state fire marshal issued pursuant to RSA 153:5 or RSA 153:14, I, shall be guilty of a violation if a natural person, or guilty of a misdemeanor if any other person. Each offense shall constitute a separate violation. All penalties, fees, or forfeitures collected under the provisions of this chapter shall be paid into the treasury of the state.*

If you believe that compliance with a stated code or rule provision item imposes an unreasonable hardship, you may apply for a variance from, or an exception to, the stated code or rule provision item, in writing, to the State Fire Marshal, in accordance with Saf-C 6006.03. Any alternative method of achieving compliance must provide protection which is equal to or exceeds the stated code or rule provision protection.

Our goal is to work together with you to improve the fire and life safety conditions of the Chatham Town House. Please provide a corrective action plan to me with in the next 60 days and schedule a follow up inspection to review completed work.

Respectfully,

Thomas J. Riley, Investigator
Office of the New Hampshire State Fire Marshal

Cc FD, File
Italics to codes added