

ARTICLE 49: AMEND GENERAL BY-LAW/STRETCH ENERGY CODE

To see if the Town will vote to amend its General By-Laws by adding thereto Section 3.10 entitled “Stretch Energy Code” for the purpose of regulating the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy, pursuant to Appendix 115.AA of the Massachusetts Building Code, 780 CMR, the “Stretch Energy Code”, including future editions, amendments, or modifications thereto, as set forth below; or take any action relative thereto.

Section 3.10 STRETCH ENERGY CODE

3.10.1 Definitions

International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) - The International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is a building energy code created by the International Code Council. It is a model code adopted by many state and municipal governments in the United States for the establishment of minimum design and construction requirements for energy efficiency, and is updated on a three-year cycle. The baseline energy conservation requirements of the MA State Building Code are the IECC with Massachusetts amendments, as approved by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards.

Stretch Energy Code - Codified by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards as 780 CMR Appendix 115.AA of the Massachusetts building code, the Stretch Energy Code is an appendix to the Massachusetts building code, based on further amendments to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) to improve the energy efficiency of buildings built to this code.

3.10.2 Purpose The purpose of 780 CMR 115.AA is to provide a more energy efficient alternative to the Base Energy Code applicable to the relevant sections of the building code for new buildings.

3.10.3 Applicability This code applies to residential and commercial buildings. Buildings not included in this scope shall comply with 780 CMR 115.AA, as indicated.

3.10.4 Stretch Energy Code The Stretch Energy Code, as codified by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards as 780 CMR Appendix 115.AA, including any future editions, amendments or modifications, is herein incorporated by reference into this section.

3.10.5 Enforcement The Stretch Energy Code is enforceable by the Building Commissioner effective January 1, 2020.

INSERTED BY: Select Board

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT: Recommendation to be Made at Town Meeting

Article Information: This Article would adopt the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code as a Town by-law. The goal of the Stretch Code is to set standards beyond base State building code requirements in order to improve energy efficiency. Adoption of the Stretch Code was previously considered by Town Meeting in 2011, and referred to the Select Board for further study. Concerns at that time included uncertainties about then-pending code changes and potential hardships for owners of smaller and older homes. Those issues have largely been resolved. The current stretch energy code is performance-based – it requires

new homes to meet a Home Energy Rating System target, rather than requiring the installation of specific levels of energy efficiency for each building element. The current differences between the base and stretch codes are relatively narrow and apply only to new residential construction and commercial construction over 100,000 square feet, not to smaller additions, renovations, and repairs. The Select Board has met with advocates for adoption of the Stretch Code, and also with architects and builders working in the community. Professionals are familiar with the Stretch Code, and report that that most new construction in Needham already uses it, and that is true in most area communities as well.

Adoption of the stretch energy code will allow the Town to apply for designation as a Green Community and qualify for grants to pay for energy saving projects. The recommendation to adopt the stretch energy code, however, stands on its own merit and a determination as to whether the Town should apply for Green Community status will be made at a later date. Adoption of the stretch code will contribute to efforts to address climate change at the local level.