Amendment of the Whole

[Ordinance amending the Fire and Housing Codes to require automatic sprinklers in residential hotels.]

Ordinance amending the San Francisco Fire Code by adding Section 9001.1.3 and the San Francisco Housing Code by amending Section 904, to require the installation of automatic sprinkler systems in residential hotels, as defined in the ordinance, and providing findings as to local conditions pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code.

Note: Additions are italic; Times New Roman; deletions are strikethrough italic, Times New Roman. Board amendment additions are double underlined. Board amendment deletions are strikethrough normal.

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. Findings.

The City and County of San Francisco is unique among communities generally in California with respect to its residential hotels in that, among other things, (1) due to the age of San Francisco itself, many of the City's residential hotels are of a greater average age than those located in other communities in California, (2) due to its relatively limited geographic area and unique topographical conditions, San Francisco has significantly more residential hotels per square mile than found in many other communities in California, and such hotels are typically directly adjacent to other such hotels as well as other types of occupancies, (3) as does San Francisco itself, the City's residential hotels reflect a wide range of construction techniques and materials, styles, and features, and therefore San Francisco is presented with a wide range of potential fire safety risks not necessarily found throughout California generally, and (4) San Francisco's residential hotels are intermingled with the City's residential, commercial, industrial, and other uses to a greater extent than is generally the case in...
many other communities in California, and this also presents a variety of fire safety risks not necessarily found in other areas of California.

Over the past several years, the City has experienced a near epidemic of residential hotel fires, resulting in significant loss of life, injuries, the loss of many residential units, and significant property damage. The causes of these fires, to the extent such causes have been determined, vary from case to case. However, it appears that smoking and cooking by residents, and either carelessness or malicious behavior by residents, ex-residents and property owners accounts for the majority of the reported fires. The incidence of reported fires in residential hotels appears to be far greater than occurs in residential occupancies of other types within the City.

In many cases, the residential hotels subject to fires were not equipped with sprinklers, or were equipped with sprinklers that were inoperable or inadequate to protect human life and property. The Fire Marshall, after investigation of several of these fires, has concluded that the presence of adequate and operational sprinkler systems would likely have prevented or significantly mitigated the damages caused by fire.

There is a severe shortage of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable rental housing in the City and County of San Francisco and this shortage affects most severely the elderly, the disabled and low-income persons. Many of the elderly, disabled and low-income persons and households reside in residential hotel units. A housing emergency exists within the City and County of San Francisco for its elderly, disabled and low-income households, which is exacerbated by the loss of residential hotel units from the rental housing market due to fire. The loss of such residential hotel units affects those persons who are least able to cope with displacement in San Francisco's housing market.

Recognizing the above-stated unique fire safety characteristics of San Francisco as presented by the City's residential hotels, requiring the fire protection measures reflected in this ordinance is intended to address the potential fire safety risks pertaining to residential hotels. Further, it is the purpose of this ordinance to benefit the general public by minimizing adverse impact on the housing
supply and on displaced low income, elderly, and disabled persons resulting from the loss of residential hotel units through fire.

California Health and Safety Code Section 17958.5 requires the City to furnish specific reasons to the California Building Standards Commission for changes to the California Fire Code, the California Building Code and/or the Uniform Housing Code, based upon local conditions. Changes to the California Fire Code and California Building Code must be based upon local conditions related to climatic, geologic, or topographical conditions. The Board of Supervisors finds and determines that the conditions described above constitute a general summary of the most significant local conditions giving rise to the need for and justifying variance from the California Fire Code, California Building Code and Uniform Housing Code. Further, this legislation is more restrictive in part than the California Fire Code, the California Building Code and the Uniform Housing Code, requiring existing buildings to comply with current building standards. The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors is hereby directed to transmit this legislation, upon its final passage, to the California Building Standards Commission and the State Fire Marshal for filing, pursuant to the applicable provisions of State law.

Section 2. Article 90 of the San Francisco Fire Code is hereby amended by adding Section 9001.1.3, to read as follows:

9001.1.3 [for SF] Local Standards for Existing Group R, Division 1 Occupancies.

(a) Sprinklers Required. An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout the residential occupancy of every residential hotel building existing on the effective date of this Section and which is three or more stories in height or contains 20 or more guest rooms, as defined in the California Building Code. "Residential Hotel" for purposes of this Section shall mean each and every hotel for which a Certificate of Use for any residential units has been issued pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Chapter 41.
(b) **Design Criteria.** The design criteria for the installation of the sprinkler system shall be approved by the Fire Department and shall comply with NFPA 13 (1999 edition). Where sprinklers previously have been installed in a building subject to this Section, the design criteria for such existing sprinkler system may be approved or modified by the Chief.

(c) **Compliance Date.** Residential hotels subject to this Section must come into compliance with this Section by June 30, 2002.

Section 3. Chapter 9 of the San Francisco Housing Code is hereby amended by amending Section 904, to read as follows:

SEC. 904. **AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEM.** (a) Where Required. In any apartment house or hotel, any compartment or room in the basement containing more than 1,800 square feet of floor area, or any compartment or room in such a building used for storing or using combustible or flammable materials, shall be equipped with an automatic sprinkler system of a type designed and installed according to the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Building Code. Automatic sprinkler systems designed and installed according to the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Building Code shall be furnished and installed in all hotels as required by this Code.

**EXCEPTIONS:**

(1) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in an existing hotel pursuant to this Code shall not be required to have an on-site water supply.

(2) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in an existing hotel pursuant to this Code may utilize existing standpipes as approved by the Director and the Bureau of Fire Prevention and Public Safety.

(3) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in a maid's closet, or similar area, or a floor containing guest rooms in a hotel shall meet the
following criteria: (a) Such system may be connected to a domestic water system, regardless of the number of maids' closets, or similar areas, in the hotel, as long as there is a minimum pressure of 15 p.s.i. at each sprinkler head; (b) only one sprinkler head need be installed in each such maid's closet, or similar area; and (c) no such system need be connected to the building's sprinkler alarm system.

(4) Any automatic sprinkler system required by this Section to be installed in an existing hotel pursuant to this Code (a) shall, in the event that such existing hotel is already equipped with a supervised automatic sprinkler system, be connected to such existing other system for purposes of supervision only, or (b) shall, in the event that such existing hotel is not already equipped with a supervised automatic sprinkler system, be connected to a local alarm located at the front desk or other approved location.

(b) **Domestic Water System.** The sprinkler system in an area having less than 1,800 square feet may be connected to a domestic water system if the water supply and pressure conform to the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Building Code.

(c) **Exceptions.** (1) Boiler rooms, central heating rooms and bank vaults are excluded from this Chapter. (2) Compartments or rooms in the basement of apartment houses containing four or less dwelling units, provided that there are no mattresses, upholstered furniture, or loose storage contained therein, are excluded from this Chapter.

(d) In existing Group R, Division 1 Occupancies with enclosed stairways in which an approved partial automatic sprinkler system is to be installed to satisfy the requirements of the Housing Code, the design of the system shall be based on all the following additional design criteria:

(1) The computations shall be based upon the most remote locations of sprinkler heads.
(2) The sprinkler water service size and riser size shall be determined by adding the total number of sprinkler heads on the floor requiring the greatest number of heads, plus one-half of the total number on the floor with the same or next greatest number of heads, plus the total number of all heads in all open stairwells.

(3) The maximum water supply required will be that necessary to supply 13 sprinkler heads.

(4) There shall be a minimum pressure of 15 p.s.i. at each sprinkler head and delivery shall be a minimum of 22 g.p.m. from each head.

(5) Piping and spacing of sprinkler heads shall be based on ordinary Hazard Schedule of NFPA 13, in accordance with the Building Code.

(e) Residential Hotels. An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed throughout the residential occupancy of every residential hotel building existing on the effective date of this Subsection and which is three or more stories in height or contains 20 or more guest rooms, as defined in the California Building Code. “Residential Hotel” for purposes of this Subsection shall mean each and every hotel for which a Certificate of Use for any residential units has been issued pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Chapter 41. The design criteria for the installation of the sprinkler system shall be approved by the San Francisco Fire Department and shall comply with NFPA 13 (1999 edition). Where sprinklers previously have been installed in a building subject to this Section, the design criteria for such existing sprinkler system may be approved or modified by the Chief of the San Francisco Fire Department or his/her authorized representative. Residential hotels subject to this Subsection must come into compliance with this Subsection by June 30, 2002.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

LOUISE H. RENNE, City Attorney

By: MIRIAM L. STOMBLER
Deputy City Attorney

[Signature]
Ordinance amending the San Francisco Fire Code by adding Section 900.1.3 and the San Francisco Housing Code by amending Section 904, to require the installation of automatic sprinkler systems in residential hotels, as defined in the ordinance, and providing findings as to local conditions pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code.

July 2, 2001  Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING
   Ayes: 11 - Ammiano, Daly, Gonzalez, Hall, Leno, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Newsom, Peskin, Sandoval, Yee

July 9, 2001  Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED
   Ayes: 11 - Ammiano, Daly, Gonzalez, Hall, Leno, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Newsom, Peskin, Sandoval, Yee
I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was FINALLY PASSED on July 9, 2001 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Mayor Willie L. Brown Jr.

Date: 7/20/01

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, became effective without his approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter.

File No. 010224