

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**TOWN OF EPPING FIRST IN THE COUNTRY TO VOTE ON AN  
INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND  
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN**

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***Ordinance Heads to Town of Epping Voters.***

EPPING, N.H., March 5, 2007—The Town of Epping Planning Board is presenting one of the first energy efficiency and sustainable design ordinances in the country to Town voters for consideration on March 13 at the annual Town Meeting. Linking issues of environmental protection and economic benefits for new developments in Town, the Planning Board has taken a step forward in “thinking globally and acting locally” with mandatory requirements for energy efficiency.

“This effort reflects the great deal of concern that has arisen around the nation and the world in the face of rising energy costs, new technologies, and sustainable building practices,” states Robert Graham, Chair of the Epping Planning Board. “Surprisingly, we have found that energy efficiency measures are already being practiced throughout the corporate community. Our efforts support this practice and raise the bar in Epping to insure that all developers engage in building and site design practices that minimize their environmental impact and save operating costs.”

The research effort has taken place over the last year, resulting from the increased national attention to climate change and its resulting impacts. “The foundation of our effort is really quite simple; using less fuel and energy results in less pollution and therefore less costs,” stated Graham. In New Hampshire, concern for addressing climate change is reflected by the effort of the Carbon Coalition and Clean-Air Cool-Planet’s success in placing a climate change resolution calling for more action on over 180 Town Meeting warrants for this year’s vote. “We just took this issue one step further, and we are proud of the fact that our Town is confronting this issue head-on as a leader, not only in New Hampshire, but in the nation as well,” said Graham.

The ordinance itself operates as a “performance” zone. Clay Mitchell, Epping’s Town Planner, described the ordinance as, “a flexible method of zoning that allows developers and facility owners to achieve compliance through a menu of options; we recognize that as one of the first implementers in the country, we should present an ordinance that requires in most cases no additional up-front costs for compliance.” The ordinance provides for a selection of compliance options that are assigned points based upon the ability to reflect the purpose of the ordinance.

Sustainable design options include, building orientation (to maximize passive heating and cooling), ventilation system efficiency, innovative heating systems, increased insulation, and operational requirements. “The idea was to set up an ordinance that allows for developers to work with the board on selecting compliance options and to reward innovation,” stated Mitchell.

The most unique aspect of the ordinance is the heavy weighting toward alternative energy production through renewable energy sources, combined heat and power, and innovative technologies. A first in the nation, this effort places the issue of energy production at the forefront. “We are importing our electricity in New Hampshire and our rates are high,” said Graham. “Our goal is to develop an environment that stabilizes energy costs, promotes innovation, and accelerates the deployment of alternative energy; this is our obligation.”

“We are past the time for talk and ready to take action,” emphasized Graham. “With this ordinance we have made clear our desire to promote efficiency and cost-savings for our corporate citizens, many of which are already employing these measures; we just want to make sure that the bar stays where it is.”

The Planning Board, in its last hearing before the vote, addressed concerns raised over increased costs that result from so-called “green” building. Mitchell presented data showing the aggressive energy efficiency measures already in place at the Wal-Mart Super Center, Lowe’s, and the measures being implemented in the newest facilities; Hurlbert Toyota and W.S. Goodrich’s new building, an active site in Epping since 1887.

“The ordinance provides credit for solutions that are eligible for tax-deductions, tax credits, and grants,” stated Mitchell, the primary author of the ordinance. “If a developer chooses compliance options that result in increased costs, the option will result in a dramatic cost-savings in the operation of the facility, more than off-setting the investment.” Mitchell went on to state, “my research indicates that some companies will select more aggressive components of our ordinance out of their own climate change policy.” The Planning Board has included these corporate policies on their Web site for the voters to conduct their own research into the ordinance. The Web site is listed at: <http://www.nhplanning.com/Epping/epping.htm>.

The Epping Board of Selectmen and Planning Board have also adopted the Cities for Climate Protection Resolution. Epping is the first town in New Hampshire to join the ranks of the larger New Hampshire cities including Keene, Nashua, and Portsmouth. Through this effort, the Town has pledged to look at its own energy consumption and carbon output and find ways to lower energy usage and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. “This resolution reflects our own commitment, as a government, to reducing our emissions and energy consumption, and we have been working with the Selectmen and the School Board in researching ways to lower energy

consumption, our emissions, and our costs,” said Graham. “Being able to address these concerns, while saving money for the tax-payer through lower operating costs for Town facilities, is really just a no-brainer.”

“The time to confront these issues has passed. The fact that we can achieve the goals of energy efficiency and sustainability through cost-saving measures further shows the Town of Epping’s commitment to balanced growth, the protection of our environment, and the sustainability of our economy,” states Graham. “We were elected to provide these ordinances to the voters for their consideration, and they expect this from us. It is in their hands now.”

The Town of Epping, with a population of about 6,200 people, is located in southeastern New Hampshire at the crossroads of State Routes 101 and 125. The Town of Epping can be visited on the web at <http://www.ci.epping.nh.us/> and the Planning Board’s site at <http://www.nhplanning.com/Epping/epping.htm>. Contact: Clay Mitchell, Town Planner, 603-679-1202 or email: [planner@townofepping.com](mailto:planner@townofepping.com).

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