

January 22, 2026

To: New Harmony Fire District Administrative Board
and Captain Jim Banks

Re: Summary of New Harmony Valley Overlay Zone amendments
and suggestions regarding HB 48.

Thank you for taking the time at your meeting Wednesday night to consider the proposed amendments to the OZ. I appreciate your input and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any additions or questions. Here is a summary of the draft changes/additions:

- Make sure all language in OZ mirrors or supports language used by the NHFD in their Community Wildfire Protection Plan and other documents;
- Make sure it is clear that a full Fire Protection Plan is required for zone changes, etc, and meet with Capt. Banks to make sure language is included to support what he needs to do to complete the FPP;
- Addition of the map from the Office of Emergency Management that shows the locations of fire breaks, dozer lines, staging areas, etc, and their access points so these can be protected and remain open to fire crews for future use;
- For all Planned Development zoned projects (both residential and commercial) where open space is mandatory require that open space be positioned as a fire break for the project, have easy access for fire vehicles off a maintained road, and open space be maintained in a manner that complies with HB 48 requirements for defensible space; This would be done in conjunction with the required FPP for the proposed project;
- Add language to the Architectural and Design Standards section in the Planned Development zone requirements to include WUI Code requirements on building materials and practices;

Suggestions for supporting the community with HB 48

I want to stress that Judy Gubler, Lisa Beck and I have no experience with fire - we were dealing with property development regulations and community outreach - but we have learned what works well in keeping the NH community informed and involved, and we would like to continue supporting the community with HB 48. By all rights, NHFD should be the lead on this, or a very strong partner, and we don't want to step out of our lane if you would rather we didn't.

- Create a website specifically for NH when dealing with fire issues and HB 48. This would include contacts for local, County & State agencies, a notice board for upcoming meetings and links to video or audio recordings of those meetings, links to videos on defensive space and preparing your property to survive a wildfire, etc. We really like Facebook for the following reasons: most of the community are already familiar with how

Facebook works (NH Happenings has 855 members and New Harmonites has 1.4K members currently), it creates a space for community dialogue - people want to vent and hash out their own ideas and they often come up with some really good ideas in the process! While it would be really good to have a link on the NHFD website and possibly a "Captain's desk" kind of question and answer thing, FB would allow for a degree of separation and protection for the NHFD, and the site should have a disclaimer stating that while the NHFD supports the community, it does not endorse any comments unless made by NHFD personnel in an official capacity.

- Work with the community to create a list of local residents, businesses and contractors that can help property owners meet the requirements of HB 48. This list would become a subsection on the website/FB page.
- Work with the County/Forest Service/ BLM to find 2 locations for community slash piles - one off exit 40 and one off exit 42. These piles would be burned periodically by Fire personnel;
- Work towards becoming a Firewise USA recognized community; I'm including a link here for you to check out Firewise USA yourselves;

<https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa>

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or additions for the NHVOZ and I appreciate all of your input!

Sincerely,

Susie Stockwell

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