

CITY OF SHELDON, IOWA
ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2010 SHELDON ZONING ORDINANCE BY ADDING SECTION 16.11. EGRESS WINDOW AND EMERGENCY ESCAPE OPENINGS.

WHEREAS, the Sheldon, Iowa Zoning Ordinance (the Zoning Ordinance”) on file in the office of the City Clerk designates certain standards as provided by Chapter 414, Code of Iowa, and

WHEREAS, the Sheldon Planning and Zoning Commission has considered the proposed zoning change and it is deemed advisable and recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission to amend the Zoning Ordinance, and

WHEREAS, permits for egress windows are required pursuant to Section 23.3 of the Zoning Ordinance, and variances are required in too many instances. The City of Sheldon desires to retain the ability to regulate egress windows, but to reduce the need for variances.

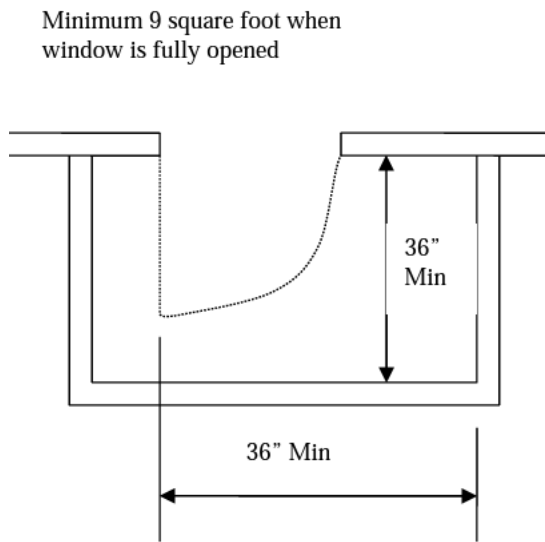
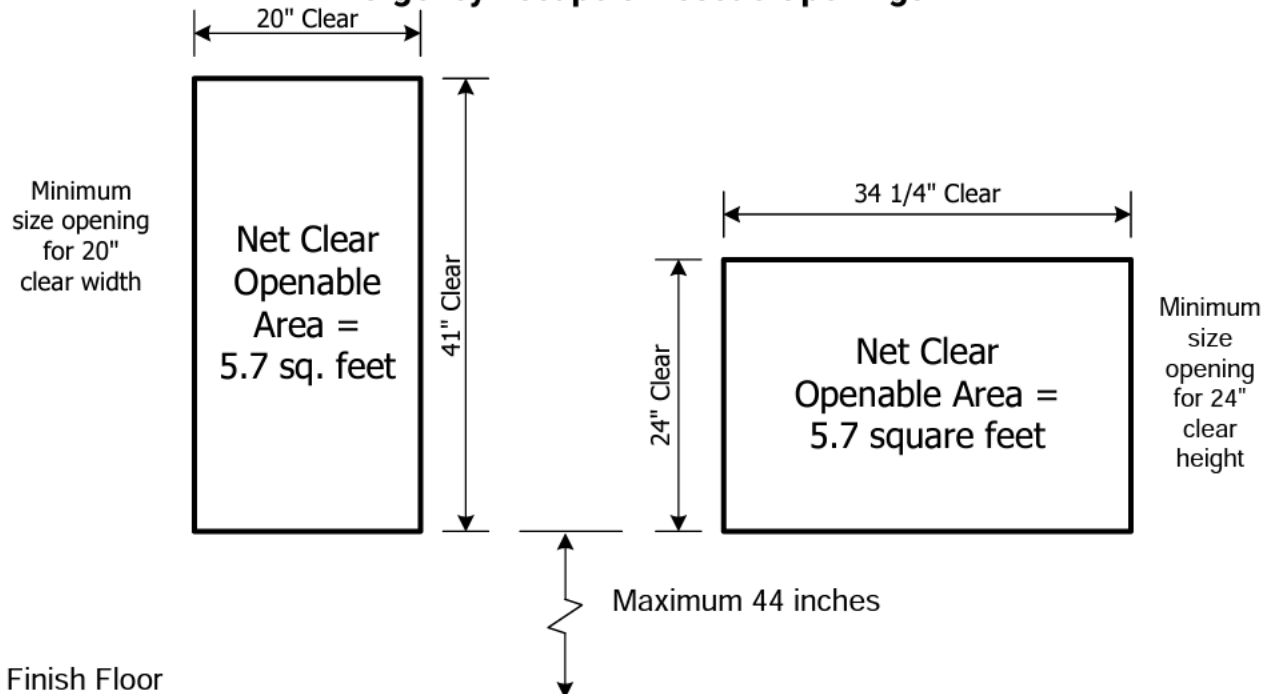
NOW THEREFORE IT BE ORDAINED, by the City Council of Sheldon, Iowa;

Section 1. ADD NEW ZONING TEXT. The Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended by adding a new Section 16.11 captioned “EGRESS WINDOWS AND EMERGENCY ESCAPE OPENINGS” within Article XVI Supplementary District Regulations.

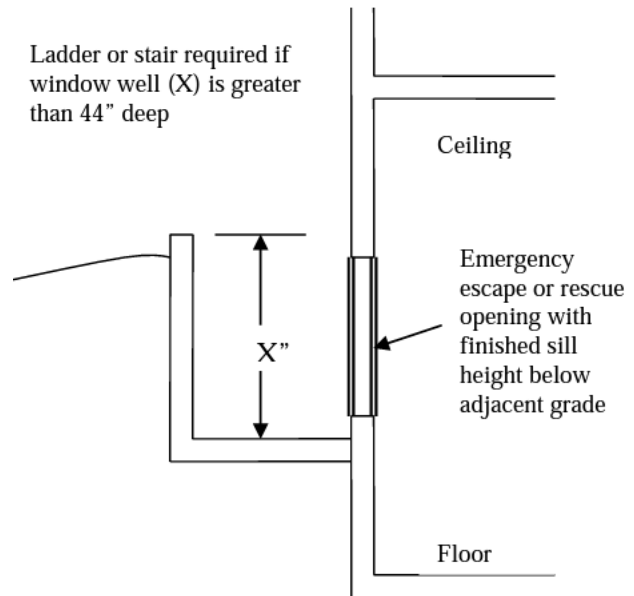
16.11. EGRESS WINDOWS AND EMERGENCY ESCAPE OPENINGS.

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of these regulations is to protect the residents of Sheldon and to ensure that basement areas should have no less than one (1) operable emergency escape opening which may be in the form of an egress window and accompanying window well on the basement wall. The following regulations are in accordance with the Residential Code of Iowa, Section R310.2: Emergency escape and rescue openings and Section R310.4: Area wells.
2. **Egress window and emergency escape opening minimum requirements.** The following shall be construed to be minimum requirements:
 - a. Sill height – Minimum sill height shall not be more than 44 inches above the floor.
 - b. Minimum Opening Area – The minimum net clear opening area shall be 5.7 square feet.
 - c. Minimum Height – The minimum net clear opening height shall be 24 inches.
 - d. Minimum Width – The minimum net clear opening width shall be 20 inches.
 - e. Opening – Windows must open directly to the outside to a yard or court through either a hinged or sliding window.
 - f. Opening Under a Deck – If located under a deck, there must be a 36” height clearance.
 - g. Window Operation – Normal operation must be from the inside without any keys or tools.
 - h. Window Well – A finished sill height below the adjacent ground requires a window well.
3. **Egress window well requirements.** Window wells required for egress windows and emergency escape openings shall have dimensions that allow the window to be fully opened and functional.
 - a. Horizontal dimensions of an egress window well shall be a minimum of 9 square feet.
 - b. Egress window wells shall project out from the house or basement wall a minimum of three feet (3’).
 - c. Window wells with a vertical depth of 44 inches or more shall be required to have a permanently attached ladder or steps.
 - d. An escape ladder in a window well shall be a minimum width of twelve inches (12”) and shall be permitted to encroach into the window well area at least six inches (6”).

Emergency Escape & Rescue Openings



Ladder or steps are permitted to encroach a maximum of 6" into required dimensions



4. **Encroachment into required yard area.** Window wells required for egress windows and emergency escape openings for purposes of life and safety in serving a sleeping room shall be permitted to encroach into a required side or rear yard setback area. Such window well shall be sized according to minimum requirements for the size of egress or emergency escape opening.
5. **Window well covering required.** For those such window wells that encroach into a minimum required yard area, such window well shall be covered with a material that shall support the weight of an average adult. With that said, in accordance with the Residential Code of Iowa, any such covering, lid, or other device covering a window well shall be releasable and removable from the inside without the use of any key, tool or special knowledge. Furthermore, any covering or lid shall not require a force greater than that required for the normal operation of the egress window or escape opening.

6. **Window wells not permitted within the required front yard area.** Window wells required for egress windows and/or emergency escape openings shall not be permitted to be located within the required minimum front yard setback area. If such residential structure is located far enough behind the minimum setback line to allow for a window well, typically a minimum of three feet (3'), such window well sized to the minimum requirements for the size of egress window shall be permitted.

Section 2. REPEALER. All ordinances or parts of the previously adopted Zoning Ordinance in conflict with the provisions of this zoning amendment are hereby repealed.

Section 3. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, provision, or any part of this zoning amendment is determined to be invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the previously adopted Zoning Ordinance as a whole, or any part or provision of the zoning amendment not determined to be invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 4. EFFECTIVE DATE. This zoning amendment shall be in full force and effect from after passage and publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Passed, approved and adopted this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Mayor Greg Geels, City of Sheldon

Attest:

Angela Beckman, City Clerk

I certify that the foregoing ordinance was published as Ordinance No. _____ on the _____ day of _____, 2023.

Angela Beckman, City Clerk