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TECHNICAL BULLETIN

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Topic: Accessibility requirements for townhouses

This is in response to questions regarding a townhouse complex and the requirements for accessibility for the physically disabled. The project includes sided by side units. Residential Code of New York State (RCNYS) R101.2, Scope, states in part ... multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses) not more than three stories in height with a separate means of egress. RCNYS section R321.2, Townhouses, states that each townhouse shall be considered a separate building and shall be separated by fire-resistance-rated wall assemblies meeting the requirements of section R302 for exterior walls (see also "exception").

RCNYS section R326.1, Accessibility, states that where there are four or more dwelling units in a structure, the provisions of Chapter 11 of the Building Code of New York State (BCNYS) for Group R-3 shall apply. This section refers to "structure" not to "building" and is therefore applicable. BCNYS section 1107.6.3 is applicable. This section is neither accessible nor adaptable. The construction requirements for Type B dwelling units are found in Section 1003 of Chapter 10 of ICC/ANSI A117.1-1998, Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities. Additionally, BCNYS sections 1107.6.3.1, Toilet and bathing facilities, and 1107.6.3.2, Maneuvering clearances, are required.

If, however, the townhouses are multistory units and are not provided with elevator service, section 1107.7.2 states that the units are NOT required to be Type B. Therefore, only one-story townhouses are required to be Type B.

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