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**Advocacy Digest | July 27, 2022**

**Brad Boycks, Executive Director**

**Committee to Examine the Commercial Building Permit Process**

Recently, the Legislative Council Study Committee on the Commercial Building Permitting Process met in Madison for the first time. WBA Outside Legal Counsel Robert Proctor of the Axley Law Firm is representing WBA on this committee that will meet this summer and fall.

The charge of the committee is to review the current commercial building permitting process, (including the commercial plan review process at the state and local levels) permitting timelines, and the role of the Commercial Building Code Council. As part of its review, the study committee is tasked with evaluating approaches in other states and identifying innovative and exemplary policies that could serve as a model for Wisconsin.

The committee is being chaired by State Senator Duey Stroebel with State Representative Rob Summerfield serving as vice-chair. You can see other members serving on the committee along with any materials that are prepared for the committee [here](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lc/study/2022/2401). If you are interested in the history of commercial plan review and recent law changes relating to commercial building, [click here](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lc/study/2022/2401/010_july_19_2022_10_30_a_m_room_411_south_state_capitol/sb_2022_02_cbpp) to review the Legislative Council Staff Brief on the topic that was distributed to members of the committee at their first meeting on July 19.

**AARP Poll Shows Large GOP Advantage**

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) recently released the [findings](https://press.aarp.org/2022-7-20-New-AARP-Poll-of-6-Most-Competitive-Congressional-Districts-Shows-Tight-Race-for-Control-of-Congress-Voters-Focused-on-Pocketbook-Issues) of poll that served likely voters from the 56 most competitive districts for 2022.

In these key districts, the GOP currently leads the generic ballot by 4 points for all votes with the margin expanding to +5% for voter over the age of 50. Women favor democrats by a +6 margin while men favor the GOP by a +16 margin.

To view the comprehensive finds of the AARP poll, [click here.](https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/surveys_statistics/politics/2022/aarp-targeted-congressional-districts-survey-voters-18-older.doi.10.26419-2Fres.00550.033.pdf)

**From NAHB: New Home Sales Plunge in June on Rising Affordability Woes**

New home sales in June fell to the lowest level since April 2020, reflecting declining builder sentiment as construction bottlenecks continue to slow new home building and raise housing costs.

Sales of newly built, single-family homes in June fell 8.1% to a 590,000 seasonally adjusted annual rate from a sharply downwardly revised reading in May, according to newly released data by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau. New home sales are down 13.4% in 2022 on a year-to-date basis.

“Builders saw sales decline significantly as buyers were priced out of the market on higher interest rates and ongoing home building and development costs, including building materials,” said Jerry Konter, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and a home builder and developer from Savannah, Ga. “This is just the second time that new home sales have fallen below a 600,000 annual pace since Oct. 2018, and this latest report also mirrors a sharp decline in builder confidence as noted in our latest survey.”

“Buyers are balking due to deteriorating affordability conditions and growing sticker shock,” said Danushka Nanayakkara-Skillington, NAHB’s assistant vice president for forecasting and analysis. “Only 14% of new home sales in June were priced below $300,000. A year ago, it was 27%. Meanwhile, inventory levels are elevated and will contribute to near-term production declines as the market finds a new balance.”

A new home sale occurs when a sales contract is signed or a deposit is accepted. The home can be in any stage of construction: not yet started, under construction or completed. In addition to adjusting for seasonal effects, the June reading of 590,000 units is the number of homes that would sell if this pace continued for the next 12 months.

New single-family home inventory remained elevated at a 9.3 months’ supply, up 60.3% over last year, with 457,000 available for sale. However, only 39,000 of the new home inventory is completed and ready to occupy. The remaining have not started construction or are currently under construction.

The median sales price dipped to $402,400 in June, down 9.5% compared to May, but is up 7.4% compared to a year ago.

Regionally, on a year-to-date basis, new home sales fell in all four regions, down 12.1% in the Northeast, 24.8% in the Midwest, 12.6% in the South and 9.6% in the West.