



Memorandum No: 14-065

Date: April 1, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor and Commissioners

From: Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

Re: Final Flood Elevation Determination Letter from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

In a letter dated February 18, 2014 (Exhibit 1), the City was notified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that final flood elevations have been determined for the City of Fort Lauderdale.

Background

FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) identifies flood hazard areas which are subject to inundation.

While FEMA was undertaking the efforts to update the FIRM, the State of Florida saw an opportunity to have communities update their floodplain regulations by creating a State Model Floodplain Ordinance. This model ordinance would be compliant with National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) standards as well as the Florida Building Code, which in 2010, adopted floodplain management into the code.

The challenge many communities faced was the conflict between local codes with higher regulatory standards, as well as the Florida Building Code, which preempted those higher regulatory standards. This would cause those communities in the Community Rating System (CRS) to be negatively impacted, which may result in changes to the insurance discounts communities receive for participating in the CRS.

A massive collaboration was undertaken to have the State reexamine the model ordinance in light of higher regulatory standards. The result of those efforts culminated in a Broward County version of the State Model Floodplain Ordinance that is compliant with NFIP and the Florida Building Code, allowing the higher regulatory standard to apply.

Proposed Actions Items

The City has until August 18, 2014 to adopt or show evidence of adoption of floodplain management regulations that meet the standards of the NFIP regulations. Part of the NFIP regulations requires adoption of the current Flood Insurance Study and Flood Insurance Rate Map in a legally enforceable document. Communities that fail to enact the necessary floodplain regulations will be suspended from participation in the NFIP, which then prevents our Neighbors from being able to procure flood insurance.

At an upcoming Commission Conference meeting, staff will present the proposed ordinance revisions and be prepared to discuss.

Please note that the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 prohibits FEMA from providing flood insurance in a community unless the community adopts and enforces floodplain management regulations that meet or exceed minimum NFIP criteria.

Attachment

Exhibit 1 – Flood Elevation Determination Letter

c: Stanley D. Hawthorne, Assistant City Manager
Susanne M. Torriente, Assistant City Manager
Cynthia A. Everett, City Attorney
Jonda K. Joseph, City Clerk
John C. Herbst, City Auditor
Department Directors
CMO Managers