

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 9, 2014 (BOS Mtg. 9/16/14)

TO: York County Board of Supervisors

FROM: James O. McReynolds, County Administrator 

SUBJECT: Proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments – Floodplain Management Area Overlay District Revisions

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has completed the public review and comment period associated with an updated Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and has issued the official notice that the new Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) will be effective on January 16, 2015. For the most part, the flood hazard area designations indicated on the new maps are a continuation of those that have been in effect since 1988. However, the digital mapping technology has also improved the accuracy of the delineation process and, as a result there have been some boundary changes. The effect of these changes has been to remove the flood hazard designation for some properties while causing other properties to be designated for the first time. Letters were sent to the owners of all the affected properties (those being removed/those being added) earlier this year to advise them of the pending changes and an informational meeting was conducted for all interested parties on February 5, 2014.

In order for York County property owners to continue to be eligible for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, it is necessary that the Floodplain Management section of the York County Zoning Ordinance be amended to reference the new maps. In addition, FEMA requires that local floodplain management ordinances contain certain standard provisions. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, which assists localities in flood hazard management compliance issues, has reviewed the existing York County ordinance and has compared it to the model ordinance provisions that FEMA considers acceptable and compliant with NFIP standards. As a result of that review, DCR has indicated that certain textual modifications, in addition to the new map reference, will be necessary. These mandatory amendments are contained in the attached proposed resolution. Also included are several optional provisions recommended for consideration by staff to increase the County's Community Rating System (CRS) score which, in turn, would increase the premium savings that is available to flood insurance policy holders. For example, increasing the "freeboard" to 3 feet (i.e., requiring new or substantially improved structures to be elevated 3 additional feet above the Base Flood Elevation) would allow the county to qualify for the next highest CRS score, and would increase the premium cost savings factor from 10% to 15% for all policy holders and would likely result in even lower premiums for the individual structures elevated to that level.

The ordinance amendments must become effective by January 16, 2015 in order to ensure continuation of flood insurance program eligibility for York County property owners. The attached proposed resolution would initiate a Zoning Ordinance text amendment

application and would refer the proposals to the Planning Commission for review, public hearing and recommendation. Sponsorship at the September 16th meeting will allow the application to be placed on the Planning Commission's October 8th agenda for public hearing and consideration. I recommend that the Board direct the Commission to complete its review and make its recommendation no later than the October 8th meeting. Doing so will provide the flexibility of several meeting dates for the Board to schedule its public hearing and take action prior to the January 16, 2015 deadline

I recommend adoption of proposed Resolution R14-116.

Carter/3337

Attachment: Proposed Resolution R14-116