

Technical Memorandum



Date: June 13, 2019
To: Chris Pasinetti, City of Enumclaw
From: Alex Capron, The Watershed Company
Project Name: Enumclaw SMP Periodic Update
Project Number: 180709

Subject: Planning Commission Comment #2: Area of Special Flood Hazard Insurance rates comment

The Watershed Company reviewed three western Washington cities and their respective flood hazard areas language as it relates to previously unmapped base flood elevation data, building permits and the possibility of higher insurance rates. This was requested by Enumclaw Planning Commissioner David Hancock as a response to comment #2 during the April 25th, 2019 Planning Commission. The Enumclaw SMP section of code is within Appendix A, specifically EMC 19.2.19(5) Review of building permits - Area of Special Flood Hazard.

City of Mountlake Terrace

Mountlake Terrace Municipal Code 16.15.440, Flood Hazard Areas:

2. Construction or reconstruction of residential structures is prohibited within designated floodways, except as provided for in WAC 173-158-070. New construction and substantial improvement of any residential structure shall have the lowest floor, including basement, elevated two feet or more above the base flood elevation (BFE).

Mountlake Terrace does not actively address areas where base flood elevation data went unmapped. Therefore, this reference code cannot be utilized as a good test case for Enumclaw's purposes.

City of Sultan

Sultan Municipal Code, 17.08.080 Duties and responsibilities of the responsible official.

The duties of the responsible official shall include, but not be limited to:

A. Permit Review...

8. When base flood elevation data is not available either through the flood insurance study, FIRM, the responsible official shall obtain, review, and reasonably utilize any base flood elevation and floodway data available from a federal, state or other source in order to administer SMC 17.08.110 through 17.08.130. Where elevation data is not available either through the flood insurance study, FIRM, or from another authoritative source, applications for building permits shall be reviewed to assure that proposed construction will be reasonably safe from flooding. The test of reasonableness is a local judgment and includes use of historical data, high water marks, and photographs of past flooding acts, where available. Failure to elevate to at least two feet above the highest adjacent grade in these zones may result in higher insurance rates.

City of Sultan utilizes the same ending sentence as EMC 19.2.19(5) Review of building permits - Area of Special Flood Hazard, underlined above.

City of Bothell

Bothell Municipal Code, 13.13.040 Frequently flooded areas.

C. Administration

2. Duties and Responsibilities of the Local Flood Management Administrator...

b. Use of Other Base Flood Data.

(2) Review of Building Permits. Where base flood elevation data has not been provided or is not available either through the flood insurance study or from another authoritative source, applications for building permits shall be reviewed to assure that proposed construction will be reasonably safe from flooding. The test of reasonableness is the judgment of the city engineer and includes use of historical data, high water marks, photographs of past flooding, etc., where available. Failure to elevate at least two feet above the highest adjacent grade in these zones may result in higher insurance rates.

City of Bothell, like the City of Sultan, utilizes the same ending sentence as EMC 19.2.19(5) Review of building permits - Area of Special Flood Hazard, underlined above.

Summary

Upon brief review of three jurisdictions' flood hazard ordinances, two of the three contain identical provisions pertaining to review of building permits where no base flood elevation data exists, whereas one does not address it altogether. Based upon precedent from other local

jurisdictions using the same code language, Enumclaw's code language appears to be appropriate.