

**City of Salem**  
**Joint City Council and Planning Board Public Hearing**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 16, 2014**

A Joint Public Hearing with the Planning Board and the City Council was held in the Council Chamber on Wednesday, April 16, 2014 at 7:00 P.M., for the purpose of discussing an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance relative to Section 8.1.2.2(a) to update Flood Hazard District Boundaries, and Base Flood Elevation and Floodway Data to incorporate the Essex County Flood Insurance Rate Map panels updated on July 16, 2014.

Planning Board members present were Ben Anderson, Randy Clarke, William J. Griset, Jr., Timothy Ready, Kirt Rieder and Dale Yale. Also present was City Planner Lynn Duncan.

Councilors absent were Todd Siegel, Josh Turiel, Joseph O'Keefe and Thomas Furey. President Robert McCarthy presided. President Robert McCarthy introduced the members of the Planning Board. Councillor McCarthy turned the floor over to City Planner Lynn Duncan.

Ms. Duncan stated that this is a housekeeping issue for the flood hazard zoning ordinance provisions as FEMA requires communities to update their zoning. The City has updated its flood hazard provisions previously, as we are being required to do so now. The action is to update current wording in the ordinance to reflect the new FEMA maps and panels. This has to be done and sent in by July 16, 2014. Staying in compliance allows Salem property owners to be able to obtain flood insurance. The process is to hold this public hearing then to refer the matter to the Planning Board for their recommendation. After the recommendation is sent to the City Council, it needs to be adopted for first and second passage.

John Carr, 7 River Street, Salem questioned would this insurance affect new construction and whether the city wanted to encourage construction in floodplains. Lynn Duncan, City Planner, stated there is no difference for flood insurance on existing properties or new properties.

Judy White 3 Cheval Avenue, Salem stated she is in a flood area at the Willows and has had flood insurance since 1978. She stated she came to see if there were any questions by the Council or Planning Board and wanted to make sure they would approve this ordinance because if it were not passed, she would not be eligible for flood insurance.

Tim Ready, Planning Board member, stated that they were here to accomplish this.

William Griset, Planning Board member, asked if we are participating in NFIP/CRS

Lynn Duncan, City Planner, stated that they were currently looking at this to see if the City is eligible.

Councillor McCarthy stated that he represents a ward that is surrounded by water and also represents Bakers Island. He stated that costs are astronomical for flood insurance, and asked how many new parcels are now in the flood plain. Lynn Duncan stated that FEMA does not provide that information. There is an increase in area, but the maps are not on a parcel basis. The cost has increased, but the Federal Government limited the premium increase to 15%.

Councillor Legault stated he looked at the maps. There there are 13 – 15 maps which you are unable to get much detail from. Lynn Duncan offered that the Councillor could come to the Planning Department to look at large maps. Mr. Griset asked if you can scan the maps to a pdf and then zoom in with Adobe.

Councillor Legault said he is concerned about notification to residents. Lynn Duncan stated that the Planning Department does not have information on a parcel by parcel basis. Councillor Legault said that the city should make an effort to get information out to the public and asked if GIS could do this. Lynn Duncan stated she will look into it tomorrow and noted that the city could put the information out on City News. Kirt Rieder Planning Board Member stated his frustration with the lack of information from FEMA. Jane Arlander resident stated she called FEMA and asked why it is so difficult to bring up maps that are online. FEMA stated they were making changes, but she said she got a copy of a map from Tom Devine in the Planning Department.

Councillor McCarthy asked if there is a report on file with the Planning Department from FEMA as referenced on the maps and what it includes. Lynn Duncan stated that she will get the information about what is included in the report, but does not believe that it includes parcel information.

Councillor McCarthy stated that he knows it is housekeeping, but if there's a report on what area is most affected this would be helpful. He stated that he understood that Council needs to adopt the new plans, but he is concerned about the cost, and noted that these are hard questions.

Lynn Duncan stated she wished we had a way to notify residents, but the maps are hard to discern if someone is in the area. She will look into the report and get the most usable maps. FEMA said these are the final maps.

Councillor Eppley - Ward Four Councillor is concerned about flooding and the city needs to have smart building with the water table rising.

Randy Clarke, Planning Board Member, asked if FEMA sends a letter to residents in the floodplain.

Lynn Duncan stated that smart planning is a valid point. She stated that FEMA does not contact residents.

There was no one appearing in opposition.

Councillor Legault moved that the hearing be closed. It was so voted.

Councillor Legault moved that the matter be referred to the Planning Board for their recommendation. It was so voted.

On the motion of Councillor Legault the hearing was closed at 7:40 P.M.

*Approved by the Planning Board on 8/7/2014*