

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY CODE
CHAPTER 23
FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT

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AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE CHAPTER 23, THE FLOOD PLAIN ORDINANCE PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VIRGINIA, BY ESTABLISHING DISTRICTS, BY REQUIRING THE ISSUANCE OF PERMITS FOR DEVELOPMENT, AND BY PROVIDING FACTORS AND CONDITIONS FOR VARIANCES TO THE TERMS OF THE ORDINANCES

BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED BY THE Board of Supervisors of Pittsylvania County, Virginia, as follows:

CHAPTER 23
FLOOD PLAIN

Article I.

General Provisions

SEC. 23-1. PURPOSE.

The purpose of these provisions is to prevent the loss of life and property, the creation of health and safety hazards, the disruption of commerce and governmental services, the extraordinary and unnecessary expenditure of public funds for flood protection and relief, and the impairment of the tax base by:

- A. Regulating uses, activities, and development which, alone or in combination with other existing or future uses, activities, and development, will cause unacceptable increases in flood heights, velocities, and frequencies.
- B. Restricting or prohibiting certain uses, activities, and development from locating within districts subject to flooding.
- C. Requiring all those uses, activities, and developments that do occur in flood-prone districts to be protected and/or flood proofed against flooding and flood damage.
- D. Protecting individuals from buying land and structures which are unsuited for intended purposes because of flood hazards.

SEC. 23-2. APPLICABILITY.

These provisions shall apply to all lands within the jurisdiction of Pittsylvania County, Virginia and identified as being in the one hundred (100)-year floodplain by the Federal Insurance Administration.

SEC. 23-3. COMPLIANCE AND LIABILITY.

- A. No land shall hereafter be developed and no structure shall be located, relocated, constructed, reconstructed, enlarged, or structurally altered except in full compliance with the terms and provisions of this ordinance and any other applicable ordinances and regulations which apply to uses within the jurisdiction of this ordinance.
- B. The degree of flood protection sought by the provisions of this ordinance is considered reasonable for regulatory purposes and is based on acceptable engineering methods of

study. Larger floods may occur on rare occasions. Flood heights may be increased by man-made or natural causes, such as ice jams and bridge openings restricted by debris. This ordinance does not imply that districts outside the floodplain district or that land uses permitted within such district will be free from flooding or flood damages.

- C. This ordinance shall not create liability on the part of Pittsylvania County, Virginia or any officer or employee thereof for any flood damages that result from reliance on this ordinance or any administrative decision lawfully made there under.

SEC. 23-4. ABROGATION AND GREATER RESTRICTIONS.

This ordinance supersedes any ordinance currently in effect in flood prone districts except the Pittsylvania County Zoning Ordinance. However, any underlying or overlaying ordinance shall remain in full force and effect to the extent that its provisions are more restrictive than this ordinance.

SEC. 23-5. SEVERABILITY.

If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance shall be declared invalid for any reason whatever, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this ordinance. The remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect; and for this purpose, the provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared severable.

SEC. 23-6. PENALTIES.

Any person who fails to comply with any of the requirements or provisions of this ordinance or directions of the Zoning Administrator or any other authorized employee of the County of Pittsylvania shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the first class and subject to the penalties therefore. In addition to the above penalties, all other actions are hereby reserved, including an action in equity for the proper enforcement of this ordinance. The imposition of a fine or penalty for any violation of, or noncompliance with, this ordinance shall not excuse the violation or noncompliance to permit it to continue; and all such persons shall be required to correct or remedy such violations or noncompliance within a reasonable time. Any structure constructed, reconstructed, enlarged, altered, or relocated in noncompliance with this ordinance may be declared by the Board of Supervisors to be a public nuisance and abatable as such. Flood insurance may be withheld from structures constructed in violation of this ordinance.

Article II.

Definitions

SEC. 23-7. DEFINITIONS GENERALLY.

- A. Base Flood/One-Hundred Year Flood. - A flood that, on the average, is likely to occur once every one hundred (100)-years (i.e. that has a one percent (1%) chance of occurring each year, although the flood may occur in any year).
- B. Base Flood Elevation. (BFE) - The Federal Emergency Management Agency designated one hundred (100)-year water surface elevation (plus one, two, or three feet).
- C. Board of Zoning Appeals. - The Board appointed to review appeals made by individuals with regard to decisions of the Zoning Administrator in the interpretation of this ordinance.
- D. Development. – Any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including, but not limited to, building or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading. Paving, excavation or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials.
- E. Flood. – (a) A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally land areas from:
1. The overflow of inland or tidal waters.
 2. The unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any.
 3. Mudslides (i.e. mudflows), which are proximately caused by flooding as defined in paragraph (a) (2) of this definition and are akin to a river of liquid and flowing mud on the surfaces of normally dry land areas, as when earth is carried by a current of water and deposited along the path of the current.
- (b) The collapse or subsidence of land along the shore of a lake or other body of water as a result of erosion or undermining caused by waves or currents of water exceeding anticipated cyclical levels or suddenly caused by an unusually high water level in a natural body of water, accompanied by a severe storm, or by an unanticipated force of nature, such as a flash flood or by some similarly unusual and unforeseeable event which results in flooding as defined in (a) (1) of this definition.
- F. Flood Prone Area. - Any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source.
- G. Floodplain. - (a) A relatively flat or low land area adjoining a river, stream or watercourse which is subject to partial or complete inundation;
- (b) an area subject to the unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface water from any source.
- H. Floodway. - The designated area of the floodplain, required to carry and discharge flood waters of a given magnitude. For the purpose of this ordinance, the floodway shall be capable of accommodating a flood of the one hundred (100)-year magnitude.

I. Historic Structure. - Any structure that is:

- (a) Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the Department of Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register;
- (b) Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district;
- (c) Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior; or
- (d) Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in counties with historic preservation programs that have been certified either;

1. By, an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior or

2. Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

J. Manufactured Home. - A structure subject to Federal Regulations, which is transportable in one or more sections; is eight body feet or more in width and forty body feet or more in length in the traveling mode, or is three hundred-twenty (320) or more square feet when erected on site; is built on a permanent chassis; is designed to be used as a single family dwelling, with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required facilities; and includes the plumbing, heating, air conditioning, and electrical systems contained in the structure.

K. Manufactured Home Park. - Three (3) or more manufactured home lots, tracts or parcels of land, corporately or privately owned, used or offered for use' in whole or part for consideration, for the parking of manufactured homes.

L. New Construction. - For the purposes, of determining insurance rates, structures for which the "start of construction" commenced on or after the effective date of an initial FIRM or after December 31, 1974, whichever is later, and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures. For floodplain management purposes, "new construction: means structures for which the "start go construction: commenced on or after the effective date of a floodplain management regulation adopted by a Community and includes any subsequent improvement to such structures.

M. Recreational Vehicles. - A vehicle which is:

- (a) built on a single chassis;
- (b) four hundred (400) square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection;
- (c) designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light duty truck; and
- (d) designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational camping, travel, or seasonal use.

N. Start of Construction. - The date the building permit was issued, provided the actual start of

construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement, or other improvement was within one hundred eighty (180) days of the permit date. The actual start means either the first placement of permanent construction of a structure on a site, such as the pouring of slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns, or any work beyond the stage of excavation; or the placement of a manufactured home on a foundation. Permanent construction does not include land preparation, such as clearing, grading and filling; nor does it include the installation of streets and/or walkways; nor does it include excavation for a basement, footings, piers, or foundations or the erection of temporary forms; nor does it include the installation on the property of accessory buildings, such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main structure. For a substantial improvement, the actual start of construction means the first alteration on any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of a building, whether or not the alteration affects the external dimensions of the building.

- O. Substantial Damage. - Damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to it's before damaged condition would equal or exceed fifty percent (50%) of the market value of the structure before the damaged occurred.

- P. Substantial Improvement. - Any reconstruction, rehabilitation addition, or other improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the market value of the structure before the "start of construction" of the improvement. This term includes structures which-have incurred, substantial damage" regardless of the actual repair work performed. The term does not, however, include either: (1) any project for improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement official and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions or (2) any alteration of a "historic structure", provided that the alteration will not preclude the structures continued designation as a "historic structure".

Article III.

Establishment of Zoning Districts

SEC. 23-8. DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICTS.

A. Basis of Districts

The various floodplain districts shall be those areas subject to inundation by waters of the one hundred (100)-year floods. The basis for the delineation of these districts shall be the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) for Pittsylvania County prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Insurance Administration.

1. The Floodway District is delineated, for purposes of this ordinance, using the criterion that certain areas within the floodplain must be capable of carrying the waters of the one hundred (100)-year flood without increasing the water surface elevation of that flood more than one (1) foot any point. The areas included in this District are specifically defined in above-referenced Flood Insurance Study and shown on its accompanying Flood Boundary and Floodway Map or Flood Insurance Rate Map.

2. The Flood-Fringe District shall be that area of the one hundred (100)-year floodplain not included in the Floodway District. The basis for the outermost boundary of the District shall be the one hundred (100)-year flood elevations contained in the flood profiles of the above referenced Flood Insurance Study and as shown on its accompanying Flood Boundary and Floodway Map or Flood Insurance Rate Map.
3. The Approximated Floodplain District shall be that floodplain area for which no detailed flood profiles or elevations are provided, but where a one hundred (100) year floodplain boundary has been approximated. Such areas are shown as Zone A on the maps accompanying the Flood Insurance Study. For these areas, the one hundred (100)-year flood elevations and floodway information from federal, state, and other acceptable sources shall be used, when available. Where the specific one hundred (100)-year flood elevations cannot be determined for this area using other sources of data, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Floodplain Information Reports, U.S. Geological Survey Flood-Prone Quadrangles, etc., then the applicant for the proposed use, development and/or activity shall determine this elevation in accordance with hydrologic and hydraulic engineering techniques. Hydrologic and hydraulic analyses shall be undertaken only by professional engineers or others of demonstrated qualifications, who shall certify that the technical methods used correctly reflect currently accepted technical concepts, studies, analyses, computations, etc., shall be submitted in sufficient detail to allow a thorough review by the County of Pennsylvania.
4. The Special Flood Plain Area shall be those areas identified in the Flood Insurance study and as shown on the maps accompanying the Study where one hundred (100) year flood elevations have been provided but no flood- has been delineated.

B. Overlay Concept

1. The Floodplain Districts described above shall be overlays to the existing underlying districts as shown on the Official Zoning Ordinance Map, and as such, the provisions for the floodplain districts shall serve as a supplement to the underlying district provisions.
2. Any conflict between the provisions or requirements of the Floodplain Districts and those of any underlying district, the more restrictive provisions and/or those pertaining to the floodplain districts shall apply.
3. In the event any provision concerning a Floodplain District is declared inapplicable as a result of any legislative or administrative actions or judicial decision, the basic underlying provisions shall remain applicable.

SEC. 23-9. DISTRICT BOUNDARY DELINEATION MAP.

The boundaries of the Floodplain Districts are established as shown on the Flood Boundary and Floodway Map and/or Flood Insurance Rate Map which is declared to be a part of this ordinance and which shall be kept on file at the Pittsylvania County offices.

SEC. 23-10. DISTRICT BOUNDARY CHANGES.

The delineation of any of the Floodplain Districts may be revised by the Board of Supervisors where natural or man-made changes have occurred and/or where more detailed studies have been conducted or undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or other qualified agency or an individual documents the need for such change. However, prior to any such change, approval must be obtained from the Federal Insurance Administration.

SEC. 23-11. INTERPRETATION OF DISTRICT BOUNDARIES.

Initial interpretations of the boundaries of the Floodplain Districts shall be made by the Zoning Administrator. Should a dispute arise concerning the boundaries of any of the Districts, the Board of Zoning Appeals shall make the necessary determination. The person questioning or contesting the location of the District boundary shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present his case to the Board of Zoning Appeals and to submit his own technical evidence if he so desires.

Article IV.

District Provisions

SEC. 23-12. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

A. Permit Requirement

All uses, activities, and development occurring within any floodplain district shall be undertaken only upon the issuance of a **zoning permit** and **building permit**. Such development shall be undertaken only in strict compliance with the provisions of the Ordinance and with all other applicable codes and ordinances, such as the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and the County of Pittsylvania Subdivision Regulations. Prior to the issuance of any such permit, the Zoning Administrator shall require all applications to include compliance with all applicable state and federal laws. Under no circumstances shall any use, activity, and/or development adversely affect the capacity of the channels or floodway of and watercourse, drainage ditch, or any other drainage facility or system.

B. Alteration or Relocation of Watercourse

Prior to any proposed alteration or relocation of any channels or of any watercourse, stream, etc., within this jurisdiction a permit shall be obtained from the U.S. Corps of Engineers, the Virginia State Water Control Board, and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (a joint permit application is available from any of these organizations). Furthermore, notification of the proposal shall be given by the applicant to all affected adjacent jurisdictions, the Division of Soil and Water Conservation (Department of Conservation and Recreation), and the Federal Insurance Administration.

C. Site Plans and Permit Applications

All applications for development in the floodplain district and all building permits issued for the floodplain shall incorporate the following information:

For structures to be elevated, the elevation of the lowest floor {including basement) - For structures to be flood proofed (non-residential only), the elevation to which the structure will be flood proofed. The elevation of the one hundred (100)-year flood. Topographic information showing existing and proposed ground elevations.

D. Manufactured Homes

Manufactured homes that are placed or substantially improved on sites shall be elevated on a permanent foundation such that the lowest floor of the manufactured home is elevated to or above the base flood elevation and be securely anchored to an adequately anchored foundation system to resist floatation collapse and lateral movement.

E. Recreational Vehicles

Recreational vehicles placed on sites shall either:

1. Be on the site for fewer than one hundred eighty (180) consecutive days, be fully licensed and ready for highway use, or
2. Meet the permit requirements for placement and the elevation and anchoring requirements for manufactured homes in paragraph 4.1 D. above.

A recreational vehicle is ready for highway use if it is on its wheels or jacking system, is attached to the site only by quick disconnect type utilities and security devices, and has no permanently attached additions.

SEC. 23-13. FLOODWAY DISTRICT.

In the Floodway District no encroachments, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, or other development shall be permitted unless it has been demonstrated through hydrologic and hydraulic analyses performed in accordance with standard engineering practice that the proposed encroachment would not result in any increase in the one hundred (100)-year flood elevation.

SEC. 23-14. PERMITTED USES IN THE FLOODWAY DISTRICT.

The following uses and activities are permitted provided that they are in compliance with the provisions of the underlying area and are not prohibited by any other ordinance and provided that they do not require structures, fill, or storage of materials and equipment:

- A. Agricultural uses, such as general farming, pasture, grazing, outdoor plant nurseries, horticulture, truck farming, forestry, sod farming, and wild crop harvesting.
- B. Public and private recreational uses and activities, such as parks, day camps, picnic grounds, golf courses, boat launching and swimming areas, horseback riding and hiking

trails, wildlife and nature preserves, game farms, fish hatcheries, trap and skeet game ranges, and hunting and fishing areas.

- C. Accessory residential uses, such as yard areas, gardens, play areas, and previous loading areas.
- D. Accessory individual and commercial uses, such as yard areas, pervious parking and loading areas, airport landing strips, etc.

SEC. 23-15. FLOOD-FRINGE, APPROXIMATED FLOOD PLAIN, AND SPECIAL FLOOD PLAIN DISTRICT.

In the Flood-Fringe, Approximated Flood Plain and Special Flood Plain Districts the development and/or use of land shall be permitted in accordance with the regulations of the underlying district provided that all such uses activities and/or development shall be undertaken in strict compliance with the flood proofing and related provisions contained in the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and all other applicable codes and ordinances.

Within the Approximated Floodplain District, the applicant shall also delineate a floodway area based on the requirement that all existing and future development not increase the one hundred (100)-year flood elevation more than one foot any one point. The engineering principle-equal reduction of conveyance shall be used to make the determination of increased flood heights.

Within the floodway area delineated by the applicant, the provisions of Section 4.2 shall apply.

Within any Special Flood Plain Areas no new construction or development shall be allowed unless it is demonstrated that the cumulative effect of the proposed development, when combined with all other existing and anticipated development, will not increase the elevation of the one hundred (100)-year flood more than one (1) foot at any point.

SEC. 23-16. DESIGN CRITERIA FOR UTILITIES AND FACILITIES.

A. Sanitary Sewer Facilities

All new or replacement sanitary sewer facilities and private package sewage treatment plants (including all pumping stations and collector systems) shall be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters into the systems and discharges from the systems into the flood waters. In addition, they should be located and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damage and impairment.

B. Water Facilities

All new or replacement water facilities shall be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of floodwaters into the system and be located and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damages.

C. Drainage Facilities

All storm drainage facilities shall be designed to convey the flow of surface waters without damage to persons or property. The Systems shall ensure drainage away from buildings and onsite disposal sites. Pittsylvania County may require a primarily underground system to accommodate frequent floods and a secondary surface system to accommodate larger, less frequent floods. Drainage plans shall be consistent with local and regional drainage plans. The facilities shall be designed to prevent the discharge of excess runoff onto adjacent properties.

D. Utilities

All utilities, such as gas lines, electrical and telephone systems being placed in flood-prone areas should be located, elevated (where possible), and constructed to minimize the chance of impairment during a flooding occurrence.

E. Streets and Sidewalks

Streets and sidewalks should be designed to minimize their potential for increasing and aggravating the levels of flood flow. Drainage openings shall be required to sufficiently discharge flood flows without unduly increasing flood heights.

Article V.

Variances: Factors to Be Considered

SEC. 23-18. VARIANCES.

In passing upon applications for Variances, the Board of Zoning Appeals shall satisfy all relevant factors and procedures specified in other sections of the zoning ordinance and consider the following additional factors:

- A. The danger to life and property due to increased flood heights or velocities caused by encroachments. No variance shall be granted for any proposed use, development, or will cause any activity within any Floodway District that increase in the one hundred (100)-year flood elevation. No variance shall be granted for any construction, development, use, or activity within any Special Flood Plain Area that would, together with all other existing and anticipated development, increase the one hundred (100)-year flood elevation more than one (1) foot at any time.
- B. The danger that materials may be swept on to other lands or downstream to the injury of others.
- C. The proposed water supply and sanitation systems and their ability of these systems to prevent disease, contamination, and unsanitary conditions.

- D. The susceptibility of the proposed facility and its contents to flood damage and the effect of such damage on the individual owners.
- E. The importance of the services provided by the proposed facility to the community.
- F. The requirements of the facility for a waterfront location.
- G. The availability of alternative locations not subject to flooding for the proposed use.
- H. The compatibility of the proposed use with existing development and development anticipated in the foreseeable future.
- I. The relationship of the proposed use to the comprehensive plan and floodplain management program for the area.
- J. The safety of access by ordinary and emergency vehicles to the property in time of flood.
- K. The expected heights, velocity, duration, rate of rise and sediment transport of the floodwaters expected at the site.
- L. The repair or rehabilitation of historic structures upon a determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure and the variance is the minimum necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the structure.
- M. Such other factors which are relevant to the purposes of this ordinance.
 - 1. The Board of Zoning Appeals may refer any application and accompanying documentation pertaining to any request for a variance to any engineer or other qualified person or agency for technical assistance in evaluating the proposed project in relation to flood heights and velocities and the adequacy of the plans for flood protection and other related matters.
 - 2. Variances shall be issued only after the Board of Zoning Appeals has determined that the granting of such will not result in (a) unacceptable or prohibited increases in flood heights, (b) additional threats to public safety, (c) extraordinary public expense; and will not (d) create nuisances, (e) cause fraud or victimization of the public, or (f) conflict with local laws or ordinances.
 - 3. Variances shall be issued only after the Board of Zoning Appeals has determined that variance will be the minimum required to provide relief from any hardship to the applicant.
 - 4. The Board of Zoning Appeals shall notify the applicant for a variance, in writing, that the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the one hundred (100) year flood elevation (a) increases the risks to life and property and (b) will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance.
 - 5. A record shall be maintained of the above notification as well as all variance actions, including justification for the issuance of the variances. And variances, which are

issued, shall be noted in the annual or biennial report submitted to the Federal Insurance Administrator.

Article VI.

Existing Structures in Floodplain Districts

SEC. 23-19. EXISTING STRUCTURES/CONDITIONS.

A structure or use of a structure or premises which lawfully existed before the enactment of these provisions, but which is not in conformity with these provisions, may be continued subject to the following conditions:

- A. Existing structures in the Floodway District shall not be expanded or enlarged unless it has been demonstrated through hydrologic and hydraulic analyses performed in accordance with standard engineering practice that the proposed expansion would not result in any increase in the one hundred (100)-year flood elevations.
- B. Any modifications, alteration, repair, reconstruction, or improvement of any kind to a structure and/or use located in any floodplain area to an extent or amount of less than fifty percent (50%) of its market value, shall be elevated and/or flood proofed to the greatest extent possible.
- C. The modification, alteration, repair, reconstruction, or improvement of any kind to a structure and/or use, regardless of its location in a floodplain area, to an extent or amount of fifty percent (50%) or more of its market value shall be undertaken only in full compliance with the provisions of this ordinance and the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.