

February 23, 2017 – FEMA CCO Meeting

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) held a Community Coordination Outreach (CCO) meeting on Thursday, February 23, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Council members attending were President Brian Mikulewicz, Dan Biondo, Robert Mikulewicz, Dale Odell, Allen Heberling, Lynn Holl, and Kirk Fries. Also present were representatives of Canaan and Texas Townships, the Wayne County Planning Department, UCC¹ Enforcement Officer Bob Bates, Sewer Enforcement Officer Chris Martin, and Secretary/Treasurer Michael Wolfe.

Presenters included:

- Molly Kaput, Mitigation Planning Specialist (Insurance); 215-931-5746, molly.kaput@fema.dhs.gov
- Lee Brancheau, Regional Project Monitor (Mapping); 215-931-5729, legrande.brancheau@fema.dhs.gov
- Christine Estes, PE, CFM (Mapping Partner); 301-820-3282, christine.estes@aecom.com
- Daniel Fitzpatrick, NFIP² Coordinator (PA DEP); 717-720-7445, dafitzpatr@pa.gov

Highlights and important notes:

- The new map is a huge improvement over the existing one
- With a few minor exceptions, the floodplain is much more limited on the new map compared to the old one
- The map includes 0.2% flood areas (500-year flood), but these are for information only; they are not used for determining premiums or compliance with federal or state regulations or laws
- The three Letters of Map Amendment (LOMA) recently approved will be automatically re-approved the day after the final map is issued; no action required on our part
- FEMA performed a “Limited Detailed Study,” which means that no floodway³ was identified
- 40 buildings were surveyed to establish their first-floor elevation and determine whether they were in the floodplain; Lee Brancheau said we would receive those survey results
- The FEMA website will provide a three-color map showing 1) which areas remain in the floodplain under the new map, 2) which areas were added, and 3) which areas were removed
- Speaking off the record, officials from the Wayne County Planning Department and Wayne Conservation District said that the only reason FEMA ran this detailed study was because Prompton Borough held out from adopting a new floodplain management ordinance in 2013; out of 2,508 PA municipalities, Prompton is one of 42 not in the NFIP (less than 2%) and one of 17 suspended from the program (less than 0.5%)
- The floodplain administrator *must* be a borough official; in most small municipalities, it falls on the secretary; the secretary can delegate authority to a third-party for enforcement; in fact, many of the provisions of floodplain management are incorporated in the building codes and so should be enforced by the UCC⁴ enforcement officer, Bob Bates
- The Wayne County Planning Department can provide a list of all the parcels with any portion within the floodplain of the new map; we can use this list as a screening tool when receiving building permit applications

Timeline of important dates:

- Feb 16, 2017: FEMA issued the preliminary map
- Mar 18, 2017: 30-day non-technical review period ends (road name changes, spelling corrections, etc.)
- Late spring
 - 90-day appeal period begins; appeals to floodplain determinations require hydrologic study at appellant expense
 - Send draft floodplain management ordinance to DEP for review
- FEMA initiates final preparation of the FIRM⁵ and FIS⁶ report
- FEMA notifies borough of future effective date of FIRM and FIS report
- Borough adopts updated floodplain management ordinance prior to FIRM/FIS report effective date
- 7 to 10 months later: FIRM and FIS report become effective

Meeting adjourned. Michael Wolfe, Secretary

¹ UCC: Uniform Construction Code

² NFIP: National Flood Insurance Program

³ “Floodway” is a specific technical term that refers to the deepest and fastest moving section of floodwater. It is a subset of the “floodplain,” which is the 1%, or 100-year, flood zone.

⁴ UCC: Uniform Construction Code

⁵ FIRM: Flood Insurance Rate Map

⁶ FIS: Flood Insurance Study