



Staff Report on Proposed Legislation

Date: 11/14/22

To: Mayor Gavin Buckley

From: Michael Mallinoff, City Manager

Subject: O-51-22, Amending the Floodplain Management Code

In 2015, the Maryland Department of Environment published a model floodplain management code for all of the participating jurisdictions to adopt. The city adopted that model code without amendments.

Currently the city has entered into a Federal Emergency Management Agency program called the Community Rating System which evaluates our compliance with floodplain management code. The better we score during the evaluation, the lower property owners will pay for flood insurance premiums.

We received some early feedback about a change in FEMA's scoring system. A community can only achieve a maximum 5% reduction in flood insurance premiums if the code contains the statement in 17.11.420E. We are aiming for a 15% reduction. Our proposed code amendment strikes that statement from the code.

Striking this section of code will result in electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems installed at or above the flood protection elevation. It eliminates the practice of installing equipment below the flood protection elevation.

This change only affects electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems in new construction or properties undergoing major renovations. It has no impact on existing properties that are not under major renovation. It also does not affect maintenance or replacement of existing systems unless there is also a major renovation.

Ultimately, this change will affect very few property owners largely because we do not have much new construction located in the floodplain. It also encourages building in a manner that resists impacts from foreseeable flooding.

Prepared by Director Michael La Place and John Menassa, Department of Planning and Zoning