

## **FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION**

### **PART I: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **§ 152.405 DEFINITIONS.**

Unless specifically defined below, words or phrases used in this subchapter shall be interpreted so as to give them the meaning they have in common usage and to give this subchapter its most reasonable application.

**SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT.** Any combination of repairs, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvement of a structure, taking place during any one year period for which the cost equals or exceeds 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 correction of existing violations of state or community health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been identified by the community 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 structure's continued designation as a historic structure and the alteration is approved by variance issued pursuant to § 152.417.

### **Part III: Provisions for Flood Hazard Reduction**

152.441 Specific standards

(E) Additions/improvements.

(4) Any combination of repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or improvement of a building or structure taking place during a one year period, the cumulative cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure before the improvement or repair is started must comply with the standards for new construction. For each building or structure, the one year period begins on the date of the first improvement or repair of that building or structure subsequent to the effective date of this subchapter. If the structure has sustained substantial damage, any repairs are considered substantial improvement regardless of the actual repair work performed. The requirement does not, however, include either:

(a) Any project for improvement of a building required to correct existing health, sanitary or safety code violations identified by the Building Official and that are the minimum necessary to assume safe living conditions; or

(b) Any alteration of a historic structure provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure.

§ 152.429 VARIANCE PROCEDURES.

(A) The Flood Management Appeals Board, as established by the Town of Swansboro hereinafter referred to as the Appeal Board, shall hear and decide requests for variances from the requirements of this subchapter.

(B) Any person aggrieved by the decision of the Appeal Board may appeal such decision to the Court, as provided in Chapter 7A of the North Carolina General Statutes.

(C) Variances may be issued for:

(1) The repair or rehabilitation of historic structures upon the determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure and that the variance is the minimum necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the structure;

(2) Functionally dependent facilities if determined to meet the definition as stated in § 152.405, provided provisions of divisions (1)(2), (3), and (5) of this section have been satisfied, and such facilities are protected by methods that minimize flood damages during the base flood and create no additional threats to public safety; or

(3) Any other type of development, provided it meets the requirements stated in this section.

(D) In passing upon variances, the Appeal Board shall consider all technical evaluations, all relevant factors, all standards specified in other sections of this subchapter, and:

(1) The danger that materials may be swept onto other lands to the injury of others;

(2) The danger to life and property due to flooding or erosion damage;

(3) The susceptibility of the proposed facility and its contents to flood damage and the effect of such damage on the individual owner;

(4) The importance of the services provided by the proposed facility to the community;

(5) The necessity to the facility of a waterfront location as defined under § 152.405 as a functionally dependent facility, where applicable;

(6) The availability of alternative locations, not subject to flooding or erosion damage, for the proposed use;

(7) The compatibility of the proposed use with existing and anticipated development;

(8) The relationship of the proposed use to the comprehensive plan and floodplain management program for that area;

(9) The safety of access to the property in times of flood for ordinary and emergency vehicles; 27  
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(10) The expected heights, velocity, duration, rate of rise, and sediment transport of the floodwaters and the effects of wave action, if applicable, expected at the site; and

(11) The costs of providing governmental services during and after flood conditions including maintenance and repair of public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical and water systems, and streets and bridges.

(E) A written report addressing each of the above factors shall be submitted with the application for a variance.

(F) Upon consideration of the factors listed above and the purposes of this subchapter, the Appeal Board may attach such conditions to the granting of variances as it deems necessary to further the purposes and objectives of this subchapter.

(G) Any applicant to whom a variance is granted shall be given written notice specifying the difference between the BFE and the elevation to which the structure is to be built and that such construction below the BFE increases risks to life and property, and that the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the BFE may result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to \$25 per \$100 of insurance coverage. Such notification shall be maintained with a record of all variance actions, including justification for their issuance.

(H) The Floodplain Administrator shall maintain the records of all appeal actions and report any variances to the FEMA and the State of North Carolina upon request.

(I) Conditions for variances.

(1) Variances shall not be issued when the variance will make the structure in violation of other federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or ordinances.

(2) Variances shall not be issued within any designated floodway or non-encroachment area if the variance would result in any increase in flood levels during the base flood discharge.

(3) Variances shall only be issued upon a determination that the variance is the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief.

(4) Variances shall only be issued prior to development permit approval.

(5) Variances shall only be issued upon:

(a) A showing of good and sufficient cause;

(b) A determination that failure to grant the variance would result in exceptional hardship; and

(c) A determination that the granting of a variance will not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, or extraordinary public expenses, create nuisance, cause fraud on or victimization of the public, or conflict with existing local laws or ordinances.

(J) A variance may be issued for solid waste disposal facilities or sites, hazardous waste management facilities, salvage yards, and chemical storage facilities that are located in special flood hazard areas provided that all of the following conditions are met.

(1) The use serves a critical need in the community.

(2) No feasible location exists for the use outside the special flood hazard area.

(3) The reference level of any structure is elevated or flood-proofed to at least the regulatory flood protection elevation.

(4) The use complies with all other applicable federal, state and local laws.

(5) The Town of Swansboro has notified the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety of its intention to grant a variance at least 30 calendar days prior to granting the variance.

(Ord. 2005-O3, passed 3-15-2005; Am. Ord. 2012-O4, passed 4-17-2012; Am. Ord. 2014-O13, passed 6-17-2014; Am. Ord. 2020-O3, passed 6-8-2020)