



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 23, 2021

TO: Board of Selectmen

CC: Chris Dwelley
Town Administrator

FROM: Courtney Starling, AICP
Land Use Director

RE: FEMA FLOOD MAP APPEAL PERIOD

The National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended, authorizes FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) to update Flood Insurance Risk Maps (FIRM). FEMA must provide communities with a 90-day appeal period whenever FEMA proposes new or modified flood hazard information, i.e., Base Flood Elevations (BFEs), base flood depths, Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), SFHA zone designations, and regulatory floodways for a community. The process for the current update has been ongoing for several years; homeowners that are potentially impacted are notified by their insurance companies.

More recently, FEMA provided the Town with updated FIRM maps in June 2020, followed by a public comment period. Comments typically submitted by communities are to alert FEMA to any major work they have done that may impact flood areas (such as the construction of dams, levies, retention ponds, and other such features). The updates to the maps (overall, not specially to Dover) were modifications to Special Flood Hazard Areas, which are areas that could be inundated during a 100-year storm event (1% annual chance flood); base flood elevations or depths; zone designations; or regulatory floodways.

In March 2021, the proposed flood hazard determinations were published in the Federal Register and Boston Globe, thereby opening the appeal period for communities and homeowners. Appeals are filed based on scientific data substantiating errors in FEMA's delineation or identification of flood hazard areas. At current, we do not anticipate any appeals will need to be filed on the community level. Once completed, the Special Flood Hazard Area determinations will become the basis for floodplain management measures that ensure ongoing qualification for Dover to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

No further action is required at this time.