

Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance

FAIRFIELD COUNTY

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
) ORDINANCE NO. 524
COUNTY OF FAIRFIELD)

AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FLOOD HAZARD AREAS IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY AND TO REPEAL ORDINANCE NUMBER 143.

WHEREAS, the Fairfield County Council wishes to insure the peace, health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the County, and

WHEREAS, The Legislature of the State of South Carolina has in SC Code of Laws, Title 4, Chapters 9 (Article 1), 25, and 27, and amendments thereto, delegated the responsibility to local governmental units to adopt regulations designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of its citizenry, and

WHEREAS, Federal Emergency Management agency has promulgated Federal regulations requiring local jurisdictions to adopt and enforce ordinances regulating construction and development in Flood Hazard Areas, and

WHEREAS, the Fairfield County Council wishes to provide regulations and provide for Flood Damage Prevention.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL that the following regulations concerning Flood Damage Prevention shall be placed into effect immediately:

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Article I. General Standards

A. Statutory Authorization.

County: The Legislature of the State of South Carolina has in SC Code of Laws, Title 4, Chapters 9 (Article 1), 25, and 27, and amendments thereto, delegated the responsibility to local governmental units to adopt regulations designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of its citizenry. Therefore, the COUNTY COUNCIL of FAIRFIELD COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA does ordain as follows:

B. Findings of Fact The Special Flood Hazard Areas Fairfield County are subject to periodic inundation which results in loss of life, property, health and safety hazards, disruption of commerce and governmental services, extraordinary public expenditures of flood protection and relief, and impairment of the tax base, all of which adversely affect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

Furthermore, these flood losses are caused by the cumulative effect of obstructions in floodplains causing increases in flood heights and velocities, and by the occupancy in flood hazard areas by uses vulnerable to floods or hazardous to other lands which are inadequately elevated, floodproofed, or otherwise unprotected from flood damages.

C. Statement of Purpose and Objectives. It is the purpose of this ordinance to protect human life and health, minimize property damage, and encourage appropriate construction practices to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions by requiring that uses vulnerable to floods, including facilities which serve such uses, be protected against flood damage at the time of initial construction. Uses of the floodplain which are dangerous to health, safety, and property due to water or erosion hazards, or which increase flood heights, velocities, or erosion are restricted or prohibited. These provisions attempt to control the alteration of natural floodplains, stream channels, and natural protective barriers which are involved in the accommodation of flood waters, and control filling, grading, dredging and other development which may increase flood damage or erosion. Additionally, the ordinance prevents or regulates the construction of flood barriers which will unnaturally divert floodwaters or which may increase flood hazards to other lands.

The objectives of this ordinance are to protect human life and health, to help maintain a stable tax base by providing for the sound use and development of flood-prone areas in such a manner as to minimize flood blight areas, and to insure that potential home buyers are notified that property is in a flood area. The provisions of the ordinance are intended to minimize damage to public facilities and utilities such as water and gas mains, electric, telephone, and sewer lines, streets and bridges located in the floodplain, and prolonged business interruptions. Also, an important floodplain management objective of this ordinance is to minimize expenditure of public money for costly flood control projects and rescue and relief efforts associated with flooding.

Floodplains are an important asset to the community. They perform vital natural functions such as temporary storage of floodwaters, moderation of peak flood flows, maintenance of water quality, groundwater recharge, prevention of erosion, habitat for diverse natural wildlife populations, recreational opportunities, and aesthetic quality. These functions are best served if floodplains are kept in their natural state. Wherever

possible, the natural characteristics of floodplains and their associated wetlands and water bodies should be preserved and enhanced. Decisions to alter floodplains, especially floodways and stream channels, should be the result of careful planning processes that evaluate resource conditions and human needs.

D. Lands to Which this Ordinance Applies. This ordinance shall apply to all areas of special flood hazard within the jurisdiction of COUNTY COUNCIL of FAIRFIELD COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in its Flood Insurance Study, dated July 19, 1982 with accompanying maps and other supporting data that are hereby adopted by reference and declared to be a part of this ordinance.

E. Establishment of Development Permit. A Development Permit shall be required in conformance with the provisions of this ordinance prior to the commencement of any development activities.

F. Compliance. No structure or land shall hereafter be located, extended, converted, or structurally altered without full compliance with the terms of this ordinance and other applicable regulations.

G. Interpretation In the interpretation and application of this ordinance all provisions shall be considered as minimum requirements, liberally construed in favor of the governing body, and deemed neither to limit nor repeal any other powers granted under State law. This ordinance is not intended to repeal, abrogate, or impair any existing easements, covenants, or deed restrictions. However, where this ordinance and another conflict or overlap, whichever imposes the more stringent restrictions shall prevail.

H. Partial Invalidity and Severability If any part of this Ordinance is declared invalid, the remainder of the Ordinance shall not be affected and shall remain in force.

I. Warning and Disclaimer of Liability. The degree of flood protection required by this ordinance is considered reasonable for regulatory purposes and is based on scientific and engineering consideration. Larger floods can and will occur on rare occasions. Flood heights may be increased by man-made or natural causes. This ordinance does not imply that land outside the areas of special flood hazard or uses permitted within such areas will be free from flooding or flood damages. This ordinance shall not create liability on the part of FAIRFIELD COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA or by any officer or employee thereof for any flood damages that result from reliance on this ordinance or any administrative decision lawfully made hereunder.

J. Penalties for Violation. Violation of the provisions of this ordinance or failure to comply with any of its requirements, including violation of conditions and safeguards established in connection with grants of variance or special exceptions, shall constitute a misdemeanor. Any person who violates this ordinance or fails to comply with any of its requirements shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not more than \$500.00 or imprisoned for not more than 30 days, or both. Each day the violation continues shall be considered a separate offense. Nothing herein contained shall prevent COUNTY COUNCIL of FAIRFIELD COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA from taking such other lawful action as is necessary to prevent or remedy any violation.

Article II. DEFINITIONS