

Climate Change Committee Recommendation to Increase Town Freeboard Requirements

Last year's initial set of recommendations from the Climate Change Committee included a recommendation to increase the town's freeboard requirements for structures in a FEMA-designated flood zone.

Except for some limited options for "floodproofing" of commercial properties, the Town Code currently requires for newly constructed and substantially renovated buildings that the first floor be elevated to a height equal to or greater than the FEMA base flood elevation plus 1 foot of freeboard. The 2018 Town Comprehensive Plan includes a recommendation to consider an increase in the freeboard requirement and proposes that Planning and Zoning consider possible amendments to Chapters 185 Zoning and 101 Flood Loss Reduction if an increase in freeboard is deemed appropriate.

Recognizing the potential for a possible change in freeboard requirements, The Town Commissioners voted unanimously last June to require that the first finished floor of the new Town Hall should not be below base flood elevation plus 3 feet.

Town Commissioners are asked to refer this issue to Planning and Zoning for further consideration, public hearing, and recommendations.