

Agenda Item Report



Winnebago County
The Wave of the Future

DATE: *January 28, 2022*
TO: *Planning and Zoning COMMITTEE (for the February 4, 2022 meeting)*
FROM: *Jerry Bougie, Director of Planning and Zoning*
RE: *Update and discussion on Sawyer Creek Floodplain issue.*

Background: The City of Oshkosh conducted a study with an engineering firm regarding the Sawyer Creek Floodplain which was subsequently submitted to the Wisconsin DNR and FEMA. As a result of the Study, on November 6, 2018, FEMA submitted a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) to the County with an effective date of March 27, 2019. The LOMR required the County to amend its floodplain ordinance to include mapped Flood Storage areas. On March 26, 2019 the County Planning and Zoning Committee (P&Z) conducted a Public Hearing on the amendment and on April 5, 2019, the P&Z Committee deliberated on the matter and voted to deny the amendment. The denial was submitted to County Board on April 16, 2019 whereby the Board also denied the floodplain storage amendment. Following that, FEMA and DNR notified the County that the County and all of its floodplain landowners in the rural areas could lose flood insurance discounts if the County doesn't approve the amendments. As a result, P&Z conducted another Public Hearing on the matter on July 30, 2019 and on August 23, 2019 P&Z deliberated and approved the flood storage zoning amendments to ensure the rural property owners didn't lose their flood insurance discounts. On September 17, 2019 the County Board reviewed the matter and decided to postpone the vote to its October 15, 2019 meeting. At the October 15 meeting, the County Board voted to refer the floodplain storage zoning amendments back to the Committee for reconsideration. On January 23, 2020 the P&Z Committee and City of Oshkosh Plan Commission held a joint public informational meeting to gather additional public input. The P&Z committee scheduled another Public Hearing on the matter in late March 2020, however the hearing was cancelled due to the pandemic. Subsequent to that County staff has conducted a number of meetings with the City of Oshkosh staff and the affected landowners to further gain input on the issue.

Policy Discussion: These mapped Flood Storage areas are new areas that the County would need to enforce as part of its state mandated floodplain enforcement. These mapped areas would place additional zoning restrictions on the landowners that currently do not exist. The mapped areas are naturally occurring lower areas that naturally store water runoff on a temporary basis during large rain events and/or snowmelts. These mapped areas are all located in the unincorporated areas in the vicinity of Sawyer Creek but are not directly connected to the existing Sawyer Creek floodplain but they store enough water to minimize the geographic extent (area) of the floodplain that is directly connected to Sawyer Creek. Due to the additional restrictions placed on the landowners within the Flood Storage Zoning areas, many of the affected landowners have been very concerned about having the additional zoning restrictions placed on their properties and have resisted the proposed floodplain storage zoning.

Requested Action: No action will be taken – this item is an update and discussion item only.

Committee Action: No action will be taken at this meeting.

Attachments: (No attachments)