



NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN DEPARTMENT
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May 14, 2020

The Honorable Tyisha Walker-Myers
President, Board of Alders
City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510

RE: Annual Report of Public Information Distributed for FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) Participation

The City of New Haven applied for entry into the optional FEMA CRS program in 2015 and was admitted in spring 2017 after a period of review by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) and FEMA. The City was admitted at Class 7 with the highest points awarded to any community in the State of Connecticut. At Class 7, holders of flood insurance policies under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) are eligible for a 15% discount on annual insurance premium payments.

One of the factors contributing to the City's Class 7 achievement was the awarding of points for development and adoption of a Program for Public Participation (PPI). The PPI is a plan (document) that lists several "messages" that the City will send and distribute to residents, property owners, realtors, and developers regarding flood risk, flood preparedness, and the mitigation of the impacts of future flood hazards. The PPI lists a variety of specific vehicles for distributing these messages. Examples include the development and distribution of flood-related brochures (two attached to this memo), direct mail (letters), workshops, meetings, press releases, newsletters, and web content. These vehicles are collectively the "public information" of the PPI.

The PPI works with other CRS activities (most notable, the Flood Warning and Response Plan) that require a nominal level of public information through outreach and engagement. Therefore, a specific message such as "Turn Around – Don't Drown" may achieve outreach under the PPI and under the Flood Warning and Response Plan.

FEMA requires that the PPI be administered by a PPI Committee. In 2016, the City Plan Department determined that the City Plan Commission and specific staff, working together, would comprise the PPI Committee. The PPI Committee must periodically review the PPI, ensure that it is being executed, and share an annual report with the Board of the Alders.

To date, City Plan staff have distributed much of the public information specified in the PPI. The attached list of accomplishments in 2019 and 2020 describes some of the activities that have been completed. The list includes some actions taken by the Emergency Management Department that count as public information. Newspaper articles that convey some of the "messages" are also listed, even though most of them were not spurred by sending press releases to the media. For example, articles are listed that included quotes from the Emergency Management Department about how to prepare for flooding. To successfully navigate the annual recertification process in February 2020, the City Plan Department distributed additional public information in January and February 2020. The Department partnered with local Certified Flood Managers and conducted public information presentations at four Community Management Team meetings (Quinnipiac East/Fair Haven Heights, Hill South, East Shore/Annex & Downtown) in January and February and is scheduled to present virtually at Whalley/Edgewood/Beaver Hills in June 2020.

It is important to understand that with or without the PPI, the City would be required to distribute flood-related public information to remain in the CRS program. However, the PPI requires a higher level of activity than would normally be undertaken by a community for CRS participation at a lower class.

Going forward, the PPI Committee and the City Plan Department plan to undertake a somewhat higher level of flood-related public information distribution to ensure that the points awarded for the PPI continue to be credited by ISO and FEMA. The City Plan Department may consider revising the PPI in the coming year to make it more straightforward and actionable for departments and individuals involved in the distribution of public information to fulfill the goals set forth in the PPI.

Thank you for your review of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aicha Woods". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aicha Woods
Executive Director, City Plan Department

cc: Stacey Davis, CRS Coordinator
Albert Lucas, Director of Legislative Services
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