



NEW HAVEN
CITY PLAN DEPARTMENT

165 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510
Tel (203) 946-6378 Fax (203) 946-7815

25 May 2023

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

**RE: ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TO TITLE IV OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN'S
CODE OF ORDINANCES (THE FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION
ORDINANCE) TO BRING THE FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION
ORDINANCE INTO COMPLIANCE WITH THE UNIFORM BUILDING CODE
FOR THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT**

Dear President Walker-Myers:

On March 4, 1991, the Board of Alders of the City of New Haven adopted an ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances concerning flood damage prevention. The ordinance was last amended on July 8, 2013, to comply with the State of Connecticut Building Code. Since then, the State of Connecticut has updated the building code twice (in 2018 and 2022) and the current city flood ordinance is out of compliance.

The 2018 Building Code updates require that the City of New Haven add several definitions (see attachment for technical summary), update several existing definitions, and expand the area of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zones subject to more stringent development regulations to match Connecticut Building Code standards.

In addition to updating the ordinance to ensure compliance, the City Plan Department sees an opportunity to address several other gaps that staff have identified and for the City to join peers like New London (which requires the highest elevation for new buildings in the state) as leaders in the region. The City Plan Department (in conjunction with Engineering, Building and Emergency Services) proposes that the Ordinance require all buildings within the Special Flood Hazard Area to be built at least two feet above Base Flood Elevation, more clearly define how applicants should measure a property's "market value" for consistent regulation across projects; and prevent further intensification of hazardous materials like oil storage tanks in flood-prone areas.

Connecticut expects to see 20 inches of sea level rise by 2050 in the Long Island Sound, and changes like requiring buildings to be built 2 feet above Base Flood Elevation (24 inches) are common sense for buildings whose lifetimes will likely exceed 30 years. Further, across the country and in New Haven, there are growing movements to prepare industrial waterfronts, many of which are embedded in low-income communities of color, for climate impacts like flooding. In coordination with other city and community-driven strategies, this ordinance can play an important role.



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This amendment will ensure the appropriate incorporation of the 2022 State Building Code into the City's Code of Ordinances. Further, this amendment will further the goal of the ordinance to promote public health, safety, and general welfare and to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions.

Thank you for your consideration. Should any questions, comments or concerns arise, please contact me.

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:

Anne Hartjen

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Anne Hartjen, ASLA, PLA
Assistant Director of Comprehensive Planning
City Plan Department

