

Kenai Peninsula Borough
Planning Department – River Center

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brent Hibbert, Assembly President
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

THRU: Charlie Pierce, Mayor *JCB*
Melanie Aeschliman, Planning Director *MA*
Stephanie Presley, SBCFSA Program Lead *SP*
Dan Nelson, Emergency Manager *DN*

FROM: Samantha Lopez, Acting River Center Manager *SL*

DATE: April 8, 2021

RE: Ordinance 2021-17, Amending KPB 21.06 Floodplain Management to Adopt Flood Depths for Three Neighborhoods in the Seward Mapped Flood Data Area) and to Incorporate the Seward Mapped Flood Data Area into the Minimum National Flood Insurance Standards (Mayor)

Since 1988, the borough has participated in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), making federal disaster assistance, federal hazard mitigation grants, federal subsidized mortgages, and individual homeowner insurance available within the borough. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) oversees the NFIP and provides participating communities with the minimum regulations and regulatory flood maps for each community to enforce.

The borough established the Seward Mapped Flood Data Area (SMFDA) in 2009 to regulate areas of known riverine and alluvial flood hazards outside the FEMA regulatory maps. The SMFDA was scheduled to sunset when FEMA provided an updated flood insurance study with new regulatory flood maps for the service area. In 2013, FEMA mapped some of the service area, but not many areas of known flood hazard, so the SMFDA was kept as a minimum regulatory tool to continue to protect residents against flood hazards.

The SMFDA was designed to be a short-term regulatory tool, and was based on anecdotal flooding evidence from three floods of record in 1986, 1995, and 2006. In 2020, the SBCFSA contracted with Alaska Water Resources Engineering to create hydraulic and hydrologic models for three neighborhoods in the SMFDA, providing flood hazard boundaries and flood depths for the 100-year flood event. These additional data provide the flood protection elevation necessary to regulate development within the SMFDA to the minimum NFIP standards.

This ordinance will integrate development within the SMFDA into the same minimum NFIP standards as the FEMA flood hazard areas. The ordinance will also

clarify and define the different flood protection elevation standards based on minimum NFIP regulations.

At its April 5, 2021 regular meeting, the SBCFSA Board of Directors recommended approval of this ordinance.

The Planning Commission will review this ordinance at the April 12, 2021 meeting, and their recommendation will be provided to the assembly prior to the scheduled hearing on this ordinance.

Your consideration of this ordinance is appreciated.