



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

Promoting the Wise Use of Land – Helping to Build Great Communities

DATE: February 20, 2014  
TO: San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission  
FROM: Nick Forester, Project Manager  
SUBJECT: FEMA required Flood Hazard revisions / LRP2012-00002

LRP2012-00002 has been placed on the agenda as hearing item number 5 for the February 20, 2014 San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission public hearing. Due to the unanticipated lack of availability of staff that was scheduled to present the project, Staff is requesting that the item be continued to March 27, 2014

If you have any questions, I can be reached at 781-1163.

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**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING  
STAFF REPORT**

*Promoting the wise use of land  
Helping build great communities*

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

MEETING DATE February 27, 2014	CONTACT/PHONE Nick Forester 781-1163	APPLICANT County of San Luis Obispo	FILE NO. LRP2012-00002
SUBJECT Hearing to consider a request by the County of San Luis Obispo to amend Sections 22.14.060 (Flood Hazard Area) and 22.80.030( Definitions) of the Land Use Ordinance (Title 22 of County Code), Sections 23.07.060 (Flood Hazard Area), 23.07.062 (Applicability of Flood Hazard Standards), 23.07.064 (Flood Hazard Area Permit Processing Requirements), 23.07.065 (General Hazard Avoidance), 23.07.066 (Construction Standards), 23.11.030 (Definitions) of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance (Title 23 of County Code) and Section 21.03.010(e) of The Real Property Division Ordinance (Title 21 of County Code), to comply with the federal law requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA).			
RECOMMENDED ACTION Recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of Land Use Ordinance Amendment LRP2012-00002 based on the findings listed in Exhibit A.			
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION This project is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this project may have a significant effect on the environment; therefore, the activity is not subject to CEQA. [Reference: State CEQA Guidelines sec. 15061(b)(3), General Rule Exemption]			
LAND USE CATEGORY All	COMBINING DESIGNATION Not Applicable	ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER Not Applicable	SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All
PLANNING AREA STANDARDS: Not Applicable			
EXISTING USES: Not Applicable			
SURROUNDING LAND USE CATEGORIES AND USES: Not Applicable			
OTHER AGENCY / ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT: The project was referred to: Public Works			
TOPOGRAPHY: Not Applicable		VEGETATION: Not Applicable	
PROPOSED SERVICES: Not Applicable		AUTHORIZED FOR PROCESSING DATE: October 16, 2012	
<p align="center">ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING &amp; BUILDING AT: COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER γ SAN LUIS OBISPO γ CALIFORNIA 93408 γ (805) 781-5600 γ FAX: (805) 781-1242</p>			

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### PROJECT SUMMARY

#### Background:

Federal law requires communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to have adequate permitting and other administrative procedures in place to ensure that local ordinances are in compliance with federal law. A local program deficiency is a defect in a community's flood plain management regulations or administrative procedures that impairs effective implementation of FEMA flood plain management regulations. FEMA has identified several deficiencies in county code. Federal law requires correction of any program deficiencies that are identified.

If the County fails to correct the identified deficiencies, the FEMA Regional Director may place the county on probation. Probation has no effect on the continued availability of flood insurance; however, an additional charge of \$50.00 will be added to the premium of each flood insurance policy.

If a community on probationary status fails to take appropriate remedial measures and adopt compliant flood plain management measures during the probationary period, the FEMA Regional Director may suspend a community from the National Flood Insurance Program. If a community is suspended, new flood insurance cannot be purchased and existing policies cannot be renewed. In addition, existing three year policies become void at the end of the current policy year.

The proposed revisions, if adopted will bring local ordinances into compliance with FEMA requirements and will prevent the imposition of additional flood insurance fees and/or cancellation of existing flood insurance policies.

#### Proposed Ordinance Modifications:

The attached Exhibits B, C and D show the proposed Ordinance amendment deletions with strikeouts, and proposed additions with underlined text. The following is a summary discussion of the proposed amendments:

The project proposes the following revisions to Section 22.14.060 (Flood Hazard Area) of Title 22 and sections 23.07.060 (Flood Hazard Area), 23.07.062 (Applicability of Flood Hazard Standards), 23.07.064 (Flood Hazard Area Permit Processing Requirements), 23.07.065 (General Hazard Avoidance), 23.07.066 (Construction Standards) of Title 23 of county code:

- Adds Language regarding Statutory Authority
- Requires that temporary uses be removable in times of flooding in order to be exempt from the Flood Hazard Combining Designation
- Adds new language regarding definition of "substantial damage"
- Establishes new requirements for projects that alter a watercourse
- Establishes new requirements and findings for variances
- Adds new language regarding disclaimer of liability
- Establishes new requirements for land divisions in flood hazard areas
- Adds new language regarding abrogation and greater restrictions

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The project also proposes revisions to section 22.80 (Definitions) of Title 22 and section 23.11(Definitions) of Title 23 of county code to add definitions of the following language:

- Highest Adjacent Grade
- Area Of Special Flood Hazard
- Start Of Construction

The project also proposes revisions to section 21.03.010 (Flood hazard and drainage) of title 21 (Real Property Division Ordinance) of county code as follows:

- For new land divisions, public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical and water systems are required to be located and constructed to minimize flood damage.
- Requires that all new subdivisions greater than 50 lots or 5 acres shall identify the Special Flood Hazard Areas and the Base Flood Elevation.

### **AUTHORITY**

#### **Land Use Ordinance Amendment**

The Land Use Element sets forth the authority by which the Land Use Ordinance can be amended. The following factors should be considered in making a decision.

#### *Guidelines for Amendments to Land Use Ordinance*

The Land Use Ordinance guides new development so as to be in character with its surroundings and to maintain amenities for living. These principles implement the general goals that are stated in Chapter 1 of Framework for Planning, Part I of the Land Use Element.

Development of new or amended Land Use Ordinance standards should be guided by the following principles for implementation of the general plan goals:

1. All developments should be designed with maximum consideration of the characteristics of project sites and their surroundings:
  - a. To enhance and achieve full use of special site potentials such as natural terrain, views, vegetation, natural waterways or other features;
  - b. To respect and mitigate (or avoid) special site constraints such as climatic conditions, noise, flooding, slope stability, significant vegetation or ecologically sensitive surroundings:

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- c. To be compatible with present and potential adjacent land uses within the context of the area's urban, suburban or rural character.
2. Designs for proposed residential uses should include:
  - a. Provisions for privacy and usable open space;
  - b. Orientation and design features to shelter from prevailing winds and adverse weather, while enabling use of natural light, ventilation and shade.
3. All developments should be designed to provide safe vehicular and pedestrian movement, adequate parking for residents, guests, employees and emergency vehicles.

The proposed amendments are consistent with these guidelines as the proposed amendments will achieve full use of a sites potential while avoiding special site constraints such as flooding. The residential principles and the principles relating to vehicular and pedestrian movement do not apply in this case.

### **LEGISLATIVE INTENT**

This ordinance amendment's purpose is to correct Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identified deficiencies in local ordinances in order to avoid imposition of additional flood insurance fees and/or cancellation of existing flood insurance policies.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Exhibit A - Findings

Exhibit B – Title 21 Amending Ordinance

Exhibit C – Title 22 Amending Ordinance

Exhibit D – Title 23 Amending Ordinance

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### EXHIBIT A - FINDINGS

#### *Environmental Determination*

- A. This project is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this project may have a significant effect on the environment; therefore, the activity is not subject to CEQA. [Reference: State CEQA Guidelines sec. 15061(b)(3), General Rule Exemption]

#### *Amendment*

- B. The proposed amendments are consistent with the Land Use Element and other adopted elements of the general plan because the changes are consistent with goal S-2 of the Safety Element to reduce damage to structures and the danger to life caused by flooding, dam inundation and tsunamis.
- C. The proposed amendments are consistent with the guidelines for amendments to the Land Use Ordinance because the modifications will allow full use of a sites potential while avoiding special site constraints such as flooding.
- D. The proposed amendment will protect the public health, safety and welfare of the area residents by allowing for development that will avoid special site constraints such as flooding.

**LRP 2012-00002:B**

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 21 OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY CODE,  
THE REAL PROPERTY DIVISION ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 3 RELATING TO FLOOD  
HAZARD COMBINING DESIGNATION AREAS

The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo ordains as follows:

SECTION 1: Section 21. 03.010(e) of the Real Property Division Ordinance, Title 21 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended as follows:

**(e) Flood hazard and drainage.**

- (1)** Where all or any portion of the subdivision is located within a Flood Hazard combining designation, evidence must be submitted to show that the parcels will have flood free building sites which satisfy the requirements of Title 22 or Title 23 of this code and shall have public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical and water systems located and constructed to minimize flood damage. In addition, the subdivision must not cause a flood hazard to surrounding properties.
- (2)** Privately maintained drainage basins shall be designed to contain two feet of water or less under the design storm as measured from the lowest point in the basin, and shall be landscaped so as to provide usable open space. Where it is not feasible to construct a drainage basin containing two feet of water or less, an adjustment may be granted pursuant to Section 21.03.020. Where such a basin is proposed, a conceptual plan shall be submitted illustrating: basin cross sections, perimeter safety/access barrier, and interior and exterior landscaping and irrigation. The interior of such a basin shall be landscaped to control erosion and the exterior of the fencing shall be landscaped to screen and soften the fencing.
- (3)** All new subdivision proposals and other proposed development, including proposals for mobile home parks and subdivisions, greater than 50 lots or 5 acres, whichever is the lesser, shall identify the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) and the Base Flood Elevations (BFE).

SECTION 2. This project is covered by the general rule that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment (Government Code 15061(b)(3)). It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this project may have a significant effect on the environment because no new development is authorized, no increase in density will occur, no change in allowed uses is proposed or authorized and no physical change to the environment will occur. Therefore the activity is not subject to CEQA.

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SECTION 3. If any section, subsection, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of the remaining portion of this ordinance. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each section, subsection, clause, phrase or portion thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases or portions be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 4: Before the expiration of 15 days after the adoption of this ordinance by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, it shall be published once in a newspaper of general circulation published in the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, together with the names of the members of the Board of Supervisors voting for and against the ordinance.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINING:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors,  
County of San Luis Obispo,  
State of California

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk  
of the Board of Supervisors  
County of San Luis Obispo, State of California

[SEAL]

ORDINANCE CODE PROVISIONS APPROVED  
AS TO FORM:

RITA L. NEAL  
County Counsel

By:

Deputy County Counsel

Dated:

**LRP 2012-00002:D**

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 23 OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY CODE,  
THE COASTAL ZONE LAND USE ORDINANCE, CHAPTERS 23.07 AND 23.11 RELATING  
TO FLOOD HAZARD COMBINING DESIGNATION AREAS

The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo ordains as follows:

SECTION 1: Section 23.07.060 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended as follows:

**23.07.060 - Flood Hazard Area (FH):**

**Purpose and Statutory Authorization.** The Legislature of the state of California has in Government Code Sections 65302, 65560 and 65800 conferred upon local governments the authority to adopt regulations designed to promote the public health safety and general welfare of its citizenry. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo does hereby adopt the following flood plain management regulations. The Flood Hazard combining designation is applied to specific parcels by the Official Maps (Part III) of the Land Use Element to areas where terrain characteristics would present new developments and their users with potential hazards to life and property from potential inundation by a 100-year frequency flood or within coastal high hazard areas. These standards are also intended to minimize the effects of development on drainage ways and watercourses. The areas of special flood hazard identified by the Federal Insurance Administration, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency in a scientific and engineering report entitled "The Flood Insurance Study for the San Luis Obispo County," dated July 18, 1985, with accompanying flood insurance rate maps, and any subsequent revisions to the flood insurance rate maps or flood area boundary maps, are hereby adopted and incorporated into this title by reference as though they were fully set forth here. The flood insurance study is on file in the County Public Works office.

SECTION 2: Section 23.07.062 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended as follows:

**23.07.062 - Applicability of Flood Hazard Standards:**

All uses proposed within a Flood Hazard combining designation are subject to the standards of Sections 23.07.064 through 23.07.066, except:

- a. **Temporary uses:** With the approval of the Director of Public Works, the ~~of~~ Planning and Building Director may authorize construction or placement of a temporary structure or use within a Flood Hazard area pursuant to the required land use permit without meeting these

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standards, provided that the structure or use will ~~not be in place from October 15, to April 15.~~  
be removable in times of imminent flooding (such as structures or machinery on semi-trailers).

- b. **Emergency work:** Emergency work may be undertaken where necessary to preserve life or property. Within 48 hours after commencement of such work, the Director of Public Works is to be notified and an application filed with the Department of Planning and Building in compliance with the provisions of Section 23.07.064.
- c. **Existing uses:** The continuance, operation, repair, or maintenance of any lawful use of land existing on the effective date of this title is permitted. Any expansion or alteration of an existing structure or use, or grading of a site, shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable provisions of this title.

SECTION 3: Section 23.07.064 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended as follows:

### **23.07.064 - Flood Hazard Area Permit and Processing Requirements:**

Drainage plan approval is required where any portion of the proposed site is located within a Flood Hazard combining designation, in addition to all other permits required by this title, state and federal law. In addition to the information called for in Section 23.05.042 (drainage plan required) the drainage plan shall include:

- a. Federal Insurance Administration flood data, including base flood elevations, flood hazard areas and floodway locations.
- b. In areas where water surface elevation data has not been provided by the Federal Insurance Administration, a normal depth analysis or other equivalent engineering analysis that identifies the location of the floodway and demonstrates to the satisfaction of Director of Public Works that the structure will not be located within the floodway or be subject to inundation by the 100-year storm. The following information is required to determine the location of flood elevation and the floodway, except where waived or modified by the Director of Public Works:
  - (1) Plans drawn to scale showing the location, dimensions, and elevation of the lot, existing or proposed structures, fill, storage of materials, flood-proofing measures, and the relationship of the above to the location of the floodway.
  - (2) Typical valley cross-sections showing the normal channel of the stream, elevation of the land areas adjoining each side of the channel, cross-sections of areas to be occupied by the proposed development, and high-water information sufficient to define the 100-year storm flood profile level.
  - (3) A profile showing the slope of the bottom of the channel or flow line of the stream.
  - (4) Any previously determined flood data available from any state, federal or other source.

SECTION 4: Section 23.07.065 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended as follows:

**5-11****23.07.065 - General Hazard Avoidance:**

- a. **New Development in Flood Hazard Areas.** New structural development, including expansions, additions and improvements to existing development, shall be located outside of the flood hazard areas to the maximum extent feasible. ~~All new structural development located in a flood hazard areas, including expansions, additions, improvements, and repairs to existing development, shall be constructed consistent with the standards set forth in Section 23.07.066.~~
- b. ~~Improvement/repair to existing structures in Flood Hazard Areas. Where the value of improvements or repairs to existing structures located in flood hazard areas is greater than 50 percent of the market value of the existing structure before the start of construction of the new structure or any improvement, and prior to the damage requiring the repair, all structural development (existing and proposed) shall be located outside of flood hazard areas to the maximum extent feasible. This can be determined by the assessment roll or by a current appraisal. The appraisal shall be completed by an appraiser with a “Certificate General License” issued by the State Office of Real Estate Appraisal and shall determine full market value of the existing site improvements based on the Uniform Standards of the Professional Appraisal Practices as published by the Appraiser Standards Board of the Appraisal Foundation. Any structural development (existing and proposed) that cannot be located outside of flood hazard areas shall be constructed and/or reconstructed consistent with the standards set forth in Section 23.07.066.~~  
**New Structures or Substantial Improvement.** New structures or any substantial improvement or any repair of substantial damage to an existing structure (including manufactured homes) are subject to the standards set forth in Section 23.07.066 of this Title. Substantial damage means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to the before damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred. Substantial improvement means any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement. This term includes structures which have incurred substantial damage regardless of the actual repair work performed. This can be determined by the assessment roll or by a current appraisal. The appraisal shall be completed by an appraiser with a “Certified General License” issued by the State Office of Real Estate Appraisal and shall determine full market value of the existing site improvements based on the Uniform Standards of the Professional Appraisal Practices as published by the Appraiser Standards Board of the Appraisal Foundation. The term substantial improvement does not include any project for improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement official and are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions or any alteration of historic structure, provided that the alteration will not preclude the structures continued designation as historic structure.
- c. **Land Division in Flood Hazards Areas.** Land divisions, including lot line adjustments, are prohibited within hazard areas where they create new buildable areas within a hazard zone.

SECTION 5: Section 23.07.066 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended as follows:

**23.07.066 - Construction Standards:**

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- a. **Construction, general:** For the purpose of determining insurance rates, structures and any subsequent improvements to such structures for which the “start of construction” as defined in Chapter 11 of this Title, commenced on or after the effective date of an initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) or after December 31, 1974, whichever is later are deemed new construction. For floodplain management purposes, new construction means structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of a floodplain management regulation adopted by a community and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures.
- (1) No construction or grading is to limit the capacity of the floodway or increase flood heights on existing structures unless the adverse effect of the increase is rectified to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. In no case shall flood heights be increased above that allowed under the Federal Flood Insurance Program.
  - (2) Structures shall be anchored to prevent collapse, lateral movement or flotation that could result in damage to other structures or restriction of bridge openings and narrow sections of the stream or river.
  - (3) Service facilities such as electrical and heating equipment are to be floodproofed or constructed at minimum of one-foot above the 100-year storm flood profile level for the site.
  - (4) Water supply and sanitary sewage systems shall be designed to minimize infiltration of flood waters into the system and discharge from systems into flood waters.
  - (5) On-site waste disposal systems shall be located to avoid their being impaired or contaminated during flooding.
  - (6) All buildings or structures shall be located landward of mean high tide.
  - (7) Residential, commercial and industrial development shall be prohibited outside of urban and village reserve lines.
  - (8) Whenever a watercourse is to be altered or relocated, the flood carrying capacity within the altered or relocated portion of said watercourse shall be maintained. ~~the~~ The Department of ~~Planning and Building~~ Public Works shall notify adjacent communities, ~~and~~ the California Department of Water Resources and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. ~~evidence of such notification shall be sent to the Federal Insurance Administration.~~ This notification shall include evidence that the flood carrying capacity has been maintained.
    - (i) Within six months of information becoming available or project completion (whichever comes first), and Base Flood Elevations have changed due to physical alterations caused by the project, the Floodplain Administrator or Public Works Director shall submit or ensure that the permit applicant submits technical or scientific data to FEMA for a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR).
    - (ii) All LOMR’s for flood control projects are approved prior to the issuance of building permits. Building permits must not be issued based on Conditional Letters of Map Revision (CLOMR’s). Approved CLOMR’s allow construction

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of the proposed flood control project and land preparation as specified in the “start of construction” definition. Such Submissions are necessary so that upon confirmation of those physical changes affecting flooding conditions, risk premium rates and floodplain management requirements are based on current data.

- (9) Fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor that are subject to flooding shall be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwaters. Designs for meeting this requirement must either be certified by a registered professional engineer or architect or meet or exceed the following minimum criteria:
- (i) A minimum of two openings on different sides of the structure having a total net area of not less than one square inch for every square foot of enclosed area subject to flooding.
  - (ii) The bottom of all openings shall be no higher than one foot above grade.
  - (iii) Openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, valves or other coverings or devices provided that they permit the automatic entry and exit of flood waters.
  - (iv) Buildings with more than one enclosed area must have openings on exterior walls for each area to allow flood water to directly enter.
- (10) On the basis of structural plans and the depth analysis, the ground floor of all structures is to be constructed at a minimum of one-foot above the 100-year storm flood profile level. Within any AO zone on the Flood Insurance Rate maps, this elevation shall be determined by adding one foot to the depth number specified. If no depth is specified, structures shall be elevated a minimum of two feet above adjacent natural grade.
- (11) Non-residential construction shall either be elevated in conformance with Section 23.07.066a(10) above, or together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, be elevated a minimum of two feet above the highest adjacent grade and be floodproofed to a minimum of one-foot above the 100-year storm flood profile level. Examples of floodproofing include, but are not limited to:
- (i) Installation of watertight doors, bulkheads, and shutters.
  - (ii) Reinforcement of walls to resist water pressure.
  - (iii) Use of paints, membranes, or mortars to reduce seepage through walls.
  - (iv) Addition of mass or weight to structure to resist flotation.
  - (v) Armor protection of all fill materials from scour and/or erosion.
- (12) All structures subject to inundation shall use flood resistant materials up to one foot above base flood elevation.

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- b. **Storage and processing:** The storage or processing of materials that in time of flooding are buoyant, flammable, or explosive; that could be injurious to human, animal, or plant life; or that may unduly affect the capacity of the floodway or unduly increase flood heights is not permitted. Storage of other material or equipment may be allowed if not subject to major damage by floods and if firmly anchored to prevent flotation, or if readily removable from the area within the time available after flood warning.
- c. **Coastal High Hazard areas.** The following requirements shall apply to new structures or any improvement / repair to an existing structure as specified in Section 23.07.066 in areas identified as having special flood hazards extending from offshore to the inland limit of a primary frontal dune along an open coast and any other area subject to high velocity waters including coastal and tidal inundation or tsunamis as established on the maps identified in subsection 23.07.060 of this title:
- (1) All buildings or structures shall be elevated on adequately anchored pilings or columns and securely anchored to such pilings or columns so that the lowest horizontal portion of the structural members of the lowest floor (excluding the pilings or columns) is elevated to or above the base flood elevation level. The pile or column foundation and structure attached thereto is anchored to resist flotation, collapse, and lateral movement due to the effects of wind and water loads acting simultaneously on all building components. Water loading values used shall be those associated with the base flood. Wind loading values used shall be those required by applicable state or local building standards.
  - (2) All new construction and other development shall be located on the landward side of the reach of mean high tide.
  - (3) All buildings or structures shall have the space below the lowest floor free of obstructions or constructed with breakaway walls. Such enclosed space shall not be used for human habitation and will be usable solely for parking of vehicles, building access or storage.
  - (4) Fill shall not be used for structural support of buildings.
  - (5) Man-made alteration of sand dunes that would increase potential flood damage is prohibited.
  - (6) The Director of Planning and Building and/or the Public Works Director shall obtain and maintain the following records:
    - (i) Certification by a registered engineer or architect that a proposed structure complies with Subsection ~~D.3.a.c~~(1).
    - (ii) The elevation (in relation to mean sea level) of the bottom of the lowest structural member of the lowest floor (excluding pilings or columns) of all buildings and structures, and whether such structures contain a basement.
- d. **Certification of Compliance.** The following certifications shall be filed with the Building Official prior to final building inspection:

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- (1) Upon completion of any structure within a flood hazard combining designation, compliance with elevation requirements shall be certified by a registered civil engineer or licensed land surveyor. Such certification shall include as a minimum the elevation of the lowest floor. If the structure has been floodproofed in conformance with Section 23.07.066a(11) above, the certification shall include the elevation to which the structure has been floodproofed. These records shall be maintained by the County Public Works Director for public inspection and made available as needed. Elevations shall be based on the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929.
- (2) Where floodproofing is used, a registered civil engineer or architect shall certify that the floodproofing methods are adequate to withstand the flood depths, pressures, velocities, impact and uplift forces and other factors associated with the 100-year flood.
- (3) Compliance with the structural design requirements within Coastal High Hazard areas stated in Section 23.07.066c shall be certified by a registered civil engineer or architect.

**e. Exceptions to construction standards.** The standards of this section may be waived or modified by the Board of Supervisors through the variance procedure set forth in Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Chapter 1, Section 60.6, instead of through the adjustment process described in Section 23.01.044 of this title. Requests for such waivers or modifications shall be filed with County Public Works for processing. ~~Procedures for the granting of variances under Title 14 are available from the County Public Works Department.~~

- (1) Variations may be issued for new construction, substantial improvement, and other proposed new development to be erected on a lot of one-half acre or less in size contiguous to and surrounded by lots with existing structures constructed below the base flood level, providing that the procedures of this ordinance have been fully considered. As the lot size increases beyond one-half acre, the technical justification required for issuing the variance increases.
- (2) Variations may be issued for new construction, substantial improvement, and other proposed new development necessary for the conduct of a functionally dependent use provided that the provisions of this ordinance are satisfied and that the structure or other development is protected by methods that minimize flood damages during the base flood and does not create a public nuisance. Variations may be issued for the repair or rehabilitation of "Historic Resources" (as defined in article 8 of this ordinance) upon a determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the structures continued designation as an historic resource and the variance is the minimum necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the structure. Upon consideration of the factors of Section 23.07.066.e and the purpose of this ordinance, the Board may attach such conditions to the granting of variances as it deems necessary to further the purposes of this section.
- (3) Variations shall not be issued within any mapped regulatory floodway if any increase in flood levels during the base flood discharge would result.
- (4) Variations shall only be issued upon a determination that the variance is the "minimum necessary" considering the flood hazard, to afford relief. "Minimum necessary" means to afford relief with a minimum of deviation from this ordinance.

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- (5) If a variance is granted the Board of Supervisors Resolution will act as written notice that the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to amounts as high as 25 dollars for every 100 dollars of insurance coverage, and that such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property.
- (6) The Floodplain Administrator or Public works Director will maintain a record of all variance actions, including justification for their issuance, and report such variances issued in its biennial report submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- (7) When considering a requests for a variance, the Board of Supervisors shall consider all technical evaluations, all relevant factors, standards specified in other sections of this Title and the following:
- (i) Danger that materials may be swept onto other lands to the injury of others;
  - (ii) Danger of life and property due to flooding or erosion damage;
  - (iii) Susceptibility of the proposed facility and its contents to flood damage and the effect of such damage on the existing individual owner and future owners of the property;
  - (iv) Importance of the services provided by the proposed facility to the community;
  - (v) Necessity to the facility of a waterfront location, where applicable;
  - (vi) Availability of alternative locations for the proposed use which are not subject to flooding or erosion damage;
  - (vii) Compatibility of the proposed use with existing and anticipated development;
  - (viii) Relationship of the proposed use to the comprehensive plan and floodplain management program for that area;
  - (ix) Safety of access to the property in time of flood for ordinary and emergency vehicles;
  - (x) Expected heights, velocity, duration, rate of rise, and sediment transport of the flood waters expected at the site; and
  - (xi) Costs of providing governmental services during and after flood conditions, including maintenance and repair of public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical, and water system, and streets and bridges.
- (8) A variances shall be approved only where the following findings can be made:
- (i) Showing of good and sufficient cause; and,
  - (ii) Determination that failure to grant the variance would result in exceptional “hardship” to the applicant; and,

- (iii) Determination that the granting of a variance will not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, or extraordinary public expense, create a nuisance, cause fraud and victimization of the public, or conflict with existing local laws or ordinances.
- f. **Waiver of rights to future armoring.** Where applicant's geologic assessment/wave run-up studies determine that the new or improved development is sited such that it will not need a shoreline protective device for the life of the structure, the applicants shall waive their rights to a future shoreline protective device.
- e-g **Tsunami Inundation Zone.** Where feasible, development shall be sited outside of potential tsunami inundation zones, even if not currently designated FH. A Registered Civil Engineer with coastal experience shall make a determination, through examination of the most current tsunami inundation and run up maps or a wave run-up analysis, whether the site is subject to inundation during a tsunami, pursuant to the criteria of Section 23.07.064b. If it is not feasible to site development outside of tsunami inundation zone, new development shall be in conformance with all provisions set forth in Section 23.07.066(e)-c.

SECTION 6: Chapter 23.07 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended by adding new Subsection 23.07.067 and 068 as follows:

**23.07.067 Abrogation and Greater Restrictions.** This Section is not intended to repeal, abrogate, or impair any existing easements, covenant, or deed restrictions. Where this section and another ordinance conflict or overlap, whichever imposes the more stringent restrictions shall prevail.

**23.07.068 Disclaimer of Liability.** The degree of flood protection required by this Section is considered reasonable for regulatory purposes and is based on scientific and engineering considerations. Larger floods can and will occur on rare occasions. Flood heights may be increased by man-made or natural causes. This Section does not imply that land outside the area of special flood hazard or uses permitted within such areas will be free from flooding or flood damages. This Section shall not create liability on the part of San Luis Obispo County, any officer or employee thereof, the State of California, or the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for any flood damages that result from reliance on this Section or any administrative decision lawfully made hereunder.

SECTION 7: Section 23.11.030 of the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended by adding then following new definitions as follows:

**Highest Adjacent Grade.** The highest natural elevation of the ground surface prior to construction next to the proposed walls of a structure.

**Area of Special Flood Hazard.** The land in a flood plain within a community subject to a 1 percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year the area may be designated as Zone A on the Flood Hazard Boundary Maps. After detailed rate making has been completed in preparation for publication of the flood insurance rate map, Zone A usually is refined into Zones A, AO, AH, A1-30, AE, A99, AR, AR/A1-30, AR/AE, AR/AO, AR/AH, AR/A, VO, or V1-30, VE, or V. For purposes of these

regulations, the term “special flood hazard area” is synonymous in meaning with the phrase “area of special flood hazard”.

**Start of Construction.** For the purposes of 23.07.060 et seq. “start of construction” includes substantial improvement and other proposed new development and means the date the building permit was issued, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement, or other improvement was within 180 days from the date of the permit. The actual start means either the first placement of permanent construction of a structure on a site, such as the pouring of a slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns, or any work beyond the stage of excavation; or the placement of a manufactured home on a foundation. Permanent construction does not include land preparation, such as clearing, grading, and filling; nor does it include the installation of streets and/or walkways; nor does it include excavation for a basement, footings, piers, or foundations or the erection of temporary forms; nor does it include the installation on the property of accessory buildings, such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main structure. For a substantial improvement, the actual start of construction means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of a building, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the building.

SECTION 8. This project is covered by the general rule that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment (Government Code 15061(b)(3)). It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this project may have a significant effect on the environment because no new development is authorized, no increase in density will occur, no change in allowed uses is proposed or authorized and no physical change to the environment will occur. Therefore the activity is not subject to CEQA.

SECTION 9. If any section, subsection, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of the remaining portion of this ordinance. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each section, subsection, clause, phrase or portion thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases or portions be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 10. The local coastal program is intended to be carried out in a manner fully in conformity with the Coastal Act.

SECTION 11. This amendment shall become operative automatically, pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations §13551(b)(1), upon the certification without any modifications or amendments to said amendments by the California Coastal Commission and upon acknowledgment by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors of receipt of the Commission’s resolution of certification pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations §13544. In the event that the California Coastal Commission recommends modifications to said amendments, the amendments with modification shall be processed in accordance with Government Code § 65350 et seq., before final local government adoption of the amendments with the modifications suggested by Coastal Commission pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations §13551(b)(2), or before the Board of Supervisors resubmits, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 30512 and 30513, any additional amendments to satisfy the Commission's recommended changes.

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SECTION 12: Before the expiration of 15 days after the adoption of this ordinance by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, it shall be published once in a newspaper of general circulation published in the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, together with the names of the members of the Board of Supervisors voting for and against the ordinance.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINING:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors,  
County of San Luis Obispo,  
State of California

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk  
of the Board of Supervisors  
County of San Luis Obispo, State of California

[SEAL]

ORDINANCE CODE PROVISIONS APPROVED  
AS TO FORM:

RITA L. NEAL  
County Counsel

By:

Deputy County Counsel

Dated:

**LRP 2012-00002:C**

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 22 OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY CODE,  
THE LAND USE ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 22.14 AND ARTICLE 8. RELATING TO FLOOD  
HAZARD COMBINING DESIGNATION AREAS

The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo ordains as follows:

SECTION 1: Section 22.14.060 of the Land Use Ordinance, Title 22 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended as follows:

**22.14.060 – Flood Hazard Area (FH)**

- A. Purpose and applicability Statutory Authorization.** The Legislature of the state of California has in Government Code Sections 65302, 65560 and 65800 conferred upon local governments the authority to adopt regulations designed to promote the public health safety and general welfare of its citizenry. Therefore, the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo does hereby adopt the following flood plain management regulations. The Flood Hazard (FH) combining designation is applied to areas where terrain characteristics would present new developments and their users with potential hazards to life and property from potential inundation by a 100-year frequency flood or within coastal high hazard areas. These standards are also intended to minimize the effects of development on drainage ways and watercourses. The areas of special flood hazard identified by the Federal Insurance Administration, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency in a scientific and engineering report entitled "The Flood Insurance Study for San Luis Obispo County," dated July 18, 1985, with an accompanying flood insurance rate maps, and any subsequent revisions to the flood insurance rate maps or flood area boundary maps, are hereby adopted and incorporated into this Title by reference as though they were fully set forth here. The flood insurance study is on file in the County Public Works office.
- B. Applicability of flood hazard standards.** All uses proposed within a FH combining designation are subject to the standards of this Section, except:
- 1. Temporary uses.** With the approval of the County Engineer, the Director may authorize construction or placement of a temporary structure or use within a Flood Hazard area pursuant to the required land use permit without meeting these standards, provided that the structure or use will ~~not be in place from October 15, to April 15.~~ be removable in times of imminent flooding (such as structures or machinery on semi-trailers).
  - 2. Emergency work.** Emergency work may be undertaken where necessary to preserve life or property. Within 48 hours after commencement of such work, the County

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Engineer shall be notified and an application filed with the Department in compliance with the provisions of Subsection C.

3. **Existing uses.** The continuance, operation, repair, or maintenance of any lawful use of land existing on the effective date of this Title is permitted. Any expansion or alteration of an existing structure or use, or grading of a site, shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable provisions of this Title.

C. **Flood Hazard Area permit and processing requirements.** Drainage plan approval is required where any portion of the proposed site is located within a Flood Hazard combining designation, in addition to all other permits required by this Title, state and Federal law. In addition to the information called for in Section 22.52.110 (Drainage Plan Required) the drainage plan shall include:

1. Federal Insurance Administration flood data, including base flood elevations, flood hazard areas and floodway locations.
2. In areas where water surface elevation data has not been provided by the Federal Insurance Administration, a normal depth analysis or other equivalent engineering analysis that identifies the location of the floodway and demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works that the structure will not be located within the floodway or be subject to inundation by the 100-year storm. The following information is required to determine the flood elevation and the location of the floodway, except where waived or modified by the Director of Public Works:
  - a. Plans drawn to scale showing the location, dimensions, and elevation of the lot, existing or proposed structures, fill, storage of materials, flood-proofing measures, and the relationship of the above to the location of the floodway.
  - b. Typical valley cross-sections showing the normal channel of the stream, elevation of the land areas adjoining each side of the channel, cross-sections of areas to be occupied by the proposed development, and high-water information sufficient to define the 100-year storm flood profile level.
  - c. A profile showing the slope of the bottom of the channel or flow line of the stream.
  - d. Any previously determined flood data available from any state, federal or other source.

D. **Construction standards.** New structures or any substantial improvement ~~or any repair of substantial damage~~ to an existing structure (including manufactured homes) ~~where the value proposed is more than 50 percent of the market value of that existing structure before start of construction of the new structure or any improvement, and prior to the damage requiring the repair~~ are subject to the following construction standards. Substantial damage means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to the "before damaged condition" would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred. Substantial improvement means any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement. This term

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includes structures which have incurred substantial damage regardless of the actual repair work performed. This-The market value of the structure can be determined by the assessment roll or by a current appraisal. The appraisal shall be completed by an appraiser with a “Certified General License” issued by the State Office of Real Estate Appraisal and shall determine full market value of the existing site improvements based on the Uniform Standards of the Professional Appraisal Practices as published by the Appraiser Standards Board of the Appraisal Foundation. The term substantial improvement does not include any project for improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary or safety code specifications which have been identified by the Chief Building Official and are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions or any alteration of historic structure, provided that the alteration will not preclude the structures continued designation as historic structure.

1. **Construction, general:** For the purpose of determining insurance rates, structures and any subsequent improvements to such structures for which the “start of construction” as defined in Article 8, commenced on or after the effective date of an initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) or after December 31, 1974, whichever is later are deemed new construction. For floodplain management purposes, new construction means structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of a floodplain management regulation adopted by a community and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures.
  - a. No construction or grading shall limit the capacity of the floodway or increase flood heights on existing structures unless the adverse effect of the increase is rectified to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. In no case shall flood heights be increased above that allowed under the Federal Flood Insurance Program.
  - b. Structures shall be anchored to prevent collapse, lateral movement or flotation that could result in damage to other structures or restriction of bridge openings and narrow sections of the stream or river.
  - c. Service facilities such as electrical and heating equipment shall be floodproofed or constructed at minimum of one-foot above the 100-year storm flood profile level for the site.
  - d. Water supply and sanitary sewage systems shall be designed to minimize infiltration of flood waters into the system and discharge from systems into flood waters.
  - e. On-site waste disposal systems shall be located to avoid their being impaired or contaminated during flooding.
  - f. All buildings or structures shall be located landward of mean high tide.
  - g. Whenever a watercourse is to be altered or relocated, the flood carrying capacity within the altered or relocated portion of the water course shall be maintained. The Department shall notify adjacent communities and the Department of Water Resources and ~~evidence of such notification shall be sent to the Federal Insurance Administration.~~ the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This

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notification shall include evidence that the flood carrying capacity shall be maintained.

- (1) Within six months of information becoming available or project completion, whichever comes first, and the base flood elevation changes due to physical alterations caused by the project, the Floodplain Administrator or County Engineer shall submit or assure that the permit applicant submits technical or scientific data to FEMA for a Letter Of Map Revision (LOMR).
  - (2) All LOMR's for flood control projects shall be approved prior to the issuance of building permits. Building permits shall not be issued based on Conditional Letters Of Map Revision (CLOMRS). Approved CLOMRS allow construction of the proposed flood control project and land preparation as specified in the start of construction definition. Such submissions are necessary so that upon confirmation of those physical changes affecting flooding conditions, risk premium rates and flood plain management requirements are based on current data.
- h. Fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor that are subject to flooding shall be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwaters. Designs for meeting this requirement must either be certified by a registered professional engineer or architect or meet or exceed the following criteria:
- (1) A minimum of two openings on different sides of the structure having a total net area of not less than one square inch for every square foot of enclosed area subject to flooding.
  - (2) The bottom of all openings shall be no higher than one foot above grade.
  - (3) Openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, valves or other coverings or devices provided that they permit the automatic entry and exit of flood waters.
  - (4) Buildings with more than one enclosed area must have openings on exterior walls of each area to allow flood water to directly enter.
- i. On the basis of structural plans and the depth analysis, the lowest floor of all structures shall be constructed at a minimum of one-foot above the 100-year storm flood profile level. Within any AO zone on the Flood Insurance Rate maps, this elevation shall be determined by adding one foot to the depth number specified. If no depth is specified, structures shall be elevated a minimum of two feet above adjacent natural grade.
- j. Non-residential construction shall either be elevated in conformance with Subsection D.1.i, or together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, be elevated a minimum of two feet above the highest adjacent grade and be

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floodproofed to a minimum of one-foot above the 100-year storm flood profile level. Examples of floodproofing include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Installation of watertight doors, bulkheads, and shutters.
  - (2) Reinforcement of walls to resist water pressure.
  - (3) Use of paints, membranes, or mortars to reduce seepage through walls.
  - (4) Addition of mass or weight to structure to resist flotation.
  - (5) Armor protection of all fill materials from scour and/or erosion.
- k. All structures subject to inundation shall use flood resistant materials up to one foot above base flood elevation.
2. **Storage and processing.** The storage or processing of materials that in time of flooding are buoyant, flammable, or explosive; that could be injurious to human, animal, or plant life; or that may unduly affect floodway capacity or unduly increase flood heights is not permitted. Storage of other material or equipment may be allowed if not subject to major damage by floods and if firmly anchored to prevent flotation, or if readily removable from the area within the time available after flood warning.
3. **Coastal High Hazard areas.:** The following requirements shall apply to new structures or any improvement / repair to an existing structure as specified in Subsection D., in areas identified as having special flood hazards extending from offshore to the inland limit of a primary frontal dune along an open coast and any other area subject to high velocity waters including coastal and tidal inundation or tsunamis as established on the maps identified in subsection A.:
- a. All buildings or structures shall be elevated on adequately anchored pilings or columns and securely anchored to such pilings or columns so that the lowest horizontal portion of the structural members of the lowest floor (excluding the pilings or columns) is elevated to or above the base flood elevation level. The pile or column foundation and structure attached thereto is anchored to resist flotation, collapse, and lateral movement due to the effects of wind and water loads acting simultaneously on all building components. Water loading values used shall be those associated with the base flood. Wind loading values used shall be those required by applicable state or local building standards.
  - b. All new construction and other development shall be located on the landward side of the reach of mean high tide.
  - c. All buildings or structures shall have the space below the lowest floor free of obstructions or constructed with breakaway walls. Such enclosed space shall not be used for human habitation and will be usable solely for parking of vehicles, building access or storage.
  - d. Fill shall not be used for structural support of buildings.

- e. Man-made alteration of sand dunes that would increase potential flood damage is prohibited.
- f. The Director and/or the Public Works Director shall obtain and maintain the following records.
  - (1) Certification by a registered engineer or architect that a proposed structure complies with Subsection D.3.a
  - (2) The elevation (in relation to mean sea level) of the bottom of the lowest structural member of the lowest floor (excluding pilings or columns) of all buildings and structures, and whether such structures contain a basement.

**4. Certification of compliance.** The following certifications shall be filed with the Building Official prior to final building inspection:

- a. Upon completion of any structure within a FH combining designation, compliance with elevation requirements shall be certified by a registered civil engineer or a licensed land surveyor. Such certification shall include as a minimum the elevation of the lowest floor. If the structure has been floodproofed in conformance with Subsection D.1.j, the certification shall include the elevation to which the structure has been floodproofed. These records shall be maintained by the County Engineer for public inspection and made available as needed. Elevations shall be based on the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929.
- b. Where floodproofing is used, a registered civil engineer or architect shall certify that the floodproofing methods are adequate to withstand the flood depths, pressures, velocities, impact and uplift forces and other factors associated with the 100-year flood.
- c. Compliance with the structural design requirements within Coastal High Hazard Areas stated in Subsection D.3. shall be certified by a registered civil engineer, or architect.

**5. Exceptions to construction standards.** The standards of this Section may be waived or modified by the Board of Supervisors through the variance procedure set forth in Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Chapter 1, Section 60.6, instead of through the adjustment process in Section 22.70.030. Requests for such waivers or modifications shall be filed with County Public Works for processing. ~~Procedures for the granting of variances under Title 44 are available from County Public Works.~~

Variances may be issued for new construction, substantial improvement and other proposed new development to be erected on a lot of one half acre or less in size contiguous to and surrounded by lots with existing structures constructed below the base flood level, provided that the other procedures of this ordinance have been fully considered. As the lot size increases beyond one-half acre, the technical justification required for issuing the variance increases.

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- a. Variances may be issued for new construction, substantial improvement, and other proposed new development necessary for the conduct of a functionally dependent use provided that the provisions of this ordinance are satisfied and that the structure or other development is protected by methods that minimize flood damages during the base flood and does not result in additional threats to public safety and does not create a public nuisance. Variances may be issued for the repair or rehabilitation of historic resources, as defined by Section 22.14.080, upon a determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the resources continued designation as a historic resource and the variance is the minimum necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the resource. Upon consideration of the factors of this ordinance, the Board may attach such conditions to the granting of variances as it deems necessary to further the purposes of this Section.
- b. Variances shall not be issued within any mapped regulatory floodway if any increase in flood levels during the base flood discharge would result.
- c. Variances shall only be issued upon a determination that the variance is the minimum necessary considering the flood hazard, to afford relief. Minimum necessary means to afford relief with a minimum of deviation from the requirements of this ordinance.
- d. If a variance is granted, the Board of Supervisors Resolution will act as written notice that the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to amounts as high as 25 dollars for 100 dollars of insurance coverage, and that such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property.
- e. The Floodplain Administrator or Public Works Director will maintain a record of all variance actions, including justification for their issuance, and report such variances issued in in the biennial report submitted to FEMA.
- f. When considering a request for a variance, the Board of Supervisors shall consider all technical evaluations, all relevant factors, standards specified in all other Sections of this Title, and the Following:
  - (1) Danger that materials may be swept onto other lands to the injury of others.
  - (2) Danger to life or property due to flooding or erosion damage
  - (3) Susceptibility of the proposed facility and its contents to flood damage and the effect of such damage on the existing individual owner and future owners of the property.
  - (4) Importance of the services provided by the proposed facility to the community.
  - (5) Necessity to the facility of a waterfront location, where applicable.

- (6) Availability of alternative locations for the proposed use which are not subject to flooding or erosion damage.
  - (7) Compatibility of the proposed use with existing and anticipated development.
  - (8) Relationship of the proposed use to the comprehensive plan and floodplain management plan for that area.
  - (9) Safety of access to the property in time of flood for ordinary and emergency vehicles.
  - (10) Expected flood heights, velocity, duration, rate of rise and sediment transport of the flood waters expected at the site.
  - (11) Costs of providing governmental services during and after flood conditions, including maintenance and repair of public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical and water systems and streets and bridges.
- g. A Variance shall be approved only where the following findings can be made:
- (1) Showing of good and sufficient cause; and,
  - (2) A determination that failure to grant the variance would result in exceptional hardship to the applicant; and,
  - (3) A determination that the granting of a variance will not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, or extraordinary public expense, create a nuisance, cause fraud and victimization of the public, or conflict with existing local laws or ordinance.

**E. Disclaimer of Liability.** The degree of flood protection required by this Section is considered reasonable for regulatory purposes and is based on scientific and engineering considerations. Larger floods can and will occur on rare occasions. Flood heights may be increased by man-made or natural causes. This Section does not imply that land outside the areas of special flood hazards or uses permitted within such areas will be free from flooding or flood damages. This Section shall not create liability on the part of San Luis Obispo County, any officer or employee thereof, the State of California or the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for any flood damages that result from reliance on this Section or any administrative decision lawfully made hereunder.

**F. Land Divisions in the Flood Hazard Combining Designation.** Land divisions and lot line adjustments are prohibited within the Flood Hazard Combining Designation where they create new building areas within the 100 year flood hazard zone, unless a Flood Hazard Plan identifying construction constraints is approved by the Director of Public Works prior to approval.

**G. Abrogation and Greater Restrictions.** This Section is not intended to repeal, abrogate, or impair any existing easements, covenant, or deed restrictions. Where this Section and another ordinance conflict or overlap, whichever imposes the more stringent restrictions shall prevail.

SECTION 1: Article 8 of the Land Use Ordinance, Title 22 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, is hereby amended by adding the following new definitions as follows:

**Highest Adjacent Grade:** The highest natural elevation of the ground surface prior to construction next to the proposed walls of a structure.

**Area of Special Flood Hazard:** The land in a flood plain within a community subject to a 1 percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year the area may be designated as Zone A on the Flood Hazard Boundary Maps. After detailed rate making has been completed in preparation for publication of the flood insurance rate map, Zone A usually is refined into Zones A, AO, AH, A1-30, AE, A99, AR, AR/A1-30, AR/AE, AR/AO, AR/AH, AR/A, VO, or V1-30, VE, or V. For purposes of these regulations, the term "special flood hazard area" is synonymous in meaning with the phrase "area of special flood hazard".

**Start of Construction:** For the purposes of Section 22.14.060, start of construction includes substantial improvement and other proposed new development and means the date the building permit was issued, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement, or other improvement was within 180 days from the date of the permit. The actual start means either the first placement of permanent construction of a structure on a site, such as the pouring of a slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns, or any work beyond the stage of excavation; or the placement of a manufactured home on a foundation. Permanent construction does not include land preparation, such as clearing, grading, and filling; nor does it include the installation of streets and/or walkways; nor does it include excavation for a basement, footings, piers, or foundations or the erection of temporary forms; nor does it include the installation on the property of accessory buildings, such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main structure. For a substantial improvement, the actual start of construction means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of a building, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the building.

SECTION 3. This project is covered by the general rule that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment (Government Code 15061(b)(3)). It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this project may have a significant effect on the environment because no new development is authorized, no increase in density will occur, no change in allowed uses is proposed or authorized and no physical change to the environment will occur. Therefore the activity is not subject to CEQA.

SECTION 4. If any section, subsection, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of the remaining portion of this ordinance. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each section, subsection, clause, phrase or portion thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases or portions be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 5: Before the expiration of 15 days after the adoption of this ordinance by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, it shall be published once in a newspaper of general

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circulation published in the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, together with the names of the members of the Board of Supervisors voting for and against the ordinance.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINING:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors,  
County of San Luis Obispo,  
State of California

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk  
of the Board of Supervisors  
County of San Luis Obispo, State of California

[SEAL]

ORDINANCE CODE PROVISIONS APPROVED  
AS TO FORM:

RITA L. NEAL  
County Counsel

By:

Deputy County Counsel

Dated: