



To: Flooding Study Task Force
CC: File
Date: April 26, 2011
Re: Response to Task Force Inquiry

I regret that I am unable to attend the Flooding Study Task Force meeting on April 28, 2011. I am committed to a previously scheduled training program that day. I offer the following responses to the questions that the Task Force has that are within my areas of knowledge.

What types of restrictions are there on redevelopment in areas defined as having surface flood risk?

The only areas currently identified as having surface flood risk are those indicated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These indicate those areas of the city that are designated as within the floodplain. Any proposed development within a mapped floodplain must meet various requirements of federal and state regulations for such construction. There are provisions in the Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code for the construction of a one- or two-family dwelling in a floodplain. Those restrictions include elevating the lowest level to at or above the base flood elevation, floodproof basements, and protection of electrical and mechanical equipment. Our current zoning code would restrict such development, however. Areas outside of a mapped flood plain may experience surface flooding for other reasons, but are not subject to those restrictions. These areas of surface flooding risk are not identified at this time.

What are DCD's thoughts on disallowing basements on new construction in areas that have a known basement back-up flooding risk?

In the City of Milwaukee Code of Ordinances, s. 225-7 requires that all new construction be referred to DPW to determine if the property is in a critical backwater area. If it is, the lowest level of the new building must be at least three feet higher than the top of the public sanitary sewer or provided with a backwater valve to prevent water from entering the dwelling. These devices cost approximately \$50.00. Disallowing basements may be a conflict with State Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC). According to s. 20.02(2) (a) of that code, no municipality may enact a restriction greater than the UDC.

Could DCD require that on new construction, HVAC units be suspended x amount of feet off of the basement floor to reduce property damage in the event of flooding?

Similar to the previous question, this would be a local requirement that is more restrictive than the UDC and would not be permitted.

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Does the City currently have any existing point of sale requirements for structural issues on properties? What are the pros and cons of point-of-sale requirements relative to sewer connections on commercial, industrial, residential properties?

DNS had a point of sale interior/exterior code compliance program and I believe it still does for the exterior in limited areas. DNS is best equipped to provide insights to this question.

I hope that the Task Force will find the above information helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Rute". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" and last name "Rute" clearly distinguishable.

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