



Town of Surfside Beach

Planning, Building & Zoning Newsletter



You can't control
the weather, but
you can
Prepare for it

PROTECT NATURAL FLOODPLAIN FUNCTIONS

Areas adjacent to the coast are most at risk to life and severe property damage from dangerous coastal surge. Coastal floodplain areas function to reduce the impacts of coastal surge flooding.

Wetlands in particular function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water, rain, groundwater and flood waters. Trees, root mats, and other wetland vegetation also slow the speed of flood waters and distributes them more slowly over the floodplain. This combined water storage and braking action lowers flood heights and reduces erosion. Wetlands within and downstream of urban areas are particularly valuable, counteracting the greatly increased rate and volume of surface water runoff from pavement and buildings. The holding capacity of wetlands helps control floods. Preserving and restoring wetlands, together with other water retention, can often provide a level of flood control otherwise provided by expensive dredge operations.

These areas can also be attractive targets for people to live. Developing these sites must be done responsibly and must conform to a federal, state, and local regulations to ensure that development does not impact water quality, species habitat, or flood protection. To preserve the ability of floodplains and wetlands to properly function please keep in mind the following:

- Don't interfere with tidal flow by blocking culverts or weirs.
- Don't fill or dump in wetlands
- Don't dump animal waste, household wastes, or litter into the water.
- Keep unauthorized structures or fill out of wetlands.
- Landscape your property appropriately, use a vegetated buffer of a variety of native plants and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers in sensitive areas.
- Preserve and possibly restore your wetlands
- Obtain proper permits prior to working in wetlands.
- Contact proper authorities if you see illegal activities in these sensitive areas.

PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED; PROTECT THE LIFE YOU'VE BUILT

A community that works together can plan for a safer future no matter what may come.

Hurricane Florence, turned tropical storm proved to be devastating for many in our area. Homes and properties that were built and paid for with life savings were destroyed without much notice. The majority of these properties were outside of the Special Flood Hazard Areas and had never been flooded before.

Last year's hurricane season reminds us that disasters can happen anywhere, and often without warning. After the devastating flooding that hit Houston, Jacksonville, Atlanta, New Orleans, and Charleston in 2017, residents along the Gulf Coast and Eastern seaboard want to learn from those disasters and prepare for the next storms. As difficult as it is to prepare for the unexpected, there are steps that our town residents can take now to ensure that their homes and community are protected. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) advises all residents to prepare a go-bag with emergency disaster supplies like flashlights, batteries, cash, first aid supplies, medications, and copies of critical documents. Residents should also establish an evacuation route and make a family communications plan. Visit Ready.gov/hurricanes for more information.

One of the most important steps residents can take today to prepare for hurricane season is to buy flood insurance.

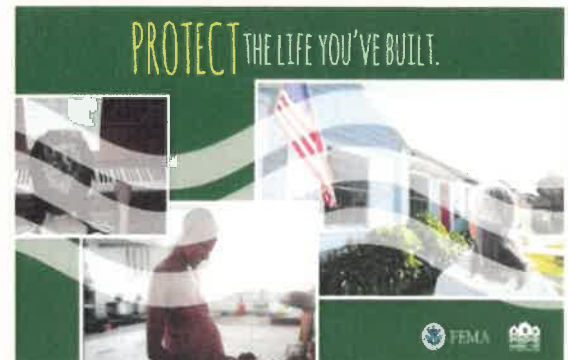
The fact is, flooding is the most common and costly natural disaster in the United States, and a flood doesn't have to be the size of Hurricane [Matthew/Irma/Harvey] to cause

serious damage. Just one inch of water in a home can cost more than \$25,000 in damage. And most homeowners and renters policies typically do not cover flood damage.

"Research shows that individuals who have flood insurance recover more quickly and fully after a flooding event than those who do not," said David Maurstad, FEMA's deputy associate administrator for insurance and mitigation. "If residents complement their insurance portfolios with this extra layer of flood protection, they can better protect the lives they've built."

As residents prepare for storms, it's also important for local agencies, state and federal partners, elected officials, and the private sector to work together to identify where the town is at-risk and implement the necessary steps needed, such as stronger building codes and land use planning and zoning, to protect the community.

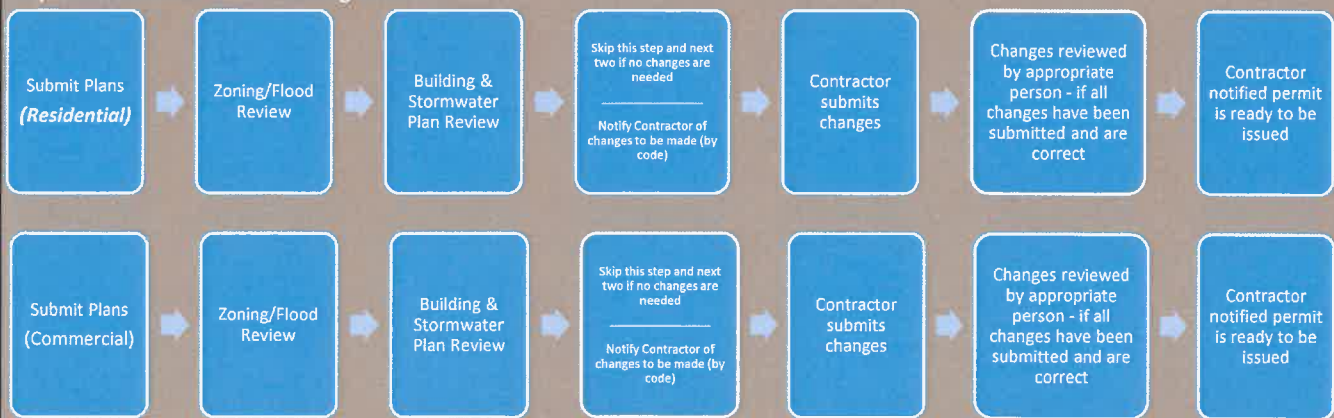
Contact an insurance agent to purchase flood insurance today. Visit FloodSmart.gov or call 1-800-427-4661 to learn more about how to prepare for a flood and where to purchase flood insurance, if you don't already have an agent.



In each PB&Z Newsletter we will answer some of the most frequently asked questions that our department receives from residents, contractors etc. If there is a question you'd like answered, please email Sabrina Morris at smorris@surfsidebeach.org and we'll try and get the answer in an upcoming newsletter.

- 1. Under what residential building code are we operating?** *Mandatory Building Codes adopted for current use in South Carolina and which must be enforced by all municipalities and counties, beginning July 1, 2016, include the: 2015 South Carolina Building Code or the 2015 International Building Code with SC modifications; 2015 South Carolina Residential Code or the 2015 International Residential Code with SC modifications; 2015 South Carolina Fire Code or the 2015 International Fire Code with SC modifications; 2015 South Carolina Plumbing Code or the 2015 International Plumbing Code. 2015 South Carolina Mechanical Code or the 2015 International Mechanical Code. 2015 South Carolina Fuel Gas Code or the 2015 International Fuel Gas Code with SC modifications 2009 South Carolina Energy Conservation Code; and, 2014 National Electrical Code (NFPA 70).*
- 2. What kind of windows do I need for my home?** *The code requires residential windows meet a Negative Design Pressure of DP 45 or no higher than 50.*
- 3. Is my property in a special flood hazard area and if so does your department have a copy of my elevation certificate on file?** *Your property may or may not be located in a special flood hazard area (SFHA) depending on the property location within the town. You can call our department at 843-913-6341 and we'll be glad to check that for you. If your property is located within the SFHA all elevation certificates the department has on file can be found on our website at www.surfsidebeach.org once on the website on the top bar select "Flood Plain Resources" once you click on the Flood Plain Resources page the "Flood Elevation Certificates" can be found there.*
- 4. Can the Planning, Building & Zoning Department help me with disputes concerning property line boundaries?** *These are considered civil matters and not in the Planning, Building & Zoning Department's jurisdiction. In order to precisely establish boundaries a professional land survey prepared by a licensed surveyor would be required.*
- 5. Why is zoning so important to the town?** *Zoning and land use planning exists to protect the health, safety and welfare of the town and to help preserve property values. Without zoning non-compatible uses could be located within what was a quiet single family neighborhood. Establishing a good zoning ordinance helps protect non-compatible encroachment from entering into residential and commercial districts by restricting uses within each district.*
- 6. What zoning district is my lot in and what are my district requirements?** *The town has different zoning districts. To find out what district your property is located in you can either call or stop by our department located at 829 Pine Dr. Surfside Beach, SC; or you can find our zoning map on line at www.surfsidebeach.org on the home page go to "Government" at the top hover over the word "Government" and you'll then see a drop down. Find and click on "Planning, Building & Zoning" on the left side of the Planning, Building & Zoning page scroll down until you find "Building & Zoning forms" click there, then look near the center of the page and find "District Zoning Map" there you'll find the map of all zoning districts within the town limits. Directly above the "District Zoning Map" you'll find "District regulations" by clicking on that option it gives you the different requirements for each zoning district.*

Ever Wonder About the Review Process??



Why it's important to get a permit...

There are many important reasons to obtain the required permit(s) and to obtain the required inspections for your construction projects. It's important to remember the Planning, Building & Zoning Department work for the homeowners and business owners to protect their investment.

Helps Protect Property Values

Your home or business is an investment. For most it's the biggest investment of a lifetime. If your construction project does not comply with the adopted codes in the town, the value of your investment could be reduced.

Ensures Your Contractor is Licensed

We all want to get the best deal on products and services. However some claiming to be "Licensed Contractors" may not be. To protect yourself and the investment you're making you must make sure the person you hire is in fact licensed. Before a permit is issued for any construction the contractor must have a town business license and a state license authorizing the type of construction the company is proposing.

Saves Money

Property insurers may not cover work or damages caused by work done without permits and inspections.

Makes Selling Property Easier

Many financial institutions will not finance a purchase without proof of a final inspection. If you decide to sell a home or building that has modifications without a permit, you may be required to tear down the addition or do costly repairs to ensure compliance with local, state and federal requirements.

Improves Safety

Your permit allows the building official to reduce potential hazards of unsafe construction to provide for public health, safety and welfare. By following code requirements, your completed project will meet minimum standards of safety and will be less likely to cause injury to you, your family, and your friends or future owners. Mandatory inspections complement the contractor's experience and act as a system of checks and balances resulting in a safer project.

The ramifications of not pulling a permit

When work requiring a permit is started without the proper permits a fine of \$200. And double the normal fees are charged and this may not be the worst of it.

Most likely if someone working on your property tell you you don't need a permit (and you really do) he or she doesn't have the license to be doing the work and therefore can not pull a permit. Do you really want this person working on your home or commercial project?

Any licensed contractor, subcontractor, electrician, plumber, etc. working on the job will be reported to South Carolina Labor, License and Regulation (SCLLR). SCLLR will decide how to proceed, but persons could be stripped of their license.

It's the Law

Work requiring permits are made such by town ordinance. Working without a permit may be subject to removal, fines, court summons or other costly remedies.

Remember!

A permit will insure that you meet certain criteria and safety concerns in relation to:

- **Zoning Codes**
- **Environmental (Stormwater)**
- **Flood Codes**
- **Building Codes**
- **Electrical Codes**
- **Mechanical Codes**
- **Having a record of your renovations/additions/ or building project to show the bank, insurance company and future homeowners that there was a permit pulled and the work was deemed safe for the dwelling and done according to current codes.**



"I HAVEN'T FOUND ANYTHING WRONG YET, BUT IT'S OK FOR YOU TO GO AHEAD AND WORRY A BIT LONGER."

Did you know??

1. **The town participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) through FEMA.** The town currently has a rating of 5 which means a 25% discount to those having flood insurance in a Special Flood Hazard Area and a 10% discount to those having flood insurance on a non-special flood hazard area.

If you have a Preferred Risk Policy (only available in Zone X) for properties that are shown to have minimal risk of flood damage. These policies do not receive the discount because it already has a lower premium than other policies.

A Flood Discount Letter can be found on our website at www.surfsidenbeach.org Under "Flood Plain Resources"

2. **Everyone in town can buy flood insurance?**

Whether you're in a Special Flood Hazard Area or outside of the Special Flood Hazard Area; owner of property or renter you can buy flood insurance.

Standard homeowner or commercial policies will not cover damage to structures or contents caused by flooding. Flood insurance is the only sure way to be reimbursed for some of your flood losses.

The Town's Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and updated in 2019

"The term planning is used to describe activities conducted to prepare and organize for the future." Comprehensive Planning Guide for Local Governments

Questions We Plan For.

- What do we want our community to look like in 2030?
- Are adequate water, sewer and transportation systems in place to accommodate a new 100 lot subdivision?
- How much commercial space is necessary for an increase of 10,000 people?
- What will our transportation needs be if gas prices rise to \$5.00 per gallon?
- If this proposal is implemented, how will it impact the character of the neighborhood?

Who plans?

- We all do
- All are a part of the process and have a role to play

Comprehensive Plan

SC Code of Laws 6-29-510

- "The local planning commission shall develop and maintain a planning process which will result in the systematic preparation and continual re-evaluation and updating of those elements considered critical, necessary, and desirable to guide the development and redevelopment of its area of jurisdiction."
- Re-evaluation is defined as being reviewed by the Planning Commission as necessary but no less than once every five years
- The comprehensive plan and all elements must be updated at least every ten years.

Comprehensive Plan Elements

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Population• Economic Development• Natural Resources• Cultural Resources• Community Facilities• Housing• Land Use• Transportation• Priority Investment | <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy• Urban Design• Social Infrastructure• Tourism• Coastal Zone |
|---|---|

Starting in January 2019 the Planning, Building & Zoning Department is initiating a public involvement and outreach to encourage and promote the engagement in the updating of our town's comprehensive plan. Much as changed since the plan was adopted in December of 2014. Throughout 2019 there will be multiple opportunities for residents and businesses to participate and share feedback and ideas about the future of the Town.

As a citizen why should I care?

GREAT question! As a property owner, citizen or business owner in the Town of Surfside Beach, you have made an important choice to invest in this community. If you like the community the way it is, you should care because change is always happening. If you want aspects of the community improved you have an opportunity to help prioritize the most important projects or areas to address. This is your chance to have a direct say and recommendation in what the town looks like for years to come.

When will the meetings be held?

Review of the comprehensive plan will be held during planning commission meetings and special meetings. These meetings will be posted on line and will be shared through this newsletter.

PLEASE PLAN TO GET INVOLVED!

Planning for the future



Department Contact Information:

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Mike Farria, Building Official
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mfarria@surfsidebeach.org

Sabrina Morris, Director
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smorris@surfsidebeach.org

Our office is located at 829 Pine Drive, Surfside Beach, SC 29575 (Front portion of the Dick M. Johnson Civic Center – Behind Town Hall).

Planning Commission 2019 Regularly Scheduled Meeting dates

(Held on Tuesday nights at 6:00PM unless otherwise noted below)

- January 3, 2019 (Thursday)
- February 5, 2019
- March 5, 2019
- April 2, 2019
- May 7, 2019
- June 4, 2019
- July 2, 2019
- August 6, 2019
- September 3, 2019
- October 1, 2019
- November 4, 2019 (Monday)
- December 3, 2019