

**Recommendation for Council Action – Backup
Floodplain Variance Request – 7906 South 1st Street**

APPLICABLE CODE AND VARIANCES REQUESTED

- I. LDC Section 25-12-3, (Local Amendments to the Building Code), Section 1612.4.3 Means of Egress provides that normal access to a building shall be by direct connection with an area that is a minimum of one foot above the design flood elevation.

VARIANCE REQUESTED: *The applicant requests a variance to Building Code Section 1612.4.3, to allow the existing building to be developed without providing normal access to an area that is a minimum of one-foot above the design flood elevation. The existing home is in the 25-year and 100-year floodplains of South Boggy Creek. The maximum depth of floodwater along the proposed egress path on the property is 0.9 feet during the 100-year flood event and is elevated above the 25-year flood event by 0.3 feet. The maximum depth of floodwater in the right-of-way on South 1st Street is 2.9 feet during the 100-year flood event and 1.6 feet during the 25-year flood event.*

- II. LDC Section 25-7-92, (A) and (B) Encroachment on Floodplain Prohibited prohibits encroachment of a building on the 25-year and 100-year floodplains.

VARIANCE REQUESTED: *The applicant requests a variance to elevate the existing home and construct a 215 square foot addition. The elevated portion of the existing home and the addition will encroach into the 25-year and 100-year floodplains.*

- III. LDC Section 25-12-3, (Local Amendments to the Building Code), Section G102.3 Nonconforming Uses prohibits alteration or enlargement including substantial improvement of a structure unless the structure is changed to conform to these regulations.

VARIANCE REQUESTED: *The applicant requests a variance to Building Code Section G102.3 to allow the development of an existing building without bringing the building into compliance with the means of egress requirements of the floodplain regulations.*

- IV. LDC Section 25-7-152 Dedication of Easements and Rights-of-Way requires that the owner of real property proposed to be developed dedicate to the public an easement or right-of-way for a drainage facility, open or enclosed, and stormwater flow to the limits of the 100-year floodplain.

VARIANCE REQUESTED: *The applicant requests a variance to exclude the footprint of the existing building and addition from the requirement to dedicate a drainage easement to the full extent of the 100-year floodplain.*

PREREQUISITES FOR GRANTING VARIANCES AND FINDINGS:

Per LDC Section 25-12-3, Technical Codes, Section G105.7 Variances, variances shall only be issued upon consideration of the following prerequisites:

PREREQUISITE

1) A technical showing of good and sufficient cause based on the unique characteristics of the size, configuration or topography of the site.

Insufficient causes for issuing a variance may include the following:

- *Less than a drastic depreciation of property.*
- *Convenience of property owner.*
- *Circumstances of owner not land.*
- *To obtain better financial return.*
- *Property similar to others in neighborhood.*
- *Hardship created by owner's own actions.*

2) A determination that failure to grant the variance would result in exceptional hardship by rendering the lot undevelopable;

The location of the floodplain on the property is a characteristic of the land. Hardship refers to the effect of the floodplain status of the land on its use; it does not refer to personal or financial circumstances of the current owner of the land. In fact financial hardship, inconvenience, aesthetic considerations, physical handicaps, personal preferences or the disapproval of one's neighbors do not qualify as exceptional hardships. The applicant has the burden of proving exceptional hardship. FEMA advises that the reasons for granting floodplain management variances must be substantial and the proof compelling. The claimed hardship must be exceptional, unusual and peculiar to the property involved.

3) A determination that granting of a variance would not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, nor create nuisances, cause fraud on or victimization of the public or conflict with existing laws or ordinances.

4) A determination that the variance is the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief.

Relief is defined as respite from unnecessary hardship. Unnecessary hardship is defined as:

- *Loss of all beneficial or productive use.*
- *Deprivation of reasonable return on property.*
- *Deprivation of all or any reasonable use.*
- *Rendering property valueless.*
- *Inability to develop property in compliance with the regulations.*
- *Reasonable use cannot be made consistent with the regulation.*

5) Notification to the applicant in writing over the signature of the building official that the issuance of a variance to construct a structure below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance, and that such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property.

