

# **CHAPTER 16**

## **FLOODPLAIN ZONING**

- 16.01 Statutory Authorization
- 16.02 Finding of Fact
- 16.03 Statement of Purpose
- 16.04 Title
- 16.05 Definitions
- 16.06 Areas to Be Regulated
- 16.07 Official Maps and Revisions
- 16.08 Compliance
- 16.09 Municipalities and State Agencies Regulated
- 16.10 Abrogation and Greater Restrictions
- 16.11 Interpretation
- 16.12 Severability
- 16.13 Warning and Disclaimer of Liability
- 16.14 Annexed Areas for Cities and Villages
- 16.15 General Development Standards
- 16.16 General Standards Applicable to All Floodplain Districts
- 16.17 Base Flood Elevations
- 16.18 Floodway District (FW)
- 16.19 Floodfringe District (FF)
- 16.20 General Floodplain District (GFP)
- 16.21 Nonconforming Uses
- 16.22 Administration
- 16.23 Amendments
- 16.24 Enforcement and Penalties

16.01 STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION. This Chapter is adopted pursuant to the authorization in ss. 59.69, 59.692, and 59.694, Wis. Stats. and the requirements in s. 87.30, Wis. Stats.

16.02 FINDING OF FACT. Uncontrolled development and use of the floodplains and rivers of the County would impair the public health, safety, convenience, general welfare and its tax base.

16.03 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE. This Chapter is intended to regulate floodplain development within the unincorporated areas of the County to:

- (1) Protect life, health and property;
- (2) Minimize expenditures of public funds for flood control projects;
- (3) Minimize rescue and relief efforts undertaken at the expense of the taxpayers;
- (4) Minimize business interruptions and other economic disruptions;
- (5) Minimize damage to public facilities in the floodplain;
- (6) Minimize the occurrence of future flood blight areas in the floodplain;
- (7) Discourage the victimization of unwary land and homebuyers;
- (8) Prevent increases in flood heights that could increase flood damage and result in conflicts between property owners; and,
- (9) Discourage development in a floodplain if there is any practicable alternative to locate the activity, use or structure outside of the floodplain.

16.04 TITLE. This Chapter shall be known as the Floodplain Zoning Ordinance for the County of La Crosse, Wisconsin.

16.05 DEFINITIONS. Unless specifically defined below, words and phrases used in this ordinance shall have the same meaning as they have at common law and to give this ordinance its most reasonable application. Words used in the present tense include the future. Words used in the singular number include the plural and words used in the plural number include the singular. The word “may” is permissive. The word “shall” is mandatory and not discretionary.

(1) “A Zones” - those areas shown on the Official Floodplain Zoning Map which would be inundated by the regional flood. These areas may be numbered or unnumbered A Zones. The A Zones may or may not be reflective of flood profiles, depending on the availability of data for a given area.

(2) “Accessory Structure or Use” - a facility, structure, building or use which is accessory or incidental to the principal use of a property, structure or building.

(3) “Base Flood” - the flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year, as published by FEMA as part of a FIS and depicted on a FIRM.

(4) “Basement” - any enclosed area of a building having its floor subgrade, i.e., below ground level, on all sides.

(5) “Building” – see “Structure”.

(6) “Bulkhead Line” - a geographic line along a reach of navigable water that has been adopted by a municipal ordinance and approved by the Department pursuant to s. 30.11, Wis. Stats., and which allows limited filling between this bulkhead line and the original ordinary highwater mark, except where such filling is prohibited by the floodway provisions of this ordinance.

(7) “Campground” - any parcel of land which is designed, maintained, intended or used for the purpose of providing sites for nonpermanent overnight use by 4 or more camping units, or which is advertised or represented as a camping area.

(8) “Camping Unit” - any portable device, no more than 400 square feet in area, used as a temporary shelter, including but not limited to a camping trailer, motor home, bus, van, pick-up truck, tent or other mobile recreational vehicle.

(9) “Certificate of Compliance” - a certification that the construction and the use of land or a building, the elevation of fill or the lowest floor of a structure is in compliance with all of the provisions of this ordinance.

(10) “Channel” - a natural or artificial watercourse with definite bed and banks to confine and conduct normal flow of water.

(11) “Condominium” has the meaning given in s. 703.02, Wis. Stats.

(12) “Crawlways or Crawl Space” - an enclosed area below the first usable floor of a building, generally less than 5 feet in height, used for limited access to plumbing and electrical utilities.

(13) “Deck” means an unenclosed exterior structure that has no roof or sides, but has a permeable floor which allows the infiltration of precipitation.

(14) “Department” - the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

(15) “Development” - any artificial change to improved or unimproved real estate, including, but not limited to, the construction of buildings, structures or accessory structures; the construction of additions or alterations to buildings, structures or accessory structures; the repair of any damaged structure or the improvement or renovation of any structure, regardless of percentage of damage or improvement; the placement of buildings or structures; subdivision layout and site preparation; mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations; the storage, deposition or extraction of materials or equipment; and the installation, repair or removal of public or private sewage disposal systems or water supply facilities.

(16) “Dryland Access” - a vehicular access route which is above the regional flood elevation and which connects land located in the floodplain to land outside the floodplain, such as a road with its surface above regional flood elevation and wide enough for wheeled rescue and relief vehicles.

(17) “Encroachment” - any fill, structure, equipment, building, use or development in the floodway.

(18) “Existing Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision” - a parcel of land, divided into 2 or more manufactured home lots for rent or sale, on which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots is completed before the effective date of this ordinance. At a minimum, this would include the installation of utilities, the construction of streets and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads.

(19) “Expansion to Existing Mobile/Manufactured Home Park” - the preparation of additional sites by the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed. This includes installation of utilities, construction of streets and either final site grading, or the pouring of concrete pads.

(20) “Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)” - the federal agency that administers the National Flood Insurance Program.

(21) “Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)” - a map of a community on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated both special flood hazard areas (the floodplain) and the risk premium zones applicable to the community. This map can only be amended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(22) “Flood or Flooding” - a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas caused by one of the following conditions:

(a) The overflow or rise of inland waters;

(b) The rapid accumulation of runoff of surface waters from any source;

(c) The sudden increase caused by an unusually high water level in a natural body of water, accompanied by a severe storm, or by an unanticipated force of nature, such as a seiche, or by some similarly unusual event.

(23) “Flood Frequency” - the probability of a flood occurrence which is determined from statistical analyses. The frequency of a particular flood event is usually expressed as occurring, on the average, once in a specified number of years or as a percent chance of occurring in any given year.

(24) “Floodfringe” - that portion of the floodplain outside of the floodway which is covered by flood waters during the regional flood and associated with standing water rather than flowing water.

(25) “Flood Hazard Boundary Map” - a map designating approximate flood hazard areas. Flood hazard areas are designated as unnumbered A-Zones and do not contain floodway lines or regional flood elevations. This map forms the basis for both the regulatory and insurance aspects of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) until superseded by a Flood Insurance Study and a Flood Insurance Rate Map.

(26) “Flood Insurance Study” - a technical engineering examination, evaluation, and determination of the local flood hazard areas. It provides maps designating those areas affected by the regional flood and provides both flood insurance rate zones and base flood elevations and may provide floodway lines. The flood hazard areas are designated as numbered and unnumbered A-Zones. Flood Insurance Rate Maps that accompany the Flood Insurance Study form the basis for both the regulatory and the insurance aspects of the National Flood Insurance Program.

(27) “Floodplain” - land which has been or may be covered by flood water during the regional flood. It includes the floodway and the floodfringe, and may include other designated floodplain areas for regulatory purposes.

(28) “Floodplain Island” - a natural geologic land formation within the floodplain that is surrounded, but not covered, by floodwater during the regional flood.

(29) “Floodplain Management” - policy and procedures to insure wise use of floodplains, including mapping and engineering, mitigation, education, and administration and enforcement of floodplain regulations.

(30) “Floodplain Profile” - a graph or a longitudinal profile line showing the relationship of the water surface elevation of a flood event to locations of land surface elevations along a stream or river.

(31) “Floodproofing” - any combination of structural provisions, changes or adjustments to properties and structures, water and sanitary facilities and contents of buildings subject to flooding, for the purpose of reducing or eliminating flood damage.

(32) “Flood Protection Elevation” - an elevation of 3 feet of freeboard above the water surface profile elevation designated for the regional flood.

(33) “Flood Storage” - those floodplain areas where storage of floodwaters has been taken into account during analysis in reducing the regional flood discharge.

(34) “Floodway” - the channel of a river or stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel required to carry the regional flood discharge.

(35) “Freeboard” - a safety factor expressed in terms of a specified number of feet above a calculated flood level. Freeboard compensates for any factors that cause flood heights greater than those calculated, including ice jams, debris accumulation, wave action, obstruction of bridge openings and floodways, the effects of watershed urbanization, loss of flood storage areas due to development and aggregation of the river or stream bed.

(36) “Habitable Structure” - any structure or portion thereof used or designed for human habitation.

(37) “Hearing Notice” - a publication or posting meeting the requirements of Chapter 985, Wis. Stats. For appeals, a Class 1 notice, published once at least 1 week before the hearing, is required. For all zoning ordinances and amendments, a Class 2 notice, published twice, once each week consecutively, the last at least a week before the hearing, is required. Local ordinances or bylaws may require additional notice, exceeding these minimums.

(38) “High Flood Damage Potential” - damage that could result from flooding that includes any danger to life or health or any significant economic loss to a structure or building and its contents.

(39) “Historic Structure” means any structure that is either:

(a) Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places or preliminary determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register;

(b) Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district;

(c) Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior; or

(d) Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either by an approved state program, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior; or by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

(40) “Hydraulic Reach” - that portion of the river or stream extending from one significant change in the hydraulic character of the river or stream to the next significant change. These changes are usually associated with breaks in the slope of the water surface profile and may be caused by bridges, dams, expansion and contraction of the water flow and changes in stream bed slope or vegetation.

(41) “Hydrologic Reach” - a designated length of river, stream or lake where the storage of flood waters therein has been taken into account to reduce the regulatory flood discharge. Major man-made or natural changes in the river character, limits of political jurisdiction or a change in the flood routing technique used to determine the storage and translation of a flood wave through the area of interest may be used to define the end of a hydrologic reach (e.g., a dam may be considered a major man-made change in the river character or a change from channel routing to reservoir routing may be considered a major change in the flood routing technique).

(42) “Increase in Regional Flood Height” - a calculated upward rise in the regional flood elevation, equal to or greater than 0.01 foot, based on a comparison of existing conditions and proposed conditions which is directly attributable to development in the floodplain but not attributable to manipulation of mathematical variables such as roughness factors, expansion and contraction coefficients and discharge.

(43) “Land Use” - any nonstructural use made of unimproved or improved real estate.

(44) “Manufactured Home” - a structure transportable in 1 or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and is designed to be used with or without a permanent foundation when connected to required utilities. The term “manufactured home” includes a mobile home but does not include a “mobile recreational vehicle”.

(45) “Mobile Recreational Vehicle” - a vehicle which is built on a single chassis, 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection, designed to be self-propelled, carried or permanently towable by a licensed, light-duty vehicle, is licensed for highway use if registration is required and is designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling, but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel or seasonal use. Manufactured homes that are towed or carried onto a parcel of land, but do not remain capable of being towed or carried, including park model homes, do not fall within the definition of “mobile recreational vehicles”.

(46) “Municipality” means La Crosse County.

(47) “NGVD or National Geodetic Vertical Datum” - elevations referenced to mean sea level datum, 1929 adjustment.

(48) “New Construction” - structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of floodplain zoning regulations adopted by this community and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures. For the purpose of determining flood insurance rates, it includes any structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of an initial FIRM or after March 15, 1984, whichever is later, and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures.

(49) “Nonconforming Structure” - an existing lawful structure or building which is not in conformity with the dimensional or structural requirements of this ordinance for the area of the floodplain which it occupies.

(50) “Nonconforming Use” - an existing lawful use or accessory use of a structure or building which is not in conformity with the provisions of this ordinance for the area of the floodplain which it occupies.

(51) “Obstruction to Flow” - any development which blocks the conveyance of floodwaters such that this development alone or together with any future development will cause an increase in regional flood height.

(52) “Official Floodplain Zoning Map” - a map, adopted and made part of this ordinance, as described in s. 16.07, which has been approved by the Department and FEMA.

(53) “Open Space Use” means those having a relatively low flood damage potential and not involving structures.

(54) “Ordinary Highwater Mark” - the point on the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of surface water is so continuous as to leave a distinctive mark such as by erosion, destruction or prevention of terrestrial vegetation, predominance of aquatic vegetation, or other easily recognized characteristic.

(55) “Person” - an individual, or group of individuals, corporation, partnership, association, municipality or state agency.

(56) “Private Sewage System” - a sewage treatment and disposal system serving 1 structure with a septic tank and soil absorption field located on the same parcel as the structure. It also means an alternative sewage system approved by the Department of commerce, including a substitute for the septic tank or soil absorption field, a holding tank, a system serving more than 1 structure or a system located on a different parcel than the structure.

(57) “Public Utilities” means those utilities using underground or overhead transmission lines such as electric, telephone and telegraph, and distribution and collection systems such as water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer.

(58) “Reasonably Safe From Flooding” - base flood waters will not inundate the land or damage structures to be removed from the special flood hazard area and that any subsurface waters related to the base flood will not damage existing or proposed buildings.

(59) “Regional Flood” – a flood determined to be representative of large floods known to have occurred in Wisconsin. A regional flood is a flood with a 1% chance to being equaled or exceeded in any given year, and if depicted on the FIRM, the RFE is equivalent to the BFE.

(60) “Start of Construction” – 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 of the permit date. The actual start means either the first placement of permanent construction on a site, such as the pouring of slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns, or any work beyond initial 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 an alteration, 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.

(61) “Structure” means any manmade object with form, shape and utility, either permanently or temporarily attached to, placed upon or set into the ground, stream bed or lake bed, including, but not limited to, roofed and walled buildings, gas or liquid storage tanks, bridges, dams and culverts.

(62) “Subdivision” has the meaning given in s. 236.02(12), Wis. Stats.

(63) “Substantial Damage” – damage of any origin sustained by a structure, whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its pre-damaged condition would equal or exceed 50% of the equalized assessed value of the structure before the damage occurred.

(64) “Unnecessary Hardship” means where special conditions affecting a particular property, which were not self-created, have made strict conformity with restrictions governing areas, setbacks, frontage, height or density unnecessarily burdensome or unreasonable in light of the purposes of the ordinance.

(65) “Variance” means an authorization by the Board of Adjustment or appeals for the construction or maintenance of a building or structure in a manner which is inconsistent with dimensional standards contained in the floodplain zoning ordinance.

(66) “Violation” – the failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with the floodplain zoning ordinance. A structure or other development without required permits, lowest floor elevation documentation, floodproofing certificates or required floodway encroachment calculations is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided.

(67) “Watershed” – the entire region contributing runoff or surface water to a watercourse or body of water.

(68) “Water Surface Profile” means a graphical representation showing the elevation of the water surface of a watercourse for each position along a reach of river or stream at a certain flood flow. A water surface profile of the regional flood is used in regulating floodplain areas.

(69) “Well” means an excavation opening in the ground made by digging, boring, drilling, driving or other methods, to obtain groundwater regardless of its intended use.

16.06 AREAS TO BE REGULATED. This ordinance regulates all areas within the unincorporated limits of La Crosse County that would be covered by the regional flood or base flood.

#### 16.07 OFFICIAL MAPS AND REVISIONS.

(1) Designations. The boundaries of all floodplain districts are designated as floodplains or A-Zones on the maps listed below and the revisions in the La Crosse County Floodplain Appendix. Any change to the base flood elevations (BFE) in the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Number 55063CV00A or on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) must be reviewed and approved by the DNR and FEMA before it is effective. No changes to regional flood elevations (RFE's) on non-FEMA maps shall be effective until approved by the DNR. These maps and revisions are on file in the office of the County Zoning Administrator. If more than 1 map or revision is referenced, the most restrictive information shall apply.

(a) Official Maps: Based on the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Number 55063CV00A – Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), community number 550217, panel numbers: 55063C0010C, 55063C0015C, 55063C0020C, 55063C0030C, 55063C0035C through 55063C0039C, 55063C0041C through 55063C0044C, 55063C0055C, 55063C0060C through 55063C0064C, 55063C0066C through 55063C0069C, 55063C0080C, 55063C0085C through 55063C0089C, 55063C0095C, 55063C0106C through 55063C0109C, 55063C0126C through 55063C0129C, 55063C0131C through 55063C0134C, 55063C0136C through 55063C0139C, 55063C0141C through 55063C0144C, 55063C0155C, 55063C0160C through 55063C0164C, 55063C0166C through 55063C0169C, 55063C0180C, 55063C0185C through 55063C0189C, 55063C0191C through 55063C0194C, 55063C0205C, 55063C0210C through 55063C0214C, 55063C0216C, 55063C0218C, 55063C0227C, 55063C0231C through 55063C0234C, 55063C0242C, 55063C0244C, 55063C0251C through 55063C0254C, 55063C0256C through 55063C0259C, 55063C0261C through 55063C0264C, 55063C0266C through 55063C0269C, 55063C0276C through 55063C0279C, 55063C0281C through 55063C0284C, 55063C0286C through 55063C0289C, 55063C0295C, 55063C0305C, 55063C0310C, 55063C0315C, 55063C0320C, 55063C0332C, 55063C0351C, 55063C0352C, 55063C0356C, 55063C0357C, 55063C0376C, 55063C0377C, 55063C0385C, 55063C0405C, 55063C0410C, with an effective date of April 2, 2008. All maps require approval by the DNR and FEMA.

(b) Official Maps: Based on other studies:

1. Hydrologic and Dam Failure Analyses and Hazard Rating Assessment for Coon Creek Structures, No. 29, dated May 1996, including the studies and maps concerning the hydraulic shadow extending into La Crosse County, and No. 53, dated April, 1996, including studies and maps concerning the hydraulic shadow extending into La Crosse County, prepared by Ayres Associates and approved by DNR.

FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.07(1)(b)2.

2. Hydrologic and Hydraulic Analyses, including Dam Failure Analysis, and Hazard Rating Assessment for Coon Creek Structures, No. 33, dated March, 2006, revised July, 2007, and No. 35, dated May, 2005, prepared by USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Services and approved by DNR.

3. Floodplain study and maps: All other DNR-approved and FEMA-approved floodplain maps, flood profiles, floodway data tables, regional or base flood elevations and other information located on file in the La Crosse County Zoning, Planning and Land Information Office. The County shall provide the most up-to-date information to the DNR and FEMA regional offices.

4. Soil survey maps on file in the La Crosse County Zoning, Planning and Land Information office.

(2) Establishment of Districts. The regional floodplain areas are divided into 3 districts as follows:

(a) The Floodway District (FW) is the channel of a river or stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel required to carry the regional floodwaters.

(b) The Floodfringe District (FF) is that portion of the floodplain between the regional flood limits and the floodway.

(c) The General Floodplain District (GFP) is those areas that have been or may be covered by floodwater during the regional flood.

(3) Locating Floodplain Boundaries. Discrepancies between boundaries on the official floodplain zoning map and actual field conditions shall be resolved using the criteria in paragraphs (a) or (b) below. If a significant difference exists, the map shall be amended according to s. 16.23. Where the flood profiles are based on established base flood elevations from a FIRM, FEMA must also approve any map amendment pursuant to s. 16.23(1)(f). The zoning administrator can rely on a boundary derived from a profile elevation to grant or deny a land use permit, whether or not a map amendment is required. The zoning administrator shall be responsible for documenting actual pre-development field conditions and the basis upon which the district boundary was determined and for initiating any map amendments required under this section. Disputes between the zoning administrator and an applicant over the district boundary line shall be settled according to s. 16.22(3)(c) and the criteria in pars. (a) and (b) below.

(a) If flood profiles exist, the map scale and the profile elevations shall determine the district boundary. The regional or base flood elevations shall govern if there are any discrepancies.

(b) Where flood profiles do not exist, the location of the boundary shall be determined by the map scale, visual on-site inspection and any information provided by the Department.

(4) Removal of Lands From Floodplain. Compliance with the provisions of this ordinance shall not be grounds for removing land from the floodplain unless it is filled at least 3 feet above the regional or base flood elevation, the fill is contiguous to land outside the floodplain, and the map is amended pursuant to s. 16.23. This procedure does not remove the requirements for the mandatory purchase of flood insurance. The property owner must contact FEMA to request a Letter of Map Change (LOMC).

16.08 COMPLIANCE. Any development or use within the areas regulated by this ordinance shall be in compliance with the terms of this ordinance, and other applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

16.09 MUNICIPALITIES AND STATE AGENCIES REGULATED. Unless specifically exempted by law, all cities, villages, towns, and counties are required to comply with this ordinance and obtain all necessary permits. State agencies are required to comply if s. 13.48(13), Wis. Stats., applies. The construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of state highways and bridges by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is exempt when s. 30.2022, Wis. Stats., applies.

16.10 ABROGATION AND GREATER RESTRICTIONS.

(1) This ordinance supersedes all the provisions of any municipal zoning ordinance enacted under ss. 59.69, 59.692 or 59.694 or s. 87.30, Wis. Stats., which relate to floodplains. If another ordinance is more restrictive than this ordinance, that ordinance shall continue in full force and effect to the extent of the greater restrictions, but not otherwise.

(2) This ordinance is not intended to repeal, abrogate or impair any existing deed restrictions, covenants or easements. If this ordinance imposes greater restrictions, the provisions of this ordinance shall prevail.

16.11 INTERPRETATION. In their interpretation and application, the provisions of this ordinance are the minimum requirements liberally construed in favor of the governing body and are not a limitation on or repeal of any other powers granted by the Wisconsin Statutes. If a provision of this ordinance, required by Ch. NR 116, Wis. Admin. Code, is unclear, the provision shall be interpreted in light of the standards in effect on the date of the adoption of this ordinance or in effect on the date of the most recent text amendment to this ordinance.

16.12 SEVERABILITY. Should any portion of this ordinance be declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this ordinance shall not be affected.

16.13 WARNING AND DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY. The flood protection standards in this ordinance are based on engineering experience and scientific research. Larger floods may occur or the flood height may be increased by man-made or natural causes. This ordinance does not imply or guarantee that non-floodplain areas or permitted floodplain uses will be free from flooding and flood damages. Nor does this ordinance create liability on the part of, or a cause of action against, the municipality or any officer or employee thereof for any flood damage that may result from reliance on this ordinance.

16.14 ANNEXED AREAS FOR CITIES AND VILLAGES. The La Crosse County floodplain zoning provisions in effect on the date of annexation shall remain in effect and shall be enforced by the municipality for all annexed areas until the municipality adopts and enforces an ordinance which meets the requirements of Ch. NR 116, Wis. Admin. Code, and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). These annexed lands are described on the municipality's official zoning map. County floodplain zoning provisions are incorporated by reference for the purpose of administering this section and are on file in the office of the La Crosse County zoning administrator. All plats or maps of annexation shall show the regional flood elevation and the location of the floodway.

16.15 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS. La Crosse County shall review all permit applications to determine whether proposed building sites will be reasonably safe from flooding. If a proposed building site is in a flood-prone area, all new construction and substantial improvements shall be designed or modified and adequately anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement of the structure resulting from hydrodynamic and hydrostatic loads; be constructed with materials resistant to flood damage; be constructed by methods and practices that minimize flood damages; and be constructed with electrical, heating, ventilation, plumbing, and air conditioning equipment and other service facilities designed and/or located so as to prevent water from entering or accumulating within the components during conditions of flooding. Subdivisions and condominiums shall be reviewed for compliance with the above standards. All subdivision and condominium proposals (including manufactured home parks) shall include regional flood elevation and floodway data for any development which meets the subdivision definition of this ordinance.

16.16 GENERAL STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL FLOODPLAIN DISTRICTS.

(1) Hydraulic and Hydrological Analyses.

(a) Except as allowed in par. (c) below, no floodplain development shall:

1. Obstruct flow, defined as development which blocks the conveyance of floodwaters by itself or with other development, increasing regional flood height; or
2. Increase regional flood height due to floodplain storage area lost, which equals or exceeds 0 foot.

(b) The zoning administrator shall deny permits if it is determined the proposed development will obstruct flow or increase regional flood heights 0 foot or more, based on the officially adopted FIRM or other adopted map, unless the provisions of sub. (c) are met.

(c) Obstructions or increases equal to or greater than 0 foot may only be permitted if amendments are made to this ordinance, the official floodplain zoning maps, floodway lines and water surface profiles, in accordance with s. 16.23.

(2) Watercourse Alterations. No land use permit to alter or relocate a watercourse in a mapped floodplain shall be issued until the local official has notified in writing all adjacent municipalities, the Department and FEMA regional offices and required the applicant to secure all necessary state and federal permits. The flood carrying capacity of any altered or relocated watercourse shall be maintained. As soon as is practicable, but not later than 6 months after the date of the watercourse alteration or relocation, the zoning administrator shall notify FEMA of the changes by submitting appropriate technical or scientific data in accordance with NFIP guidelines that shall be used to revise the FIRM, risk premium rates and floodplain management regulations as required.

(3) Chapters 30 and 31, Wis. Stats.: Development. Development which requires a permit from the Department, under Chapters 30 and 31, Wis. Stats., such as docks, piers, wharves, bridges, culverts, dams and navigational aids, may be allowed if the necessary permits are obtained and amendments to the floodway lines, water surface profiles, BFE's established in the FIS, or other data from the officially adopted FIRM, or other floodplain zoning maps or the floodplain zoning ordinance are made according to s. 16.23.

(4) Public or Private Campgrounds. Public or private campgrounds shall have a low flood damage potential and shall meet the following provisions:

(a) The campground is approved by the Department of Health & Family Services.

(b) A land use permit for the campground is issued by the zoning administrator.

(c) The character of the river system and the elevation of the campground is such that a 72-hour warning of an impending flood can be given to all campground occupants.

(d) There is an adequate flood warning procedure for the campground that offers the minimum notice required under this section to all persons in the campground. This procedure shall include a written agreement between the campground owner, the municipal emergency government coordinator and the chief law enforcement official which specifies the flood elevation at which evacuation shall occur, personnel responsible for monitoring flood elevations, types of warning systems to be used and the procedures for notifying at-risk parties, and the methods and personnel responsible for conducting the evacuation.

(e) This agreement shall be for no more than 1 calendar year, at which time the agreement shall be reviewed and updated – by the officials identified in par. (d) – to remain in compliance with all applicable regulations, including those of the state department of health and family services and all other applicable regulations.

(f) Only camping units are allowed.

(g) The camping units may not occupy any site in the campground for more than 180 consecutive days, at which time the camping unit must be removed from the floodplain for a minimum of 24 hours.

(h) All camping units that remain on site for more than 30 days shall be issued a limited authorization by the campground operator, a written copy of which is kept on file at the campground. Such authorization shall allow placement of a camping unit for a period not to exceed 180 days and shall ensure compliance with all the provisions of this section.

(i) The municipality shall monitor the limited authorizations issued by the campground operator to assure compliance with the terms of this section.

(j) All camping units that remain in place for more than 180 consecutive days must meet the applicable requirements in either s. 16.18 or s. 16.19 for the floodplain district in which the structure is located.

(k) The campground shall have signs clearly posted at all entrances warning of the flood hazard and the procedures for evacuation when a flood warning is issued.

(l) All service facilities, including but not limited to refuse collection, electrical service, natural gas lines, propane tanks, sewage systems and wells shall be properly anchored and placed at or floodproofed to the flood protection elevation.

16.17 BASE FLOOD ELEVATIONS. Certain areas in the County have had known encroachments in the floodplains, such as by the construction of bridges and placement of culverts, depositing fill or other means that have caused more than 0.1' increase in the regional flood elevations for certain rivers and streams. The administration of all of the provisions of this chapter is to be based on the regional flood elevations that are listed in the following paragraphs, until such time that the obstructions are removed and the chapter is amended to reflect the change in the regional flood elevation.

(1) ELEVATION 708.40 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on County Road "OA" over Drectrah Coulee Creek in the SE 1/4 - NE 1/4 of Section 29, T16N, R6W in the Town of Barre.

(2) ELEVATION 687.28 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on Swamp Road over Bostwick Creek in the NE 1/4 of Section 20, T16N, R6W in the Town of Barre.

(3) ELEVATION 797.90 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on Niedfeldt Road over Burns Creek in the NW 1/4 - NW 1/4 of Section 11, and the SW 1/4 - SW 1/4 of Section 2, all in T17N, R5W in the Town of Burns.

(4) ELEVATION 754.10 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the County Road "E" bridge over Burns Creek in the SW 1/4 - NE 1/4 of Section 21, T17N, R5W in the Town of Burns.

(5) ELEVATION 763.60 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on Jewett Road over Burns Creek in the SE 1/4 of Section 16, T17N, R5W in the Town of Burns.

(6) ELEVATION 645.20 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on Clinton Street (County Road "B") over the Black River in the Town of Campbell.

(7) ELEVATION 818.50 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on State Road 108 over Creamery Creek in the NW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 33, T18N, R6W in the Town of Farmington.

(8) ELEVATION 855.40 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on State Road 108 over Creamery Creek in the NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 33, T18N, R6W in the Town of Farmington.

(9) ELEVATION 779.10 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the County Road "V" bridge over Gilbert Creek in the west 1/2 of the NE 1/4 of Section 12, T18N, R7W in the Town of Farmington.

(10) ELEVATION 735.30 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the Severson Road Bridge over Sour Creek in the SW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 15, T18N, R7W in the Town of Farmington.

(11) ELEVATION 743.90 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on Walker Road over Hoyer Coulee Creek in the SE 1/4 - SW 1/4 of Section 14, T17N, R6W in the Town of Hamilton.

(12) ELEVATION 695.50 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on Gills Coulee Road over Gills Coulee Creek in the SW 1/4 - NE 1/4 of Section 32, T17N, R6W in the Town of Hamilton.

(13) ELEVATION 816.50 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the Torgerson Road bridge over Neshonoc Creek in the SW 1/4 - SW 1/4 of Section 10, T17N, R6W in the Town of Hamilton.

(14) ELEVATION 743.50 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on State Road 108 over Neshonoc (Scotch Coulee) Creek in the NW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 22, T17N, R6W in the Town of Hamilton.

(15) ELEVATION 676.10 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the U.S. Highway 53 – State Road 35 bridge over the Black River in the NW 1/4 - SW 1/4 of Section 1, T18N, R8W in the Town of Holland.

(16) ELEVATION 666.50 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on County Road "XX" over Halfway Creek in the SW 1/4 of Section 18, T17N, R7W in the Town of Onalaska.

(17) ELEVATION 898.30 M.S.L. Immediately upstream from the bridge on County Road "G" over Fishback Creek in the NW 1/4 of Section 23, T15N, R5W in the Town of Washington.

#### 16.18 FLOODWAY DISTRICT (FW).

(1) Applicability. This section applies to all floodway areas on the floodplain zoning maps and those identified pursuant to s. 16.20(4).

(2) Permitted Uses. The following open space uses are allowed in the floodway district and the floodway areas of the general floodplain district, if they are not prohibited by any other ordinance; they meet the standards in subsections (3) and (4); and all permits or certificates have been issued according to s. 16.22(1).

(a) Agricultural uses, such as: farming, outdoor plant nurseries, horticulture, viticulture and wild crop harvesting.

(b) Nonstructural industrial and commercial uses, such as loading areas, parking areas and airport landing strips.

(c) Nonstructural recreational uses, such as golf courses, tennis courts, archery ranges, picnic grounds, boat ramps, swimming areas, parks, wildlife and nature preserves, game farms, fish hatcheries, shooting, trap and skeet activities, hunting and fishing areas and hiking and horseback riding trails, subject to the fill limitations of subsection (3)(d).

(d) Uses or structures accessory to open space uses, or classified as historic structures that comply with subsections (3) and (4).

(e) Extraction of sand, gravel or other materials that comply with subsection (3)(d).

(f) Functionally water-dependent uses, such as docks, piers or wharves, dams, flowage areas, culverts, navigational aids and river crossings of transmission lines, and pipelines that comply with Chapters 30 and 31, Wis. Stats.

(g) Public utilities, streets and bridges that comply with s. (3)(c).

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.18(3)

(3) Standards for Developments in Floodway Areas.

(a) General.

1. Any development in floodway areas shall comply with s. 16.16 and have a low flood damage potential.

2. Applicants shall provide the following data to determine the effects of the proposal according to s. 16.16(1):

a. A cross-section elevation view of the proposal, perpendicular to the watercourse, showing if the proposed development will obstruct flow; or

b. An analysis calculating the effects of this proposal on regional flood height.

3. The zoning administrator shall deny the permit application if the project will increase flood elevations upstream or downstream 0.01 foot or more, based on the data submitted for par. 2. above.

(b) Structures: structures accessory to permanent open space uses, classified as historic structures, or functionally dependent on a waterfront location may be allowed by permit if the structures comply with the following criteria:

1. The structures are not designed for human habitation and do not have a high flood damage potential;

2. The structures are constructed and placed on the building site so as to increase flood heights less than 0.01 foot and minimally obstruct the flow of floodwaters. Structures shall be constructed with the long axis parallel to the flow of floodwaters and on the same line as adjoining structures;

3. The structures are properly anchored to prevent them from floating away and restricting bridge openings or other restricted sections of the stream or river; and

4. The structures have all service facilities at or above the flood protection elevation.

(c) Public utilities, streets and bridges may be allowed by permit, if:

1. Adequate floodproofing measures are provided to the flood protection elevation; and

2. Construction meets the development standards of s. 16.16(1).

(d) Fills or deposition of materials may be allowed by permit, if:

1. The requirements of 16.16(1) are met;

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.18(3)(d)2.

2. No material is deposited in the navigable channel unless a permit is issued by the Department pursuant to Chapter 30, Wis. Stats., and a permit pursuant to s. 404 of the Federal

Water Pollution Control Act, Amendments of 1972, 33 U.S.C. 1344 has been issued, if applicable, and the other requirements of this section are met;

3. The fill or other materials will be protected against erosion by riprap, vegetative cover, sheet piling or bulkheading; and

4. The fill is not classified as a solid or hazardous water material.

(4) Prohibited Uses. All uses not listed as permitted uses in subsection 16.17(2) are prohibited, including the following uses:

(a) Habitable structures, structures with high flood damage potential, or those not associated with permanent open-space uses;

(b) Storing materials that are buoyant, flammable, explosive, injurious to property, water quality, or human, animal plant, fish or other aquatic life;

(c) Uses not in harmony with or detrimental to uses permitted in the adjoining districts;

(d) Any private or public sewage systems, except portable latrines that are removed prior to flooding and systems associated with recreational areas and Department-approved campgrounds that meet the applicable provisions of local ordinances and Ch. COMM 83, Wis. Admin. Code;

(e) Any public or private wells which are used to obtain potable water, except those for recreational areas that meet the requirements of local ordinances and Chapters NR 811 and NR 812, Wis. Admin. Code.

(f) Any solid or hazardous waste disposal sites;

(g) Any wastewater treatment ponds or facilities, except those permitted under s. NR 110.15(3)(b), Wis. Admin. Code.

(h) Any sanitary sewer or water supply lines, except those to service existing or proposed development located outside the floodway which complies with the regulations for the floodplain area occupied.

#### 16.19 FLOODFRINGE DISTRICT (FF)

(1) Applicability. This section applies to all floodfringe areas shown on the floodplain zoning maps and those identified pursuant to s. 16.20(4).

(2) Permitted Uses. Any structure, land use, or development is allowed in the floodfringe district if the standards in subsection (3) are met, the use is not prohibited by this or any other ordinance or regulations and all permits or certificates specified in s. 16.22(1) have been issued.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.19(3)

(3) Standards for Development in Floodfringe Areas.

(a) General. All of the provisions of s. 16.16(1) shall apply. In addition, the following requirements shall apply according to the use requested.

(b) Residential Uses. Any habitable structure, including a manufactured home, which is to be erected, constructed, reconstructed, altered, or moved into the floodfringe area, shall meet or exceed the following standards:

1. The elevation of the lowest floor, excluding the basement or crawlway, shall be 3 feet above the regional flood elevation on fill. The fill shall be 1 foot or more above the regional flood elevation extending at least 15 feet beyond the limits of the structure. The Department may authorize other floodproofing measures if the elevations of existing streets or sewer lines makes compliance impractical and the Board of Adjustment grants a variance;

2. The basement or crawlway floor may be placed at the regional flood elevation if it is floodproofed to the flood protection elevation. No basement or crawlway floor is allowed below the regional flood elevation;

3. Contiguous dryland access shall be provided from a structure to land outside of the floodplain, except as provided in par. 4.; and

4. In developments where existing street or sewer line elevations make compliance with par. 3. impractical, the County may permit new development and substantial improvements where access roads are at or below the regional flood elevation, if:

a. The County has written assurance from police, fire and emergency services that rescue and relief will be provided to the structure(s) by wheeled vehicles during a regional flood event; or

b. The County has a natural disaster plan approved by Wisconsin Emergency Management and the Department.

(c) Accessory Structures or Uses.

1. Except as provided in par. 2., an accessory structure which is not connected to a principal structure may be constructed with its lowest floor at or above the regional flood elevation.

2. An accessory structure which is not connected to the principal structure and which is less than 600 square feet in size and valued at less than \$10,000 may be constructed with its lowest floor no more than two feet below the regional flood elevation if it is subject to flood velocities of no more than two feet per second and it meets all of the provisions of sections 16.18(3)(b) 1., 2., 3., and subsection (f) below.

(d) Commercial Uses. Any commercial structure which is erected, altered or moved into the floodfringe area shall meet the requirements of subsection (3)(b). Subject to the requirements of sub. (f), storage yards, surface parking lots and other such uses may be placed at lower elevations if an adequate warning system exists to protect life and property.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.19(3)(e)

(e) Manufacturing and Industrial Uses. Any manufacturing or industrial structure which is erected, altered or moved into the floodfringe area shall be protected to the flood protection elevation in compliance with flood proofing measures in s. 16.22(5). Subject to the requirements of sub. (f), storage

yards, surface parking lots and other such uses may be placed at lower elevations if an adequate warning system exists to protect life and property.

(f) **Storage of Materials.** Materials that are buoyant, flammable, explosive, or injurious to property, water quality or human, animal, plant, fish or aquatic life shall be stored at or above the flood protection elevation or floodproofed in compliance with s. 16.22(5). Adequate measures shall be taken to ensure that such materials will not enter the water body during flooding.

(g) **Public Utilities, Streets and Bridges.** All utilities, streets and bridges shall be designed to be compatible with this ordinance; and

1. When failure of public utilities, streets and bridges would endanger public health or safety, or where such facilities are deemed essential, construction of and substantial improvements to such facilities may only be permitted if they are floodproofed in compliance with s. 16.22(5) to the flood protection elevation;

2. Minor roads or nonessential utilities may be constructed at lower elevations if they are designed to withstand flood forces to the regional flood elevation.

(h) **Sewage Systems.** All on-site sewage disposal systems shall be floodproofed, pursuant to s. 16.22(5), to the flood protection elevation and shall meet the provisions of all local ordinances and Ch. COMM 83, Wis. Admin. Code.

(i) **Wells.** All wells shall be floodproofed, pursuant to s. 16.22(5), to the flood protection elevation and shall meet the provisions of Chs. NR 811 and NR 812, Wis. Admin. Code.

(j) **Solid Waste Disposal Sites.** Disposal of solid or hazardous waste is prohibited in floodfringe areas.

(k) **Deposition of Materials.** Any deposited material must meet all the provisions of this Ordinance.

(l) **Manufactured Home.**

1. Owners or operators of all manufactured home parks and subdivisions shall provide adequate surface drainage to minimize flood damage, and prepare, secure approval and file an evacuation plan, indicating vehicular access and escape routes, with local emergency management authorities.

2. In existing manufactured home parks, all new homes, replacement homes on existing pads, and substantially improved homes shall have the lowest floor elevated to the flood protection elevation and be anchored so they do not float, collapse or move laterally during a flood.

3. Outside of existing manufactured home parks, including new manufactured home parks and all single units outside of existing parks, all new, replacement and substantially improved manufactured homes shall meet the residential development standards for the floodfringe in subsection (3)(b).

LA CROSSE COUNTY 03/08  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.19(3)(m)

(m) **Mobile Recreational Vehicles.** All mobile recreational vehicles that are on site for 180 consecutive days or more or are not fully licensed and ready for highway use shall meet the elevation and anchoring requirements in subsections (3)(1)2. and 3. A mobile recreational vehicle is ready for highway

use if it is on its wheels or jacking system, is attached to the site only by quick-disconnect utilities and security devices and has no permanently attached additions.

#### 16.20 GENERAL FLOODPLAIN DISTRICT (GFP)

(1) Applicability. The provisions for this district shall apply to all floodplains for which flood profiles are not available or where flood profiles are available but floodways have not been delineated. Floodway and floodfringe districts shall be delineated when adequate data is available.

(2) Permitted Uses. Pursuant to subsection (4), it shall be determined whether the proposed use is located within a floodway or floodfringe area. Those uses permitted in floodway and floodfringe areas are allowed within the general floodplain district, according to the standards of subsection (3) provided that all permits or certificates required under s. 16.22(1) have been issued.

(3) Standards for Development in the General Floodplain District. The provisions of s. 16.18 applies to floodway areas and s. 16.19 applies to floodfringe areas. The rest of this ordinance applies to either district.

(4) Determining Floodway and Floodfringe Limits. Upon receiving an application for development within the general floodplain district, the zoning administrator shall:

(a) Require the applicant to submit 2 copies of an aerial photograph or a plan which shows the proposed development with respect to the general floodplain district limits, stream channel, and existing floodplain developments, along with a legal description of the property, fill limits and elevations, building floor elevations and flood proofing measures;

(b) Require the applicant to furnish any of the following information deemed necessary by the Department to evaluate the effects of the proposal upon flood height and flood flows, regional flood elevation and to determine floodway boundaries:

1. A typical valley cross-section showing the stream channel, the floodplain adjoining each side of the channel, the cross-sectional area to be occupied by the proposed development, and all historic high water information;

2. Plan (surface view) showing elevations or contours of the ground; pertinent structure, fill or storage elevations; size, location and layout of all proposed and existing structures on the site; location and elevations of streets, water supply, and sanitary facilities; soil types and other pertinent information;

3. Profile showing the slope of the bottom of the channel or flow line of the stream; and

4. Specifications for building construction and materials, floodproofing, filling, dredging, channel improvement, storage, water supply and sanitary facilities.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.20(4)(c)

(c) Transmit 1 copy of the information described in pars. (a) and (b) to the Department Regional office along with a written request for technical assistance to establish regional flood elevations and, where applicable, floodway data. Where the provisions of s. 16.22(1)(b)3 apply, the applicant

shall provide all required information and computations to delineate floodway boundaries and the effects of the project on flood elevations.

#### 16.21 NONCONFORMING USES.

##### (1) General.

(a) If these standards conform with s. 59.69(10), Wis. Stats., they shall apply to all modifications or additions to any nonconforming use or structure and to the use of any structure or premises which was lawful before the passage of this ordinance or any amendment thereto.

(b) The existing lawful use of a structure or its accessory use which is not in conformity with the provisions of this ordinance may continue subject to the following conditions:

1. No modifications or additions to a nonconforming use or structure shall be permitted unless they comply with this ordinance. The words “modification” and “addition” include, but are not limited to, any alteration, addition, modification, structural repair, rebuilding or replacement of any such existing use, structure or accessory structure or use. Ordinary maintenance repairs are not considered modifications or additions; these include painting, decorating, paneling and the replacement of doors, windows and other nonstructural components and the maintenance, repair or replacement of existing private sewage or water supply systems or connections to public utilities. Ordinary maintenance repairs do not include any costs associated with the repair of a damaged structure. The construction of a deck that does not exceed 200 square feet and that is adjacent to the exterior wall of a principal structure is not an extension, modification or addition. The roof of the structure may extend over a portion of the deck in order to provide safe ingress and egress to the principal structure.

2. If a nonconforming use or the use of a nonconforming structure is discontinued for 12 consecutive months, it is no longer permitted and any future use of the property, and any structure or building thereon, shall conform to the applicable requirements of this ordinance;

3. The municipality shall keep a record which lists all nonconforming uses and nonconforming structures, their present equalized assessed value, the cost of all modifications or additions which have been permitted, and the percentage of the structure’s total current value those modifications represent;

4. No modification or addition to any nonconforming structure or any structure with a nonconforming use, which over the life of the structure would equal or exceed 50% of its present equalized assessed value, shall be allowed unless the entire structure is permanently changed to a conforming structure with a conforming use in compliance with the applicable requirements of this ordinance. Contiguous dry land access must be provided for residential and commercial uses in compliance with s. 16.19(3)(b). The costs of elevating a nonconforming building or a building with a nonconforming use to the flood protection elevation are excluded from the 50% provisions of this paragraph.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 03/08  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.21(1)(b)5.

5. a. Except as provided in subsection (1)(b), if any nonconforming structure or any structure with a nonconforming use is destroyed or is substantially damaged, it cannot be replaced, reconstructed or rebuilt unless the use and the structure meet the ordinance requirements. A structure

is considered substantially damaged if the total cost to restore the structure to its pre-damaged condition equals or exceeds 50% of the structure's present equalized assessed value.

b. For nonconforming buildings that are damaged or destroyed by a nonflood disaster, the repair or reconstruction of any such nonconforming building may be permitted in order to restore it after the nonflood disaster, provided that the nonconforming building will meet all of the minimum requirements under 44 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60, or under the regulations promulgated thereunder.

6. A nonconforming historic structure may be altered if the alteration will not preclude the structures continued designation as a historic structure, the alteration will comply with s. 16.18(3)(a), flood resistant materials are used, and construction practices and floodproofing methods that comply with s. 16.22(5) are used.

(2) Floodway Areas.

(a) No modification or addition shall be allowed to any nonconforming structure or any structure with a nonconforming use in a floodway area, unless such modification or addition:

1. Has been granted a permit or variance which meets all ordinance requirements;

2. Meets the requirements of s. 16.21(1);

3. Will not increase the obstruction to flood flows or regional flood height; and

4. Any addition to the existing structure shall be floodproofed, pursuant to s. 16.22(5) by means other than the use of fill, to the flood protection elevation.

(b) No new on-site sewage disposal system, or addition to an existing on-site sewage disposal system, except where an addition has been ordered by a government agency to correct a hazard to public health, shall be allowed in a floodway area. Any replacement, repair or maintenance of an existing on-site sewage disposal system in a floodway area shall meet the applicable requirements of all municipal ordinances and Ch. COMM 83, Wis. Admin. Code.

(c) No new well or modification to an existing well used to obtain potable water shall be allowed in a floodway area. Any replacement, repair or maintenance of an existing well in a floodway area shall meet the applicable requirements of all municipal ordinances and Chs. NR 811 and NR 812, Wis. Admin. Code.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 03/08  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.21(3)

(3) Floodfringe Areas.

(a) No modification or addition shall be allowed to any nonconforming structure or any structure with a nonconforming use unless such modification or addition has been granted a permit or

variance by the municipality, and the modification or addition shall be placed on fill or floodproofed to the flood protection elevation in compliance with the standards for that particular use in s. 16.19(3), except where s. 16.21(3)(b) is applicable.

(b) Where compliance with the provisions of par. (a) would result in unnecessary hardship and only where the structure will not be used for human habitation or be associated with a high flood damage potential, the Board of Adjustment/Appeals, using the procedures established in s. 16.22(3) may grant a variance from those provisions of par.(a) for modifications or additions, using the criteria listed below. Modifications or additions which are protected to elevations lower than the flood protection elevation may be permitted if:

1. No floor is allowed below the regional flood elevation for residential or commercial structures;
2. Human lives are not endangered;
3. Public facilities, such as water or sewer, will not be installed;
4. Flood depths will not exceed 2 feet;
5. Flood velocities will not exceed 2 feet per second; and
6. The structure will not be used for storage of materials as described in s. 16.19(3)(f).

(c) If neither the provisions of par. (a) or (b) above can be met, 1 addition to an existing room in a nonconforming building or a building with a nonconforming use may be allowed in the floodfringe, if the addition:

1. Meets all other regulations and will be granted by permit or variance;
2. Does not exceed 60 square feet in area; and
3. In combination with other previous modifications or additions to the building, does not exceed 50% of the present equalized assessed value of the building.

(d) All new private sewage disposal systems, or addition to, replacement, repair or maintenance of a private sewage disposal system shall meet all the applicable provisions of all local ordinances and Ch. COMM 83, Wis. Admin. Code.

(e) All new wells, or addition to, replacement, repair or maintenance of a well shall meet the applicable provisions of this ordinance and Ch. NR 811 and NR 812, Wis. Admin. Code.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22

16.22 ADMINISTRATION. Where a zoning administrator, planning agency or a Board of Adjustment/Appeals has already been appointed to administer a zoning ordinance adopted under ss. 59.69 or 59.692, Wis. Stats.

- (1) Zoning Administrator.

(a) The zoning administrator is authorized to administer this ordinance and shall have the following duties and powers:

1. Advise applicants of the ordinance provisions, assist in preparing permit applications and appeals, and assure that the regional flood elevation for the proposed development is shown on all permit applications.

2. Issue permits and inspect properties for compliance with provisions of this ordinance and issue certificates of compliance where appropriate.

3. Inspect all damaged floodplain structures and perform a substantial damage assessment to determine if substantial damage to the structures has occurred.

4. Keep records of all official actions such as:

a. All permits issued, inspections made, and work approved;

b. Documentation of certified lowest floor and regional flood elevations for floodplain development;

c. Records of water surface profiles, floodplain zoning maps and ordinances, nonconforming uses and structures including changes, appeals, variances and amendments.

d. All substantial damage assessment reports for the floodplain structures.

5. Submit copies of the following items to the Department Regional office:

a. Within 10 days of the decision, a copy of any decisions on variances, appeals for map or text interpretations, and map or text amendments;

b. Copies of any case-by-case analyses, and any other information required by the Department including an annual summary of the number and types of floodplain zoning actions taken.

c. Copies of substantial damage assessments performed and all related correspondence concerning the assessments.

6. Investigate, prepare reports, and report violations of this ordinance to the municipal zoning agency and attorney for prosecution. Copies of the reports shall also be sent to the Department Regional office.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22(1)(a)7.

7. Submit copies of text and map amendments and biennial reports to the FEMA Regional office.

(b) Land Use Permit. A land use permit shall be obtained before any new development or any repair or change in the use of a building or structure, including sewer and water facilities, may be initiated. Application to the zoning administrator shall include:

1. General Information.

- a. Name and address of the applicant, property owner and contractor.
- b. Legal description, proposed use, and whether it is new construction or a modification.

2. Site Development Plan. A site plan drawn to scale shall be submitted with the permit application form and shall contain:

- a. Location, dimensions, area and elevation of the lot;
- b. Location of the ordinary highwater mark of any abutting navigable waterways;
- c. Location of any structures with distances measured from the lot lines and street center lines;
- d. Location of any existing or proposed on-site sewage systems or private water supply systems;
- e. Location and elevation of existing or future access roads;
- f. Location of floodplain and floodway limits as determined from the official floodplain zoning maps;
- g. The elevation of the lowest floor of proposed buildings and any fill using National Geodetic and Vertical Datum or the North American Vertical Datum (NAVD);
- h. Data sufficient to determine the regional flood elevation in NGVD or NAVD at the location of the development and to determine whether or not the requirements of s. 16.18 or 16.19 are met; and
- i. Data to determine if the proposed development will cause an obstruction to flow or an increase in regional flood height or discharge according to s. 16.16(1). This may include any of the information noted in s. 16.18(3)(a).

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22(1)(b)3.

3. Data Requirements to Analyze Developments.

- a. The applicant shall provide all survey data and computations required to show the effects of the project on flood heights, velocities and floodplain storage, for all subdivision proposals, as “subdivision” is defined in s. 236, Stats., and other proposed developments exceeding 5 acres in area or where the estimated cost exceeds \$125,000. The applicant shall provide an analysis of the effect of the development on the regional flood profile, velocity of flow and floodplain storage capacity, a map showing

location and details of vehicular access to lands outside the floodplain, and a surface drainage plan showing how flood damage will be minimized. The estimated cost of the proposal shall include all structural development, landscaping, access and road development, utilities, and other pertinent items, but need not include land costs.

4. Expiration. All permits issued under the authority of this ordinance shall expire one year after issuance.

(c) Certificate of Compliance. No land shall be occupied or used, and no building which is hereafter constructed, altered, added to, modified, repaired, rebuilt or replaced shall be occupied until a certificate of compliance is issued by the zoning administrator, except where no permit is required, subject to the following provisions:

1. The certificate of compliance shall show that the building or premises or part thereof, and the proposed use, conform to the provisions of this ordinance;

2. Application for such certificate shall be concurrent with the application for a permit;

3. If all ordinance provisions are met, the certificate of compliance shall be issued within 10 days after written notification that the permitted work is completed; and

4. The applicant shall submit a certification signed by a registered professional engineer or registered land surveyor that the fill, lowest floor and floodproofing elevations are in compliance with the permit issued. Floodproofing measures also require certification by a registered professional engineer or registered architect that floodproofing measures meet the requirements of s. 16.22(5).

(d) Other Permits. The applicant must secure all necessary permits from federal, state, and local agencies, including those required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under s. 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, Amendments of 1972, 33 U.S.C. 1344.

(2) Zoning Agency.

(a) The Planning, Resources and Development Committee shall:

1. Oversee the functions of the office of the zoning administrator;

2. Review and advise the Governing body on all proposed amendments to this ordinance, maps and text; and

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22(2)(a)3.

3. Maintain a complete public record of all proceedings.

(b) This zoning agency shall not grant variances to the terms of the ordinance in place of action by the Board of Adjustment or amend the text or zoning maps in place of official action by the County Board.

(3) Board of Adjustment/Appeals. The Board of Adjustment created under s. 59.694, Wis. Stats., is hereby authorized or shall be appointed to act for the purposes of this ordinance. The Board shall

exercise the powers conferred by Wisconsin Statutes and adopt rules for the conduct of business. The zoning administrator may not be the secretary of the Board.

(a) Powers and Duties: The Board of Adjustment shall:

1. Appeals – hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by an administrative official in the enforcement or administration of this ordinance.

2. Boundary Disputes – hear and decide disputes concerning the district boundaries shown on the official floodplain zoning map.

3. Variances – hear and decide, upon appeal, variances from the ordinances standards.

(b) Appeal to the Board.

1. Appeals to the Board may be taken by any person aggrieved, or by any officer or department of the municipality affected by any decision of the zoning administrator or other administrative officer. Such appeal shall be taken within 30 days unless otherwise provided by the rules of the Board, by filing with the official whose decision is in question, and with the Board, a notice of appeal specifying the reasons for the appeal. The official whose decision is in question shall transmit to the Board all records regarding the matter appealed.

2. Notice and Hearing for Appeals Including Variances.

a. The Board shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing, publish adequate notice pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes, specifying the date, time, place and subject of the hearing, and assure that notice shall be mailed to the parties in interest and the Department Regional office at least 10 days in advance of the hearing.

b. Hearing. Any party may appear in person or by agent or attorney. The Board shall resolve boundary disputes according to subsection (3)(c); decide variance applications according to s. 16.22(3)(d); and decide appeals of permit denials according to s. 16.22(4).

3. Decision. The final decision regarding the appeal and variance application shall be: made within a reasonable time; sent to the Department Regional office with 10 days of the decision; a written determination signed by the chairman or secretary of the Board; state the specific facts which are the basis for the Board's decision; either affirm, reverse, vary or modify the order, requirement, decision or

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22(3)(b)3.

determination appealed, in whole or in part, dismiss the appeal for lack of jurisdiction or grant or deny the variance application; and include the reasons for granting an appeal, describing the hardship demonstrated by the applicant in the case of a variance, clearly stated in the recorded minutes of the Board proceedings.

(c) Boundary Disputes. The following procedure shall be used by the Board in hearing disputes concerning floodplain district boundaries:

1. If a floodplain district boundary is established by approximate or detailed floodplain studies, the flood elevations or profiles shall prevail in locating the boundary. If none exist, other evidence may be examined.

2. In all cases, the person contesting the boundary location shall be given a reasonable opportunity to present arguments and technical evidence to the Board.

3. If the boundary is incorrectly mapped, the Board should inform the zoning committee or the person contesting the boundary location to petition the governing body for a map amendment according to s. 16.23.

(d) Variance.

1. The Board may, upon appeal, grant a variance from the standards of this ordinance if an applicant convincingly demonstrates that:

a. Literal enforcement of the ordinance provisions will cause unnecessary hardship;

b. The hardship is due to adoption of the floodplain ordinance and unique property conditions, not common to adjacent lots or premises. In such case the ordinance or map must be amended;

c. The variance is not contrary to the public interest; and

d. The variance is consistent with the purpose of this ordinance in s. 16.03.

2. In addition to the criteria in par. 1., to qualify for a variance under FEMA regulations, the following criteria must be met:

a. The variance may not cause any increase in the regional flood elevation;

b. Variances can only be granted for lots that are less than one-half acre and are contiguous to existing structures constructed below the RFE;

c. Variances shall only be granted upon a showing of good and sufficient cause, shall be the minimum relief necessary, shall not cause increased risks to public safety or nuisances, shall not increase costs for rescue and relief efforts and shall not be contrary to the purpose of the ordinance.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22(3)(d)3.

3. A variance shall not:

a. Grant, extend or increase any use prohibited in the zoning district.

b. Be granted for a hardship based solely on an economic gain or loss.

- c. Be granted for a hardship which is self-created.
- d. Damage the rights or property values of other persons in the area.
- e. Allow actions without the amendments to this ordinance or map(s) required in s. 16.23(1).
- f. Allow any alteration of an historic structure, including its use, which would preclude its continued designation as an historic structure.

4. When a floodplain variance is granted the Board shall notify the applicant in writing that it may increase flood insurance premiums and risks to life and property. A copy shall be maintained with the variance record.

(4) To Review Appeals of Permit Denials.

(a) The Zoning Agency (s. 16.21(2)) or Board shall review all data related to the appeal. This may include:

- 1. Permit application data listed in s. 16.22(1)(b).
- 2. Floodway/floodfringe determination data in s. 16.20(4).
- 3. Data listed in s. 16.18(3)(a)2.b. where the applicant has not submitted this information to the zoning administrator.
- 4. Other data submitted with the application, or submitted to the Board with the appeal.

(b) For appeals of all denied permits the Board shall:

- 1. Follow the procedures of subsection (3);
- 2. Consider zoning agency recommendations; and
- 3. Either uphold the denial or grant the appeal.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22(4)(c)

(c) For appeals concerning increases in regional flood elevation the Board shall:

- 1. Uphold the denial where the Board agrees with the data showing an increase in flood elevation. Increases equal to or greater than 0.01 foot may only be allowed after amending the flood profile and map and all appropriate legal arrangements are made with all adversely affected property owners.

2. Grant the appeal where the Board agrees that the data properly demonstrates that the project does not cause an increase equal to or greater than 0.01 foot provided no other reasons for denial exist.

(5) Floodproofing.

(a) No permit or variance shall be issued until the applicant submits a plan certified by a registered professional engineer or architect that the floodproofing measures will protect the structure or development to the flood protection elevation.

(b) Floodproofing measures shall be designed to:

1. Withstand flood pressures, depths, velocities, uplift and impact forces and other regional flood factors;
2. Protect structures to the flood protection elevation;
3. Anchor structures to foundations to resist flotation and lateral movement; and
4. Insure that structural walls and floors are watertight to the flood protection elevation, and the interior remains completely dry during flooding without human intervention.

(c) Floodproofing measures could include:

1. Reinforcing walls and floors to resist rupture or collapse caused by water pressure or floating debris.
2. Adding mass or weight to prevent flotation.
3. Placing essential utilities above the flood protection elevation.
4. Installing surface or subsurface drainage systems to relieve foundation wall and basement floor pressures.
5. Constructing water supply wells and waste treatment systems to prevent the entry of flood waters.
6. Putting cutoff valves on sewer lines or eliminating gravity flow basement drains.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.22(6)

(6) Public Information.

(a) Place marks on structures to show the depth of inundation during the regional flood.

(b) All maps, engineering data and regulations shall be available and widely distributed.

(c) All real estate transfers should show what floodplain zoning district any real property is in.

#### 16.23 AMENDMENTS.

(1) GENERAL. The governing body may change or supplement the floodplain zoning district boundaries and this ordinance in the manner provided by law. Actions which require an amendment include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Any change to the official floodplain zoning map, including the floodway line or boundary of any floodplain area.

(b) Correction of discrepancies between the water surface profiles and floodplain zoning maps.

(c) Any fill in the floodplain which raises the elevation of the filled area to a height at or above the flood protection elevation and is contiguous to land lying outside the floodplain.

(d) Any fill or floodplain encroachment that obstructs flow, increasing regional flood height 0.01 foot or more.

(e) Any upgrade to a floodplain zoning ordinance text required by s. NR 116.05, Wis. Admin. Code, or otherwise required by law, or for changes by the municipality.

(f) All channel relocations and changes to the maps to alter floodway lines or to remove an area from the floodway or the floodfringe that is based on a base flood elevation from a FIRM requires prior approval by FEMA.

(2) Procedures. Ordinance amendments may be made upon petition of any interested party according to the provisions of s. 59.69, Wis. Stats. Such petitions shall include all necessary data required by ss. 16.20(4) and 16.22(1)(b).

(a) The proposed amendment shall be referred to the zoning agency for a public hearing and recommendation to the governing body. The amendment and notice of public hearing shall be submitted to the Department Regional office for review prior to the hearing. The amendment procedure shall comply with the provisions of s. 59.69, Wis. Stats.

(b) No amendments shall become effective until reviewed and approved by the Department.

LA CROSSE COUNTY 08/06  
FLOODPLAIN ZONING 16.23(2)(c)

(c) All persons petitioning for a map amendment that obstructs flow, increasing regional flood height 0.01 foot or more, shall obtain flooding easements or other appropriate legal arrangements from all adversely affected property owners and notify local units of government before the amendment can be approved by the governing body.

(d) For amendments in areas with no water surface profiles, the zoning agency or board shall consider data submitted by the Department, the zoning administrator's visual on-site inspections and other available information. (See s. 16.07(3))

16.24 ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES. Any violation of the provisions of this ordinance by any person shall be unlawful and shall be referred to the District Attorney who shall expeditiously prosecute all such violations. A violator shall, upon conviction, forfeit to the County a penalty of not less than \$100 and not more than \$500, together with the taxable costs of such action. Each day of continued violation shall constitute a separate offense. Every violation of this ordinance is a public nuisance and the creation may be enjoined and the maintenance may be abated by action at suit of the municipality, the state, or any citizen thereof pursuant to s. 87.30, Wis. Stats.