

**Planning Board Report to Annual Town Meeting
Chapter 255-91 Floodplain Regulations Amendment
March 25, 2026**

ARTICLE XX: To see if Town Meeting will vote to repeal and replace Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255-91 Floodplain Regulations, as further articulated in the Planning Board’s Report to Town Meeting or take any other action relative thereto.

PUBLIC HEARING: The Planning Board conducted a public hearing on March 13, 2026 for the proposed amendment to the Zoning Bylaw, as articulated in the Warrant Article.

REPORT:

The proposed Warrant Article asks for the Town Meeting to consider the repeal and replacement of the South Hadley Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255-91 Floodplain Regulations to meet current regulatory standards for floodplains. The Zoning Bylaw creates a Floodplain Zoning Overlay District (Floodplain District) which corresponds to all special flood hazard areas designated on the South Hadley Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) issued by FEMA, dated August 15, 1979. The Floodplain District is known as an “overlay district” which means that all other zoning requirements such as allowable uses and dimensional requirements still apply, and the regulations for floodplain management are in addition. The proposed Floodplain District corresponds to the 100-year floodplain, as delineated on the effective FIRM, posted online here:

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14872/FEMA-Floodplain-Maps--Effective-August-15-1979> The Floodplain District includes the Connecticut River, Buttery Brook (to Gaylord Street), Stoney Brook, Bachelor Brook, Elmer Brook and Dry Brook.

South Hadley is under mandate by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the State coordinating office for the National Flood Insurance Program, to update South Hadley’s existing floodplain regulations to meet current standards. In 2020, DCR released an updated model bylaw and sent notice to municipalities requiring compliance with the updated standards. Simultaneously, FEMA had undertaken a process to update the regulatory floodplain maps nationwide. It was the intention of the Planning Board to wait until the updated maps for our region were released, however, that process has been delayed by FEMA/DCR and we are required to utilize the current effective FIRM issued by FEMA for the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program. *The current effective FIRM maps for South Hadley are dated August 15, 1979.* It may take FEMA/DCR several more years to finalize the updated maps, and when that happens, we will be required to revise our bylaw again to reference the new effective map.

What is different in the new bylaw?

A detailed comparison of the existing bylaw to the proposed bylaw is posted online here: <https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14648/South-Hadley-Floodplain-Bylaw-Checklist-2242025>

Most of the proposed changes address administrative requirements such as adding language that clearly states that permits are required for construction within the Floodplain District, identification of the Building Commissioner as the local Floodplain Administrator, project size triggers for determining blasé flood elevation, requirement to submit any new base flood elevation data to FEMA, process for seeking variances from State Building Code, and new definitions. The location of the Floodplain Zoning Overlay District is not changing and will remain in its current configuration which corresponds to the 100-year floodplain, as delineated on August 15, 1979.

PUBLIC HEARING DISCUSSION:

The exact location of the Floodplain Overlay Zoning District was discussed and how property owners within that area were to be notified of this hazard area. The District delineation has been in place since 1979, and any person purchasing property within that area would have been notified by their mortgage company and insurance company of floodplain coverage requirements. There was a request for the Planning Board to conduct outreach to these property owners about the location of the floodplain. The anticipated release date from FEMA for the updated floodplain maps was discussed. Town officials have no control over that process and are only able to relay information released by FEMA. Town officials have been participating in the floodplain update mapping process including attendance at a regional meeting to identify known areas of flooding, review of draft map updates, and posting notice of the process through Town media channels.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE MASTER PLAN:

The South Hadley Master Plan (2020) doesn't specifically address amending the Zoning Bylaw to update the floodplain regulations. However, maintaining local regulations that support the protection of important natural resources such as floodplains, and ensures the safety of human life and property are consistent with Goal #2: *South Hadley provides community-wide stewardship of its natural, cultural, and historic resources*. Historic development patterns across town are clustered along major rivers including the Connecticut River, Buttery Brook, Bachelor Brook, and Stoney Brook. These rivers provided hydropower that supported industrial development and the economic engine that led to settlement of South Hadley. Some of the structures built along these rivers many years ago still exist today, and much new settlement has followed. The Master Plan encourages supporting historic neighborhoods such as South Hadley Falls through redevelopment that protects natural resources and provides protection of human life and property.

RECOMMENDATION:

During the public hearing on March 13, 2026, the Planning Board voted five (5) out of five (5) members present in favor (D. Mulvaney, N. Therien, B. Hutchison, R. Watchilla, and B. Szklarz) to recommend to the Selectboard the inclusion of the herein proposed Zoning Bylaw amendment on the May 13, 2026 Annual Town Meeting warrant for adoption. At their meeting on March 23, 2026, the Planning Board voted five (5) out of five (5) members

present to approve (D. Mulvaney, N. Therien, B. Hutchison, R. Watchilla, and B. Szklarz) this Report to Town Meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Proposed 255-91 Floodplain Regulations Zoning Bylaw

Attachment B: Public Hearing Minutes - March 13, 2026

APPENDIX A:

255-91. Floodplain regulations.

- A. Purposes. The purpose of the Floodplain Overlay District is to:
- 1) Ensure public safety through reducing the threats to life and personal injury;
 - 2) Eliminate new hazards to emergency response officials;
 - 3) Prevent the occurrence of public emergencies resulting from water quality, contamination, and pollution due to flooding;
 - 4) Avoid the loss of utility services which if damaged by flooding would disrupt or shut down the utility network and impact regions of the community beyond the site of flooding;
 - 5) Eliminate costs associated with the response and cleanup of flooding conditions; and,
 - 6) Reduce damage to public and private property resulting from flooding waters.

B. Floodplain District.

The Floodplain District is herein established as an overlay district. The District includes all special flood hazard areas designated on the Town of South Hadley's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program, dated August 15, 1979 and on the Flood Boundary & Floodway Map dated August 15, 1979. These maps indicate the 1%-chance regulatory floodplain. The exact boundaries of the District shall be defined by the 1%-chance base flood elevations shown on the FIRM and further defined by the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report dated February 15, 1979. The effective FIRM, FBFM, and FIS report are incorporated herein by reference and are on file with the Town Clerk, Planning Board, Building Commissioner, and Conservation Commission.

C. Designation of Community Floodplain Administrator.

The Town of South Hadley hereby designates the position of Building Commissioner to be the official floodplain administrator for the Town.

D. Permits are required for all proposed development in the Floodplain Overlay District.

- (1) The Town of South Hadley requires a permit for all proposed construction or other development in the Floodplain Overlay District, including new construction or changes to existing buildings, placement of manufactured homes, placement of agricultural facilities, fences, sheds, storage facilities or

drilling, mining, paving and any other development that might increase flooding or adversely impact flood risks to other properties.

- (2) The Town's permit review process includes the requirement that the proponent obtain all local, state and federal permits that will be necessary in order to carry out the proposed development in the floodplain overlay district. The proponent must acquire all necessary permits, and must demonstrate that all necessary permits have been acquired.

E. Floodway encroachment.

- (1) In Zones A, A1-30, and AE, along watercourses that have not had a regulatory floodway designated, the best available Federal, State, local, or other floodway data shall be used to prohibit encroachments in floodways which would result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the occurrence of the base flood discharge.
- (2) In Zones A1-30 and AE, along watercourses that have a regulatory floodway designated on the Town's Flood Boundary & Floodway Map encroachments are prohibited, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, and other development within the adopted regulatory floodway unless it has been demonstrated through hydrologic and hydraulic analyses performed in accordance with standard engineering practice that the proposed encroachment would not result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the occurrence of the base flood discharge.

F. Unnumbered A Zones.

In A Zones, in the absence of FEMA BFE data and floodway data, the building department will obtain, review and reasonably utilize base flood elevation and floodway data available from a Federal, State, or other source as criteria for requiring new construction, substantial improvements, or other development in Zone A and as the basis for elevating residential structures to or above base flood level, for floodproofing or elevating nonresidential structures to or above base flood level, and for prohibiting encroachments in floodways.

G. Subdivision and other development proposals.

All subdivision proposals and other development proposals in the floodplain overlay district shall be reviewed to assure that:

- (1) Such proposals minimize flood damage.
- (2) Public utilities and facilities are located & constructed so as to minimize flood damage.

(3) Adequate drainage is provided.

H. Base flood elevation data for subdivision and other development proposals.

When proposing subdivisions or other developments greater than 50 lots or 5 acres (whichever is less), the proponent must provide technical data to determine base flood elevations for each developable parcel shown on the design plans.

I. Recreational vehicles.

In A, A1-30, and AE Zones, all recreational vehicles to be placed on a site must be elevated and anchored in accordance with the zone's regulations for foundation and elevation requirements or be on the site for less than 180 consecutive days or be fully licensed and highway ready.

J. Watercourse alterations or relocations of riverine areas.

In a riverine situation, the Floodplain Administrator shall notify the following of any alteration or relocation of a watercourse:

- (1) Adjacent Communities, especially upstream and downstream
- (2) Bordering States, if affected
- (3) NFIP State Coordinator - Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
- (4) NFIP Program Specialist - Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region I

K. Requirement to submit new technical data.

If the Town acquires data that changes the base flood elevation in the FEMA mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas, the Town will, within six months, notify FEMA of these changes by submitting the technical or scientific data that supports the change(s.) Notification shall be submitted to:

- (1) NFIP State Coordinator - Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
- (2) NFIP Program Specialist - Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region I

L. Variances to building code floodplain standards.

- (1) The Town will request from the State Building Code Appeals Board a written and/or audible copy of the portion of the hearing related to the variance, and will maintain this record in the community's files.
- (2) The Town shall also issue a letter to the property owner regarding potential impacts to the annual premiums for the flood insurance policy covering that property, in writing over the signature of a community official that (i) the issuance

of a variance to construct a structure below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to amounts as high as \$25 for \$100 of insurance coverage and (ii) such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property.

(3) Such notification shall be maintained with the record of all variance actions for the referenced development in the Floodplain Overlay District.

M. Variances to local Zoning Bylaws related to community compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

A variance from these floodplain bylaws must meet the requirements set out by State law, and may only be granted if: 1) Good and sufficient cause and exceptional non-financial hardship exist; 2) the variance will not result in additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, or fraud or victimization of the public; and 3) the variance is the minimum action necessary to afford relief.

N. Abrogation and greater restriction.

The floodplain management regulations found in this Floodplain Overlay District section shall take precedence over any less restrictive conflicting local laws, ordinances or codes.

O. Disclaimer of liability

The degree of flood protection required by this bylaw is considered reasonable but does not imply total flood protection.

P. Severability section.

If any section, provision or portion of this bylaw is deemed to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court, the remainder of the ordinance shall be effective.

Q. Local Enforcement

Enforcement of the provisions of this bylaw shall be in accordance with §255-141 of the South Hadley Zoning Bylaw.

R. Terms Defined.

Terms as used herein §255-91 Floodplain Regulations have definitions specific to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program. Such terms may have conflicting definitions or interpretations where used elsewhere within the Town of South Hadley's Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255. Therefore, the following terms as used herein §255-91

Floodplain Regulations are defined as follows. Any other term not herein defined in §255-91 may rely on definitions as provided in §255-10.

- (1) DEVELOPMENT means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to building or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]
- (2) FLOOD BOUNDARY AND FLOODWAY MAP means an official map of a community issued by FEMA that depicts, based on detailed analyses, the boundaries of the 100-year and 500-year floods and the 100-year floodway. (For maps done in 1987 and later, the floodway designation is included on the FIRM.)
- (3) FLOOD HAZARD BOUNDARY MAP (FHBM.) An official map of a community issued by the Federal Insurance Administrator, where the boundaries of the flood and related erosion areas having special hazards have been designated as Zone A or E. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]
- (4) FLOODWAY. The channel of the river, creek or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]
- (5) FUNCTIONALLY DEPENDENT USE means a use which cannot perform its intended purpose unless it is located or carried out in close proximity to water. The term includes only docking facilities, port facilities that are necessary for the loading and unloading of cargo or passengers, and ship building and ship repair facilities, but does not include long-term storage or related manufacturing facilities. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59] Also [Referenced Standard ASCE 24-14]
- (6) HIGHEST ADJACENT GRADE means the highest natural elevation of the ground surface prior to construction next to the proposed walls of a structure. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]
- (7) HISTORIC STRUCTURE means any structure that is:
 - (a) Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the Department of Interior) or preliminarily 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:

(1) By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior or

(2) Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

[US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

(8) NEW CONSTRUCTION. Structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of the first floodplain management code, regulation, ordinance, or standard adopted by the authority having jurisdiction, including any subsequent improvements to such structures. *New construction includes work determined to be substantial improvement.*

[Referenced Standard ASCE 24-14]

(9) RECREATIONAL VEHICLE means a vehicle which is:

(a) Built on a single chassis;

(b) 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection;

(c) Designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light duty truck; and

(d) Designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use.

[US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

(10) REGULATORY FLOODWAY - see FLOODWAY.

(11) SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA. The land area subject to flood hazards and shown on a Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard map as Zone A, AE, A1-30, A99, AR, AO, AH,

[Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

(12) START OF CONSTRUCTION. The date of issuance for new construction and substantial improvements to existing structures, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, placement or other improvement is within 180 days after the date of issuance. The actual start of construction means the first placement of permanent construction of a building (including a manufactured home) on a site, such as the pouring of a slab or footings, installation of pilings or construction of columns.

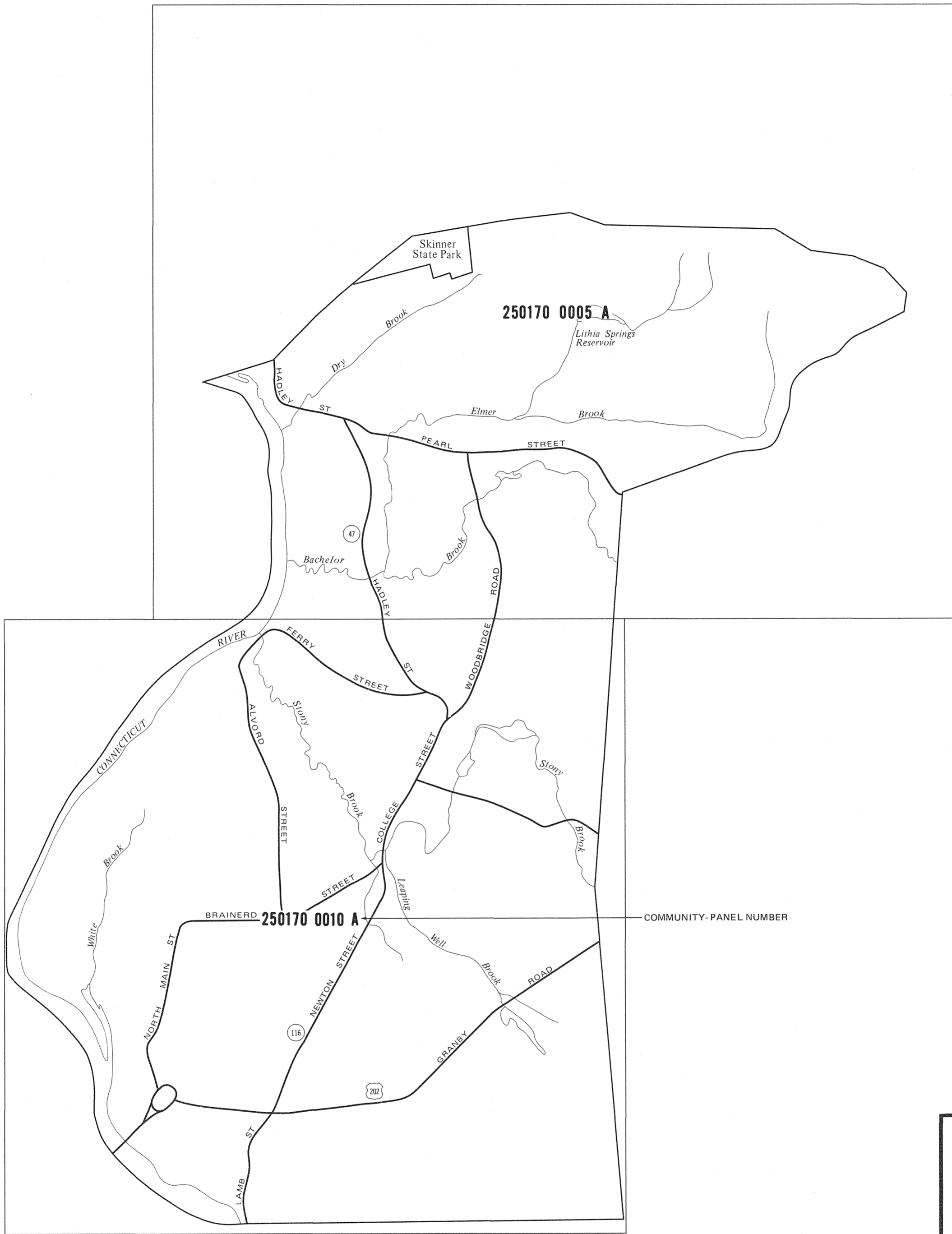
Permanent construction does not include land preparation (such as clearing, excavation, grading or filling), the installation of streets or walkways, excavation for a basement, footings, piers or foundations, the erection of temporary forms or the installation of accessory buildings such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main building. For a substantial improvement, the actual "start of construction" means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor or other structural part of a building, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the building. [Base Code, Chapter 2, Section 202]

(13) STRUCTURE means, for floodplain management purposes, a walled and roofed building, including a gas or liquid storage tank, that is principally above ground, as well as a manufactured home. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

(14) SUBSTANTIAL REPAIR OF A FOUNDATION. When work to repair or replace a foundation results in the repair or replacement of a portion of the foundation with a perimeter along the base of the foundation that equals or exceeds 50% of the perimeter of the base of the foundation measured in linear feet, or repair or replacement of 50% of the piles, columns or piers of a pile, column or pier supported foundation, the building official shall determine it to be substantial repair of a foundation. Applications determined by the building official to constitute substantial repair of a foundation shall require all existing portions of the entire building or structure to meet the requirements of 780 CMR. [As amended by MA in 9th Edition BC]

(15) VARIANCE means a grant of relief by a community from the terms of a floodplain management regulation. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]

(16) VIOLATION means the failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with the community's flood plain management regulations. A structure or other development without the elevation certificate, other certifications, or other evidence of compliance required in §60.3 is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided. [US Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Part 59]



NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

FLOODWAY
FLOOD BOUNDARY AND
FLOODWAY MAP

TOWN OF
SOUTH HADLEY,
MASSACHUSETTS
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

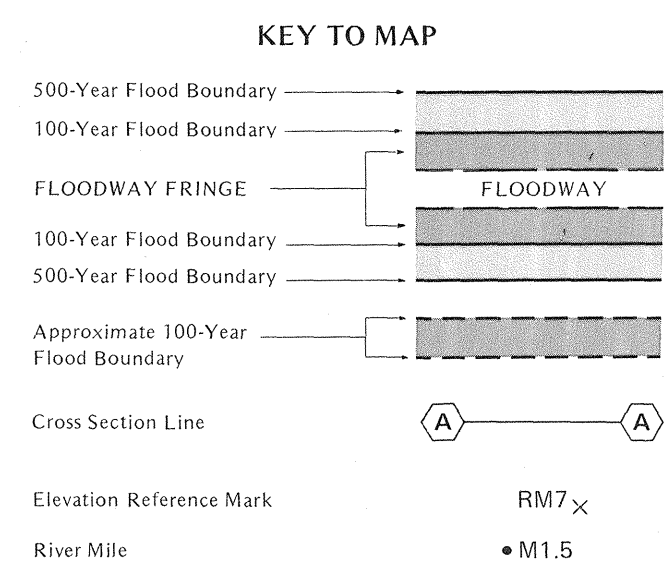
MAP INDEX
PANELS PRINTED: 5, 10

COMMUNITY-PANEL NUMBERS
250170 0001-0010

EFFECTIVE DATE:
AUGUST 15, 1979



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
FEDERAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION



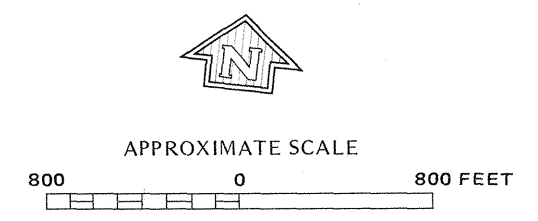
NOTES TO USER

Boundaries of the floodways were computed at cross sections and interpolated between cross sections. The floodways were based on hydraulic considerations with regard to requirements of the Federal Insurance Administration.

This map was prepared to support minimum flood plain management regulations; it may not show all areas subject to flooding in the community or all planimetric features outside special flood hazard areas.

Floodway widths in some areas are too narrow to show to scale. Refer to Floodway Data Table where floodway width is shown at 1/20 inch.

For adjoining map panels, see separately printed Index to Map Panels.



ELEVATION REFERENCE MARKS

| REFERENCE MARK | ELEVATION (FT. NGVD) | DESCRIPTION OF LOCATION |
|----------------|----------------------|--|
| RM4 | 119.55 | Chiseled square on southwest corner of State Highway 47 bridge over Bachelor Brook at south end of curb. Established by Harry R. Feldman, Inc. |
| RMS | 240.30 | Standard tablet stamped C38 1933 240 at Moody Corner, at southwest angle of road forks, 155 feet southwest of Granby-South Hadley town line markers, 25 feet west of centerline of State Highway 116, 1 foot south of wire fence, in concrete flush with ground. Established by Harry R. Feldman, Inc. |

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

FLOODWAY
FLOOD BOUNDARY AND
FLOODWAY MAP

TOWN OF
SOUTH HADLEY,
MASSACHUSETTS
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

PANEL 5 OF 10
(SEE MAP INDEX FOR PANELS NOT PRINTED)

COMMUNITY-PANEL NUMBER
250170 0005 A

EFFECTIVE DATE:
AUGUST 15, 1979

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
FEDERAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION

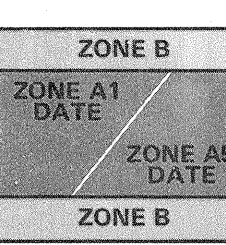


ELEVATION REFERENCE MARKS

| REFERENCE MARK | ELEVATION (FT. NGVD) | DESCRIPTION OF LOCATION |
|----------------|----------------------|--|
| RM1 | 78.15 | Monel rivet on the southeast end of the top step of the south-west entrance to the South Hadley Town Hall, on the north side of Main Street, 300 feet southeast of the intersection of Bridge Street. (TBM No. 3119). Established by Harry R. Feldman, Inc. |
| RM2 | 168.99 | Standard tablet stamped C5 1933 169, in top of 9 x 9 x 38 inches stone post set flush with ground, 1.6 miles north of South Hadley Falls, 20 feet north and 55 feet east of intersection of Lathrop and Brainerd Streets, 1 foot south of fence. Established by Harry R. Feldman, Inc. |
| RM3 | 257.45 | Standard tablet stamped C40 1933 257 in South Hadley Center, at Mount Holyoke College, at west entrance of Dwight Memorial Hall, on north end of second step. Established by Harry R. Feldman, Inc. |

KEY TO MAP

- 500-Year Flood Boundary
- 100-Year Flood Boundary
- Zone Designations* With Date of Identification e.g., 12/2/74
- 100-Year Flood Boundary
- 500-Year Flood Boundary
- Base Flood Elevation Line With Elevation In Feet**
- Base Flood Elevation In Feet Where Uniform Within Zone**
- Elevation Reference Mark
- River Mile



- *EXPLANATION OF ZONE DESIGNATIONS**
- | ZONE | EXPLANATION |
|--------|--|
| A | Areas of 100-year flood; base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined. |
| A0 | Areas of 100-year shallow flooding where depths are between one (1) and three (3) feet; average depths of inundation are shown, but no flood hazard factors are determined. |
| AH | Areas of 100-year shallow flooding where depths are between one (1) and three (3) feet; base flood elevations are shown, but no flood hazard factors are determined. |
| A1-A30 | Areas of 100-year flood; base flood elevations and flood hazard factors determined. |
| A99 | Areas of 100-year flood to be protected by flood protection system under construction; base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined. |
| B | Areas between limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood; or certain areas subject to 100-year flooding with average depths less than one (1) foot or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile; or areas protected by levees from the base flood. (Medium shading) |
| C | Areas of minimal flooding. (No shading) |
| D | Areas of undetermined, but possible, flood hazards. |
| V | Areas of 100-year coastal flood with velocity (wave action); base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined. |
| V1-V30 | Areas of 100-year coastal flood with velocity (wave action); base flood elevations and flood hazard factors determined. |

NOTES TO USER

Certain areas not in the special flood hazard areas (Zones A and V) may be protected by flood control structures. This map is for flood insurance purposes only; it does not necessarily show all areas subject to flooding in the community or all planimetric features outside special flood hazard areas. For adjoining map panels, see separately printed Index To Map Panels.

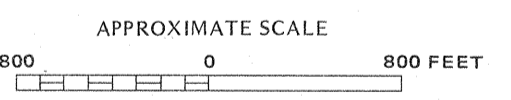
INITIAL IDENTIFICATION: MARCH 22, 1974

FLOOD HAZARD BOUNDARY MAP REVISIONS:

FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP EFFECTIVE: AUGUST 15, 1979

FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP REVISIONS:

Refer to the FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP EFFECTIVE date shown on this map to determine when actuarial rates apply to structures in the zones where elevations or depths have been established. To determine if flood insurance is available in this community, contact your insurance agent, or call the National Flood Insurance Program, at (800) 638-6620, or (800) 424-8872.



NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

FIRM FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

PANEL 10 OF 10
(SEE MAP INDEX FOR PANELS NOT PRINTED)

COMMUNITY-PANEL NUMBER 250170 0010 A

EFFECTIVE DATE: AUGUST 15, 1979



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT FEDERAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION

APPENDIX B

SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD HYBRID PUBLIC HEARING:
To consider repeal and replacement of the South Hadley Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255-91
Floodplain Regulations
MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 9, 2026

Present (all in-person): Diane Mulvaney, Chair; Nate Therien; Vice-Chair; Brad Hutchison, Clerk; Rob Watchilla, Member; Bob Szklarz, Member; Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation; Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

In-person location: South Hadley Senior Center, 45 Dayton Street, South Hadley MA

Virtual location: Zoom Webinar

14 attendees were present virtually as indicated in the Zoom attendance report (attached) and 5 attendees were present in-person.

Chair Mulvaney called the public hearing to order at 7:56 PM and Clerk Hutchison read the public hearing notice aloud as follows:

The South Hadley Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM to consider a repeal and replacement of the South Hadley Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255-91 Floodplain Regulations.

The public hearing will be held in a hybrid format as follows:

In-person attendance: South Hadley Council on Aging, Multipurpose Room 45 Dayton Street, South Hadley.

Virtual via the Zoom Webinar platform: URL to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86301770371?pwd=s051CnIzUBbQGx1Zd7RRqqgr2Ub.dlx.1>

Join by phone: (646) 558 8656 Webinar ID: 863 0177 0371 Passcode: 766965

The proposed bylaw amendment is on file in the Planning and Conservation Department at Town Hall, Room U6, 116 Main Street, South Hadley, and is available to the public for review between the hours of 8:30AM and 4:00PM. Materials are also available online at <https://southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws> under "Floodplain Regulations".

Any person interested in or wishing to be heard should appear/join the hearing at the date and time specified and in the manner designated. This notice is filed pursuant to MGL c40A, sec. 5.

Brad Hutchison, Clerk

South Hadley Planning Board

Publication: Friday, February 20, 2026

Friday, February 27, 2026

Director Capra shared a presentation (attached) which detailed the purpose and intention of amending the Floodplain Bylaw. The Town was under Federal and State mandate to bring the local bylaw into compliance with current standards. There was local interest in waiting to update the bylaw until after revised FEMA flood mapping had been provided. The current regulatory

mapping had last been updated in the 1970s, and updates were underway with preliminary mapping available for public review. However, the Town had been directed to amend the existing bylaw which required reference to the 1970s mapping. When updated mapping was formally released, the bylaw would need to be amended again to reference the update.

Members reviewed the proposed bylaw language which included a new section identifying protocols for variances, and terms defined. Director Capra recommended that terms defined remain within the Floodplain Bylaw, rather than be brought into the Zoning Bylaw’s chapter for terms defined. This would prevent confusion with regulatory language. The bylaw also identified the role of ‘Floodplain Administrator’ who would locally be identified as the Building Commissioner. Member Watchilla asked if the Building Commissioner was aware of this responsibility, and Director Capra responded that he was. Clerk Hutchison identified that Floodplain regulation overlapped with Building Code, so identifying the role with the Building Commissioner made sense.

Chair Mulvaney opened the hearing to public comment.

Joanna Brown, 25 Charon Terrance, addressed the Board. She identified that the software providing preliminary FEMA mapping updates was difficult to use. She expressed concern for the impacts of updated mapping to home insurance, and concern for communicating those impacts to the public. Director Capra responded that the updated FEMA mapping had not been finalized, and still only existed in preliminary format. The older 1970s FEMA mapping was still utilized for regulatory purposes. She further explained that the mapping updates had been under development for several years, which included meetings with Town officials. The Town was not mandated to provide public education on the changes, but further consideration could be given regarding methods for public notice. Member Watchilla noted that it was common practice for mortgage lenders to inform new property owners of insurance impacts. Vice-Chair Therien considered in the Sustainability and Energy Commission could assist in public education efforts.

Motion: Member Watchilla moved to accept the proposed repeal and replace amendment to Chapter 255-91 Floodplain Regulations and submit to the Selectboard for placement on the warrant for the ATM to be held May 13, 2026. Member Szklarz seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call vote.

Motion: Member Szklarz moved to close the public hearing. Vice-Chair Therien seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members present voted in favor of the motion through roll call vote.

The regular meeting reconvened at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

Appendix

| Document | Document Location |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Zoom Attendance Report | Attached |

| | |
|---|----------------|
| In-person attendance sheet | Attached |
| Floodplain Bylaw Public Hearing Presentation -3/9/26 | Attached |
| FEMA Floodplain Maps -Effective August 15, 1979 | Planning Files |
| 255-91 Floodplain Regulations - Draft Amendment - 2/5/26 | Planning Files |

Attendee Report

Report generated time 3/25/2026 9:54

| Topic | Webinar ID | Actual Duration (minutes) | Unique Viewers | Total Users | Max Concurrent Views |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Planning Board Meeting | 863 0177 0371 | 173 | 13 | 29 | 10 |

Host Details

| Attended | User Name (Original Name) | Join Time | Leave Time | Time in Session (minutes) | Is Guest |
|----------|---|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Yes | Colleen Canning# Staff (Town of South Hadley 3) | 3/9/2026 17:56 | 3/9/2026 20:48 | 173 | No |

Panelist Details

| Attended | User Name (Original Name) | Join Time | Leave Time | Time in Session (minutes) | Is Guest |
|----------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Yes | Chair Diane Mulvaney | 3/9/2026 18:08 | 3/9/2026 20:48 | 160 | Yes |
| Yes | Director Anne Capra | 3/9/2026 18:09 | 3/9/2026 20:48 | 160 | Yes |
| Yes | Gwendolyn Fern | 3/9/2026 18:40 | 3/9/2026 19:56 | 77 | Yes |
| Yes | Member Bob Szklarz | 3/9/2026 18:23 | 3/9/2026 18:32 | 9 | Yes |
| Yes | Member Bob Szklarz | 3/9/2026 18:33 | 3/9/2026 18:34 | 1 | Yes |
| Yes | Member Bob Szklarz | 3/9/2026 18:37 | 3/9/2026 20:47 | 131 | Yes |
| Yes | Planning Board (Mike Maresca) | 3/9/2026 17:59 | 3/9/2026 20:48 | 169 | Yes |
| Yes | Jim Falcone | 3/9/2026 18:39 | 3/9/2026 19:56 | 77 | Yes |

Attendee Details

| Attended | User Name (Original Name) | Join Time | Leave Time | Time in Session (minutes) | Is Guest |
|----------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Yes | Christine Bey | 3/9/2026 19:06 | 3/9/2026 19:10 | 4 | Yes |
| Yes | Christine Bey | 3/9/2026 19:22 | 3/9/2026 19:22 | 1 | Yes |
| Yes | Linda Sachs | 3/9/2026 18:27 | 3/9/2026 19:25 | 59 | Yes |
| Yes | Linda Sachs | 3/9/2026 18:41 | 3/9/2026 19:24 | 44 | Yes |
| Yes | peteg | 3/9/2026 18:33 | 3/9/2026 20:48 | 136 | Yes |
| Yes | Stef | 3/9/2026 19:45 | 3/9/2026 20:07 | 22 | Yes |
| Yes | Stefanie | 3/9/2026 19:46 | 3/9/2026 19:46 | 1 | Yes |
| Yes | Attorney Julie L. Hogan | 3/9/2026 18:36 | 3/9/2026 19:43 | 67 | Yes |
| Yes | Attorney Julie L. Hogan | 3/9/2026 20:10 | 3/9/2026 20:16 | 7 | Yes |
| Yes | Attorney Julie L. Hogan | 3/9/2026 20:25 | 3/9/2026 20:44 | 19 | Yes |
| Yes | Marc Desrosiers | 3/9/2026 18:48 | 3/9/2026 20:47 | 120 | Yes |

| | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----|-----|
| Yes | Neal OMeara | 3/9/2026 18:37 | 3/9/2026 19:38 | 62 | Yes |
| Yes | Ashley | 3/9/2026 18:42 | 3/9/2026 19:47 | 65 | Yes |
| Yes | Gwendolyn Fern | 3/9/2026 17:58 | 3/9/2026 18:02 | 5 | Yes |
| Yes | Gwendolyn Fern | 3/9/2026 18:18 | 3/9/2026 18:40 | 22 | Yes |
| Yes | Rebekah Cornell | 3/9/2026 19:07 | 3/9/2026 20:30 | 83 | Yes |
| Yes | Martha Terry | 3/9/2026 19:25 | 3/9/2026 20:48 | 84 | Yes |
| Yes | Linda Bey | 3/9/2026 19:05 | 3/9/2026 19:37 | 33 | Yes |
| Yes | Jim Falcone | 3/9/2026 17:56 | 3/9/2026 18:00 | 5 | Yes |
| Yes | Jim Falcone | 3/9/2026 18:01 | 3/9/2026 18:39 | 39 | Yes |

Planning Board Meeting Attendance Sheet

Meeting Date: 3/9/26

| Name | Address/ Affiliation |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Marge Morvass | SB Church 589 Granby Rd, |
| Joanna Brown | 25 Charan Ter. SH |
| Joseph Greene | SBC Church 589 Granby Rd |
| Dan Riley | 210 Lathrop St |
| Corelei Riley | 210 Lathrop St |
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PUBLIC HEARING 255-91 Floodplain Regulations

Proposed Amendments
March 9, 2026
Planning Board Meeting



1

Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) -

Flood hazard areas identified on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (Firm) / Flood

- SFHA are defined as the area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.
- The 1-percent annual chance flood is also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood.
- In South Hadley, SFHA are labeled:
 - Zone A: Areas of 100-year flood; base flood elevation and flood hazard factors not determined
 - Zone AE: Used on new FIRMs to replace A1-30.
 - Zone A1-30: Areas of 100-year flood; base flood elevations and flood hazard factors are determined.

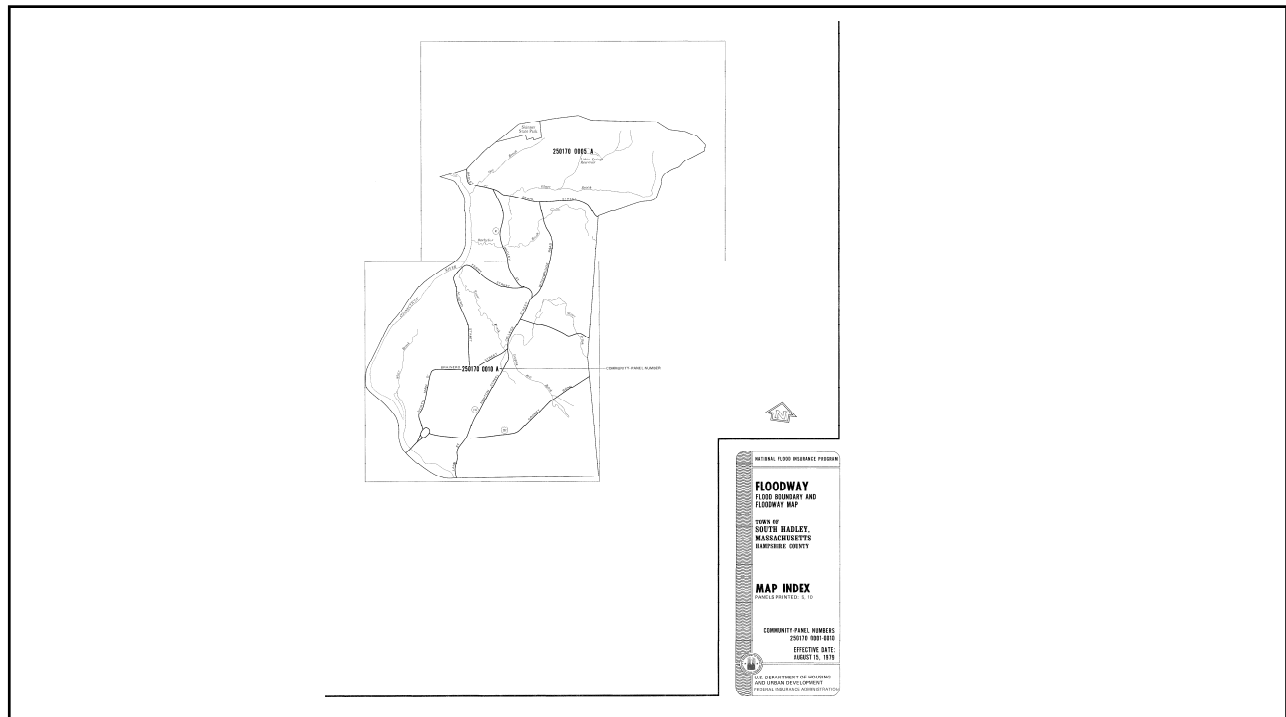
2

Floodplain District

Zoning Overlay District

- Delineated as the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA)
- Defined by the 1% chance base floodplain or 100-year flood
- Does not include:
 - Zone B - 0.2% chance base flood / 500-year flood
 - Zone C - everything higher in elevation than the 1% chance floodplain and the 0.2% chance floodplain

3



4

Floodplain Bylaw Checklist – DCR

[South-Hadley-Floodplain-Bylaw-Checklist-2242025](#)

Draft 255-91 Floodplain Regulations

[255-91-Floodplain-Regulations---Draft-Amendment---2526](#)

Effective Flood Maps:

[FEMA-Floodplain-Maps--Effective-August-15-1979](#)

