Where does floodplain zoning apply?

A community that has been issued official floodplain maps by the DNR must adopt and administer a floodplain zoning ordinance. As a consequence, citizens in the community become eligible to apply for federal flood insurance. A state administrative rule (NR 116) sets minimum standards for local ordinances.

The floodplain consists of lands that are subject to flooding during the regional flood. The floodplain includes floodway and flood fringe zones. Regional flood elevations are calculated by hydraulic models that consider the size of a drainage basin, amount of precipitation and land characteristics. They are also based on evidence of previous flooding.

The floodway consists of the channel of a river or stream, and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel that are required to carry the regional flood discharge. The floodway is the most dangerous part of the floodplain. It is characterized by deeper moving water.

220 Wis. Stat. § 87.30(1)
The flood fringe is the portion of the floodplain landward of the floodway. It is generally associated with standing water rather than flowing water and with shallower depths.

**What are the purposes of floodplain zoning?**

The purposes of floodplain zoning are to protect human life, health and to minimize property damages and economic losses.
Section VII – Review

Keywords

- Ordinary high water mark
- Floodplain
- Floodway
- Flood fringe

Test your Knowledge (answers on page 152)

Chapter 21 – Shoreland Zoning

1) Name the five statewide purposes of shoreland zoning.

2) Does your local shoreland zoning ordinance provide any additional purpose statements?

3) A recent study of waterfront properties found that one factor resulted in significantly higher property prices. What is that one factor?

4) Name three steps that zoning boards can take to maintain good water quality, fisheries and wildlife in lakes and streams.

5) When the impervious surfaces in a watershed exceed a certain level the number of fish and fish species decreases significantly. What percentage is this?

Chapter 22 – Floodplain Zoning

6) Name the purposes of floodplain zoning.
Answers

1) a. Maintain safe and healthful conditions
   b. Prevent and control water pollution
   c. Protect spawning grounds, fish, and aquatic life
   d. Control building sites, placement of structures, and uses; and
   e. Reserve shore cover and natural beauty

2) Answers may vary

3) Clearer water

4) a. Curb pollutants
   b. Cut runoff
   c. Capture and cleanse

5) 8%

6) a. Protect human life and health
   b. Minimize property damage and economic losses
Reference Materials

Zoning Boards of Adjustment and Appeals

Zoning Board Handbook for Zoning Boards of Adjustment/Appeals, 2nd edition. Lynn Markham and Rebecca Roberts. 2006, Published by Center for Land Use Education at 715-346-3783 or www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/pubs.html


Zoning


Local Government


Wisconsin County Supervisor’s Handbook. 2004. 142 pages. Published by the Wisconsin Counties Association at 1-866-404-2700 or http://www.wicounties.org/

Planning and Zoning Committees/Commissions

Plan Commission Handbook. 2002. 84 pages. Published by Center for Land Use Education at 715-346-3783 or www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/pubs.html

Open Meetings Law


Public Records Law


Water Law

Newsletters

*Land Use Tracker.* Four issues per year covering Wisconsin land use issues, including zoning. Available on-line from the Center for Land Use Education at www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/newsletters.html

*Zoning Bulletin.* Monthly bulletins summarizing the most significant recent zoning lawsuits from throughout the United States. Available from 800-229-2084 or www.qpgmunicipal.com/zo.shtml

*Zoning News.* Monthly four-page newsletter monitors the latest trends in local land-use controls using case studies. Available at 312-431-9100 or www.planning.org/ZoningNews/index.htm

*Plan Commissioners Journal.* Four issues per year, about 20 pages per issue, about planning and zoning issues. Available from 802-864-9083 or www.plannersweb.com

Websites

UW-Extension Center for Land Use Education
www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter

UW-Extension Local Government Center
www.uwex.edu/lgc/

Wisconsin DNR shoreland zoning
www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/title.htm

Wisconsin DNR floodplain zoning
www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/flood/rules.htm

American Planning Association
www.planning.org