

February 8, 2013

RE: FEMA / ADVISORY BASE FLOOD ELEVATION MAPS

Dear Friends:

My Administration has been carefully reviewing the ramifications of FEMA's Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE) Maps and Governor Christie's recent adoption of them for the entire state.

The ABFE Maps are seriously flawed and inaccurate for many parts of our community. They are, by FEMA's own admission, based on incomplete data and analysis.

I am aware of the serious concerns many of you have, especially those of you who find your property is now in the "V Zone" on these maps. I share those feelings and have expressed my concerns to officials at multiple levels of the state and federal governments. Additionally, my staff and I are consulting with neighboring communities and the New Jersey League of Municipalities in order to express a unified opposition to the adoption of these maps and, just as importantly, work with FEMA on correcting the obvious flaws.

The City has issued a request for proposals from qualified coastal engineering consulting firms to assist us in our dealings with FEMA. I expect to recommend a contract with such a firm to the City Council at their meeting on February 14, 2013.

We in Ocean City all have tremendous sympathy for the devastated communities to our north. However, our situation is different. It is that point I am trying my best to make.

In an effort to provide you with as much information as possible about this important subject, the City has compiled numerous informational pieces. You may view these materials [HERE](#). I encourage you to check these pages on our website frequently as new information will be added.

I would like to emphasize some important points:

1. If your property was not substantially damaged you do not have to take any action at this time. (A structure is considered substantially damaged if the cost of restoration exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure prior to the damage.)
2. Even if homes are substantially damaged, homeowners may be able to take certain measures to make their home habitable pending elevation. FEMA guidelines provide for a period of up to four years so that owners can properly prepare and finance their elevation project.
3. If you are able to do so, the best advice may be to wait until FEMA provides Preliminary Base Flood Elevation Maps later this year. It is my hope that the steps the City is taking to interact with FEMA in the coming months will lead to these maps being much more accurate than the ABFE Maps that we are currently dealing with.
4. There are indications that significant sources of grant funding will be available to assist owners with elevation projects. The City will aggressively pursue any such funding.

If you have any questions please feel free to call us at 609-399-6111.

Sincerely,

Jay A. Gillian

Mayor