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SURGE WATCH



A Note from the SSWG Chair



I am delighted that we have started a new publishing endeavor aimed at bringing to the public, their elected officials and staff the important issues surrounding protection measures for not only New York City itself and its magnificent Harbor, but also northern New Jersey with its dense industrial, seaport and airport facilities, the Hudson River Valley, the vulnerable southern coasts of the outer boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens and the exposed, flat southern coast of western Long Island. We seek

regional, robust and affordable solutions that transcend geographic and political boundaries, because storm surges and rising sea levels are surely regional issues that demand a regional solution.

Our mission is to advance the only long term solution by building a regional system of offshore storm surge barriers, plus modest local coastline protection to resist the slow but relentless rise in sea level over the decades ahead. Both interlocking systems are needed.

In our deliberations, we are not content to just limiting future damage through building a modest degree of resiliency, but to recommend defense technologies to completely stop all the storm surges from destroying our cities again for up to 100 years.

We hope to bring you breaking news of wide interest, not only of our ongoing efforts, but also those of courageous individuals and organizations, who all over the tri-state region are fighting with all their might to ensure that their children, their grandchildren and their communities will prosper, and will never have to undergo in their lifetimes the vast trauma and enduring loss of all those superstorm Sandy communities and victims.

We hope you enjoy reading this inaugural issue. We encourage you to send us your comments and look forward to hearing from you.

Malcolm Bowman,
Senior Editor

A Regional Approach to Protecting the NY-NJ Metropolitan Area

The Metro NY-NJ SSWG promotes the development of a system of robust surge barriers to protect the core of the combined New York - New Jersey Metro Region from future devastating storm surges. Two movable barriers located across the outer harbor (Sandy Hook, NJ to Far Rockaway, NY), and upper East River will provide a ring of protection to most of the bi-state Metro Region, including the seaports of New York City and Port Elizabeth, NJ, ground level and underground transportation terminals, the three major international airports, subway and roadway tunnels, hospitals, communication centers, the industrial complex of northern NJ and the millions of residents at risk in the outer boroughs of NYC and coastal New Jersey north of Sandy Hook. These movable storm surge barriers will be coupled with modest sea level rise coastline seawalls for a layered approach to resiliency.

In This Issue

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- Draft Proposal to Update the Flood Zoning Text
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National Institute for Coastal & Harbor Infrastructure (NICHI) and Storm Surge Working Group (SSWG) hold forum on February 28, 2018 on traditional and innovative finance options for the storm surge barrier system



Resiliency FAQs: Common Questions Answered

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, New York City Planning is working with communities throughout the floodplain to identify zoning and land use strategies to reduce flood risks and support the city's vitality and resiliency through long-term adaptive planning. The City is currently seeking input on a future update to the special zoning regulations that apply in the floodplain citywide and wants to hear from those affected on how to remove regulatory barriers to resiliency investments and make neighborhoods more resilient. [Continue reading...](#)



Image Credit: Shutterstock.com

Draft Proposal to Update the Flood Zoning Text

As part of the City's ongoing climate resiliency initiatives, New York City Planning is working with coastal communities to update the special zoning regulations that apply in the flood plain. These regulations promote flood resistant building design so as to ensure that neighborhoods are more resilient to flooding and climate change. However, they were adopted on a temporary emergency basis following Sandy and need to be made permanent to ensure buildings do not lose the zoning flexibility that enables resilient design. [Continue reading...](#)



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Amendment of Reference Standard for Flood Insurance Rate Maps – Public Hearing

The Department of Buildings held a public hearing on February 5, 2018 to review amendments to its flood insurance rate maps as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) works to substantially redraw the City's flood lines.

This rule amends the Reference Standard FEMA FIRM 360497, as identified in Section BC G402 of the building code. The FEMA FIRMs are the Flood Insurance Rate Maps published by FEMA and are referenced in the building code for the purpose of enforcement of the construction standards of the National Flood Insurance Program. This rule updates the FEMA FIRMs to incorporate a Letter of Map Amendment approved by FEMA for La Guardia Airport in Queens. This amendment ensures New York City's continued compliance with and eligibility to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. [Continue reading...](#)

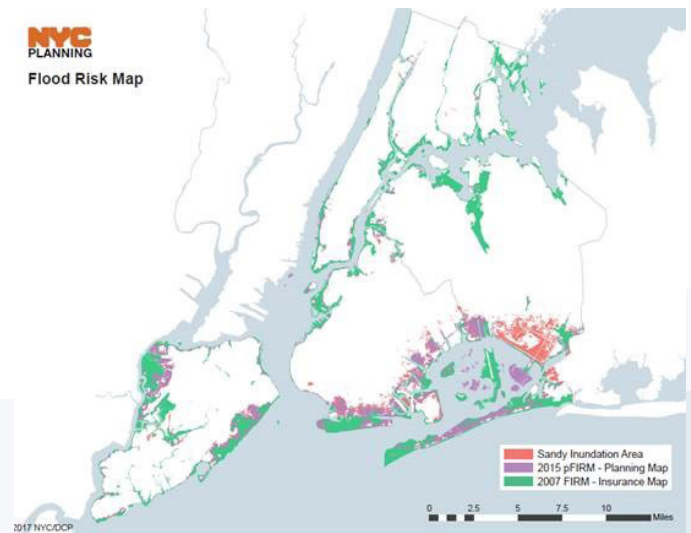


Image Credit: NYC Department of City Planning

Other Flooding and Climate Change News

New US Flood Aid Rules Requiring Federally Funded Projects to Account for Increased Flood Risk. [Continue reading...](#)

Bloomberg | Feb 7, 2018

Climate Change Could Swamp Your Muni-Bond Portfolio

[Continue reading...](#)

Wall Street Journal | February 2, 2017

Moody's Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Could Affect Cities' Bond Ratings [Continue reading...](#)

Urban Land Magazine | January 17, 2018

World's Biggest Weather Threat Isn't Hurricanes [Continue reading...](#) *Bloomberg | January 12, 2018*

Thank you for keeping up with the SSWG. For more information, please visit our [website](#)

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