

## Emily Hjulstrom

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**From:** Vicki Wheaton <vickiwheaton@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 02, 2018 8:03 AM  
**To:** BZA Planning  
**Subject:** My original reasons for Nelson adopting the Amended Floodplain Ordinance

Dear BZA,

Here are my original reasons for Nelson adopting the Amended Floodplain Ordinance which we prudently did. However, they are the same reasons why Variances should be denied now.

FPO = Floodplain Ordinance  
NFIP = National Floodplain Insurance Program  
FEMA = Federal Emergency Management Agency  
DCR = VA Department of Conservation & Recreation  
USGS: United States Geological Survey  
CSA = Community Rating System  
SUP = Special Use Permit  
BOS = Nelson's Board of Supervisors  
PC = Nelson's Planning Commission  
FP = Floodplains  
NCHS = Nelson County High School

1. Nelson's FPs have 5 out of the 8 High Risk Flood Hazard Areas associated with FPs: Alluvial fans, Mudslides, Flash flooding, Erosion, & High velocity flow.
2. Nelson has very steep slopes...personally I think this should be another High Risk Flood Hazard Area...not sure why it isn't. Maybe they lump it in with alluvial fans/mudslides/erosion. However, I feel it should stand alone.
3. The history of Camille & other serious flooding in Nelson makes it prudent to adopt the amended FPO. The USGS described what they called debris avalanches with boulders up to 10 feet in diameter. In Nelson: 124 deaths, loss of 133 public bridges, hundreds of homes & buildings, 120 miles of roads, 25,000 acres of croplands, communities under water, loss of electricity & other infrastructure etc etc etc.
4. Severe weather patterns are increasing & Meteorologist predict this patterns will continue. A local TV Meteorologist told me that a Camille like Hurricane wasn't a matter of if...just when. Nelson has personal experience that the unexpected indeed happens often with dire consequences.
5. In the wake of the destruction caused by Hurricane Camille & other natural disasters, the U.S. Congress enacted the Disaster Relief Act of 1969
6. As a result of the damage & devastation caused by Hurricane Carla (1962), Hurricane Betsy (1965), Hurricane Camille (1969), & Hurricane Agnes (1972), President Jimmy Carter issued Executive Order 12127, which merged many separate disaster related organizations into FEMA

7. The National Weather Service said that at the time, Hurricane Camille was "the probable maximum rainfall which meteorologist compute to be theoretically possible". It is the heaviest rainfall ever recorded in VA, the worst natural disaster in VA & is one of the most severe ever recorded in US history.
8. Communications during Camille were ravaged as the storm progressed making it impossible to communicate warnings. Current first responders agree that even with sophisticated communication, weather monitoring etc often times there's very little warning time to respond, storms are severe, unpredictable & systems fail.
9. People had to be turned away from the 40th Anniversary of Hurricane Camille held at NCHS in 2009...evidence of the scars left on Nelson County Resident hearts as they remembered the flood victims & heard personal survival stories. The room was full at the 2016 & 2017 Annual Commemorations. The 50th Commemoration will be next year.
10. Less than 2% of property owners in flood prone areas (not just Floodplains) have flood insurance.
11. Flood insurance is only available through NFIP & it's premiums are rising due to the unprecedented amount of national flooding disasters in recent years & this trend is predicted to continue. Lower premiums helps both residents & businesses to remain solvent in the aftermath of flooding. As more & more businesses choose Nelson for their long term business plans having affordable FP insurance becomes critical for attracting & maintaining them.
12. Floodplains are expanding due to the development & impacts these severe floods are having on Floodplains. This requires FEMA to extend their Floodplain maps...not to punish Landowners but to save lives & properties.
13. FEMA recommended the Higher Standards to local communities not States, non Profits, Citizens etc. The Higher Standards were sent to local VA communities via DCR in February of 2014 & a similar version in 2011.
14. The amended FPO includes bringing the Ordinance up to the Standards of DCR's Model FPO which assures that all the Counties that are participating in NFIP meet the Minimum requirements set forth by FEMA/NFIP. This is the only role DCR plays...the intermediary between local Communities & FEMA/NFIP. Otherwise it's totally up to local communities to manage & enforce their FPO. "Localities have the authority & responsibility to manage development in their Floodplains.
15. The Planning Commission recommended unanimously for the BOS to approve the amended FPO. They also recommended that the BOS invite DCR to come to Nelson & hold a Public Floodplain Workshop. They reviewed & considered the amended FPO for 5 months & conferred with our County Attorney, Phil Payne, & Floodplain experts from DCR came to advise.
16. The adoption of Higher Standards makes Nelson eligible to participate in FEMA/NFIP Community Rating System which offers discounted Floodplain Insurance to residents & businesses making Floodplain Insurance more affordable to those who already have it & for those who need it but can't afford.
17. The economic impacts of flooding can be summarized in three areas: immediate damages, relief costs, and recovery costs. The immediate damages included damage to homes, cars, personal belongings, and roads, as a result of the wind or water associated with the storm during its landfall and overland stages. Relief costs encompass the efforts put forth by various federal and non-federal agencies to provide emergency services such as housing in the months following the storm.
18. Recovery costs are more long-term than immediate damages or relief costs. These costs include the loss of taxable property value and tax revenue due to depressed economic development. Recovery costs may also include the value of funds provided to rebuild farms, roads, homes, and industries. These three areas of impact do not include

overlapping costs. When totaled they provide an assessment of the economic impact of severe flooding.

19. Of course, not all damages are accounted for with economic losses, e.g., psychological impacts or environmental damages.
20. It's imperative for the solvency of our County Government, businesses & residents that we protect our Floodplains to the fullest extent possible. Communities can no longer count on the dwindling resources of FEMA & other State & Federal Agencies to help in the aftermath of flooding, due to the increase in severe weather trends leading to severe flooding escalating in many parts of our country.

**24. The proposed ACP...the canary in the coal mine. A 27 mile long trench, 10' deep, & 100'-200' wide filled with 42" pipe in 40' long pieces, filled with highly explosive & flammable contents that also includes staging areas & access roads. If Hurricane Harvey had been our next Camille, or impending Irma this trench would become a new River coursing thru our County as the Floodplains, creeks, streams, rivers, roads, rocky steep slopes etc that it crosses all come raging into it spewing it's contents all over our County & rupturing the pipeline buried within it..ultimately finding it's way to the James River & on to Richmond. Early on, Governor McAuliffe named the proposed ACP the "Energy Super Highway of Virginia." It's inauspicious that here in Nelson the Energy on this highway will be the power of Nature. It's unstoppable, uncontrollable & unpredictable...by any means. Camille & Harvey (costs \$180 billion & growing) proved that this type of thinking is foolish, irresponsible & reckless. If ACP LLC has issue with our FPO they need to go complain to FEMA & DCR because they're the ones that came up with & introduced the Guidelines. We don't have to prove anything because we're being prudent & wise.**

Take care,

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