

## **II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The planning began with the Town Council contacting the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments' office for assistance in drafting the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The town had experienced severe flooding during the Hurricane Floyd event and had discussed this problem many times in their Town Council meetings.

The Eastern Carolina Council (ECC), a regional planning agency provided input to the town on hazard mitigation plans being formulated by Wayne County and by surrounding towns. ECC was actively involved in Hazard Mitigation strategic planning with a number of Wayne County towns. ECC provided technical assistance and help in designing and writing the plan.

A Mitigation Advisory Committee (MAC) was formed to provide input into the risk assessment and to craft the mitigation strategies for the town. The Town Council of the Town of Seven Springs appointed the MAC members. The tasks assigned to the MAC were facilitated by a Planner from the Eastern Carolina Council. The MAC met with the ECC planner on September 27, 2001 in Seven Springs to collect, review, analyze and make decisions on data presented. The group discussed the history of the town with regard to hazards (several on the committee had families that had lived in the town for generations). The focus was primarily on the effects of Hurricane Floyd that occurred in fall of 1999.

Prior to attending the meeting, the planner obtained and reviewed planning documents related to Seven Springs. These included: maps, Town of Seven Springs Code of Ordinances adopted in March 2000 which includes a section on Land Usage and incorporates Building Regulations, Flood Damage Prevention, and Mobile Home Parks. Information was gathered from Wayne County regarding the services it provides to the town. The planner reviewed the flood map and a list of potential strategies with the MAC. Internet searches were conducted to collect other pertinent data.

The MAC conducted an inventory of the Seven Springs's existing and proposed policies, programs and ordinances that may affect its vulnerability to hazards. The town has a Code of Ordinances adopted in March 2000 which includes a section on Land Usage and incorporates Building

Regulations, Flood Damage Prevention, and Mobile Home Parks.

The Building Codes adopted by reference in the Ordinance are the NC State Building Codes, most current edition (Section 150.01).

The town incorporated the Wayne County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance into the Town Ordinances. The town relies on Wayne County to administer this Ordinance.

According to the Section 152.04 of the Town's Ordinances, "There shall be a moratorium on the construction of any new mobile home parks or addition to any existing mobile home park within the town limits. This moratorium shall remain in effect until such time as a zoning ordinance has been approved for the town."

The town does not have a subdivision ordinance, zoning, or stormwater/erosion ordinance. The Neuse River Rules apply to stormwater/erosion issues. These are the only pertinent documents that this town has related to any aspect of Hazard Mitigation Planning.

Wayne County provides Building, Planning, Permitting and Inspection services to the town. The State of North Carolina Building Codes are applied to all structures built in the town. Wayne County has a one-foot freeboard elevation requirement that is applicable to the Town of Seven Springs.

Data collected and reviewed also included: NOAA historical weather data (see attached), property tax information provided by the Wayne County Tax office (see attached), HAZUS maps, and websites related to various types of natural hazards (URLs noted).

Discussions were held with the Wayne County Planning, Building & Inspections office (Connie Price), NFIP representatives (Tammy Riddle), and a representative of the Army Corps of Engineers (Mr. Greene). ECC planners and GIS coordinator were also consulted.

Material developed by the committee and decisions made by them were subsequently shared with the council members. The Town Council stayed in contact with ECC

and the NC Emergency Management Mitigation Section staff. Due to confusion regarding new FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning Criteria, the planning process took longer than anticipated. The plan was eventually completed and a copy provided to NCEM. The plan was created under previous guidelines, but was reviewed under the new FEMA criteria. This caused the plan to have to be rewritten. The revised plan was submitted to NCEM for review on September 25, 2002. Final changes were made to the plan and the plan was formally approved via resolution at the Town Council meeting.

At the town meeting on March 13, 2002 Town Council Mayor Kilpatrick introduced the draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan completed for the town by the Eastern Carolina Council in discussion with the appointed Mitigation Advisory Committee. Each commissioner was asked to read it over and seek comments from the public on plan. Because the town is so very small public input was sought by the members of the Town Council as they interacted informally with town residents.

At its meeting on October 9, 2002, the Board adopted the Hazard Mitigation Plan and it was submitted to NCEM for review. The NCEM staff reviewed the plan and made some suggestions for change, but before the changes could be incorporated, NCEM put a halt on reviewing Hazard Mitigation Plans as FEMA was promulgating new requirements for these plans. It was not until May 2003 that NCEM conducted training on the new FEMA requirements. The work resumed on the plan to bring it into compliance with the new FEMA criteria.

The draft of the revised plan was completed in December 2003. An email with the plan attached was sent to: Wayne County Manager, Wayne County Planning Director, Wayne Community College President, Wayne County EMS Director, Wayne County Economic Developer, and Wayne County Chamber of Commerce. A copy of the draft plan was placed in the local public library (located next to town hall) on December 31, 2003 and the public was invited to attend a meeting to discuss the draft plan on January 7, 2004. This meeting day and time was noted in the newspaper. After the public meeting, the town commissioners held a workshop meeting to discuss the draft. Comments were incorporated into the plan by the

ECC Planning Director and the plan was again opened for public comment via a meeting held on January 14, 2004. After the public meeting, at an official meeting of the Town commissioners, the Plan was adopted pending review by the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management—Hazard Mitigation Section.