

# FEMA Flood Insurance Forum

City of Quincy, Central Middle School  
February 20, 2014 at 7:00 PM



Congressman Stephen F. Lynch  
Mayor Thomas P. Koch

# National Flood Insurance Program

- Established by Congress in 1968
- Created Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)
- Provides federally backed flood insurance
- Communities must adopt floodplain management ordinances to participate
- Goal is to reduce flooding over time & provide means for people to rebuild after flooding
- Currently \$24 billion in debt due in part to Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy

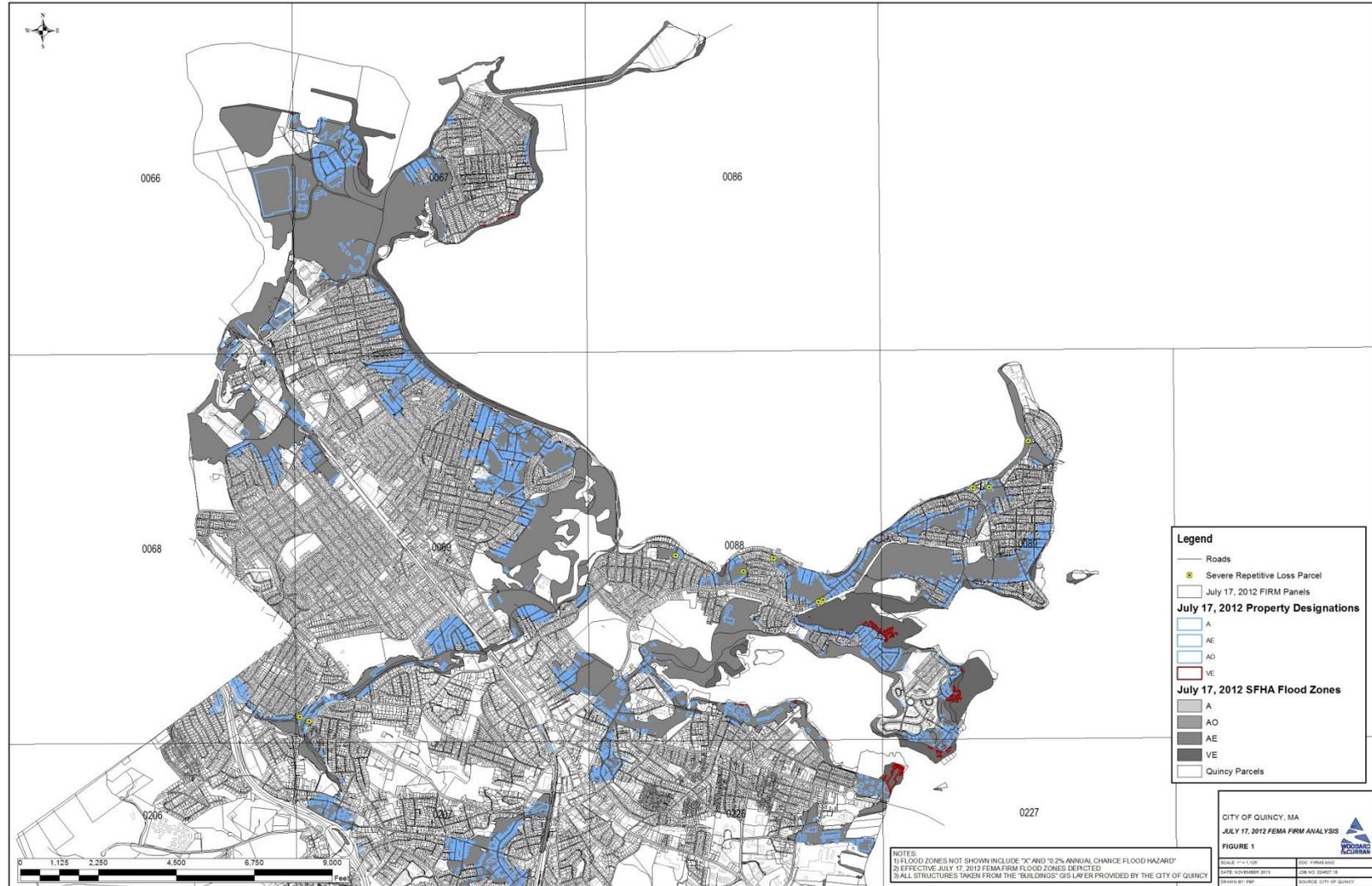


# Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)

- Depicts properties that are required to have flood insurance
- Portrays Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)
  - Flood boundary for 100-year rainfall event
- Establishes “Zones” of predicted flooding conditions
- Have routine been updated every 6 to 10 years since 1968

# Current FIRM for Quincy

effective July 2012



# Biggert Waters 2012

- Instituted on October 1, 2013
- Goal: To increase financial stability of NFIP
- Summary:
  - Elimination of subsidized rates over time for Pre-FIRM secondary homes, businesses, and severe repetitive loss properties (25% premium increases per year)
  - Premiums migrate towards true actuarial risk
  - Establishes on-going National Flood Mapping Program & Technical Mapping Advisory Council
  - Requires a Affordability Study for Rate Increases –
    - **YET TO BE COMPLETED**

# Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act

- Passed by the Senate on January 30, 2014
- Four year delay for certain rate increases
  - All post-FIRM properties
  - Pre-FIRM primary properties at the point of sale
  - Pre-FIRM second homes and businesses at the point of sale
- No action has been taken in the House
  - It is expected that a less extensive Bill will be proposed in lieu of Act

# Changes in Effect

- 25% Premium increases per year for:
  - Pre-FIRM secondary homes
  - Pre-FIRM Businesses
  - Severe Repetitive Loss Properties
- Full risk rates applied to:
  - Lapsed policies
  - Properties within the SFHA uninsured when Biggert Waters 2012 passed
  - Policies purchased after enactment of Biggert Waters 2012

# Changes on Hold

- One section of Biggert Waters 2012 delayed through the Omnibus Appropriations Bill
  - Passed on January 17, 2014
  - Appropriates funds from Treasury for many departments, including FEMA
- Delays Section 207 for one year
  - FEMA cannot allocate funds towards increasing premiums for Post-FIRM properties

# Flood Risk vs. Cost



- The pictures above represent the three risk levels that are used by FEMA to calculate your actuarial risk of flooding:
  - A. First Floor Elevation (FFE) below Base Flood Elevation (BFE)
  - B. First Floor Elevation at Base Flood Elevation
  - C. First Floor Elevation above Base Flood Elevation
- By constructing or rebuilding FFE above the BFE, as opposed to below, you can significantly lower your flood insurance, possibly saving you up to tens of thousands of dollars over ten years.

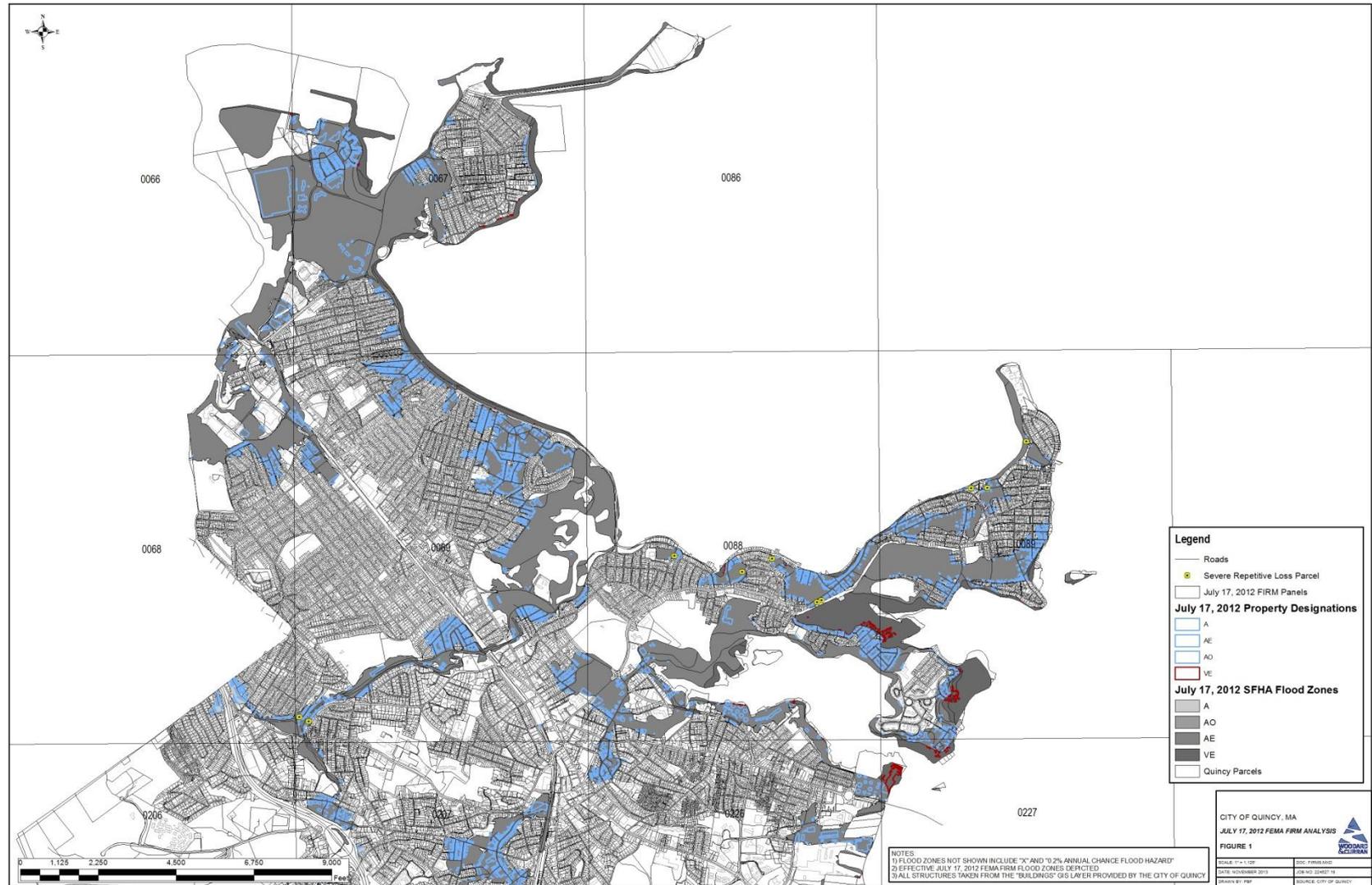
# Mayor Koch Content

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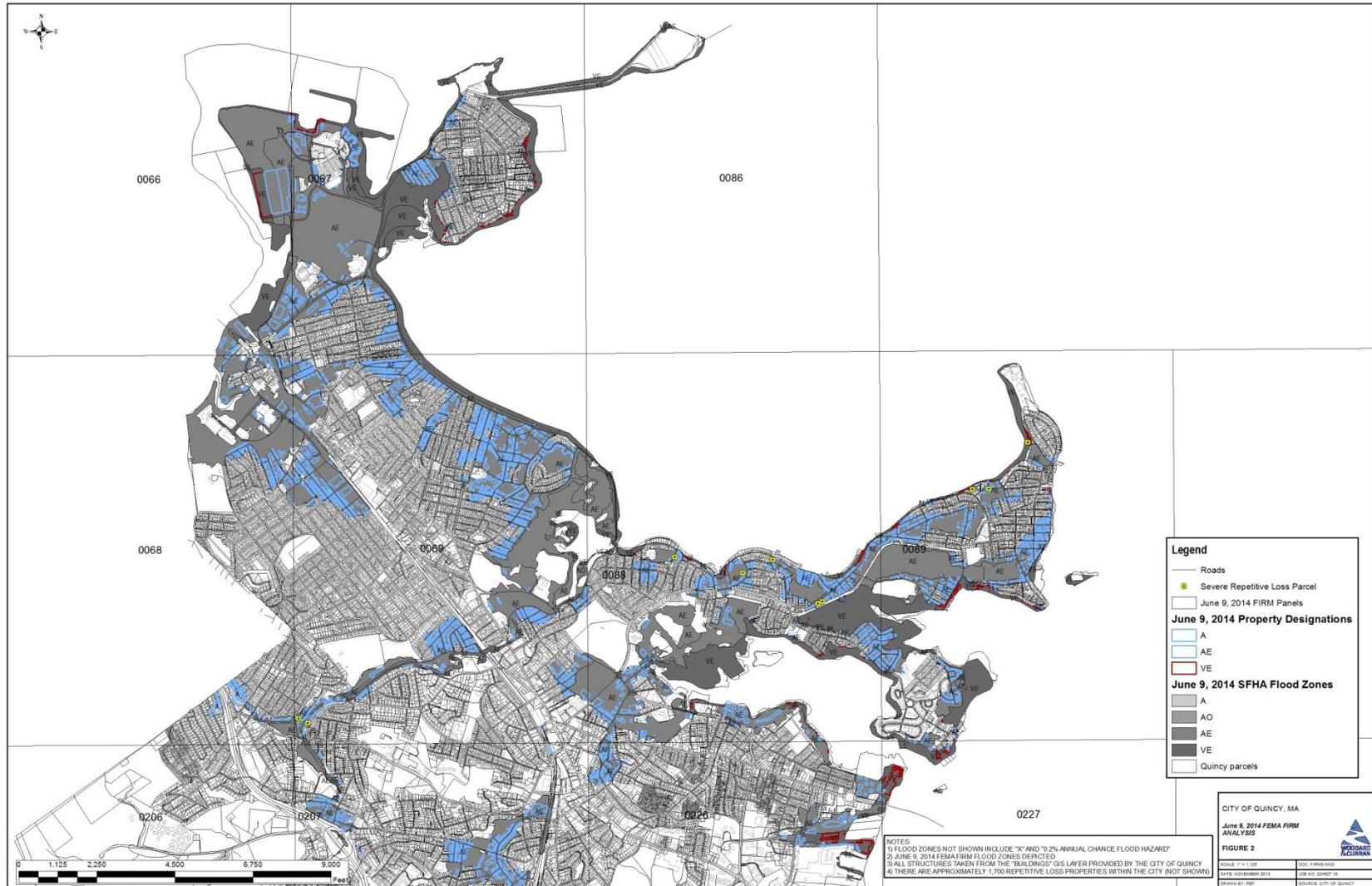
# Quincy's FIRMs

- Map that is in effect today is dated July 17, 2012
  - Located on FEMA web site
  - Approved by City Council on June 25, 2012
  - Generally depicts those properties that the City's history of flooding and DPW responses show are subject to flooding
- FEMA issued NEW Maps to be effective June 9, 2014
  - New maps have significantly changed in some neighborhoods

# July 17 2012 FIRMs

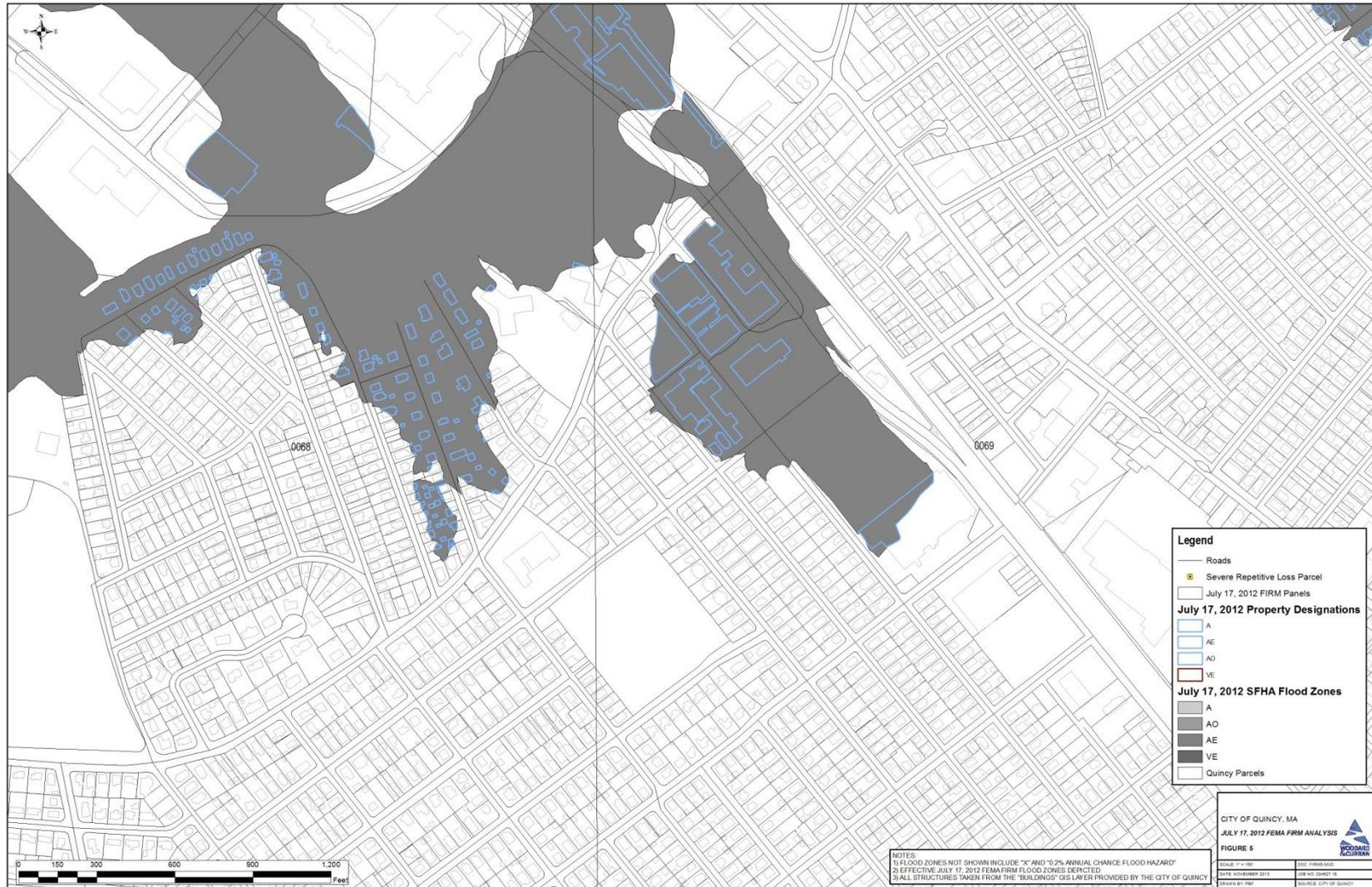


# Proposed June 9, 2014 FIRM



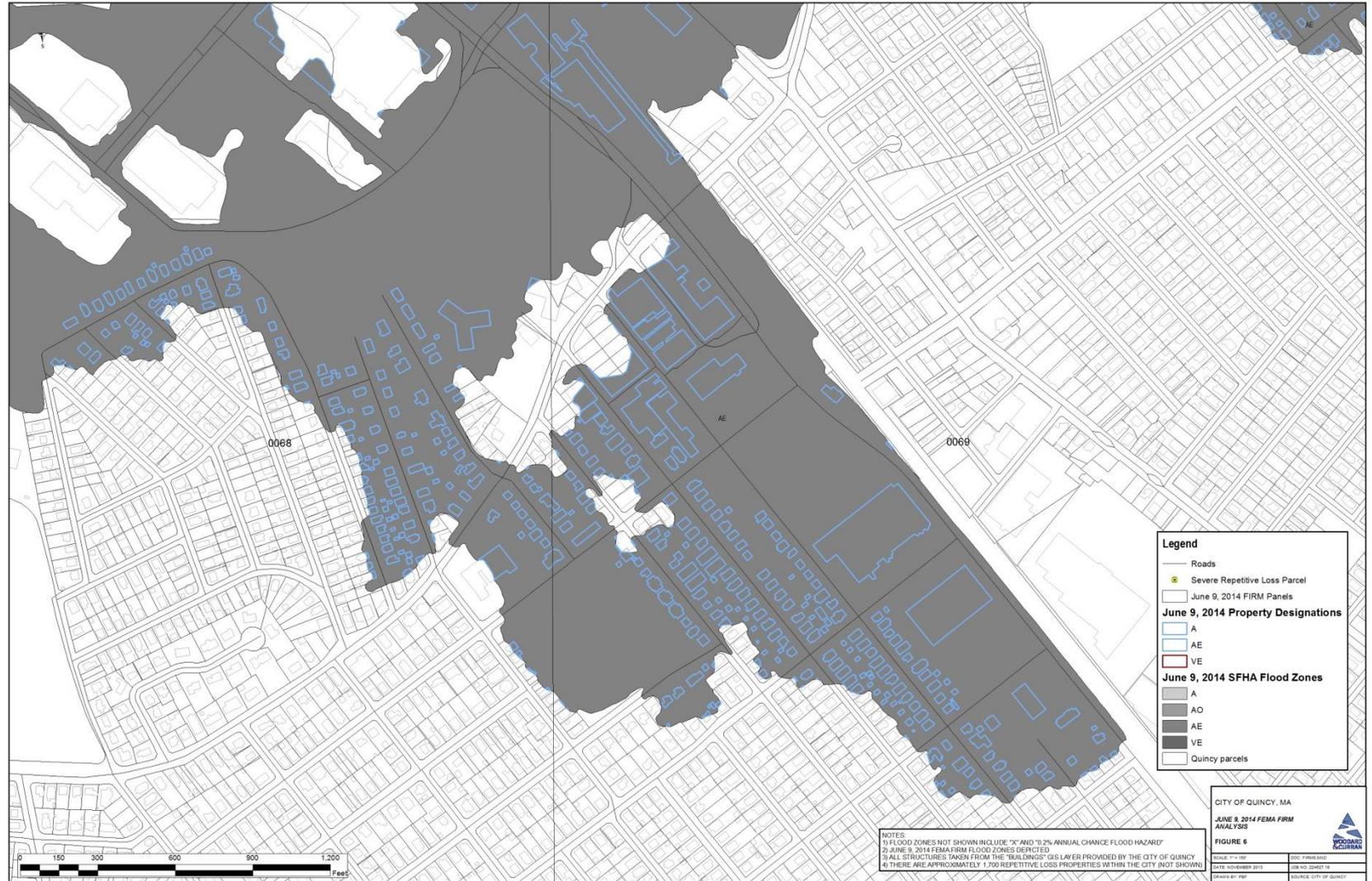
# July 17 2012 FIRM

## Fayette St. & Farrington St. Area



# Proposed June 9, 2014 FIRM

## Fayette St. & Farrington St. Area



**Legend**

- Roads
- Severe Repetitive Loss Parcel
- June 9, 2014 FIRM Panels

**June 9, 2014 Property Designations**

- A
- AE
- VE

**June 9, 2014 SFHA Flood Zones**

- A
- AO
- AE
- VE
- Quincy parcels

NOTES  
 1) FLOOD ZONES NOT SHOWN INCLUDE "X" AND "0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD"  
 2) JUNE 9, 2014 FEMA FIRM FLOOD ZONES DERIVED  
 3) SMALL STRUCTURES TAKEN FROM THE "BUILDINGS" GIS LAYER PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF QUINCY  
 4) THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 1,700 REPETITIVE LOSS PROPERTIES WITHIN THE CITY (NOT SHOWN)

CITY OF QUINCY, MA  
 JUNE 9, 2014 FEMA FIRM  
 ANALYSIS

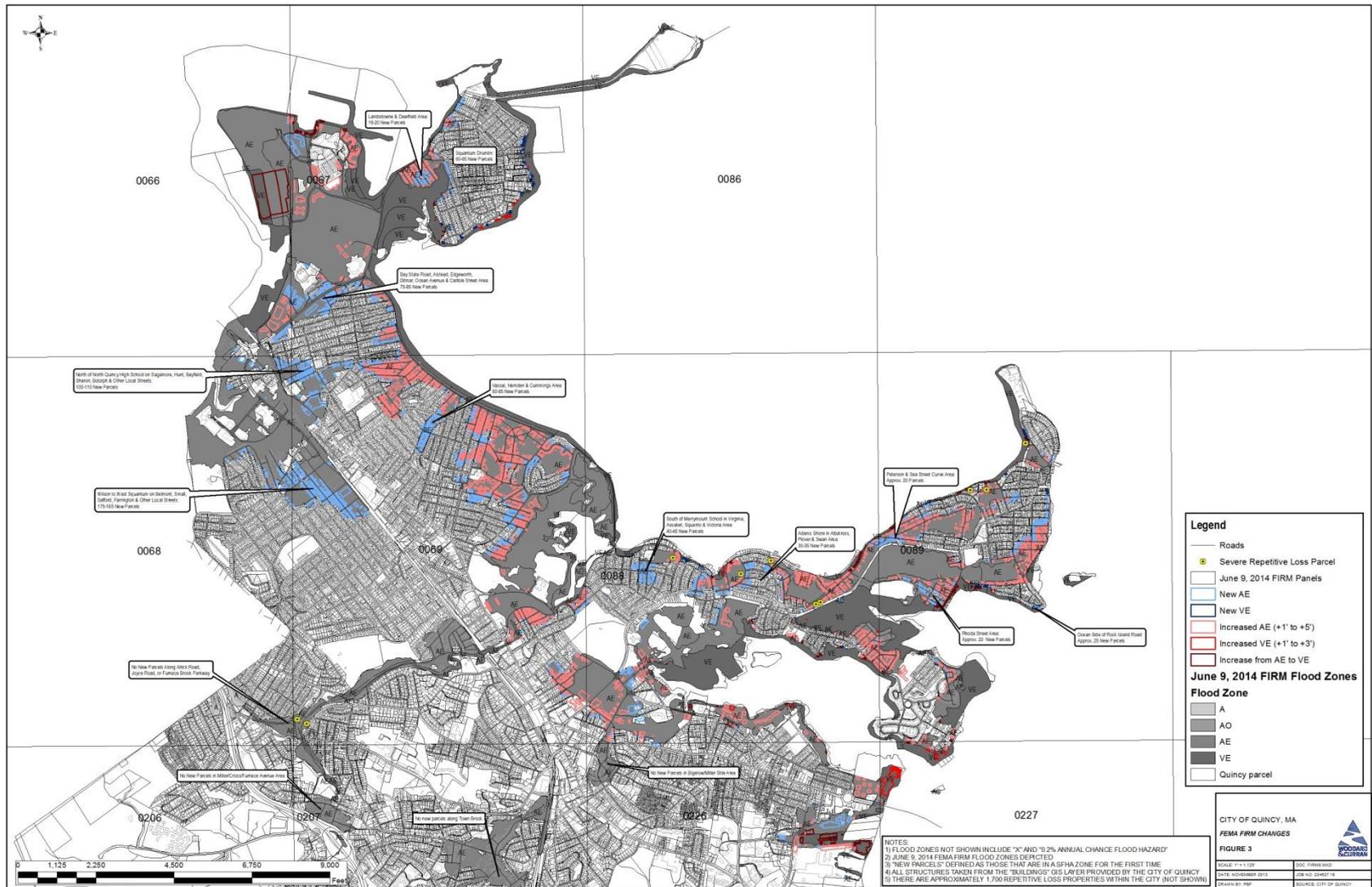
**FIGURE 6**

SCALE: 1" = 100'  
 DATE: NOVEMBER 2013  
 DRAWN BY: PMP

DOC. FIRM5102  
 JOB NO. 20487.18  
 SOURCE: CITY OF QUINCY



# Flood Insurance Policy Changes



# Quincy By The Numbers

- July 2012 FIRMs - Total Policies: **3,200**
- Proposed June 9, 2014 FIRMs – Total Policies: **4,600**
- Changes by Category:
  - Policies with Increased Flood Designations: 2,700
  - Policies with no change in designation: 500
  - Projected NEW First Time Policy Holders: 1,400
  - Impacted parcels: 4,600**

Rate Increases probable for all policies (new & existing)

# Quincy Actions to Date

- Work with Congressman Lynch's Office to push FEMA to address the two "blended" issues
  1. Get the NEW FIRMs Correct
  2. Do not skyrocket flood insurance rates
- Align with the Metro Mayors Council & Coastal Coalitions' efforts to force FEMA to review their methodology for new maps
- Participation in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS)
- Preparing a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) for incorrectly mapped neighborhoods
- Prepare Public Education handouts for property owners

# Community Rating System (CRS)

- Voluntary incentive program that encourages communities to implement floodplain management initiatives that exceed the minimum requirements established by the NFIP
- The floodplain management initiatives enacted by the City leads to higher discounts for policyholders
- City of Quincy currently has a rating of 8 out of 10
  - Gives policyholders a **10% discount on flood insurance**
  - Best rating among participating communities in Massachusetts (5 others have a rating of "8")

# CRS Update to be filed in May 2014

- Goal is to use the Drainage and Sea Wall projects from the 2011 Infrastructure CIP to push Quincy score to a “7”
  - “7” will give a 15% discount on flood insurance
- Update the City’s Flood Plain Management processes for additional credit
  - City Engineering Office
  - Building Department
  - Planning Board
  - Conservation Commission

# Prepare Letter of Map Revision (LOMR)

- Appeal to change the flood designation for impacted neighborhoods
- Perform coastline modeling to demonstrate the correct limits of SFHA
- Provide available survey data and individual property Elevation Certificates for FEMA's use in correcting their FIRMs
- To Join the City's plans for a Letter of Map Revision Appeal, Contact the Engineering Office at 617-376-1937

LOMR can not be filed until new Maps are Effective  
To be filed on June 10, 2014

# Resources for Property Owners

## Quincy Guide to FEMA's Flood Insurance Changes

City of Quincy



Property Owners'  
Guide to FEMA's  
Flood Insurance  
Changes  
January 2014



## FEMA "Need to Know" Pamphlet



IF YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS  
HAS BEEN FLOODED

**Build Back  
Safer and Stronger**

What You Need to Know



Quincy City  
Engineering  
Department

55 Sea Street  
617-376-1937

# Option for Individual Parcels: Letter of Map Amendment

- Appeal to change the flood designation for a single property
- Granted by FEMA if property is improperly mapped because topography on FIRM was not detailed enough to identify higher elevations adjacent to the structure
- Elevation Certificate is required for appeal
  - Official FEMA form completed by licensed surveyor
  - Used to calculate difference between First Floor Elevation and Base Flood Elevation
  - Copy to be filed with the City Engineering Dept

# Option for Individual Parcels: Preferred Risk Policy (PRP)

- Option for properties that are newly mapped into a Special Flood Hazard Area
- Property is locked into a lower rate for two years
- Costs for residential building and contents typically range from \$129 - \$414 per year
- Policy can carry over if property is sold
- Allows time for policyholder to save money before full risk rates take effect
- **Talk to your insurance agent about this option**



# Next Steps – City of Quincy

1. Continue to work with Congressman Lynch's office, Metro Mayor Council and other Coalitions to pressure FEMA to address incorrect maps
2. Continue review of the New Maps while preparing coastal model, LOMR for June 10, 2014 submission
3. Identify ways to improve Quincy's rating in the CRS Program to increase discounts above 10%
4. Keep updated information available to residents regarding flood insurance and any future changes



# Possible Actions if FEMA does not revise or delay the new FIRMs

- Prior to June 9, 2014, Quincy City Council will need to approve the New June 9, 2014 FIRMs **WITH RESERVATIONS:**
  - LOMR being submitted to FEMA to Correct the Maps Immediately
- If the new Maps are not approved by the City Council:
  - July 2012 FIRMS expire
  - Property Owners will not be eligible to purchase flood insurance through the NFIP
  - City is not eligible for Hazard Mitigation funds from FEMA

# Suggested Next Steps – Property Owners

- Review the proposed June 9, 2014 FIRMs at City Engineers Office
  - Determine zone designation of property
  - Determine Base Flood Elevation of zone if applicable
- If newly mapped into SFHA:
  - Talk to your insurance agent about PRP Eligibility
- If your designation seems incorrect
  - Obtain an elevation certificate and file a LOMA with FEMA
  - Contact the City's Engineering Office to join the City's Letter of Map Revision appeal at 617-376-1937.
- If property is in an X-Zone
  - Flood insurance is not required, but consider a PRP policy
  - Locks you into lower rates if you are mapped into a SFHA in the future
  - If selling home, ensures that buyers are locked into lower rates

# Resources

- Massachusetts Coastal Coalition (MCC)
- Coalition for Sustainable Flood Insurance (CSFI)
- Floodsmart.Gov
- MSC.FEMA.Gov
- FEMA website
- City of Quincy Engineering Department
- Your local insurance agent

# Questions?



# Outline

## Federal Issues / Actions

1. National Flood Insurance Program
2. Biggert Waters 2012
3. Flood Insurance Rate Maps
4. Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act
5. Changes in Effect & Changes on Hold

## City's Actions

1. Quincy FIRM Analysis
2. Aligning with Metro & Regional appeal efforts
3. Letter of Map Revision Applications
4. Community Rating System (CRS) update
5. Public Outreach & Tools for property owners
  1. Preferred Risk Policy Extension
  2. Letter of Map Amendments for individual homeowners

## Next Steps for Property Owners and the City

