

# Council approves floodplain ordinance

**MOUNT VERNON** — The City Council here passed the controversial floodplain construction ordinance last week, qualifying the city for the federal flood insurance program and allowing citizens to get loans for structures on the floodplain.

City Attorney Larry Moller said FEMA official Chuck Steele told him the ordinance, which requires the City building official to ensure all structures will be "reasonably safe from flooding" before issuing a building permit, will be approved by FEMA.

A set of 100-year flood elevations was suc-

cessfully appealed by the City and is being doublechecked in Washington, D.C. by FEMA.

In place of 100-year flood elevations, the City must use historical data, high water marks, photographs of past flooding — or even common sense — to determine what constitutes "reasonably safe from flooding."

When the elevations return from Washington, D.C., the City will either have to require new or substantially improved floodplain structures to be elevated above the 100-year flood level or be kicked out of the insurance program.

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