



Watercourse + Floodplain Protection

OR SCAN ME!



Learn more at: www.townofbethlehem.org/940/Zoning-Update

Watercourse and floodplain protection is a priority identified in the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

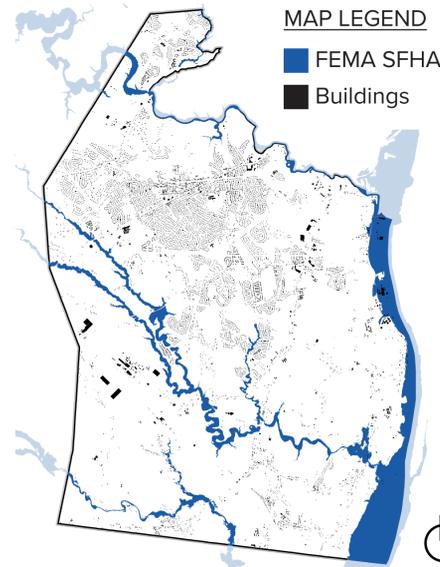
Harmony with Nature is one of the guiding principles identified in Bethlehem Forward, and this principle seeks to ensure that the contributions of natural resources to human well-being are explicitly recognized and valued and that their health is a primary objective of future development and activities in the Town.

Specifically, Bethlehem Forward recommends considering the expansion of existing regulations related to the development and disturbance of lots bordering some streams to include all NYS Department of Environmental Conservation classified streams.

Regulations already in place to protect watercourses and floodplains

The Town has a **Flood Damage Prevention Law**, which regulates activities in the Special flood Hazard Area (SFHA) as delineated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions.

Check out the map to the right to see the areas regulated by this law.

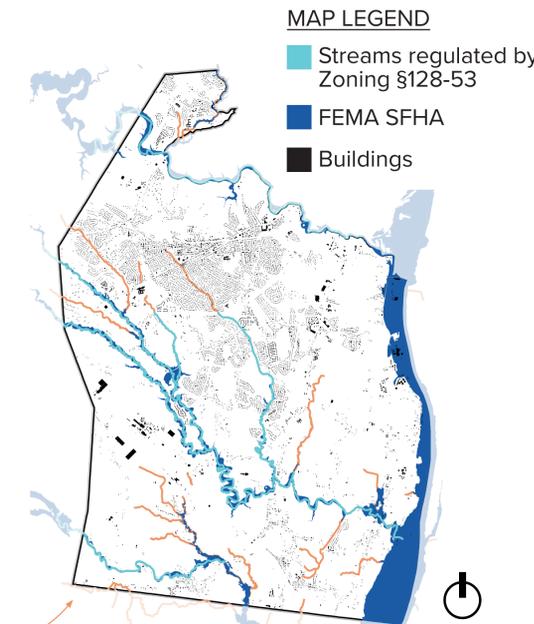


MAP LEGEND
■ FEMA SFHA
■ Buildings

The Town's **Zoning §128-53** prohibits the issuance of a building permit for the construction of any permitted or accessory use in any district within 100 feet of the bank of the following streams or within the SFHA of the following streams:

- Normans Kill Creek
- Vloman Kill Creek
- Onesquethaw Creek
- Phillipin Kill Creek
- Dowers Kill Creek south of Rte. 32

The current regulations leave several watercourses unprotected, particularly smaller tributaries. These unprotected streams are shown in orange.



MAP LEGEND
■ Streams regulated by Zoning §128-53
■ FEMA SFHA
■ Buildings

What is a watercourse?

A channel conveying water, such as a natural stream, river, or artificial channel.

You're most likely familiar with perennial watercourses, which maintain a continuous flow of surface water. However, watercourses can also be intermittent; these are drainage channels with a defined bed and banks in which there is not a permanent flow of water.

What is a 100-year storm?

A storm event that has a one percent chance of happening each year. In Albany County, a 100-year storm event is associated with 6.5 inches or more of rainfall over a 24-hour period (NYS DEC Stormwater Management Design Manual).

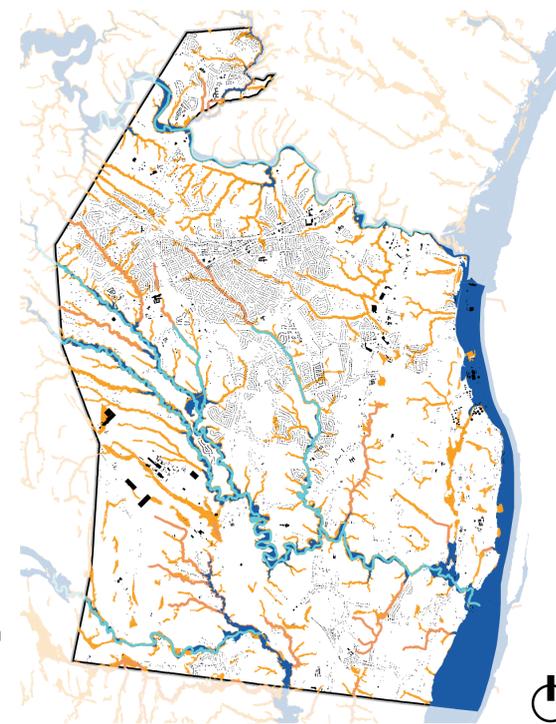
Many areas in the Town are exposed to flood hazards but are NOT currently regulated

Albany County's **Climate Resiliency Plan** used data* that identified areas likely to be inundated during a 100-year storm. These areas are shown in orange in the map to the right.

While the Flood Damage Prevention Law and Zoning Code §128-53 protect larger streams and rivers in the lower reaches of watersheds, they do not protect smaller streams, headwaters, intermittent streams, and areas prone to flooding due to topography and a high concentration of impervious surfaces (i.e., pavement).

*Data from First Street Foundation

MAP LEGEND
■ Areas likely to be inundated in a 100-year storm
■ FEMA SFHA
■ Streams regulated by Zoning §128-53



We Want to Hear From You!

Which watercourses should be regulated?

Keep regulations as they are.

Future uses and activities should only be regulated in the SFHA or within 100-feet of certain streams. Place a dot below if you agree.

Expand regulations to include all watercourses in the Town.

Future uses and activities should be regulated adjacent to all watercourses, including perennial (i.e., water is always flowing) and intermittent streams (i.e., channel may be dry at times). Place a dot below if you agree.