

The Flood Resilience Zoning Text (the “Flood Text”) is one part of a wide range of efforts by the City to recover from Hurricane Sandy, promote rebuilding, and increase the city’s resilience to climate-related events, including coastal flooding and storm surge. To learn more about the Flood Resilience Zoning Text and other terms used here, visit: www.nyc.gov/floodtext.

Overview

NYC’s zoning seeks to enable and encourage flood resilient building construction throughout designated floodplains.

In 2013, the Flood Resilience Text Amendment modified zoning to remove regulatory barriers that hindered or prevented the reconstruction of storm-damaged properties by enabling new and existing buildings to comply with new, higher flood elevations issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and to comply with new requirements in the New York City Building Code. It also introduced regulations to soften the effects flood resilient construction may have in the public realm.

The text was adopted in 2013 on a temporary, emergency basis. Therefore a future update of this text is necessary to make the text permanent. As part of this process, the Department is soliciting community input and is seeking to incorporate lessons learned during the recovery and rebuilding process.

Where is the Flood Text Applicable?

The Flood Text is available to buildings located entirely or partially within the 1% annual chance floodplain*.

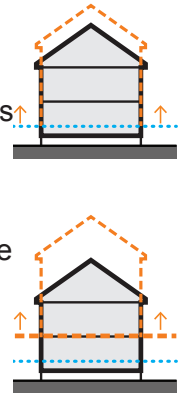
These rules can be found in Article VI, Chapter 4 of the Zoning Resolution and, if utilized, typically require the building to fully comply with flood resilient construction standards found in Appendix G of the New York City Building Code. However, some provisions, such as elevation of mechanical spaces, are available to all buildings located in the floodplain, even if not fully compliant with Appendix G.

*This includes areas that are in the 100-year floodplain on either the 2007 FIRMs or 2015 PFIRMs.

Summary of the Flood Text

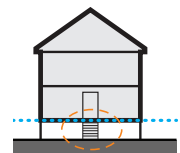
Height

The Flood Text recognizes flood resistant construction requirements in Building Code and allows buildings to measure height from the flood level to ensure they can fit their permitted floor area above the flood elevation. Where flood elevations are moderate, a few feet of additional height are allowed for usable space (parking, storage, and access).



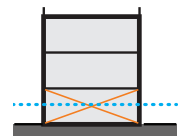
Access

Additional flexibility is provided for stairs, ramps, and entry areas as needed, in order to allow the access of elevated spaces.



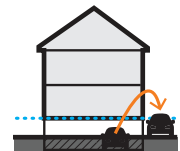
Ground Floor Use

For existing buildings located in lower-density commercial areas, active, dry floodproofed commercial spaces are encouraged by not counting them toward limits on floor area.



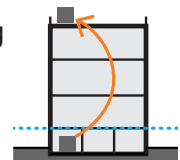
Parking

More flexibility is allowed for the accommodation of off-street parking above grade.



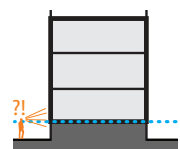
Mechanical Systems

More flexibility is allowed for locating mechanical systems above flood levels.



Streetscape

Design elements are required when the first occupiable floor is elevated above moderate heights, in order to improve the way buildings are perceived at the street level.

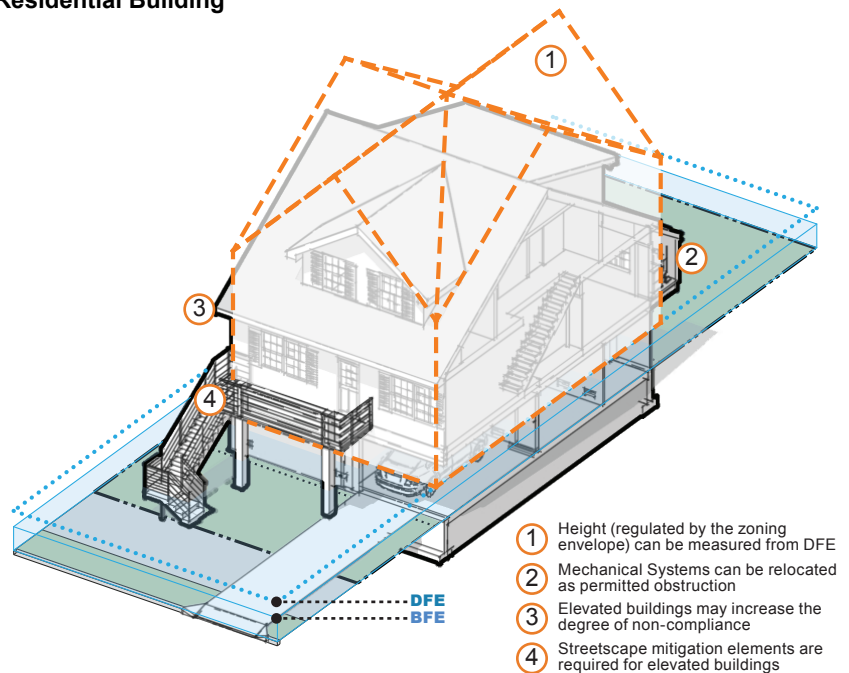


Examples of how the Flood Text can be enable resilient construction

Existing Buildings

The Flood Text provides special allowances to facilitate the retrofitting of existing buildings, which can often be more complex than building a new, flood resilient building. For example, zoning allowances are provided to existing single- and two-family homes to elevate in place, even if they do not match the current zoning envelope. These rules also allow the building to be shifted back on the lot to provide adequate space in the front yard for stairs, ramps, or lifts. In addition, mechanical systems can be relocated to portions of the rear or side yard as permitted obstructions. If a building is elevated, it must comply with requirements for streetscape mitigations, to soften any effects at the street level.

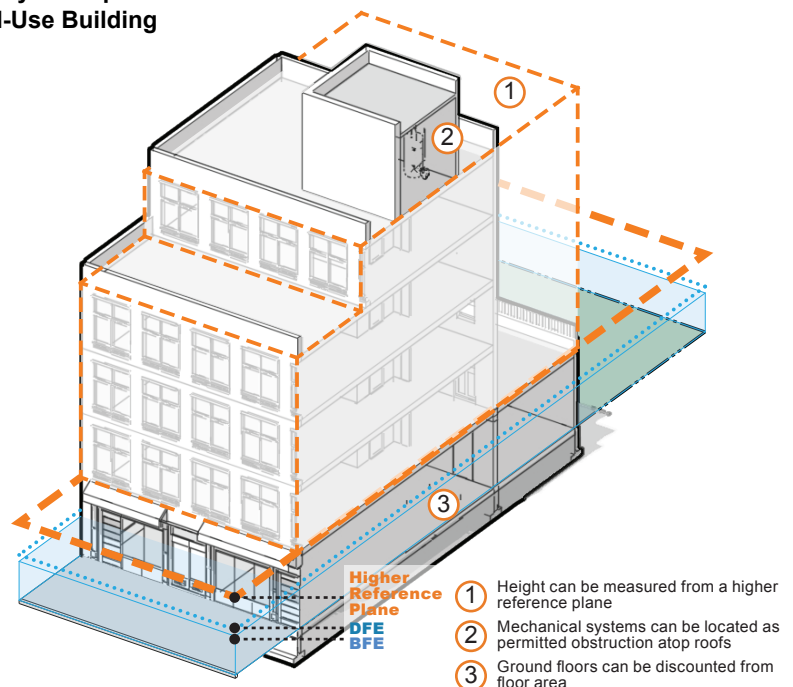
Retrofitted Wet Floodproofed Residential Building



New and Existing Buildings

The Flood Text recognizes that buildings in the floodplain often cannot have subgrade spaces, such as basements or cellars. In residential buildings, ground-floor space is limited to parking, storage or access, since this space has to be wet floodproofed. Zoning also takes into consideration the high cost of dry floodproofing, which is generally the preferred option for commercial or mixed-use buildings, since it allows active uses to remain at grade and therefore encourages street-level activity. The Flood Text allows additional flexibility for buildings that meet flood resistance standards in order to help neighborhoods in the floodplain remain vibrant.

New Dry Floodproofed Mixed-Use Building



City Planning is working with communities throughout the floodplain to identify zoning and land use strategies to reduce flood risks and support the city's vitality and resiliency through long-term adaptive planning. To learn more, visit www.nyc.gov/resilientneighborhoods.

About the Department of City Planning

The Department of City Planning (DCP) plans for the strategic growth and development of the City through ground-up planning with communities, the development of land use policies and zoning regulations, and its contribution to the preparation of the City's 10-year Capital Strategy. For more information, go to: nyc.gov/data-insights