

## Planners eye 180-day RV rule

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ROMNEY — Hampshire County planning commissioners approved the first reading last week of a proposed change to the county floodplain ordinance.

If adopted, the revision would constitute a change or elimination of one word in the section of the ordinance pertaining to the “placement” of recreational vehicles in floodplain areas.

The proposed revision would have the effect of lessening the regulatory aspects of the existing rule.

Presently, the owners of RVs parked in floodplain areas must adhere to a 180-day rule and have their RVs “fully licensed and ready for highway use.”

The 180-day rule states that a given RV “shall be on the (floodplain site) for fewer than 180 consecutive days.”

The proposed revision eliminates the word “and,” replacing it with the word “or.”

The new version reads: Recreational vehicles to be placed within any floodplain area shall either 1. Be on site for fewer than 180 consecutive days, or 2. Be fully licensed and ready for highway use.

According to county planning official Charles Baker, who is responsible for enforcing the provisions of the county floodplain ordinance, the 180-day rule simply meant that RV owners had to move their RVs a few feet from an existing parking location and were allowed to move it back to the spot.

The idea in moving the RV was to show the road-worthiness of the RV, explained Baker.

With the inclusion of the word “and” in the existing ordinance, the county regulations apparently exceed federal requirements.

Changing the “and” to “or” corrects that situation. Planners agreed that the change was needed as to not over burden RV owners who park along the rivers in the county.

Baker also said there was a major problem in attempting to consistently enforce the 180-day rule, given that only one person is tasked with that duty.

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