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News Release

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FEMA issues final ruling on Branson Landing buildings *City acted appropriately in permitting buildings*

The city of Branson this week received the long awaited final ruling from FEMA that stated Branson Landing buildings 1-6 are “reasonably safe from flooding.”

This final written report followed an inspection of the buildings on the west side of the Landing by FEMA officials from Kansas City last August. Following that Landing tour, FEMA official Dean Ownby said the buildings appeared to be reasonably safe from flooding, but an official ruling would be issued later when he further studied the findings of his site visit.

The FEMA visit was prompted by a former Branson Planning and Development Department employee who told city aldermen that the basements under two Branson Landing buildings were prone to flooding because the city did not enforce flood-plain regulations.

Ruth Denham also said the city did not disclose the non-compliance to FEMA, which in 2008 revised the flood-plain map and removed those buildings from the Lake Taneycomo flood area. Denham insisted the city gave FEMA incomplete and possibly fraudulent information, and therefore occupancy permits should never have been issued.

However, Branson City Engineer David Miller contended the buildings should be outside the flood zone because of the fill that elevated the west side of Branson Landing above the 100-year flood plain.

FEMA agreed with the city. In its Executive Summary to the city, FEMA wrote, “A review of the Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) as it relates to floodplain management concludes that Branson Landing buildings 1 through 6 appropriately were removed from the Special Flood Hazard Area and meets the requirements ...as reasonably safe from flooding.”

The LOMR is a document sent by the city showing the revised flood plain that depicted the buildings outside the flood plain. FEMA officials reviewed the LOMR and determined it was appropriate and no fraud was involved.

During the site visit last summer, Miller said he was 100 percent confident that FEMA would rule in the city's favor, and now FEMA has confirmed his confidence.