

## **FEMA to Buy Out One Home on Old York Road**

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The township is changing its agreement with the NJDEP Blue Acres Program for the purchase and demolition of two homes on Old York Road along the Raritan River Floodway—because only one is now being accepted into the program. This program concerns the buy-out and demolition of homes affected by flooding, particularly after Hurricane Irene in 2011. The homes at 203 Old York Road and 205 Old York Road were approved for the program in August, and were expected to be bought out and demolished through a program with FEMA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. But the property at 203 Old York Road had to be dropped from the agreement because the owner had already begun his own demolition work, according to township engineer Thomas Forsythe. “FEMA had selected two homes to sponsor and buy out using money from Hurricane Irene,” he said. “One home is still moving forward.” Forsythe said the owner of 203 Old York Road had already gone before the planning board with plans to demolish the property, so FEMA could not move forward with its work. “Now we need to change the memorandum of agreement to reflect that small change,” he said. FEMA is now only taking control of 205 Old York Road. “Once the state takes the title to the property, we will help arrange for the contractor to knock it down,” Forsythe said. “The state pays for the demolition.” The township will only be responsible for the maintenance of the lawn, Forsythe said. According to the resolution, the agreement states that FEMA will pay \$98,000 for the home, and Blue Acres will pay the balance of the appraisal cost and other fees, while the ICC Coverage Fund will be used to demolish the two homes. The council unanimously approved the resolution.