

Newburyport Resiliency Committee (NRC) Meeting Minutes

3 PM February 16,, 2022 Virtual Meeting

NRC Mission Statement

The Newburyport Resiliency Committee will analyze, coordinate, and develop a plan in conjunction with regional planning efforts to increase community resilience related to sea level rise, storm surge, flooding and extreme weather events throughout the city. Further, the committee will advocate for and oversee implementation of the plan's recommendations.

NRC Attendees: Julia Godtfredsen, Sarah Tappan, Andrew Port, Brett Lefebvre, Jane Healey, Joe Teixeira Rishi Nandi, Molly Ettenborough, Jon-Eric White.

Other Participants: Maria Parenti, Andrew Levine, Mayor Sean Reardon, Kim Turner, David Moon

Note taker: Sarah Tappan

Key Accomplishments this month

- 3 EOIs for the MVP Action Grant Program were submitted on 2/1/2022: Indian Hill Raw Water Transmission Line (\$450k design/permitting), Lower Artichoke Dam Improvements (\$80k design/permitting), and Bulkhead (\$2M for construction) (Jon-Eric)
- A grant application to EEA Dam and Seawall Program was submitted on 2/3/2022 (\$80K) (Jon-Eric)
- Final draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan was submitted to the HMP committee (Julia)
- Jane spoke to the NDCC about the Resiliency Committee's work at a mtg on 2/8.(CommEdu)
- Meeting held with Mayor Reardon on 1/25/2022 to introduce the committee's work and near term goals. (CommEdu)

Minutes

- Approval of 01/19/22 meeting notes:
The notes were approved with no changes and Julia will send them to Diane for posting on the web page.
- Andrew Levine, Kim Turner and Mayor Reardon joined the meeting for the first time this month. The volunteers on the committee were introduced. We also had two residents attending, David Moon and Maria Parenti.
- **Committee Updates**
 - **CommEdu**
 - Speaker series (Sarah)
 - The Storm Surge Speaker Series is working on 2 talks this year related to resiliency and sustainability.

- Tom Cusick has agreed to give an update on the water supply quality and the resiliency projects related to the water supply. This will be in May. We are talking to Molly about an update from the EAC in June. The remainder of the speaker series will be on global topics. We are looking for a talk on carbon sequestration and plan to show a documentary on climate change solutions.
- Website (Brett)
 - The Mayor's plan to revamp the city's website and hire a new IT director has put into question the viability of a separate website for the Resiliency Committee.
 - We will however continue to work on a Drupal based prototype to help drive the design of pages that could be either added to the city's Drupal site or used in a separate stand alone website.
 - A couple of new partially complete pages have been added to the prototype site as the Drupal learning curve is being ascended.
 - One of the issues slowing progress is defining the content. A new volunteer/committee resource, Stacia Pathiakis, has offered to assist with that task.
- NBPT Democratic City Committee (NDCC) talk
 - Jane was asked to speak about the Resiliency Committee's work at a mtg on 2/8. Sheila Taintor from Storm Surge also presented. The meeting was well attended and NDCC member's asked many questions demonstrating a keen interest in resiliency. The NDCC is planning a community service project involving climate resiliency.
- Brochure (Julia)
 - Additional edits made to brochure and are being incorporated by Bill Goff
- **Regs Working Group** - Site design review/Resiliency Questionnaire (Jane)
 - Language for Site Plan Review and draft of Climate Change questionnaire is ongoing. Next RWG mtg is scheduled for 3/2.

Discussion:

- The members discussing the site design review/resiliency questionnaire include Andy, Julia, Joe, Jane and Rick Taintor. Looking at potential updates and language for a site plan review in terms of stormwater management and tree canopies. Not looking at the floodplain yet. However, potential flood hazards will be addressed in a questionnaire for project applicants, asking about climate resiliency issues. The questionnaire is intended to be both an information gathering tool for the city as well as an educational tool for project applicants.
- We are not working on zoning overlay districts at this time. Julia noted the initial priority is what was considered low-hanging fruit. Updating special permit revisions for low impact development based on work Rick was already doing and

also reviewing climate related checklists from NY, Boston and Cambridge to see if they may be helpful.

- Andy noted that we've talked about expanding the section of the city's website that currently has the MIMAP tool to show GIS info and parcels relative to current zoning regulations. We would like to add a page that shows future sea level rise and flooding hazards. The intent of this would be for public education on the future risks.
- Jon-Eric noted that they are in the middle of changing the stormwater ordinances in response to requirements from the EPA and requested that he be kept in the loop.
- Jane agreed to coordinate with Jon-Eric after the next meeting on 3/2.

- **Finance & Funding**

- MVP Action Grant EOI (2/1/22)
 - Feb 1, 2022, we submitted 3 EOIs for the MVP Action Grant Program this spring: Indian Hill Raw Water Transmission Line (\$450k design/permitting), Lower Artichoke Dam Improvements (\$80k design/permitting), and Bulkhead (\$2M for construction) (Jon-Eric)
- Other grant opportunities:
 - Feb 3, 2022, we submitted a \$80k grant application to EEA Dam and Seawall Program (Jon-Eric)
 - *Jon-Eric has suggested to Andrew Levine to start holding coordination meetings to manage grant applications. Nancy's job is being a grant writer, not bringing in staff to strategize and coordinate who's doing what. Since we have many projects about to be designed and we really should set ourselves up for all of this infrastructure money coming our way it would make sense for a representative from NRC to stay on top of this with Andrew.*

Discussion:

Given the amount of infrastructure projects associated with Resilience and the amount of grant funding coming available, it would be beneficial for the committee to stay on top of these opportunities to advocate and make sure nothing falls through the cracks.

Julia volunteered to be the representative from NRC to participate in the grant coordination process. She is tied into the grants process and gets notifications of the MVP, local, state and federal environmental grants.

When Jon-Eric reviewed the capital improvement projects with Andrew Levine last week Jon-Eric proposed regular meetings to review grants. He feels we need more coordination on the grant coordination among the department heads and by the Mayor's chief of staff. Jon-Eric's concern is that we need to have projects design-ready to apply for certain grants. Andy commented that Nancy and some of the Department

heads write grant applications, and agrees that more coordination would be helpful. Andy recommended that the department heads need to be the liaison for large capital projects going after funding, in coordination with the Mayor's office. Jon-Eric noted that water, sewer, highway departments have a lot of projects in progress. Nancy is not tasked with contacting everyone about grant opportunities.

Andrew Levine described the process he is envisioning, Kim Turner is driving the Capital Facilities Needs plan. This will be a prioritized list of all the infrastructure projects and be used to figure out how to pay for them. This dovetails into the discussions on the ARPA funding and anticipating the funding opportunities that may come out of the Federal bi-partisan infrastructure law. As part of this we will need to understand which projects need to be shovel-ready to apply for funding. Both Andrew and the Mayor noted that prioritizing funding for design in the near term makes sense so more projects can be classified as shovel-ready..

Andrew suggested sending any projects that should be on this master list to him and he will get them added to Kim's list or a similar list of infrastructure projects that Tony Funari is pulling together.

Jane asked about the best way for the Resiliency Committee to help coordinate efforts when grant opportunities are announced so things don't fall through the cracks. Andy Port expressed support for Julia being a liaison for the Resiliency Committee in the grant process and also recommended that the Resiliency Committee expedite letters of support for grant opportunities.

Molly asked if Nancy was on the ARPA committee as well. Andrew said she wasn't. The ARPA money was not being treated as a grant since this is money that has been given and needs to be allocated.

Andrew reiterated the need for sharing information on any funding opportunities and he views a role of the Resiliency Committee is to share any info that we see.

Jon-Eric suggested a distribution list with the appropriate department heads, Julia for NRC, Nancy, Jon-Eric, Andy, Geordie, Tony, Jamie, Molly etc and use this to distribute grant proposals. Julia likes the idea of the distribution list and recommends that everyone be required to respond to the request for input on a specific grant and identify whether they will have a project which is applicable. If multiple people have ideas for the same grant that could be worked out with Nancy and the Mayor's office.

Decision: Julia will be the point person for the Resiliency Committee into the grant committee organized by Andrew.

- Other Business

- Mtg w/ Mayor Reardon to introduce Resiliency Committee

- Jane, Molly, Andy, Jon-Eric, and Julia met with Mayor Reardon on 1/25 to introduce the committee's work and review our near term goals. All felt it was a productive conversation and the information was well received. (Jane)

- Nbpt Hazard Mitigation Plan (Julia)

- Julia has forwarded a final draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan to the HMP committee. She added new language regarding our Local Emergency Response Plan, which is highlighted in yellow in the Action Plan and Section 7.2 (5) page 117.
- After any additional comments:
 - A first listening session will be scheduled, possibly for an upcoming Resiliency Committee meeting.
 - After the listening session, the doc will be forwarded to MEMA for their review and comment.
 - Schedule the second listening session . This session should take place at a City Council Meeting and include the core team, stakeholders, City Council and Public. Ideally, this meeting is where the City Council will adopt the plan.
 - Send the adopted plan to FEMA for final approval.

Discussion:

- Jane asked if the new contact at MVPC would be leading the listening sessions.
- Jennifer finished the plan before she left. Julia was assuming we can terminate the work with MVPC and handle the rest of the actions ourselves. The listening session is to get input from the stakeholders that participated in the planning session and we know who they are, however we could engage MVPC to moderate the listening sessions.
- Molly noted that MVPC will bring in representatives from contiguous communities and feels that is important.
- DECISION: There was agreement to engage MVPC to drive the rest of the process as long as that does not slow things down. ACTION ITEM: Julia will follow-up.
- Potential pilot project w/ Tree Commission - stormwater mgmt/bump-outs (Jane)
 - Jane reported back to Sheila Taintor, Chair of the Tree Commission, the NRC's interest in coordinating with the Tree Commission on a potential pilot project involving stormwater mgmt & bump-outs.

- City Project Updates

- Lower Artichoke Dam Reconstruction Project (Jon-Eric)

We submitted a grant application and an Expression of Interest application the week of Feb 1, see update in Grants below. The design fee proposal is still being worked on. Regardless of receiving grant money, we will very likely execute a contract and proceed in hopes of getting funding at a later date. We do not want to delay.

- Lower Artichoke emergency temporary protection project (Jon-Eric)

No update

- Indian Hill Raw Water Line and Pump Station (Jon-Eric)

We submitted an Expression of Interest application Feb 1, 2022, see below. We are awaiting a design fee proposal from a consultant.

- Water Supply Protection & Treatment Projects: Amesbury Interconnect – emergency and permanent, WTP Upgrades, watershed management (Jon-Eric)

We rec'd comments from the DOT. Technically it's in the 25% design phase. We will respond to these comments within the next 2 weeks. Add'l design work is req'd.

- WWTP Flood Protection - sidewalls (Jon-Eric)

No update

- Central Waterfront Bulkhead Renovations (Andy)

- Continuing to look for funding for the bulkhead project

- Central Waterfront Park (Andy)

- Continuing to work the design process for the Market Landing Park project. Jon-Eric is helping make sure the designs account for any flood issues from market square to the waterfront and the plan still includes raising the wall for resiliency when funding is available.

- Waterfront West (Andy)

- No update

- Pl/Reservation Terrace status (Julia)

- Situation is stable along Reservation Terrace for the time being. Coir bag/rock system will be evaluated and the need for any additional sand, repair measures, etc. will be identified.

New business:

- City Council liaison and communications

- Molly has spoken with the Mayor and Andrew. Barry Connell is interested in continuing to participate as a volunteer.

- Suggestion is that a representative from the city council planning and development committee participate as a member of the Resiliency Committee.
 - Ed Cameron, Connie Preston and Christine Wallace. The Mayor agreed to speak with Counselor Cameron to see if he is interested or if one of his committee members would be interested.
 - Members agreed that having a member of the council on the committee is important for sponsorship and as a liaison.
 - **Decision:** The committee will request that the Mayor follow up with Ed. **Action item:** Molly will drive this.
- City website overhaul / NRC's website
 - NRC website is part of our communication plan.
 - With the planned overhaul of the city web-site we need to determine how the NRC website plan will fit in with that.
 - Andy raised concerns about the manageability of a separate website and the proliferation of separate websites.
 - Molly noted that the Mayor plans to put a team together to look at the city's website and figure out what changes could be made. Molly suggested we feed our requirements into that team. Andrew Levine is driving a review of the city's site as a whole for consistency and useability. Requested input on features that the committee needs that are not available on the current site. Andy Port responded that we need that ability for committee members (volunteers) to update the page to speed up the frequency of the updates.
 - Brett asked if the scope of the project included moving away from Drupal or Civic Plus. Andrew responded that the intention is not to move away from the current platform. The current focus is to figure out what are the requirements that can not currently be met.
 - Andy Port noted that there is functionality to support mailing lists and newsletters on the current site.
 - Decision: Communication Sub-group will submit requirements within the next 2-3 weeks.
 - NHS student involvement
 - Environmental Open House at High School tomorrow. Last year there was an attempt to engage High School students.
 - Molly said depending on who is interested will can see what their interests are and how to get them engaged.
 - Jane noted that there is a Community Outreach webinar tonight on Essex County - FEMA Region I Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas Study.

Next Meeting: March 16, 2022, 3-4:30pm

