

**Newburyport Resiliency Committee (NRC)**  
**3 PM January 18, 2023 Virtual Meeting –Meeting Notes**

**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.

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NRC Attendees: Julia Godtfredsen, Jane Healey (chair), Sarah Tappan (note taker), Connie Preston, Jon Eric White, Barry Connell, Andrew Port, Joe Teixeira

Absent: Brett Lefabvre (co-chair), Molly Ettenborough, Samantha Burke

Other Attendees: Sandra Thaxter, Mark Wright, David Moon

**Key Accomplishments:**

- ~9000 Resiliency Brochures distributed to residents with the tax bills
- MVP Communication Grant Expression of Interest submitted
- The Resiliency Projects Story map ready for release.
  
- Public Comments: Sandra Thaxter joined the meeting today. She expressed interest in potentially helping the committee in the future. Sandra has lived in NBPT since 1973, and has experience with trees and landscape conservation and restoration efforts in Maine.
  
- Approval of 11/16/22 mtg notes were approved by all, Sarah will request that they be posted.
  
- Committee Updates
  - CommEdu
    - Nbpt High School Environmental Open House (Sarah)  
December 14 at NHS. Julia, Jane and Sarah attended. Julia provided copies of the Resiliency Committee Brochure to distribute. In addition to talking with students about the work of the NRC, the event gave us a chance to connect with local environmental groups and we received some additional proposals for the community grant project as a result.
    - Brochure (Julia)  
The Resiliency brochure was distributed to ~9000 households with the December tax bill. There has been positive feedback to the brochure. Additional copies are available to be used at future events as needed.
    - StoryMaps Resiliency Projects & Resiliency Planning (Brett/Sarah)

- The Resiliency Projects Story map which was reviewed last month is now ready to publish. Jane is meeting with the Mayor tomorrow morning and we expect to post it after that meeting.
- The Resiliency brochure was turned into a story map. This is a WIP, but close to completion. Need to investigate an issue Jane was seeing loading images and also waiting to hear if we can use a couple of the photos. Agreement that can be published when these loose ends are resolved.
- City Website Overhaul (Molly) - Jane will get status off-line.
- Tree Tags (Jane) - Jane has been working with Kim Turner and Ted Boretti from the Parks Commission on tree tags. The plan is to hang on the Rail Trail first as a small pilot. These are polyester tags and will be hung temporarily with no damage to the tree. Goal is to highlight the type of trees, natives vs invasives. The Parks commission will discuss tree tags tomorrow.

Connie commented that Norway Maple, while invasive and illegal to plant in MA, still does absorb CO<sub>2</sub>. She suggested adding a balance statement, about the CO<sub>2</sub> benefit. Lots of them in the city and some of the largest trees in the city. Would not want to encourage the removal of them or encourage the planting of them. Jane agreed and will take that feedback into consideration.

- Regs Working Group
  - MIMAP floodplain mapping/Resiliency Questionnaire (Jon-Eric/Jane) - A draft of the MIMAP floodplain was reviewed, but the layers are not quite in the correct place yet, they are shifted slightly and not landing on the true coordinates. The business park information still needs to be incorporated. The changes look like they will be very useful once the shifting issue is resolved, allowing homeowners to look at the flood maps at particular addresses. Jon Eric is prioritizing getting this finished.
- Finance & Funding
  - Grants - MVP, other (Julia/Sarah)
    - MVP Expression of Interest was submitted last Thursday ahead of tomorrow's deadline. Many thanks to Nancy London for getting it submitted. We hope to get feedback from the MVP staff on the proposal, in particular the partner's template, so we can start working with the community partner groups and on the final application. 17 groups have expressed interest in participating. At Molly's suggestion, we added a greater Newburyport Green Expo as a project for the grant proposal.
    - The FEMA Hazard Mitigation Program Grant, applying for funds for buyouts of 3 houses on Plum Island was submitted to FEMA/MEMA and we are waiting for feedback.

- Nbpt Hazard Mitigation Plan (Julia)

FEMA has finalized their review of the Hazard Mitigation Plan and approved it for adoption by the city. Next step is for the City Council to review and adopt. Adoption needs to be completed within a year. Julia will make sure the latest version is posted on the city website as a pdf.

Connie asked about the process to bring to the council. A draft order was submitted with the package. Will also need to provide a summary statement. Aiming for mid-Feb. Council meeting. Several councilors including Connie are willing to sponsor.

- City Project Updates

- Lower Artichoke Dam Reconstruction Project (Jon-Eric) - There was a kickoff meeting for the lower dam reconstruction on December 16. Current focus is on Planning meetings with regulatory bodies. The next step is to get input from the regulatory agencies on what is feasible. A constraint for the elevation of the water will be dictated by the new Plummer Springs Bridge. The bottom of the bridge is 16 feet, max water would be 14 feet. This will add 2 feet of water height to the Upper Artichoke and 5 feet to the Lower Artichoke. The current upper artichoke dam will be underwater and no-longer needed. The Lower artichoke dam will be at an elevation of at least 12 feet, preferably with a max elevation of 14 feet if that can be done without impacting properties. The Berm will be higher with a storm gate that can be raised in the case of a storm. This will allow the protection of the water supply up to 18/19 feet.

Temporary emergency solution is still waiting on permits from MEPA. Same state it's been in for a year. Hopefully the permits will be approved this Spring. We will have to balance getting this emergency spillway built vs the dam reconstruction project.

- Indian Hill Raw Water Line and Pump Station (Jon-Eric) - Being designed from AECOM. They are proposing a location in the woods on the east side of the reservoir with access from Indian hill street. Jon Eric prefers a West Side location. Still discussing the options. Will eventually approach West Newbury with the proposed location. East side option is 800 feet longer. Costs are the same, but there is a stream & wetland crossing; 1000 foot gravel driveway associated with the east side option. The W. Newbury Conservation commission may have more concerns. West side would follow the street.
- Water Supply Protection and Treatment Projects: Amesbury Interconnect – emergency and permanent, WTP Upgrades, watershed management (Jon-Eric) - Outstanding questions on technical memo from environmental partners have been answered. Jon Eric wants a peer review to ensure there is sufficient pressure to reach all the homes required. Expect this to take a few weeks. Permits exist with MASSDOT; The MOU with Amesbury is still outstanding; queued behind answering the technical questions on the water pressure.

- WWTP Flood Protection - sidewalks (Jon-Eric) - On-hold; design not started. Company working on the design is the same company as working on Phillips Drive and company is swamped. Design has not been started.
- Central Waterfront Bulkhead Renovations (Andy) – On track for Winter 2023-2024.
- Central Waterfront Park (Andy) - Preparing bid package integrated plans for release. Contingent on the bids being within budget, the plan is still to complete phase 1 this year.
- PI / Reservation Terrace status (Julia) – Dredge has not yet restarted; it was paused due to the 12/23/22 storm and was supposed to start this week. Still on target to finish March 15.  
The next MRBA meeting is Friday Feb 3 at 10 am at PETA hall. Main agenda topic is the dredge.
- CSO monitoring and communication alert system/app (Mayor's office) - Jane will follow-up offline and hopefully will have an update next month.

**Topics not on agenda (raised as discussion):**

Status of Ordinance changes: Focus of the regulations working group has been on the checklist at this point. The workgroup is close to finalizing the questionnaire, but it is queued behind the MIMAP improvements because the questionnaire references the MIMAP.

Jane attended a meeting in Gloucester reviewing their wetland regulations and has opted for 2.4 feet and they are also putting together a questionnaire very similar to what we are doing.

Beyond Waterfront West there are small projects being proposed such as construction behind Leary's. This project would be a good test case for the checklist.

David Moon - Next Friday there is a meeting of the Great Marsh Revitalization task force Friday 1/27 at 10 am at refuge headquarters. Meeting is discussing marsh restoration efforts. David will be presenting on Audubon's living-shoreline resilience project at Joppa Flats. Julia will attend for the resiliency committee.

**Next Meeting:** February 15, 2023, 3-4:30pm

**Future guest speakers**

Mike Strauss - Energy Advisory Committee update

David Moon - update on living shoreline project.