

Newburyport Resiliency Committee (NRC) Meeting Notes
3 PM June 15, 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, Molly Ettenborough, Jon-Eric White, Barry Connell, Joe Teixeira, Connie Preston, Samatha Burke

Absent: Rishi Nandi

Other Participants: Megan Chiango, David Moon, Afroz Khan, Lela Wright, Mark Wright, Rick Taintor

Key Accomplishments May/June:

- MVP and CZM Coastal Resilience Grants submitted in May
- Hazard mitigation plan public meeting held, plan submitted to MEMA and minor changes are being incorporated before submission to FEMA.
- Resiliency brochure final reviews completed.
- Proposed FY23 Capital improvement plan includes a number of resiliency projects: initial design of the Indian Hill raw water line and pump station, emergency interconnect point with Amesbury, initial design of the lower Artichoke dam
- Grant submitted for preliminary design and permitting planning phase for the Artichoke dam
- MASSDOT has approved a permit for an emergency waterline across the Whittier bridge connecting Newburyport to Amesbury

AGENDA

- **Guest Speaker: Megan Chiango**
Megan is working on bringing a ghost gear retrieval project to Newburyport. This is a project to remove abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear from the oceans. Megan has been in contact with the Parker River Wildlife Reservation staff and they agree that a program like this would be beneficial. A grant would be obtained to employ fishermen in off-season to locate and retrieve this gear. The ghosted gear (primarily lobster traps, would be returned to the owners if possible, the remainder is typically recycled for energy. But this is not ideal. There is a state law that prevents reselling of this gear. Megan came to inquire what the resiliency committee thought of retaining walls created from these lobster pots, as is being done by fishermen in the Bay of Fundy in Canada. Megan is looking for a better reuse/recycle program for the lobster pots.

Jon Eric raised a concern that salt water would infiltrate the plastic which covers the steel on the ports and would cause structural damage overtime. The issue is holidays (pinholes and voids in the plastic coating that would expose the underlying steel to corrosion). Jon Eric recommended if the lobster pots are used for retaining walls, it be limited to low retaining walls for landscaping for peoples homes. These are referred to as gabion walls. Definitely keep less than 5 feet and don't put anything that would put people at risk. From the resiliency committee perspective, there would probably be limited use because of concerns about long-term integrity.

Sarah asked if they might be viable for the mussel beds that Audubon is researching. Sarah will connect Megan and David Moon offline.

- Approval of 4/27/22 mtg notes - The minutes from last month were approved. Sarah will provide the PDF to Julia for posting.

- Committee Updates
 - CommEdu
 - Storm Surge Speaker Series - June (Sarah)

On June 22nd (next Wednesday) Molly Ettenborough and Mike Strauss, Chair EAC, will speak on green-house gas emissions in Newburyport, residential electric supply aggregation, city ordinances enacted last year and future changes. The talk will be at the Newburyport Senior/Community Center at 331 High St, Newburyport, MA. Doors will open at 6:30 and the talk is at 7 pm.
 - StoryMaps (Brett)

Website Status Report

 - Some progress was made creating a StoryMap that overlays city's resiliency projects on a map of Newburyport. The prototype can be seen at:
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3d198611d5484f6d8d1ee888abbc2bc3>
 - When we get an official account with MVPC we'll be able to use the GIS maps they've helped create for the city.
 - We could use some getting project descriptions that can augment the brief summaries displayed in the map view.

- Still working on how multiple StoryMaps will be tied together on the city website.

Molly and Jon Eric asked if these would be hosted on a separate site? Brett answered that this will be hosted on the MVPC site, but linked to the city's resiliency website page. This would supplement the information on the resiliency web page.

Jon Eric asked how many links can be added to each project. Brett does not know of a limit. Can't embed links or anchor text to other websites with the free/demo version he is using. Can add buttons. Ideally all the links would go to details archived on the city's website.

Jon-Eric stated that we need to have a protocol for having an appropriate department head or responsible person review the text before it is uploaded.

Jane noted that she liked the compelling nature of the site and hopefully if we are awarded the MVP resiliency grant we will have funding to expand on this idea with other maps.

Barry - Likes the interactive nature of the tool. Barry stated that we should establish a policy about what gets loaded onto the page. We need to make the content consistent with the mission of the resiliency committee. Julia agreed with Barry, it will be tempting to use for other groups outside the resiliency committee. Other groups could have similar pages that they make/maintain.

Action item: (Jane) Comm/Ed committee to propose a policy for review and for what projects would be included on the page. Considering a project sheet template.

■ City Website Overhaul (Molly)

There was an internal meeting yesterday regarding the city website overhaul. Making progress. Molly doesn't expect it will take too long once the designers are given the information. This will be the same civic-plus platform but an upgrade of the look/feel to make it more user friendly. The user experience will be better and there will be training to allow other people to provide updates, such as the chair of a committee. Looking to get a better understanding of what users want. Will be sending a survey to residents, looking at what should be the top menu items.

Molly asked the committee to look at what changes need to be made for the resiliency committee page. She would like this info in the next couple weeks.

Action Item: (Jane) Comm/Ed committee will review/propose changes to the resiliency page within the next 2 weeks.

There was also a discussion on logos. There is a need for logos to be cohesive between departments/committees etc. Barry recommended the clipper ship be the basis for the logo, rather than the city seal. Molly noted that they will also be looking for photographs for the city page.

- Brochure (Julia)

After sending the final draft around, Molly had a few additional changes and those have been sent to Bill for incorporation. Need to determine method/timing of distribution once finalized and printed. Based on the current timing, we will miss the spring tax bill. Separate mailing may be too expensive. May use social media to promote in the short-term and distribute it with the next tax bill
- Tracking Resiliency Plan Implementation Progress (Jane)

Jane and new member Sam Burke are developing a tracking system for Resiliency Plan action items and implementation. There is nothing to present yet, however they will likely be contacting committee members over the summer to get feedback on the status of various Res Plan action items. *There has been a lot of progress made in the last year and we want to make sure to keep track of it!* The project will also work to identify other areas where we might need more focus.

An additional intention of the project is to be able to better highlight the City's resiliency efforts on the committee's webpages.
- Regs Working Group
 - MIMAP/Resiliency Questionnaire (Jon-Eric/Jane)

Julia noted that there was a good meeting of the regulatory working group this morning. The two major topics discussed were the sea-level rise map overlays and a climate resiliency checklist. Jon Eric and his intern will be generating these data layers over the next couple weeks to send to MVPC to then be incorporated into the city's MIMAPs.

The other topic was reviewing a resiliency checklist that Jane drafted. Working through a checklist for developers and project applicants in Newburyport. Reviewed checklists from NY, Boston, Toronto. Would cover flood zones, sea-level rise, heat, drought, extreme rainfall and how projects would try to incorporate resiliency measures into their project to address these issues. The intent is to use it as an educational and informational gathering tool.
- Finance & Funding
 - Grants (Julia)
 - CZM Coastal Resilience Grant was submitted at the end of May in conjunction with Mass Audubon for salt marsh resiliency study.

- Meeting tomorrow with MEMA and CZM on June 16th to discuss the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant. Molly wondered if there was additional ARPA fund available this year. Julia will ask at the meeting.
 - CIP/Budget (Jane)
 - Jane met with the Mayor, Tony Furnari, Tom Cusick, Connie Preston, Jon-Eric W, and Molly E to discuss water supply related infrastructure projects and budget priorities.
- Other Business
 - Nbpt Hazard Mitigation Plan (Julia)
 - Received minor comments back from MEMA on submitted HMP. MVPC is incorporating necessary changes prior to submission to FEMA.
- City Project Updates
 - Lower Artichoke Dam Reconstruction Project (Jon-Eric)
Submitted application for Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Program grant to cover the design in FY23. Feedback so far is positive.
 - Indian Hill Raw Water Line and Pump Station (Jon-Eric)
Funding for design has been included in the FY23 proposed Capital Improvement Plan. AECOM has been chosen as the engineering design firm for the raw waterline. Contract is in progress.
 - Water Supply Protection and Treatment Projects: Amesbury Interconnect – emergency and permanent, WTP Upgrades, watershed management (Jon-Eric)

MA DOT approved a permit for putting a temporary waterline on the Whittier bridge. Need IMA agreement with the Mayor of Amesbury. Then can bid the work to build permanent connections on both sides of the river. City Council approved designating ARPA funding for the Amesbury emergency interconnect points in March. (ordr00336_03_28_2022)
 - WWTP Flood Protection - sidewalls (Jon-Eric)
No updates.
 - Central Waterfront Bulkhead Renovations (Andy)
No Updates
 - Central Waterfront Park (Andy)
There was a productive meeting with Sasaki Associates on resiliency plans, primarily focused on the design of the small restroom and the placement of that building. The City Council and ad hoc committee was advocating for pushing the restroom building to the west, but that would put it in the flood zone. Sasaki will propose raising the elevation of the slab of the building and positioning it outside the flood zone. Assumption is net-zero building with solar panels. Barry asked if the plan was for slab or pilings? Discussed both, but Sasaki is assuming a slab that could be relocated or raised in the future if necessary. Jon Eric asked if Sasaki will provide a written summary on the resiliency aspects. Andy said yes, they will provide a memo on resiliency aspects. Jon

Eric said the ad hoc committee recommended 40 inches above FEMA floodplain for the floor. Andy said the slab is proposed at 15.33 feet.

PI Reservation Terrace status (Julia)

- The Army Corps is awaiting bids for the Merrimack River Dredge project. Bids are coming in now and the bid opening will be on June 24th. Work anticipated to begin in September 2022. Connie asked what is the probability of getting a good bid this year? Julia said they have increased the ceiling for the bids based on last year's bids.
- Waterfront West (Jane/Andy)
No update
- New Business
 - Future meetings - in person or zoom? **Action Item:** Jane will poll members off-line.

Next Meeting: July 20, 2022, 3-4:30pm