

Newburyport Resiliency Committee (NRC) Meeting Notes
3 PM August 24, 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, Andrew Port, Brett Lefebvre, Jane Healey, Molly Ettenborough, Connie Preston

Absent: Sarah Tappan, Jon-Eric White, Barry Connell, Joe Teixeira, Samatha Burke

Other Participants: none. *The city calendar entry did not include the participant link for this meeting. This was an oversight because the meeting date was changed.*

Key Accomplishments July/August

- Resiliency brochure final edits completed and it is ready for printing.
- With the help of Tighe and Bond, the city received an \$84k grant from EOEEA to help fund a conceptual design solution for the Lower Artichoke dam.

Membership updates - Rishi is stepping down due to time constraints. Jane noted that we are down a couple people and encouraged people to consider volunteers.

Final review of the Resiliency Brochure - Julia

- Julia shared the Resiliency Brochure with the final edits incorporated. New section on the back page of the brochure includes the mayor's quote and the QR code. The brochure is now printer-ready. Will be printed and also put up on the web-site. Since we've missed the tax bill, it will be available at city hall, chamber of commerce, future events similar to the "get to know your community" event that was held during yankee home-coming. Will provide some to the schools, senior center. Jane commented that the brochure looks beautiful and we will re-use it on the web-site. Brett asked how many will be printed. The PI brochure was over-printed, so will look at the pricing tiers and will start with a conservative number.
- Action Item: Julia will talk to the mayor's office about the next opportunity to mail.
- Action Item: Jane will talk to the mayor's office about how to pay for the printing and other Resiliency Committee expenses. The Resiliency Committee currently has no budget. If necessary, Julia can fund from the conservation commission budget but feels it should be funded from the Resiliency Committee.

Web-site StoryMap discussion - Brett

- Have been making progress on a draft story map to document the projects that the city is working on related to resilience. The draft has placeholders for 9 projects currently, but the information is what the volunteers have scraped from the various minutes and websites. We will

need someone with in-depth knowledge on the subject matter to review and make sure the content is correct.

- Andy - purpose of the story map is to provide information on the project. Question was raised whether MVPC could spend some of their time helping to create story maps. Want to make sure that the Resiliency Committee is able to make updates. Brett responded that absolutely the resilience committee volunteers will be able to make edits, but need support in reviewing the content from the subject matter experts. Andy said city staff members can review content for accuracy.
- Jane noted that there had been a meeting with Steve Lopez at MVPC last week on the process to update and to make sure that the resiliency committee volunteers would be able to make updates.
- Andy supports asking MVPC for technical time for this work. Andy will write the response to MVPC.
- Action item: Brett will distribute the link to the draft storymap to the Resiliency Committee members. The current draft is using a free-account. We need to fund an account with MVPC to have them set up the account.
- Brett explained that the value of using MVPC is that it will give us access to the MVPC modified maps.
- Andy suggested that to keep the information up-to-date we need the city official who is responsible for each project. Jane has put together an initial list of the projects and person responsible.

City Website Update - Molly

- Beta is complete for the look/feel. Andrew Levine is driving the review and expects the changes to be completed in 2 months.
- Once the update is complete, will still have the ability to update each page.

Speaker Series Update - Jane for Sarah

- 2040 Documentary update - September 28, 7pm. Tickets are available on the Firehouse website and are free for the first 100 people.
- Molly noted that Nourish North Shore has their event that night as well.

Tracking Resiliency Projects Progress - Jane

- No update. Jane would like to have a year-end update for the Resiliency Committee in September/October

MiMAP Flood Map Updates - Julia

- Jon Eric provided pdf updates for MIMAP that included FEMA + SLR projections and Mean High Water + SLR projections. There are overlays for the current FEMA Flood plane, then lines for plus 2 feet up to 10 Feet in 2 foot increments. The same for Mean High Water plus 2 feet to 10 feet.
- Julia noted that the Mean High Water projections are important for people to be able to visualize the twice daily high-tide water lines in the future. These are easier to conceptualize than the 100 year floods.
- Molly suggested adding a note that MHW translates to the twice-daily high-tide water level.
- There are no-dates shown on these map projections.
- When residents go to MIMAP on the city's website in the future, hopefully they will have some choices. We anticipate that there will be a Special/Expanded/Future Flood Hazard area (exact title not yet decided), which will be the flood hazard area taking into account sea level rise. The City's Conservation Commission Wetlands Protection Regulations currently require an allowance

of 40" of sea level rise be incorporated in projects located in the FEMA A and V zones. The MIMAP project will address areas beyond the A and V zones and so are out of current FEMA jurisdiction. The Special Flood Hazard area maps will show the FEMA floodplain plus 4', 6', 8' and 10' of SLR. Four feet will be the default map, and the intent is that when permit applicants are asked if they are in the future sea level rise flood zone, this is the map they will use. The other layers (6', 8' and 10') will be available for informational purposes. The maps will also be available to the public, not just project proponents.

- UVM summer intern Lance Olsen was responsible for these updates and he did a great job.

Grant update - Jane/Julia

- We did not receive the MVP Communication Grant that we applied for. We were told that we did not receive the grant in July but we won't hear feedback on why until September. Julia will confirm the date for the meeting.
- We did not receive the CZM grant with Audubon.
- Julia noted that we are getting ready to start preparing an application to FEMA for Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant for buyouts of 2-3 houses on Plum Island. There is more money this year and a lower matching fund rate than most years. This will require funding outside consultants for the cost-benefit analysis FEMA requires and the application itself. Looking to hire GZA to work this process. Application due at the end of October. It is submitted through MEMA to FEMA. If the grant is funded, then the consultant cost is reimbursed. The initial estimated cost for GZA was \$8K although this may go up. Connie asked if the funds were already budgeted, Julia didn't know and deferred to the Mayor's office. Connie asked about the homeowner process. Julia explained that this is a voluntary process for the homeowners. Homeowners have requested the city support them with the application process. Julia believes that during the application process, the city council has to agree to provide a 10% match. Land if acquired becomes open space. Connie asked about the impact of the dredging project. Julia said that this was a good question and one of the reasons that we didn't go forward with this last year. Have been told that the application is based on current conditions.

Hazard Mitigation Plan - Julia

- HMP is with FEMA for review.

Drought discussion:

- Jon-Eric had electronically shared thoughts on the drought situation and the impact on resiliency.. Specifically he raised a concern about the risk of fires and the impact on the water supply as drinking water is potentially diverted from the reservoirs to fight fires.
- Jane asked if members of the committee had thoughts on how the committee should engage in this conversation. Molly noted that the watering ban requirements were driven by specific water level metrics in the reservoirs but that she has been talking to the water department about not waiting until we hit these levels and be more proactive about instituting watering bans earlier. Molly suggested a conversation with Tom Cusick at a future meeting.
- Julia and Connie agreed and suggested that the water ban criteria include fire hazard levels. Molly also noted the different criteria in surrounding towns is confusing to residents.
- Molly and Connie also suggested that water conservation efforts should be proactively communicated to residents every summer.
- Action Item; Jane will queue this up for the next agenda and will talk to Tom about attending.

City Project Updates:

- Lower Art Dam Reconstruction Project: Jon-Eric
Jon-Eric has received Tighe and Bond's design fee contract proposal and will hopefully get that executed at the Water and Sewer Commission Mtg on 8/24.. With the help of Tighe, the city receives an \$84k grant from EOEEA to help fund the contract.
- Indian Hill Raw Water Line: Jon-Eric
AECOM is submitting their design fee contract proposal to the Water and Sewer Commission today for signature.
- Water Supply Protection and Treatment: Jon-Eric
 - Amesbury Interconnect: We received MassDOT's Highway Access Permit to allow us to lay the pipe on the Whittier Bridge. Tom Cusick is tracking the additional deliverables: Intermunicipal Agreement, installing connecting points, purchasing equipment, etc.
 - Water Treatment Plant Upgrades: CIP was not funded this Fiscal Year
 - Watershed Management: Tom Cusick is submitting Woodard and Curran's contract proposal to the Water and Sewer Commission today.
 - WWTP Flood Protection sidewalls: Under design. You won't see any approved construction-related funding placeholders in the CIP for this FY. If the design is completed this FY, then we'll seek funding again next FY.
- Water Street Lift Station: Andy -
Molly asked about the status of a grant for this project. Andy said we need to close this with Nancy. Discussions with PRWF about exchanging land but there are complexities. Molly and Andy suggested an update from Nancy and Jon-Eric
- Market Landing Park Project - Andy
Rick Taintor is vice chair of the planning board, Rick had asked about the dataset/assumptions that the consultants are using for the park design. This will be addressed at the planning board meeting on 9/7. Andy thought that this discussion would be of interest to the NRC.
- Bulkhead Project. - Andy
No update.

Next meeting will be the normal 3rd Wednesday of the Month at 3:30 and will include a guest presentation from the Conservation Law Foundation in Boston.