

October 10, 2023 Meeting Notes

Flood Committee

Attendees: Donnie Bowen, Lauren Kabler, Gary Koopman, Carola Wilson, Dave Damalouji, Elana Van Oudenaren, Stacy Milor, Tom Litke, Jay Loveless, Rick Crump, Mike Benton.

Discussion Items

1. Managing flood risk via ordinances, policy updates, construction standards, and other governing tools.

- a.** Rick Crump, director of Code Enforcement for North Beach, outlined a number of governing tools and policies that would help the Town manage flood risk and, in some cases, lower insurance fees and improve grant eligibility.
- b.** Foremost among these governing tools/policies are expanding the Critical Area designations, renewing the Town's participation in the FEMA-sponsored Community Rating System, refreshing construction ordinances to reflect the increased frequency of storm and coastal flooding, and re-establishing boundaries on certain roads and alleys via curbing, sidewalks, and greenways to improve flow of rainfall away from living areas.
- c.** Items of note in this discussion:
 - i.** Approximately 75% of the Town is currently designated as a Critical Area.
 - ii.** Participating in the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) program requires detailed reporting and is resource-intensive. The Town did participate in the program years ago, but dropped out, likely because of the resource drain. However, Rick estimates that participating in CRS could result in as much as a 50% reduction in homeowner flood insurance fees.
 - iii.** Considering any of these options clearly requires a robust outreach program to residents that explains, solicits support, and provides a forum for fact-based discussion.
 - iv.** It's clear that managing our flood risk requires a multi-solution approach that can solve problems that range from storms and tidal surges that flood 7th and 9th Streets to rainfall that habitually seeps into basements of homes west of Chesapeake Avenue.

2. FEMA grant review, identifying gaps, next steps for applying, and additional grants.

- a. Tom Litke, who manages various grant applications on a contract basis for North Beach, provided feedback from the Maryland's Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) on the 2022 grant applications the Town had submitted for upgrading the pump station on 9th Street and establishing a pump station at 7th Street.
- b. Tom reported that the MDEM was complimentary of our applications but advised they ultimately fell short in scope, particularly in comparison with applicants with much larger needs and who had the resources to provide considerable detail and quantifying stats. In its feedback, MDEM also cited a preference for a whole system approach to flood control. In our case, MDEM referenced including a project that would mitigate surge (e.g., a revetement as proposed in BayLand's Compound Flood Action Plan) in addition to the pump stations. Clearly, this whole system preference should be top-of-mind in our future grant applications.
- c. The discussion subsequently focused on which priorities identified in the Compound Flood Action Plan would: a) best meet the parameters of the various grants available via the "Grants Gateway" system managed by DNR; b) coincide with priorities set by the Town's Department of Public Works; and c) be worth the time and resources to apply **(the deadline is December 14)**.
- d. The grant priorities identified from the above discussion:
 - i. Stormwater system upgrades at Atlantic Avenue (see #3 on page iii of Compound Flood Action Plan).
 - ii. Stormwater system upgrades at 9th Street (see #4).
 - iii. Stormwater system upgrades at 7th Street (see #5).
 - iv. Stormwater system upgrades at Annapolis Avenue (see #10).
 - v. Stormwater system upgrades for Greenwood Avenue (see #15).

3. Department of Public Works Flood Management Priorities for 2023-24, Updates.

- a. In the way of updates, Donnie reported that the BayLand firm was 50% complete on the engineering plan for the 9th Street pump upgrade. The expectation is to have these plans completed, approved and out for bid by the end of 2023.

- b.** A similar system is envisioned for 7th Street. But such a system will require property acquisition and additional considerations given the available space. Donnie is planning to have BayLand develop the engineering plan for this station as well.
- c.** Donnie reported to the group that his 2024 plans include:
 - i. Upgrading the 7th and 9th Street pump stations.
 - ii. Adding a stone revetement along the boardwalk from Hatch's Corner to 7th Street to combat erosion.
 - iii. Engaging Calvert County officials in discussions on moving water from the northwestern end of Town, i.e., 5th Street, before it flows into the stormwater infrastructure in the main part of Town.
 - iv. Requiring silt fences on all construction projects.

4. List of 2024 Action Items/Priorities for the Flood Committee

- a.** Working with Town officials and staff to develop an outreach program that educates and engages residents on flood mitigation and the priorities established by the community.
- b.** Providing additional resources to the Town for pursuing grants and, should the Town decide, reapplying to FEMA's Community Rating System program.
- c.** Provide a review/comment resource for the Town as it refreshes and expands its governing tools to manage flood risks.