**EBFC Minutes 1/27/14**

Present were: M Miler, D Cope, T Pascarella, M Finberg, D Budin, H Friedman, P Davis, K Manuel, D Frazier, P Eskeli, B Birns, G Dutcher, K Holcherr, A & T Antonette, S & W Bates

The meeting began with a review of meeting date and times for 2014; the Commission will meet every other month at 10a.m. in Town Hall unless otherwise specified (May’s meeting will be held on Monday the 19th or Friday the 30th as Memorial Day is the final Monday that month); M Miller will continue as chair and T Pascarella agreed to continue as Vice-chair. Our mission was also reviewed and discussed, with the following changes *(italicized*) accepted:

* Identify flood risks in the Town of Middletown, Villages & outlying areas including the Towns of Roxbury, Halcott & Hardenburgh
* Educate & inform residents, businesses, government officials & local agencies of flood risks
* Work with local, state & federal officials & agencies to:

1. Identify projects & programs that reduce the incidence & impacts of flooding &
2. Work together *regionally & individually to fund & implement projects* & associated programs throughout our area &
3. Enhance & encourage economic development in flood safe areas &
4. Educate the wider public regionally as to the mitigation & flood planning & recovery efforts that are in process
5. *Work to coordinate & support local & regional communication & recovery efforts during declared disaster events across municipal boundaries*

(The above #5 is a slight reworking and consolidation of what we discussed, please advise if you believe I have missed the mark re: intent)

Margaretville Mayor Diana Cope spoke on the CRZ (Community Recovery Zone) program; 16 projects have been identified with NYS directing that the committee should focus on those projects that will qualify for CDBG DR (Community Block Development Grant – Disaster Relief) programs, which comes down to 5 programs for M’ville with 4 as back-ups in case the 1st 5 don’t qualify or meet specs. An LFA (Local Flood analysis) has been done and the scope is from the bulkhead to 4000’ below the Fair St. Bridge. Among the potential projects are the bulkhead, Bull Run, Bridge St., Fair St. & Swart St. bridges, MCS and Freshtown.

Pat Davis spoke about FEMAs potential change in standards, making 2’ of water substantial damage; currently based on visual impacts (roof down, foundation breaks, major structural damage). He also said that we hope to have all 3 Middletown municipalities in the CRS (Community Ratings System, FEMA) program by May with a potential score of 8, 7 being the highest score in NYS. Dean Frazier spoke to the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) getting easier, driven by recurrence, with Graydon Dutcher adding that we can use or leverage the CBA with regards to FEMA criteria. Davis said infrastructure projects are #1 priority as they do not involve the relocation of residences and businesses, eroding our tax base, and have the potential to make an impact on flood level reduction.

Kent Manuel spoke very briefly re: a new Voluntary Buyout Program via NYC DEP $ (13 million) with input from County & CWT as to program rules and goals, which are very close to being in sync with one another. Miller and Davis as well as Cope, Pascarella and Friedman raised concerns about tax base erosion and an absence of our voice at the table as we are not directly represented on the CWT or CWC board and all of these programs, including the $17 million the CWC has for relocations, predominantly effect Middletown & Walton. Frazier said the admin has not been set nor have the program rules for any of the programs and that we can attend CWC & CWT meetings.

Davis spoke re: a potential land bank and Miller mentioned the prioritization of developable land planning now, taking into account access to sewer and water, for future re-locations. A general discussion was then held regarding far ranging concerns about any other property acquisitions by NYC in our communities and other issues, including long-term economic impact and a need to study that prior to any actual relocations or buyouts being done. The municipal leaders will, along with the local and county planning department, meet to discuss and plan.

The floor was then opened for public comment T Antonette asked about stream maintenance. B Birns asked about the Mill St. Bridge in Flmnns, which is a mitigation project held up by FEMA buy-outs, but one that it is projected will happen this year.

The meeting was adjourned at approx. 11:37a.m. Next Meeting is March 31st, 10a.m. in Town Hall