

East Branch Flood Commission – 5/31/12 - Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:05. Present were Marjorie Miller - Middletown Supervisor and Commission Chair, Nelson Delameter – Middletown Emergency Operations Officer and Commission Vice-chair, Fleischmann's Mayor Todd Pascarella, Halcott Supervisor Innes Kasanof, Henry Friedman and Dave Budin for the Village of Margaretville, Karl Von Hassel – Hardenburgh CEO, Carol & Phil O'Beirne – Chamber & PAC and M'ville Planning Board, Susanna Finch – Middletown Planning Board, Jean Orr - Realtor, Rick Weidenbach - Delaware County Soil & Water, Phil Eskeli of DEP, Mike Jastremski - Delaware County Planning, Dean Frazier - Delaware County Watershed Affairs

Rick Weidenbach from Del. County Soil Water gave the assembled an EWP Project update. There are 7 projects in Middletown slated for design and completion by 11/22/12 and 4 in Halcott also being designed by DCSW with the same timeline for completion. Specifics in brief on the Middletown projects are as follows: Arkville Trailer Park – 1,145 feet of bank stabilization, Bull Run – 175 feet of bank stabilization, Dry Brook Rd. – 220 feet at George's Bridge, stabilization, Millbrook – 150 feet of road protection, MCS – 450 feet of channel excavation, Bushkill - 240 feet of work on the and in Fleischmanns – 10 sites with 2100 feet of protection and 6100 cubic feet of gravel removal including excavation work on both the Valkyrian and Delaware Court motel sites.

Mike Jastremski presented the Middletown, Flmns & Margaretville F.2 & F.3 sections of the final drafts of hazard mitigation plans; these sections identify vulnerabilities and can be tweaked for final approval up until June 14th by municipalities. The sections include a list of prioritized initiatives on which each municipality can base an action plan for future funding and community planning in the long and short term.

Innes Kasanof had previously asked that the group look into community outreach opportunities for what the Commission is doing during upcoming events and Carol O'Beirne volunteered to lead that effort, via her role in the Chamber, in which effort Miller offered to assist her. There was a brief discussion of how to get the local media to support and publicize our efforts in light of the Commission's stated intent to educate and inform. Miller will continue to reach out to the paper of record as well as the W'shed Post and she will contact WIOX regarding public service announcements and a half hour or hour-long show dedicated to the Commission's work.

Miller reminded everyone re: the Irene remembrance 8/30/12 She has

generated a draft guest list, and the committee for the event is meeting June 4th @ 10a.m. in Town Hall regarding the event (this meeting is open to everyone on the Commission), including designated tables for flood recovery and disaster preparedness info specific to each hamlet and village in Middletown as well as Hardenburgh and Halcott.

Miller also reminded all present that NIMS training has been scheduled for 9/10 & 9/14 at Town Hall with the 100 level on the 10th at 1pm and 700 level on the 14th beginning at 9a.m. with each session running for approx. 3 hours. Delaware County Emergency Services will be giving the training. Nelson Delameter suggested a State OEM Executive workshop for future scheduling.

Dean Frazier gave the Commission an update re: negotiations with NYC for flood mitigation funding; the outline the update is copied and pasted here, with some [notes added in blue](#):

The flood mitigation issue and the associated negotiations can be confusing. For the sake of clarity, here are some basic points:

Long Term Objectives:

- Help get people out of harms way, protecting communities and private and public property via voluntary programs that also protect water quality.
- Decisions will be community based or individually based business/resident decisions. This was adamantly supported and advocated by NYC on May 17th.
- A long-term flood mitigation program ([15-20-25 years out](#)) is needed, as it is a long-term issue. Three components, listed below, all based on partnerships and willing cooperation.
 1. An expanded Stream Corridor Management Program (SCMP) for flood mitigation projects and the development of science based analyses to support community decisions regarding projects. The City's offer includes some planning support.
 2. Long term Community Flood Mitigation Program - relocations, buyouts, and infrastructure upgrades/changes, taking into consideration socio-economic and cultural issues, based in science, developed under the SCMP. Extensive planning and technical assistance needed for this.
 3. Long-term Anchor Business Program to assist businesses in relocating ([via CWC](#)).
- **The Negotiation Process:** ([the next meeting w NYC is in June](#))
- Number one objective for negotiations: It is incumbent upon us, for the benefit of the communities, to acquire the funding for programs in as seamless and expeditious a manner as is possible. All other issues and objectives must serve that goal.
- Do not reinvent wheels that exist. Capitalize on existing funding ([CWC & SWCD](#)) arrangements to the maximum extent possible.

- A secondary priority is that no action during this process should put at risk the model of local delivery.
- Acquire needed funding for staff at Planning, DPW and SWCD that will provide the technical, planning and implementation support to communities in their decision making, as well as providing funding for proposed projects (due to the long term nature of the planning required for flood mitigation, the county is particularly interested in monies for planning dept., possible full-term employees – also for DCSW).
- We are making good progress with negotiating parties. Program components, structures and concepts appear generally acceptable to parties; a lot of work remains.

This process involves the entire west of Hudson – we must remain united with our partners, this may involve accommodation to achieve the overall objectives.

Frazier said the discussions are in their infancy but both the city's proposal and Delaware County's were strikingly similar in nature and that in the West of Hudson Watershed, Delaware County is leading the way on this. Miller reported on a meeting with the DEP in Middletown re: currently scheduled sewer extension projects and an openness on the DEPs part in acknowledging that with the potential post-Irene loss of properties (as well as 1996 losses) in the villages as well as in the hamlet of Arkville, further sewer projects i.e. extensions were on the table for discussion in light of a lessening of sewer in-flow due to those losses. Frazier stated the point is to connect new development as much as is possible to existing infrastructure, water, sewer etc. As a part of this discussion it was suggested that all planning boards have a joint meeting at some future date to discuss long-range ideas for developable properties in the Town of Middletown where relocations paid for via flood mitigation monies could be moved as a local priority is keeping residents and businesses in our villages and hamlets.

Dave Budin spoke regarding a desire to do a feasibility study for village expansion on the Rte 28 corridor as well as the possibility of tax breaks and other incentives for businesses in reference to relocation costs.

Phil Eskeli mentioned a complete East Branch - Grand Gorge to the Pepacton stream study is in the works (including Dry Brook & from Halcott/Vly Creek – Bushkill to the Reservoir as well, done by FEMA); Rick Weidenbach confirmed that the PAC committee approved funding such a study, which the DCSW has guaranteed approval of this month. Mike Jastremski added that the LTRC Grant received by Middletown and written by Delaware Cty Planning has the potential to help support this project and other long-range flood mitigation planning projects – he also mentioned that Kristen at Del Cty Planning had done an initial developable properties map for Middletown, which Miller

requested be forwarded to her.

The next meeting date for the Commission was set for 6/25, Monday, 10a.m. in Middletown Town Hall and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20p.m.