

1. Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 4/6/2022

Documents:

[FMAC MEETING MINUTES APRIL 6.PDF](#)

Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee Meeting

April 6, 2022

In attendance: Committeeman Sanjeev Vinayak, Committeeman Richard Wasserman, Alex McDonald, Martha Callahan, John Ruschke, Vic Benes, Miriam Kurtsoy, Neeraj Nagpal, Mike Roberts, Joe Esposito, Jim McKenna, Sara Sherman

In an opening discussion on flood mitigation, Committeeman Wasserman reiterated that all solutions are on the table. “If there is a good proposal at a good time in the township’s history to get something done, then it has a chance of moving forward.” Committeeman Vinayak suggested that the committee talk about one project and keep going in that direction.

The Committeemen reported that the Township Committee accepted the FMAC’s recommendation about the Futter building. The TC wants the committee to show the 2-D modeling and how it informed their decision on the Futter building.

Suggestions for the May 11 Public Meeting with the OEM team on storm preparation:

- Additional information can be posted on the township’s website
- Encourage Swift911 sign-ups
- Have a committee table at National Night Out (August) to provide information to residents
- Gather questions from residents about storm preparation
- Add to the Mayor’s weekly message
- Information can be attached to tax bills

Update on drainage and home elevation projects:

Drainage – The surveys are almost completed. Next steps are easements and designing the drainage system. That will be followed by bid specifications. Right now, we are on track for summer construction. Alex McDonald wants to get the easements in front of the Township Committee as soon as possible to move the project forward.

Home Elevation – The township has elevation certificates; applications have been submitted. The houses are not in the 100-year flood plain (X zone rather than AE zone) and do not qualify as houses that have experienced substantial damage. Mr. McDonald stressed the importance of getting the applications done for the three houses.

General questions about storm preparation:

- Does Millburn have a high ground shelter in the event of an Ida-like storm?
Mr. McDonald responded that during Ida the safest place to be was at home, and residents were advised to move to a higher point in their homes. The public library was used to house people who had been rescued from high water situations. Residents should be encouraged to identify a friend to shelter with if evacuation is necessary (that could be included in information provided to residents).
- John Ruschke asked if residents should be encouraged/required to raise the mechanicals in their homes to mitigate future flood damage. Committeeman Wasserman asked if an ordinance was necessary. Mr. Ruschke said this falls under the Uniform Construction Code. Mr. McDonald noted that the town is not currently enforcing the Code. Martha Callahan said that enforcement can apply to new construction. She pointed out that the South Mountain neighborhood doesn't have many teardowns and the Engineering Dept doesn't usually see permits for mechanicals. Committeeman Wasserman said that houses in So. Mountain that flood should have new mechanicals.

Rahway River Mayors Council Update

Alex McDonald reported that the Mayors Council met with the ACE last week. This meeting served as a reset. No project is being advanced, but there will be an evaluation in November. South Orange, Westfield, and Clark have been invited to join the Council. The ACE will be looking at the entire Rahway River Basin.

Members of the FMAC did not see this as encouraging news. Although Rahway River flood mitigation has the support of the NJ Congressional delegation, funding for any project has to be included in the Water Resources Development Act in the fall, and the ACE has to continue its study (which could take 2-3 years).

Plans for the public meeting on April 20:

- Broad overview of the 2-D modeling? (The committee needs to review first since this is still being evaluated)
- Updates on drainage and home elevation projects
- Communication with residents and the May 11 storm preparation meeting
- Communicate to residents that we are taking the longer view toward flood mitigation. Work is happening.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 (public meeting)