

MEETING NOTICE

STEERING COMMITTEE COASTAL RISKS AND HAZARDS COMMISSION

Friday, December 20, 2013
10:00PM – 12:30PM
Rockingham Planning Commission – Conference Room
156 Water Street, Exeter, NH 03833

DRAFT MINUTES

Attending: Cliff Sinnott, Sen David Water, Sen Nancy Stiles, Rep. Fred Rice, Rep. Chris Muns, Cory Riley, Sherry Godlewski, Jennifer Gilbert, Paul Kirshen, Roger Stephenson, Ann Scholz (telephone), Vicki Quiram (telephone), John Gilbert (guest), Julie LaBranche (guest).

1. Minutes from November 2013 Meeting

Sinnott apologized saying he had not had the chance to prepare the minutes for the November meeting and will try to have them at the next meeting.

2. Georgetown Climate Center – Application for in-Kind Legal and Policy Support

Cory Riley reviewed the grant opportunity for in kind technical legal assistance for researching policy and legal questions that may arise for recommendations that the commission may make. She discussed the general scope of the application discussed so far and said the Steering Committee would not meet again before the application deadline (January 3). It was agreed that the focus of the request would be to review adequacy of applicable statutes to address adaptation recommendations and requirements. Riley said she would distribute a draft of the application on December 30 for Committee member comments. The Committee authorized Riley and Sinnott to file the application along those lines.

3. Update from Science and Technical Advisory Panel

Dr. Kirshen reviewed the purpose of the Science Panel and said that in addition to providing advice about the varying and sometimes inconsistent scientific information on anticipated climate hazards, the panel will advise on the planning parameters that the Commission should use in framing its recommendations. He reported that the people who had been approached and agreed to participate include Dr. Cameron Wake and Dr. Matthew Huber from UNH, State Climatologist Mary Stampone from UNH, Paul Ryan from USGS and CHRC members, Steve Miller, Sherry Godlewski and Ann Scholz. He also intends to ask several others.

Sen. Watters said the Commission needs help sifting through the body of relevant science and guidance on which scenarios and expected outcomes are most relevant to possible Commission recommendations. C. Riley said that will be a fluid process since the science continues to change.

Rep. Rice said he is concerned that the Panel as described does not include anyone who might be said to represent a more skeptical view of climate change as a cause of increased coastal hazards. He said that he would provide a name or names for Dr. Kirshen to consider.

Discussion ensued about the necessity of including a skeptic on the panel. R. Stephenson said that any qualified scientist will by nature be a skeptic. It is critical that members of the panel be well qualified. Watters clarified that no new science is being done by the Panel and the Commission itself is directed to limit its scope to scientifically based, peer reviewed information. Sinnott summarized that we are in agreement that the basis of the panel's work must be in peer reviewed science and that skepticism is consistent with a scientific approach, and that the addition(s) to the panel must be qualified. In the end, it is will be useful for the Commission's understanding and for the credibility of our work if the Panel could review the alternative views and evidence and report their findings on the validity of such alternative views.

4. CHRC Agenda for January and February Meetings

January: Report from State Agencies on responses to projected coastal hazards (State Parks, Cultural & Historic Resources); report on results from Strategic Planning effort

February: OEP /FEMA Map presentation; Insurance industry

5. STRATEGY DISCUSSION – PART 2:

John Gilbert, former Chair of the NH Water Sustainability Commission, joined the meeting to complete the strategic planning facilitation started in December. The transcribed flipchart notes from the first meeting were reviewed. The final two questions in the sequence were then discussed:

What information will we need?

1. Information about Anticipated Future Conditions (ranges)
 - Sea level rise, 2050 & 2100
 - Areas vulnerable to coastal flooding, with SLR, plus storm surge
 - Precipitation changes
 - Temperature changesImpacts to wetlands and fisheries per SLR and flooding scenarios
2. Information about vulnerable assets
 - State (e.g. roads, bridges, parks, buildings etc.)
 - Municipal (e.g. similar to state)
 - Critical facilitiesPrivate assets (commercial, residential, utility, etc.)
3. Other Information needed
 - Business preparedness
 - PREP "COAST" like study of comparative costs to protect, repair, replace, abandon key public assets
 - GDP of vulnerable economic assets – can this be estimated?
 - Value of vulnerable public assets
 - Focus should be on public assets and public investments

It was noted that we have good reference material for obtaining the information we need in New Hampshire, including good floodplain mapping, LiDAR based coastal mapping, SLR scenarios the Piscataqua/Great Bay report by Wake, and upcoming SLAMM modeling and the RPC coastal vulnerability assessment (Tides to Storms).

What is the work plan or framework to achieve our objectives?

- Complete basic fact-finding by July 2014
 - 1st Interim Report: Nov. 1, 2014
 - Initial fact-finding report
 - Recommendations for initial legislative, executive & other state actions (municipal too?)
 - 2nd Interim Report: September 1, 2015
 - Complete fact-finding
 - Further recommendations
 - Final Report: October 1, 2016
 - Public Input:
 - Partner with Coastal Adaptation Workgroup (CAW)
 - Review input from other Coastal Adapt. projects
 - Begin Commission public input process after 2nd Report
 - Other Workplan considerations/methods
 - Establish Sector based Workgroups (after 1st rpt.)
 - Sector-specific research
 - Report writing
 - Work plan should be flexible/adaptable because may not have reached clear recommendations for 1st report (if so, report progress and initial findings)
 - Discussion about the actual production of the report: Several stated that it will be necessary to have professional support at least for the preparation of the report, whether coming from within an existing partnering agency or hired. Gilbert said that the Water Sustainability Commission report could not have been prepared by volunteer effort alone. DES staff did much of the writing and all of the report layout and production. It was agreed that this question will have to be visited again. Funding will likely have to be found to support this aspect of the Commission's work.
6. Other; Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 12:35 PM

Minutes prepared by:

Cliff Sinnott, Chair
Julie LaBranche, RPC Senior Planner