

New Hampshire Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission (RSA 483-E) Meeting Minutes

Newington Town Hall - Auditorium
205 Nimble Hill Road, Newington

May 16, 2014
10:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Members Present

Name	Representation
Stiles, Nancy	Senator, NH District 24
Watters, David	Senator, NH District 4
Rice, Fred	Representative, District 21
Becker, Dr. Mimi	Town of Exeter
Bird, Steve	City of Dover
Bowman, Peter	Alternate, NH DRED – Division of Forests and Lands
Cormier, Robert	Homebuilders and Remodelers Association of NH
Feighner, Edna	NH Division of Historical Resources
Fitzgerald, Brian	Alternate, Town of Rye
Gilbert, Jennifer (Commission Clerk)	NH Office of Energy and Planning
Godlewski, Sherry	Alternate, NH Department of Environmental Services
Huber, Richard	Alternate, Town of Exeter
Kinner, Peter	Town Greenland/UNH Coastal Response Research
Kipp, Jonathan	NH Public Risk Management Exchange (Primex)
Kirshen, Dr. Paul	University of NH
Kupper, Theodore	NH DAS – Bureau of Public Works, Design & Construction
Miller, Steve	City of Portsmouth
Morgan, Thomas	Town of Newington
Pimental, Kyle	Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Riley, Cory	NH Fish & Game, Great Bay NERR
Scholz, Ann	Alternate, NH Department of Transportation
Sinnott, Cliff (Chairman)	Rockingham Planning Commission
Stephenson, Roger	Town of Stratham
Wolek, Gail	NH DRED – Division of Parks and Recreation
Wood, David	Town of Hampton

Members Absent

Name	Representation
Borden, Rep. David	Town of New Castle
Muns, Rep. Chris	Representative, District 21
Caron, David	NH Municipal Association
Carroll, Patrick	Town of Rollinsford
Houle, Jamie	Town of Durham
Melanson, Paul	Town of Hampton Falls
Nyhan, Kevin	NH Department of Transportation
O'Sullivan, Michael	Town of Madbury
Pennock, Jonathan	UNH Marine Program & NH Sea Grant Program
Quiram, Vicki	NH Department of Environmental Services
Rice, John	Seacoast Board of Realtors
Stanwood, Sabrina	NH DRED – Division of Forests and Lands
Smith, Raymond	Town of Seabrook
Winslow, Phil	Town of Rye

Others Present

Name	Representation
Borden, Nancy	Town of New Castle
Couture, Steve	NH Coastal Program - Department of Environmental Services
Howard, Kristen	NH Coastal Program - Department of Environmental Services
LaBranche, Julie	Rockingham Planning Commission Sen. Planner
Ryan, Mary Kate	NH Division of Historical Resources
Wysmuller, Tom	Member of CRHC Science Advisory Panel

1. Welcome/Introductions

Chairman Cliff Sinnott called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. He began the meeting by introducing Theodore Kupper, who is the new Administrator at the NH Department of Administrative Services – Bureau of Public Works Design and Construction.

Sinnott asked everyone in attendance to introduce themselves. Introductions were made around the room.

2. Approval of Draft Minutes of April 18, 2014

Sinnott asked if the Commission had any comments or corrections on the April 18, 2014 minutes.

The one comment on the minutes included:

1. Under Item #3, the first sentence is missing "David Wood."

A motion was made to accept the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded. **All approved; Senator Stiles abstained; and none opposed.**

3. Real Estate and Homebuilder Industry Perspective on Future Coastal Risks and Hazards

Chairman Sinnot stated that John Rice could not attend today's meeting.

Robert Cormier of the NH Homebuilders and Remodelers Association of NH (HBRANH) began discussing the homebuilder industry's perspective on future coastal risks and hazards. He stated that one issue that the industry is running into is that towns are using regulation to allow growth and to not allow for children due to the taxes associated with schools. In the last six years there hasn't been a lot of need for new housing. He showed a long list of possible permits involved in home building. He stated that the HBRANH would like the Commission to consider that the towns need to allow flexibility in their ordinances. For example, allow cluster development in better protected areas to offset loss of areas along the coast being preserved. He stated that construction methods may need to change. For example, in Maine, many renovated cottages are being elevated. He stated there is a need to address how these elevated buildings will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.

Chairman Sinnot stated that the homebuilders are good references for property owners and sees them as good educators.

David Wood stated he is nervous about the increased costs to existing structures. Representative Rice agreed with David. He just saw an article in a newspaper about the cost of improvements.

Senator Watters said he was struck by the long list of potential permits and regulations that homebuilders are up against. He asked if there are other states that are looked at for getting it right. Robert responded North Carolina, which has many structures on piles.

Robert stated that regulations need to be sensitive, defensible, and based on science.

4. Establishing Working Groups: Recommendations from Steering Committee and Discussion

Chairman Sinnott stated that the Steering Committee met and discussed the Working Groups. He then asked Cory Riley to facilitate the discussion. Cory stated it is time for the Commission to think about the Working Groups and provide feedback. In June, it is anticipated that the Working Groups will have a more formal charge and a guidance template to use to complete their work.

The proposed Working Groups are: Inland, Coastal, and State Agency & Legislative. There is also a proposed Outreach group along with the Science and Technical Advisory group. She stated that we need to keep in mind the mission of the Commission, the products we need to produce,

and that there are a lot of resources and information out there.

Cory asked that everyone break into the three Working Groups and that members should go to the group where they think they should be. Each group had a facilitator, which were asked to cover the following issues and questions. Each Group was asked to give a brief summary of their discussion.

Spend 15 minutes on this: Based on what you have learned so far, the handouts, and what you know about coastal hazards and risks, please discuss:

1. Problems that need to be addressed (by legislation, policies, standards, guidelines, etc.)
 - Environmental
 - Infrastructure
 - Economy
 - Social
2. “Unknowns” to be monitored & planned for
3. “No-regrets” Policies
4. Barriers to effective action

Spend 10 minutes on this: Based on the discussion you just had, please comment on the following:

1. Do you feel like the proposed workgroups are a good way to tackle the problems, unknowns, no –regret policies, and barriers?
2. Based on your discussion, do you have suggestions for the kind of things the template and/or charge to the workgroups?

After reconvening, a representative from each group provided the following summary of their group’s discussion.

Inland Working Group – Presented by Cory Riley

- Likes the proposed Working Groups. Like the Coastal vs Inland to acknowledge their differences.
- Not sure that the State Agency & Legislative group should be separate. Need technical expertise from the state agencies in the other groups.
- Need to engage other town officials other than those represented on the Commission.
- Look at the Dover assessment as an example.
- Need to incorporate outreach early on in the process.
- Fiscal analysis for the Commission’s recommendations.

Coastal Working Group – Presented by Sherry Godlewski

- Likes the proposed Working Groups.
- Concern with communication with the State Agency & Legislative group.
- Representative Rice suggested having only 2 groups – Coastal and Inland. Senator Stiles disagreed and stated that the Steering Committee discussed having the Working Groups

meet on separate days so that someone could attend more than 1 group meeting.

State Agency & Legislative Group – Presented by Mary Kate Ryan

- Look at state-wide and across communities issues.
- What is needed at the state level to help communities.
- Look at lenses (environment, economic, infrastructure) since there is some cross-over between them.
- Need all to be on the same page in regard to future conditions.
- The Working Groups' template needs to be very explicit.

Cory asked to provide her any additional feedback about the Working Groups. She will provide additional information about the Working Groups at the June Commission meeting. She also stated that the Working Group will each have a chairperson, who will be responsible for scheduling meetings and having notes taken at meetings.

Cory also stated that the Steering Committee members are looking at previous groups reports, such as the Flood Commission report.

Sherry Godlewski distributed the 2010 policy consideration for climate adaptation and mitigation and the Municipal Roadmap for Climate Change Adaptation Plan Framework developed by the NH Coastal Adaptation Workgroup.

5. Science and Technical Advisory Panel – Report Status

Dr. Paul Kirshen stated he will be emailing the Panel's draft report, which will be 2-3 pages with a 10-page appendix, as soon as possible or at the latest June 19.

6. Update on FEMA Preliminary FIRM Map Release & Review Process of Rockingham and Strafford Counties

Jennifer Gilbert stated that the preliminary FEMA maps for the 17 communities in coastal Rockingham and Strafford counties became available on April 9, 2014. FEMA held two Community Coordination meetings on May 8, 2014. Three communities were represented at the Dover afternoon meeting and eight communities were represented at the Hampton evening meeting. The 90-day appeal period is expected to start in August 2014 and end in November 2014. UNH will be producing Changes since last Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) maps for each community and will be posted on OEP's web site.

Sherry Godlewski stated that the Coastal Adaptation Workgroup will be hosting a workshop on how communities can reduce their flood risk on June 12, 2014 at the Hugh Gregg Coastal Conservation Center in Greenland. One of the topics that Jennifer will speak about is the Community Rating System.

7. Business Continuity Planning & Seacoast Conference (June 17th)

Roger Stephenson discussed the upcoming Severe Weather, Flooding or Fire – Protecting your Seacoast Business meeting on June 17, 2014 from 8:00 to 11:30 AM at the Hampton Oceanfront Pavillion (www.seacoastbusinessandsevereweather.eventbrite.com).

Roger stated that the utility companies get climate change but small businesses don't have the resources to prepare themselves for climate change. In a 2005 report by Hampton Fire Chief Chris Silver, he stated that 80% of businesses had no business continuity plan and two-thirds would be impacted by closing.

Roger stated that the purpose of this workshop is to help local business begin their own business continuity plans. Ian Dyar of the American Red Cross will discuss ReadyRating and there will be a small panel of people discussing business continuity planning.

Chairman Sinnott asked if Roger could report back to the Commission about the workshop.

8. Member Communications/General Discussion

Edna Feighner and Mary Kate Ryan will be presenting about the climate change effects on New Hampshire's cultural resources on the evening of June 10, 2014 at Saint-Gaudens Historic Site. http://www.nh.gov/nhculture/mediaroom/2014/climate_change_presentation.htm

Steve Couture of the NH Coastal Program stated they will be starting soon to work on their five-year assessment strategy.

Ann Scholz stated the Union of Concerned Scientists will be hosting a webinar about the newly released National Climate Assessment with a focus on the Northeast. http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/science/national-climate-assessment-webinar.html

Steve Miller said based on survey results they are looking at having a shoreline conference on December 11, 2014.

9. Other Business

A. Meeting schedule and agendas

Chairman Sinnott stated the next Commission meeting will be held on June 20, 2014 at the Brown's Lobster Pound in Seabrook. Courtesy of Senator Stiles there will be chowder served at 11:30 AM. Roger Stephenson stated that Dave Burdick (UNH) has a study set at Brown's so this may be an opportunity for the Commission to hear from Dave after the chowder.

The agenda will include a presentation from the Science and Technical Advisory Panel about their draft report and a discussion about the Working Groups.

The Working Groups will begin meeting in the summer so there will be no full Commission meetings in July and August.

The next Steering Committee meeting may be held the second Friday of July due to the July 4th holiday being on the first Friday of the month.

B. Reminder: Local Solutions Conference, Manchester, May 19-20

Chairman Sinnott stated that David Wood would be the Commission's representative at the Local Solutions Conference.

C. New National Climate Assessment Released (<http://www.globalchange.gov/ncadac>)

Commission members were encouraged to look at the Assessment.

10. Public Comment

Chairman Sinnott asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Dr. Mimi Becker asked about the notifications about the meetings. Chairman Sinnott responded that he tries to get the agenda for the meetings on the Commission's web site a few days before the meeting.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM.

Meeting Notes Prepared By:
Jennifer Gilbert, Commission Clerk