

Great Bay –Inland Workgroup Meeting Minutes

CRHC Commission

November 21, 2014

Related to the meeting of the NH Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission – Great Bay Inland Working Group held on Friday, November 21, 2014, from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM in conference room D at the NH Department of Environmental Services, Portsmouth Regional Office, Pease International Tradeport, 222 International Drive, Suite 175, Portsmouth, NH 03801, (603-559-1500)

Attendees:

| | | | | |
|---------|------------|-----|--------------------------------|--|
| Steve | Bird | | <s.bird@dover.nh.gov>, | City of Dover |
| Sherry | Godlewski | Alt | <Sherry.Godlewski@des.nh.gov>, | NH Dept. of Environmental Services |
| Richard | Huber | Alt | <huber@acm.org>, | Town of Exeter |
| Peter | Kinner | | <peter.kinner@unh.edu>, | Vice-Chair Town of Greenland, NH |
| Tom | Morgan | | <planning@newington.nh.us>, | Town of Newington |
| Chris | Muns | | <chrismuns@chrismuns.net>, | Representative - District 21 |
| Kyle | Pimental | | <kpimental@strafford.org>, | Strafford Regional Planning Commission |
| Roger | Stephenson | | <r-stephenson @comcast.net>, | Stratham |

Notes:

Chris brought a recent mailing (that may have been received by all New Hampshire legislators) entitled “Global Warming: Crisis or Delusion?” from the Heartland Institute [One South Wacker Drive, #2740, Chicago, IL, 60606, Heartland.org, ClimateConferences.heartland.org, ClimateChangeReconsidered.org.] It lists Tom Wysmuller among the numerous “scientists” who question the risks of climate change.

The Great Bay Inland Working Group continued, as in the previous meeting, to fill in the template by considering recommendations for strategies.

For each strategy we collaborated to fill in the template with regard to:

- Actions Required
- Responsible Entity
- Impact on Goal (low, medium, high)
- Cost to Implement (low, medium, high)
- Ease of Implementation (easy, medium, difficult)
- Who will be impacted by this recommendation?
- When does this need to be done (now, soon, later)

Kyle brought and handed out to all participants a printout from a spreadsheet titled: “Inland Communities: Additional Strategies for Goal 3.” The spreadsheet was derived from his study of the Durham Climate Action Plan.

The group reviewed these strategies and added these and others to the spreadsheet developed during the previous meeting. The updated spreadsheets will be made available to the group soon.

Attention was directed to SENATE BILL SB-164 – “An act authorizing coastal management provisions in master plans” and there was discussion of the need to consider the relationship between the periodic revision of master plans, periodic revision of hazard mitigation plans, and future projections of sea level rise, especially the need to coordinate and combine efforts to update these plans.

It was noted that there needs to be more of a coastal issue focus as FEMA maps are considered.

Issues were discussed related to the Stafford Act.

[The Stafford Act - Robert T. Stafford

- Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as Amended April 2013 86pp.]

http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1383153669955-21f970b19e8eaa67087b7da9f4af706e/stafford_act_booklet_042213_508e.pdf

FEMA is restricted to fund restoration only to restore conditions as they were before an incident. Funding enlargement of culverts to avert future incidents, for example, is sometimes blocked by the current language in the Stafford Act, unless there was mitigation that was funded for the earlier incident.

In Salem, NH there was an incident that repeated several times and each time FEMA funded the restoration of the previous condition. It could be shown that taxpayer money would be conserved if FEMA funded mitigations such as enlarging the culverts.

It was proposed that the group recommend to the governor’s office that the federal legislature be requested to amend the Stafford Act.

Issues were discussed related to buyouts and relocations. Kyle offered to research some data on repetitive losses in inland communities, number of losses, valuations of losses, etc. to support consideration of revised policies regarding reconstruction after repetitive losses.

Slides are available from a Flood Manager’s webinar that shed light on issues related to preferred risk: where property owners that are not in flood zones get flood insurance for reduced rates, thereby helping to subsidize claims when incidents occur.

Issues were discussed related to the responsibility for disclosure of updates to flood zone risk by realtors, or by mandatory regulations to include such disclosures in pre-closing purchase and sales agreements. There is precedent related to septic tanks and radon testing.

There is a need to identify situations regarding the recommendations where additional enabling legislation is required. Reference can be made to the Vermont Law study for indications of where enabling legislation has been needed.

The possibility of requiring that hazard mitigation plans be included as chapters in master plans was discussed. If the Tides to Storms studies are funded as has been discussed then the effort and cost to include the results in the hazard mitigation plans and master plans would be much reduced.

Recommendations for designing above the base flood elevation (BFE) for new construction in communities should be explored. For example, new construction could be required to plan for BFE+2ft.

A recommendation to establish a state-wide Adaptation Coordinator office that would elevate visibility of New Hampshire climate adaptation efforts was discussed.

The consensus of the working group related to the individual issues discussed was captured during the meeting in the spreadsheet that will be made available soon.

NEXT MEETING:

12/19/14 8:00-10:00 AM before the full commission meeting 10:00-Noon