

FEMA Ad Hoc Committee

**Approved Minutes September 21, 2020**

**(approved at the October 6, 2020 meeting)**

The committee held a virtual meeting on September 21, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Randy Bartholomew called the meeting to order and welcomed Colin as a formal member of the committee. The Ad Hoc Committee members noted below were in attendance and Laura Walters from the Coastal Press was also on the call. No others were identified.

- Randy Bartholomew (Chair, South Bethany Town Council)
- Ed Bintz
- Robin Greenhall (not on the call)
- Ria Malinak
- Chip Mitchell
- Maria Vershel
- Colin Chasler

The minutes were reviewed with corrections to the names being the only modifications, Chip moved, and Ed seconded the adoption of the minutes of which were unanimously approved.

Randy outlined the main agenda items and reminded everyone that there are 2 separate LOMRs and we need to be mindful of addressing each. The first, which has already been proposed, covers “Riverine hazards” and applies to the west side of Route 1 and generally the first few houses in from Route 1 on the east side. The second LOMR (not yet been proposed) covers “coastal hazards” and will apply to properties east of those covered by the Riverine hazards LOMR. The primary discussion related to FEMA’s responses to the committee’s questions. It was noted that the United States Army Corp of Engineering (USACE) has a beach replenishment project scheduled for 2021. It was also noted that, to-date, the Town has not received any complaints from property owners regarding the proposed Riverine hazards’ LOMR. The discussions generated follow up questions that would be more specific regarding the methodology utilized in their conclusions. The follow-up questions follow:

- For the Riverine hazards’ LOMR, did FEMA use the same methodology in South Bethany as it used for neighboring towns? What is the date of the data FEMA used and is it the same date of the data used for neighboring towns?
- What is the date of the data FEMA is using for the coastal hazards LOMR?
- FEMA has previously informed the Town that it is using post-replenishment data for the coastal hazards’ LOMR because of the court case. The Town has reviewed the court case and does not read it as requiring the use of data as of any particular date or pre- or post-replenishment data. Please elaborate on FEMA’s views on this.

- If the coastal LOMR results in BFEs that differ from those in effect for neighboring towns, please explain how using post-replenishment data for the Town but pre-replenishment data for neighboring jurisdictions would comply with the statutory requirement discussed in the court case that flood maps develop data on a watershed basis to eliminate discrepancies in BFEs to the maximum extent possible.
- Regarding the coastal LOMR, why was the “Modified Retreat Methodology” selected over the other 3 alternatives and what were the three other alternatives that were considered?

It was suggested that the questions be submitted to FEMA in writing and that written responses be requested. It was further suggested that the Town of South Bethany coordinate a virtual community meeting allowing FEMA to present their methodology and their conclusions, followed by a public open question and comment period with a time allocation sufficient to allow all stakeholders to be heard.

Discussions relating to the impact to insurance premiums resulted in a conclusion that we present information regarding the changes to the flood maps and suggest that each property owner follow up directly with their insurance agent to determine potential changes to their premium. Insurance is too unique to each property and individual circumstances.

The next committee meeting will be determined based upon the responses to the questions and timing of the public meeting.

A motion by Ed, seconded by Ria was made to adjourn, unanimously approved.