

Town of South Bethany

Long-Range Planning Group Meeting (formerly known as Strategic Planning Group)

Meeting February 22, 2024 9:00 am Town Hall

Participants: Tim Saxton, Christine Keefe, Steve Farrow, Randy Bartholomew, Maureen Hartman, Renee McDorman, Ryan Dacey

The meeting began with an update on the Stormwater Infrastructure Project, which is currently in its first phase – inventory of stormwater drains and initial assessment of systemic problems. Code Enforcement Officer, Ryan Dacey, who has been tasked with locating all stormwater drains in the Town, has created an updated map of the system, and has located the majority of storm drains in Town. Public Works has uncovered or cleared them of vegetation and other debris. Issues have arisen regarding approximately two dozen drains/pipes which either are buried, have been blocked by bulkheads, compromised by tree roots, or are simply broken.

Town Manager Hartman educated the Group with the concept of “jetting” the drains. Recently a company was engaged that does stormwater drain remediation, which includes hydro-jetting. This involves using high pressure water to clean and clear out drain pipes. Several drains were jetted and the results were very positive. Ms. Hartman was asked by the Mayor to pursue a contract with this company for all the drains in our system that are viable. Mr. Bartholomew indicated that additional funds for this expense could come from the Infrastructure Reserve. The Mayor indicated that the FY 25 budget for the stormwater drains should be increased to accommodate additional maintenance and valve replacement for the system.

The Group determined that the next steps included identifying the valves and pipes that were not working, and possibly engaging an engineering firm to not only assess, but also design, construct, and fix the drainage system so that it prevents surface water from backflowing into the town’s existing infrastructure during storms and high tides. Funding for this type of remediation is unknown presently.

To obtain assistance with the expense related to a stormwater system retrofit, the Mayor, after learning about the Section 219 program, asked the Army Corp of Engineers for assistance with the project in January. The Town received a letter from the USACOE indicating their willingness to assist us with the design and construction of our stormwater system. Congress has to appropriate funds before the USACE can begin the process. The Town Manager was asked to find an estimate of the cost of a complete revamp of our current system.

In the meantime, the Town will continue to maintain/correct problems with our stormwater system and engage professionals to enhance it.

The following capital projects were reviewed and updated.

**Right of Way Project.** This is a Town Maintenance project that started in Fall 2023. It has been well received by the public and has made a significant difference to many streets. Phase 2 will begin in the Fall of 2024. The project is on schedule and needs no additional funding.

**GIS Mapping Services.** This Town data management software service will assist the Town with capital projects, planning, and location information of existing infrastructure. It will digitize current Town non-

digitized data and allow the Town staff to update data bases easily. The Town Manager is currently reviewing several bids to provide this service. Implementation can be expected by the end of FY24.

Code Rewrite and Review. Currently the Town is in the process of engaging a company to review, rewrite, and update the Town's Code. This Code update will help all parties who use the code to easily access and understand the sections of the Code that are pertinent to their needs. This project should be finished by the end of 2025.

York Road Flood Mitigation Study and Design Project. The Resiliency Committee has prepared a Scope of Work document following the receipt of a Grant from FEMA for a Flood Mitigation Study of the York Road Area. The Study should be completed in 2025.

BRIC Grant for Flood Mitigation Plan for Cat Hill Study. The Resiliency Committee received a FEMA/DEMA grant to commission a comprehensive study of the Cat Hill area. A list of the mitigation options and resiliency measures to mitigate the impacts of flooding in Cat Hill will be the end product. The study should be completed in 2025.

Raising Roads. Action plan for this capital project will be dictated to some extent by the results of the studies commissioned for York Rd and Cat Hill. In the meantime, the Town will continue to maintain and address specific issues with certain roads.

Raising Bulkheads. Action for this capital project will be dictated to some extent by the results of the studies commissioned for York Rd and Cat Hill.

Dredging/CWQ Planning. CWQ Committee reviewing several options. Grant funding for dredging difficult.

Beach Replenishment. There is an Economic Analysis for Shoreline Management Study being done now by DNREC and results should be released Fall 2024. There is the possibility of cost/sharing with either the County or Coastal Towns for beach "nourishment" (replenishment) projects. The Mayor continues to be actively involved with this issue.

It was agreed that SB property owner engagement regarding capital projects is important and that more information needs to be published regarding these projects and their impact. Chris Keefe will summarize the Group's project update and timeline in the Town's newsletter and additional Long Range Planning Group updates should be announced at Town Council meetings along with Committee and Department updates.

Additionally, it is important for our property owners to understand the financial impact of executing the recommendations in the studies we are have undertaken to date. The Group will be researching cost ranges for projects in the coming weeks.