

**Town of South Bethany
Resiliency Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 20, 2023**

In attendance: Edie Dondero, Chair; Joan Marini, Mike Powell, Town Manager Maureen Hartman.

Absent: Geoff Kolberg.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Dondero at 10:01 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes of November 21, 2023

The minutes of the November 21, 2023, meeting, with the addition of changes supplied by Dr. Marini, were approved 3-0-1 abstention by Mayor Saxton.

2. Public Comment Period

There was no public comment offered.

3. Finalize Draft Scope of Work for York Road Flood Mitigation Project

The Committee discussed the draft scope of work for the York Road project. Mayor Saxton suggested making the completion of work date by December 31, 2024, and the Committee agreed.

4. Determine Process for Hiring Consultant for York Road Project

Ms. Dondero reported due to the amount and terms of the grant, the Town is not required to put this out to bid, not required to do a request for proposal (RFP) and get multiple bids. The Town can take it directly to an engineering firm of its choice and engage them directly. Ms. Dondero stated she and Town Manager Maureen Hartman think it makes sense to take this project bid to AECOM, who has done the resiliency study for Fenwick Island and is working with DeIDOT on the U.S. Route One flood mitigation plan. Dr. Marini suggested coming up with a backup firm in case AECOM's cost is considerably higher than what is in the grant. Ms. Dondero and Ms. Hartman agreed if AECOM cannot do the project then the Town can put the project out for bid. Mr. Powell stated if the Town can talk to AECOM about what they would need to complete the study and gain any thoughts they have on where they can hold their costs down by having some other organization give AECOM the information they need, it might allow AECOM to do the work for a lot less money than if they have to subcontract everything.

Ms. Dondero stated she will get the changes for Ms. Hartman for her to submit to AECOM.

5. Discussion of Possible Funding Opportunities: FMA & BRIC Grants, USACE Section 219 program

The Committee discussed the role of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in potentially providing recommendations for land management and flooding issues. The Committee agreed on the need to balance immediate short-term fixes with long-term planning and implementation. Mayor Saxton mentioned contacting the USACE to assist with solutions by having a USACE representative attend the next Resiliency Committee meeting in January. The Committee discussed the possibility of bringing in an engineering firm to assess the functionality of the stormwater system in the Town. The potential cost of the assessment was raised as a concern, but the idea of seeking FEMA grants for the project was proposed as a solution. Ms. Hartman was tasked with working with the Town to develop a plan for the project, and the deadline for submitting the text to DEMA is February 1, 2024, with FEMA feedback expected in late summer.

Mr. Powell shared research about York Road and Carlisle Road, focusing on elevation and flooding issues. The research involved pulling elevation profiles for the entire length of these roads and collecting data from the Jefferson Creek tide gauge. Mr. Powell is interested in comparing storm events at the tide gauge with the road elevations to understand how deep and how often York Road gets overtopped. The data suggested that the typical storm event causes flooding on York Road for a 30-foot section to a depth of about 6 to 9 inches. The engineering contractor will use this data to determine the length of road that needs to be raised and how much elevation is required.

The Committee discussed the issue of flooding and potential solutions, such as raising roads and implementing drainage systems. The primary concern was the potential for floodwater to be trapped if roads were raised, leading to increased stagnation and potential damage. However, it was suggested that this could be mitigated by strategic crossroad culverts under the road to allow trapped water to drain. The Committee also touched on the role of the stormwater system, which was identified as a contributing factor to the issue. It was agreed that further investigation and engineering considerations were necessary before implementing any solutions.

Dr. Marini proposed a suggestion to visit adjacent towns' committees dealing with similar issues, with the aim of sharing insights and strategies. The Committee agreed to this suggestion and planned to get in touch with the Fenwick and Bethany committees to provide the necessary information.

6. Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

Ms. Dondero stated she will reach out to the Committee to schedule its next meeting in January.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.