

Town of South Bethany
Second Community Planning Meeting
Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2025

The second Community Planning Meeting of the Community Planning Advisory Group was held on Monday, September 22, 2025, at Town Hall, beginning at 10:35. In attendance were Mayor Edie Dondero, Councilwoman Cindy Van Horn (chairwoman), members Bob Biciocchi, Fred Reitzel and Art Burritt. Also in attendance were William (B.J.) DeCoursey and Jennifer Reitz from UD IPA, and Brent Jett, PE, from George, Miles, and Buhr, LLC. There were approximately 30 attendees in person.

Mayor Dondero gave a brief overview of the status of our contract with UD IPA encompassing the community survey, education on sea level rise (SLR), resiliency issues such as flooding, and possible solutions to deal with the related issues. The Town has worked diligently on the storm water drainage system and this work still continues.

Brent James spoke first, giving an overview of his previous presentation on sea level rise and the impacts on our community. He stated what we expect now in October/November with SLR will be our future in 15 years. SLR is caused by ice melt, the slowing of the Gulf Stream, more intense rainfall. The effects of SLR on South Bethany result in nuisance flooding, higher insurance rates, and saltwater intrusion. Brent is hopeful DE will start addressing the issue. Due to the lack of FEMA support, it can't just be left to the municipalities. Many DE communities are working and talking and taking the issues to the DE capital and Federal. Critical is the need for beach replenishment which is currently no longer available from the Federal government. The Back Bay Study by the ACOE is still expected to occur by 2030.

BJ DeCoursey discussed the survey results which totaled 422. The goal for the survey was to gain an understanding of what the community wants to accomplish with

respect to resiliency issues and understand their knowledge of resiliency issues.

- Respondent type was 55% part time and 28% full time
- Average length of ownership was 21.5 years
- 26% of respondents noted no issues, and 24% of respondents noted 5 or more issues

UD IPA will pull out ocean side respondents to give a better analysis of issues survey was addressing.

Jenn Reitz discussed the policy issues that respondents chose to address. Each CPAG meeting focused on a different issue.

The impervious surface meeting addressed the following:

- Need to strengthen the definition of impervious surfaces in the code
- Consider increasing to 55% each set back area (sides, front, back)
- Assemble a list of best management practices
- Offer incentives for addressing resiliency issues such as public recognition, etc.

The next meeting discussed parking and driveways.

- No asphalt/concrete would be allowed in new builds/renovations
- Require as driveways are redone, surface needs to be impervious

The last meeting discussed resilience funds.

- Look at Bethany Beach and Lewes who have resiliency funds
- Look at Lewes, Dover and Wilmington who have stormwater utility fees
- Develop a disaster relief fund. What is a disaster and what can funds be used for

Also addressed was raising bulkheads which is being addressed by another committee (Resiliency Committee).

UD IPA will present a final report in mid-October that will summarize recommendations which will be presented to Town Council. The meeting adjourned at 12:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Van Horn, Chair