

## **Minutes from the Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee Meeting, May 4, 2022**

In attendance: Committeeman Vinayak, Committeeman Wasserman, Alex McDonald, Martha Callahan, John Ruschke, Joe Esposito, Vic Benes, Miriam Kurtsoy, Mike Roberts, Colleen Kirk, Neeraj Nagpal, Jim McKenna, Sara Sherman

### **Introductory Comments:**

John Ruschke: he is calibrating the 2-D model and has been focusing on that before moving forward. They are still seeing the water flow in a way that residents say is inaccurate. He will do an additional survey; suggested meeting with committee members and walking around the South Mountain neighborhood. He is also looking at other aspects that don't require survey information as well as the ACE model. He also needs additional information on the (Glen Ave.) wall. Committeeman Vinayak stressed the importance of moving on the wall.

### **Drainage:**

Alex McDonald: the town has the metes and bounds information. Easement agreements will be on the May 17 TC meeting agenda. They are getting contact information to have a meeting with residents for feedback. Neeraj will reach out to residents. There is no progress on the Greenwood side reaching residents and getting their responses. Committeemen Vinayak and Wasserman offered to contact Greenwood residents.

Committeeman Wasserman asked about the cost of the proposed drainage projects. With two drainage projects and a design change, the project is estimated in the area of \$600,000. Mr. McDonald says there are no final construction documents yet, but there is available money that was previously allocated.

Engineer Martha Callahan is preparing the authorization to go out to bid on the easements for the drainage project.

### **Home Elevation:**

Mr. McDonald reported that the applications for home elevation have been given to TetraTech. There has also been interest from a home on Willow Street.

### **May 11 Meeting:**

The NJOEM Hurricane Survival Guide is on the township page. The Storm Preparedness meeting is scheduled for May 11 at Town Hall or on Zoom. There will be information available about an emergency kit. It was suggested that the FMAC team be invited to the SMCA Block Party on May 22.

### **Discussion on a wall on Glen Ave.:**

Jim McKenna said he was not clear on the benefits of the wall. John Ruschke said we are exploring the feasibility of a wall. Committeeman Wasserman noted that we need an accurate analysis of a benefit. Mr. Ruschke said he can have a better update for the next meeting.

Committeeman Vinayak observed that if we slow down the flow of water, we should push for the wall. If there is no benefit shown, we should move ahead.

Mr. Ruschke stated that the wall is not a cure-all; we would need a massive area to get drops in (water) elevation downtown. We can quantify, but there will not be a drop measured in feet.

#### **Resiliency Accelerator Program:**

Mr. McDonald reported that Millburn has been invited to join a NJOEM pilot program for communities that are flood-prone. Municipalities would identify issues that they want to solve. Millburn would be an “interested stakeholder” and would learn about available resources.

#### **Army Corps of Engineers information update:**

The ACE is developing a work plan. There will be an ACE meeting in November.

Mr. McDonald pointed out that storage upstream is key and Essex County has to be on board.

John Ruschke suggested that the committee might look at nonstructural improvements to mitigate flooding.

Committeeman Vinayak asked if we could attend any meetings with the ACE once we know what the FMAC wants to do.

**Barrier behind Millburn Standard:** A 4’ guardrail has been installed to keep cars or dumpsters from falling into the river while allowing water to flow through.

#### **Glenwood Report:**

Miriam Kurtsoy said there is too much water going into the Van Winkle; addressing the problem would require pump stations. The options are limited. Mr. McDonald said that area has not been looked at since the 1939 Diversion Works. Martha Callahan said the area is a large watershed that would be difficult to divert. It would be very expensive and not a huge benefit.

Miriam suggested expanding the channel into the Arboretum and providing some holding capacity. This may have an impact on 50-year storms. Committeeman Wasserman suggested that this may be an appropriate time to discuss with the Arboretum. Joe Esposito suggested that this be investigated before the Silverman construction begins. Other related questions: What would be the environmental impact? DEP involvement?

Mike Roberts said that the Glenwood sub-committee reached out to the Short Hills Association and want to get a committee together to talk to neighbors in Glenwood, set up a meeting, and deliver letters to residents.

It was agreed by all that there is a need for both a South Mountain and a Glenwood walk-around in the near future.

**Next internal FMAC meeting: June 1, 2022, 8:30 a.m.**

