
Coastal Hazards Adaptation Team (CHAT) Work Session #32

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

2:00-4:00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

I. Present

Liz Durfee – Planner/Meeting Facilitator
Barbara Kravitz – Hampton Beach Area Commission
Tom Bassett – Resident Representative
Deb Bourbeau – Resident Representative
Brianna O’Brien – Hampton Conservation Coordinator
Jay Diener – Hampton Conservation Commission Vice-Chair
Jason Bachand – Hampton Town Planner
Jennifer Hale – Hampton DPW Director
Bob Ladd – Hampton Village District Precinct
Rayann Dionne – NHDES Coastal Program
Nathalie DiGeronimo – NHDES Coastal Program

2. Approve meeting notes from October 2021

Mr. Diener motioned to approve the October 2021 minutes and Tom Bassett seconded. All present were in favor with Ms. Hale, Ms. Kravitz, and Ms. Bourbeau abstaining.

3. Relevant Flood Updates

Mr. Bachand shared that the Master Plan steering committee meets tomorrow night. They are planning a January 2022 public outreach effort called Community Conversations where 6-7 topics will be discussed. The PREPA Grant consultant has completed the Town ordinance audit and provided draft amendments that incorporate recommendations from the NH Coastal Flood Risk Guidance. The amendments will undergo internal review with a public input session planned for January 2022.

Mr. Bassett commented that this past weekend’s King Tide caused widespread flooding. His daughter and her husband who live in their home on Gentian Road could not reach the beach by foot. His daughter entered her flood photos into the Rising Tide photo contest. Ms. DiGeronimo noted that photo contest voting ends on tomorrow and shared the link.

Mr. Diener gave an update on the Estuary Management Plan. The consultant, FB Environmental, is currently conducting a document review related to estuary health and drafting high-quality maps. The timeline is to complete the plan by the end of 2022, but along the way, there will be opportunities for public input on draft chapters. Mr. Diener noted that FBE is also working as a subcontractor on Hampton’s Master Plan Natural Resource chapter.

Ms. Kravitz asked Mr. Diener if there is a map that outlines the area that's being studied. Mr. Diener shared that the area of interest is the entire estuary which extends from the Black River up to Meadow Pond. He would look into providing a project-specific map.

Ms. DiGeronimo was pleased to share that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) recently voted unanimously to support adding the Floodplain and Resilience staff position to the upcoming NOAA Project of Special Merit proposal. She thanked Ms. Hale for her additional support.

Ms. Kravitz shared that the HBAC, with Ms. DiGeronimo's and Ms. Howard's support, has finalized a memorandum of agreement allowing the Coastal Program and NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NHDNCR) to administratively move forward with the HBAC Master Plan update. Once Governor and Council approval is obtained, they will draft a Request for Proposal to onboard a consultant.

Mr. Bassett added that he's part of the review committee for selecting a project lead for the Neighborhood Technical Assistance Program (NTAP). He was pleased to see several well-qualified candidates.

Ms. Dionne shared that in her new role with the Coastal Program she'll be supporting the Flood Smart Seacoast Project. One of the initiatives that she thought would be of most interest to CHAT is the partnering of RPC and the Town of Hampton to develop a just and equitable flood mitigation and relocation program.

Ms. Durfee noted that the Path to Resilience outreach project is well underway. They are creating a video timeline for the resilience efforts in Hampton. If CHAT members have any flooding or other relevant photos for incorporation into the video, please email them in the next couple of weeks.

4. CHAT Membership Update

Ms. Durfee shared a membership table organized by representation type including term expirations and vacancies. She pointed out areas where attendance has been low, the two current vacancies (Budget Committee and Zoning Board), and the need for a couple of alternate resident representatives. Mr. Diener has reached out to the Budget Committee and requested they select a new representative at their upcoming meeting. Ms. Durfee will confirm the ZBA representative for next the meeting.

5. Public Works Update on Flood Studies

Ms. Hale gave an update on the progress following the King's Highway and Ashworth Ave flood studies. For the King's Highway drainage system, the current timeline has the draft preliminary designs completed by the end of November, finalized in January, and permitting in May/June. One of the next steps is to perform field verification work to evaluate the proposed discharge/outfall locations relative to private and public lands and assess environmental permit feasibility. Once this is complete they will begin holding public input sessions/hearings. The King's Highway project has been divided into two phases. Phase I involves a full drainage system and road resurfacing from Gention Road down to 10th St. The

second phase will extend from Gill St and Redman Ave down the southern side of King's Highway beyond Meadow Pond. Ms. Hale shared that the town is looking for additional funding opportunities such as NHDES, FEMA, ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) to implement recommendations from the flood studies. Having a list of ready-to-go projects increases Hampton's ability to capitalize on funding opportunities, lessens the taxpayer burden, and helps to keep momentum. Recognizing that recommendations that align with funding eligibility requirements will advance first.

Ms. Hale also noted that the ditch remediation work associated with the King's Highway project and funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant will be going through August 2022.

For the Ashworth Ave flood study, no recommendations are moving forward at this time. The proposed alternatives are more complex in comparison to the King's Highway area and their cost-benefit ratios need further investigation.

Lastly Ms. Hale shared that there is no construction funding proposed on the 2022 Town Warrant. There is still the 2020 warrant article funding of \$188,000 for grant match and moving things forward.

Ms. Kravitz asked if the flood/engineering studies included discussion or thought about the installation of berms or seawalls. Ms. Hale responded that a berm was recommended along Greene and Gentian Road and they are looking at the environmental permitting feasibility. The installation of berms and seawalls was also a recommendation in the Ashworth Ave study. However, the cost may outweigh the benefit, but they are continuing to review/consider.

Mr. Bassett appreciated the update and asked if he could share the information with his neighborhood. Ms. Hale responded yes and noted that announcements for public input should come out at the end of the year.

Ms. DiGeronimo added that the Coastal Program will be releasing an ARPA-funded RFP in January that could support some of the recommended flood study projects. Several Coastal Program staff are keeping a lookout for funding opportunities. She also added that the Coastal Program will be releasing the Hampton Tide gauge report prepared by Kirsten Howard and Tiffany Chin in early December.

6. Barriers to implementing recommendations? How can CHAT help?

Ms. Durfee asked if there are ways that CHAT can help and/or support DPW move the recommendations forward? Ms. Hale didn't have any specific ways at the moment but noted that the monthly flood smart updates are very informative and valuable. She noted that there are many working directly or indirectly on flood resiliency so having one place where it's all shared and discussed helps to keep everyone up to date. There was a

discussion among the members about finding a way to share the flood-relevant updates with the public.

Ms. Durfee suggested distilling the flood update notes from each meeting into a few bulleted talking points that CHAT members could share with their respective groups. There was consensus among the group that flood update talking points would be helpful and there was willingness to share them at upcoming meetings or through emails with neighbors (resident representatives)

Ms. Durfee added that she would draft the bulleted list for CHAT members to review and approve for sharing. Mr. Diener reminded members to share with their groups that CHAT minutes are also available on the SHEA website. There was a brief discussion about the value of sharing the talking points verbally as opposed to including a written version in a board/commission member's meeting packet. Ms. Hale noted that in some situations like BOS meetings, it can be requested that the Town Manager read the flood updates into the public record.

7. CHAT Outreach Project Update

Ms. Dionne shared that SHEA did not receive any proposals following the second release of the CHAT Public Outreach RFP. The consultant feedback received noted interest in the project but a lack of sufficient funding and an inability to meet the project timeline due to other ongoing or scheduled projects. It was helpful to hear from one consultant that the funding provided was sufficient to complete the outreach strategy but not enough to facilitate the events.

Ms. DiGeronimo shared that they had a meeting with SHEA to discuss reframing it as a planning project and adding a more detailed list of tasks and deliverables. She added that SHEA's contract was originally approved through June 2022, but the Coastal Program is willing to extend it up to an additional year. They can also shift some of the Technical Assistance funds towards this effort. Hopefully, the time extension and boost in funding will help. Mr. Bassett asked about still participating in the proposal review process and Mr. Diener confirmed that would still be helpful. Ms. Dionne noted that rework of the RFP is underway and that SHEA might release it after the holidays.

8. Discussion on public participation in CHAT meetings

Ms. Durfee noted that at the last meeting CHAT started a conversation about how to include public participation in future CHAT meetings. One aspect that was still unresolved is during what parts of the meeting/agenda would the public be able to speak or ask questions. CHAT members discussed the following:

- There was agreement to refer to the CHAT member-only portion of a meeting as "business" as opposed to "closed".
- Split the meeting into business and public sections.
 - The business items would relate to operational items; the public could listen but not comment.
 - Virtual Meetings - host can control who is muted

- The public portion would be for broader topics where they could also learn and ask questions.
 - Virtual Meetings – if there’s a large number of participants - consider other Zoom formats like webinar mode
- Place the public portion at the beginning and business items at the end of the meeting
- Begin and/or end meeting with a 5-minute comment period
- What items should be labeled as public or business?
 - Business
 - Minute review and approval
 - Review of member attendance
 - Personnel issues and land acquisition – legally need to be closed/non-public – rare occasions
 - Public
 - Most agenda items
 - Although at times, what is being shared may not be fully ready for public comment.
 - Flood updates might be of most interest to the public
 - Could have a limited public comment period after updates
- How to announce and share CHAT agendas with the public
 - Ask Town to post on meeting calendar or share agenda through Town-wide email list – Mr. Bachand would check
 - Post on SHEA’s website – high visibility/traffic??
 - Announce upcoming meetings through the monthly CHAT bulleted updates
 - Make announcements welcoming
 - Share with Ms. Durfee other places to post the agenda.

Ms. Durfee will revise the rules and procedures based on discussion and at the next meeting, members can review and approve.

9. CHAT recommendations – which recommendations should CHAT dig into next?

Ms. Durfee asked CHAT members if there are some additional recommendations that they can start working on. Previously, four recommendations had been selected. Good progress has been made drafting the staff position’s role and responsibilities, the two public outreach-related items are awaiting the onboarding of an outreach consultant. CHAT reviewed and discussed their list of recommendations and the following were noted as being worth pursuing next.

- Recommendation #3 – investigate opportunities to improve applicant and local board awareness of flood vulnerability
 - Strike the last sentence regarding reconstructing the review process
 - Agreement that projects in the floodplain warrant closer attention.
- Recommendation #6 – Investigate creating a Capital Reserve account.
 - There have been great strides in obtaining grant funding but it would be nice to have a Town fund for emergencies or as grant match.

- Self-contained recommendation; supports community
- Ms. DiGeronimo shared that Jennifer Rowden with RPC is developing an innovative coastal land-use guide that will help identify funding sources. Still in the development stage, but something like impact fees might be a way to generate revenue. Consider having Jen Rowden come to a future CHAT meeting.
- Ms. Durfee noted there may be case studies in the coastal land-use guide to learn from.
- Review Senate Bill 285 and RSA 79-E as potential avenues for establishing funding or revenue sources.
- Recommendation #7 - Lower the tide height level for municipal lot parking passes
 - Evaluate the level of administrative effort
 - Creating new/tracking passes and sending out tide alerts
 - Automate the alert process – automated phone messaging
 - Consider targeting the most vulnerable streets (i.e. Manchester St)
 - Hampton Tide gauge report as a resource to support need for amending
 - Ms. DiGeronimo shared one key finding is under a 2 ft sea-level scenario, 95% of annual high tides will exceed the 10' threshold.
 - A focused initiative with opportunities to engage the public
 - Discuss impacts of these incidences of above-average tides and sea level rise
- Recommendation #13 – Economic Impact Assessment
 - Snapshot of economic impacts of sea-level rise in 2050
 - SHEA continues to pursue funding opportunities and CHAT's support/endorsement helps
 - CHAT could brainstorm and create a list of questions that this analysis could help answer.

Ms. DeGeronimo asked CHAT members to consider forming subcommittee groups to work on digging into these recommendations in between meetings and reporting back to the larger group. Mr. Diener recommended sending around a sign-up sheet and Ms. Dionne recommended holding break-out sessions during a CHAT meeting for smaller group work. Ms. Durfee will email out a sign-up list.

10. Next meeting: December 21, 2021

Ms. Durfee shared that for the December meeting, Steve Whitman who is working on the Hampton Master Plan will give a status update and provide CHAT the opportunity to share its thoughts/recommendations about incorporating sea level rise.

11. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm