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# Coastal Hazards Adaptation Team (CHAT) Work Session #47

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Tuesday, February 21, 2023

**1:00-3:00PM**

MEETING MINUTES

## 1. Introductions

Jason Bachand – Hampton Town Planner

Tori Bamford – Hampton Coastal Resilience Coordinator

Tom Bassett – Hampton Resident Representative (left at 2 pm)

Jay Diener - Hampton Conservation Commission

Rayann Dionne - Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance (SHEA)

Liz Durfee - CHAT Coordinator and Planner

Jennifer Hale - Hampton Department of Public Works (DPW)

Kristin Howard –NH Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program (NHDESCP)

Barbara Kravitz - Hampton Beach Area Commission (arrived at 1:15)

Stephen LaBranche – Hampton Resident Representative (arrived at 1:15)

Bob Ladd – Hampton Beach Village District

Brendan Lynch – NHDESCP

Chris Muns – Hampton Representative (arrived at 1:15)

Brianna O’Brien – Hampton Conservation Coordinator

Lucy Perkins – NHDESCP

Eric Sunderlin – Hampton DPW Engineer Technician

## 2. Meeting Minute Approval

- January 2023 Minutes
  - Motion: Mr. Diener moved to approve the January 2023 CHAT Minutes
  - Second: Mr. Bassett
  - Vote: All in Favor

## 3. Relevant Flood Updates

- Mr. Bachand
  - The Planning board held a public hearing last week and adopted the newly completed Master Plan. The master plan was the culmination of 3 years of hard work. The next phase involves creating an implementation committee which will take place over the next three months.
- Mr. Bassett
  - Slide show featuring photos from the significant high tide flooding event photos in January and February.
    - January 20<sup>th</sup>
      - significant high tides; January 20<sup>th</sup> predicted high tide was 9.8’ but measured 11.4’
      - Road flooding lasted for several days
    - January 26<sup>th</sup>

- Predicted high tide was 9.3' but measured 11.2'
  - Sunny day with no rain event that produced an almost 2' higher tide than predicted
  - Water comes up the pond, through storm drains, and spills into streets
- Feb 20th
  - Predicted high tide was 10.3' but measured 11.1'
  - Sunny day with no rainfall or off-shore storms that produced higher than expected tides
  - Caused road flooding - hoping the drainage project will provide some relief
- Town Deliberative Session – February 4th
  - Warrant Article #12 – King's Highway Drainage Project
    - Warrant Article requests seeks \$800K as match for the \$2M construction grant
    - Complimented Ms. Hale on her presentation and compelling arguments
    - Six Gentian Road/Meadow Pond neighborhood property owners shared their flood experience and expressed support for Warrant Article #12.
    - Ms. Stiles spoke in favor of the warrant article
    - A few spoke out in opposition to the warrant article. The issue was not with the project scope but with the funding mechanism. Funds are being requested from the Town's Undesignated Fund.
    - The article moved forward to the ballot with no amendments.
    - Town meeting vote is March 14<sup>th</sup>.
      - Mr. Basset and his wife wrote an opinion article for the Hampton Union (Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>) in support of the warrant article to contextualize the flooding situation and outline the previous work and studies to address the issue.
    - Ms. Durfee appreciated the Deliberative session insight, especially the concerns about the funding mechanisms, which might warrant CHAT's attention and be worth discussing in the future.
- Mr. Diener
  - Current House Bill 592, relative to buffers around wetlands, proposes to exempt temporary impacts and impervious coverage disturbances less than 3000 sq. ft. near wetlands from requiring local permits. The NH Association of Conservation Commission wrote a letter in opposition, and the bill has been deemed inexpedient to legislate (ITL) and will not come to the floor for a vote.
    - Rep. Muns added that ITL bills still receive a vote.
- Ms. Kravitz
  - The HBAC's Master Plan update is moving along with a completion deadline of June.
    - Draft recommendations should be completed soon.
    - Beginning to work on outreach efforts. Maybe an opportunity to coordinate with the Hampton Master Plan and/or future CHAT efforts.
    - Website development is underway and pleased with the draft version
  - The upcoming HBAC meeting on Thursday
    - David Walker with the Rockingham Planning Commission will present the 2022 Seacoast Transportation Corridor Vulnerability Assessment findings.

- Ms. Howard
  - Congratulations on the recently adopted Town Master Plan
    - A noteworthy review comment from HBAC’s Master Plan consultant, GEI, was the potential inconsistency between the desire to protect the nature of the beach and its culture, look and feel while also promoting/recognizing the need to use managed retreated as a long term solution to sea-level rise. How do we do both? CHAT could consider exploring this further and discussing how we retain access and use of the beach.
    - Ms. Durfee added that thinking about long-term planning for vulnerable areas is one of CHAT’s recommendations.
    - Ms. Kravitz noted that understanding the alternatives to management retreat, such as armoring to protect using concrete walls to safeguard coastal areas and other adaptation options – how do these fit into the discussion or thought process?
  - In early March, the Coastal Program will release its Coastal Resilience Grant Request for Proposals (RFP). There is about \$200K to spend on projects in coastal communities. Eligible applicants for Hampton include the Town or SHEA.
- Mr. Diener
  - Remind that NHDOT is holding an open house on Saturday related to the reconfiguration of Route 1a from the bridge to High St. The event will be at the Seashell complex from 1 to 5 pm. With a presentation on the recommendation at 3 pm. Great opportunity to learn more and share your opinion on recommendations.
- Ms. Dionne
  - Share two upcoming SHEA events
    - March 7<sup>th</sup> – Documentary on Salt Marsh Farming in NH at the Seabrook Library
    - March 21<sup>st</sup> – Update on the status of the Seacoast Greenway with Scott Bogle from RPC (virtual)

#### 4. Membership Vote

- **New CHAT member**
  - Motion: Ms. Kravitz moved to approve the Hampton Coastal Resilience Coordinator as a new CHAT member
  - Second: Mr. Bachand
  - Vote: All in Favor

#### 5. Follow-up items:

- **2022 Year in Review, new draft page 3**
  - Ms. Durfee noted that page 3 provides a bulleted list of areas and efforts CHAT plans to focus on in 2023 to be viewed as a general/tentative plan.
  - Ms. Kravitz recommended adding “to look for opportunities to collaborate with others to advance CHATs objectives.”
  - Rep. Muns encouraged including state elected officials in cross communications efforts.

- Particularly interested in learning more about flood protection and prevention measures in the Hampton Harbor area. What is the plan to address flooding in other areas of the community than just King’s Highway?
      - Ms. Durfee responded that CHAT could schedule a time in a future meeting to talk more about actions that state players can take to help and assist in flood protection measures.
      - Ms. Hale noted extensive work has been happening in Hampton related to coastal flooding, from securing grants and allocating town funding to better understand our flood challenges throughout all of Hampton to assessing feasible options and moving forward with select implementation efforts (i.e., King’s Highway Drainage Project – funded; Salt Marsh Ditch Remediation – funding needed). Other efforts involve the newly created Coastal Master Plan chapter, the onboarding of a Coastal Resilience Coordinator to support these efforts, a congressional spending request, exploring what the Town needs to do from an economic development standpoint - how much we are spending to figure out how much we are losing to protect all of Hampton as opposed to areas of Hampton, looking at regulations/ordinance changes, increasing discussions about funding for elevating homes and roads and funding retreat. There is a great deal of staff, state, and local coordination to find opportunities and keep moving forward.
  - Mr. Bassett commented that CHAT had a busy 2023. He recommended changing the order slightly by beginning with continuing to conduct outreach and encouraging cross-communication, and moving the photo contest towards the bottom.
  - Ms. Kravitz suggested adding time frames and implementation steps.
    - Ms. Durfee responded that CHAT would flush out those details as it moves forward
  - Based on the feedback, Ms. Durfee will finalize and email the summary to members. Feel free to share it with your associated groups, and SHEA will make it available on the CHAT webpage. This summary will also be useful in outreach events too.
- **Social Media Policy draft 3**
  - Ms. Durfee noted that the policy is gone through several iterations, and more detail was added using the CAW (Coastal Adaptation Workgroup) policy as a guide. The original intent was to provide the Social Media lead with guidance for posting and monitoring Facebook page activity. CHAT members need to determine what level of detail is necessary for this policy.
  - Mr. Diener shared that the policy’s level of detail is acceptable if it remains an internal document but is far too detailed for the general public. Mr. Diener proposes to give the Social Media lead discretion based on simple guidelines.
  - Durfee added that the policy could remain internal and made available upon request or provided as backup justification not posting or removing a posting.
  - Ms. Kravitz recommended
    - having a smaller amount of information – a simple list of “How to” and “Dos and Don’ts” on the Facebook page for users to review.
    - adding a watermark to the draft document until it’s finalized.
  - Ms. Dionne supported having a more detailed internal version and a simplified version available on Facebook.

- Ms. Durfee asked the Coastal Program staff about their experience or insight on using the CAW policy.
  - Ms. Perkins shared that she had not used it but appreciated knowing it was available.
  - Ms. Howard added that it had been referenced a few times for guidance and as a helpful decision-making tool.
- Ms. Durfee, based on the feedback, would create a simplified version for public viewing and keep the more detailed version internal. She reminded members that Ms. O'Brien will need support developing content for the page.
- Ms. O'Brien asked about the timing for launching the Facebook page and whether there would be any other accounts like Instagram
  - Ms. Durfee responded that she would complete the policy updates in the next few days for final approval at the next meeting. Start with the Facebook. Instagram could be a future option if CHAT builds up a library of photos.
- **Seabrook Coastal Resilience Team**

Mr. Diener and Ms. Dionne briefly updated the group on the newly created Coastal Resilience Team in Seabrook. This effort is modeled after the CHAT. SHEA is working with RPC (Rockingham Planning Commission) to provide meeting facilitation and administrative support.
- **Fact Cards Recommendation**
  - Ms. Durfee noted that the recent versions pertain to the last couple of pages
  - Ms. Perkins recommended
    - updating the name of the "Neighborhood Technical Assistance Program" in the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet under "What can you do" to the "Flood-Ready Neighborhood Program".
    - The bullet regarding photo documentation - based on the "Rising Tide" photo contest experience, getting the photo's location (geolocation/location tag) along with the date and time is helpful, especially for cataloging conditions over time. This information is not always automatically captured. It may be worthwhile to coordinate future image collection efforts.
    - Ms. Durfee asked about the availability of hyperlinks for the coastal landowner assistance program and neighborhood program. Ms. Howard responded that the landowner technical assistance program info is available on the UNH SeaGrant site, but no information is available yet for the neighborhood program, but coming soon.
  - Mr. Diener noted that pages 15 and 17 work together, but page 16 is not where it should be. He added that the cards provide great information, the messages are clear and illustrated when appropriate, and they are a great way to help people understand CHAT's recommendations.
  - Ms. Durfee will make these final edits, and then the resource will be ready to post online, hard copies in Town Hall, and available for future outreach events.
- **StoryMap preview**
  - Ms. Durfee presented the working draft of the GIS StoryMap, explaining the different sections and highlighting the format flexibility. The intent is to tell the story about the establishment of CHAT, its efforts, recommendations, and the challenges Hampton faces concerning sea-level rise and climate change.
    - Several member compliments about the depth of information and the flow.

- Ms. Durfee welcomed members to email photos they would like to see included.
- Ms. Kravitz asked about the target audience and how/where it will be accessed. Ms. Durfee responded that it was part of the strategic outreach plan (along with the Fact Cards and building social media presence) to provide a dedicated online space for the public to learn about CHAT's efforts and Hampton's flooding hazards and to explore the recommendations. It can also be used when sending out announcements and monthly updates.
- Mr. LaBranche recommended sharing with Town and the Schools and creating a poster for the library with a QR code to access the full StoryMap.
  - Ms. Durfee noted that it could also be posted on SHEA's CHAT webpage.
  - Mr. Bachand recommended creating business cards with the link/QR code people can take.
    - Ms. Durfee agreed and noted that the business cards could be created once the social media, FactCards and StoryMap are finalized.
- Ms. Durfee encouraged members to follow up with any additional comments after viewing the private CHAT link for the StoryMap that will be emailed after the meeting.

## **6. Discuss which recommendations to discuss in depth**

Given time limitations, members entered two recommendations in the chat box they would like to focus on in 2023.

- Start a Visioning process to think about the long-term future of areas anticipated to be impacted by sea level rise (2 members)
- Explore options to use land use ordinances and regulations to encourage and incentivize development in areas that are not vulnerable to current or future flooding while discouraging development in areas that are vulnerable to current or future flooding (2 members).
- Increase efforts to engage and inform the community of flood hazards, vulnerability, and opportunities to increase resilience. (2 members)
- Projects in the Capital Improvement Plan should identify an account for climate change impacts - Start with a presentation on how the CIP is developed and used.
- Develop a new coastal hazard overlay district to regulate development in vulnerable areas.
- Advocate options to require flood risk disclosure, including, but not limited to, statewide legislation that requires that current and future flood risk is disclosed, so that future owners are aware of the potential risk.
- Restructure the development project review process to increase awareness of flood vulnerability.
- Increase the presence of our joined state, federal, and local government as well as non-profits as it relates to coastal resiliency.
- Keep the Board of Selectman updated more frequently and prioritize the recommendations with them.

## **7. Next meeting: March 21, 2022, 1 pm-3 pm**

## **8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:01 pm.