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SEABROOK COASTAL RESILIENCE TEAM

## Meeting #2 - April 10, 2023

1:00 pm – 1:45 pm

Draft Meeting Minutes

### I. Present

Maddie Dilonno – Regional Planner - Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC)

Jay Diener – Vice President – Seabrook-Hamptons Estuary Alliance (SHEA)

Rayann Dionne – Executive Director/Project Lead – SHEA

Alyson Eberhardt – Coastal Ecosystem Specialist - UNH Extension/NH Sea Grant

Jason Janvrin – Seabrook Planning Board/NH House Representative Dist. 40

Bill Howley – Seabrook Beach Village District Planning Board

Bill Manzi – Seabrook Town Manager

Kirsten Howard - Resilience Program Coordinator – NHDES Coastal Program

### II. NHDES Coastal Resilience Grant Opportunity

Ms. Dilonno shared that following the February CRT meeting, SHEA and RPC had a follow-up conversation with Mr. Howley about the poor/deteriorating condition and limited accessibility (not ADA compliance) of the Seabrook beach walkways and the need for additional dune education/awareness. Today's meeting aims to discuss whether work related to these walkways could be pulled together in a proposal for the upcoming NHDES Coastal Resilience Grant.

- Mr. Howley noted that two additional Commission/Board members are interested in joining CRT
  - Joel Spiller – Seabrook Beach Village District Planning Board
  - Srinivasan (“Ravi”) Ravikumar – Board of Selectmen
- Mr. Howley
  - shared some background information on the beach walkways
    - 18 existing beach walkways
    - Length ranges from 78 ft to 575 ft
    - 4-5 in disrepair – tilted or missing boards.
  - Goal would be to repair and provide safer and greater access to the entire community.
    - Considering the use of Mobi Mats
  - Project proposal would require approval from both the Town Board of Selectmen and Beach Village District Commissioners
  - Who could help with the proposal?
    - Ms. Dilonno – RPC and SHEA could provide application support
- Ms. Howard – Coastal Resilience Grant Background
  - Grant Info - <https://www.des.nh.gov/business-and-community/loans-and-grants/coastal-resilience-grants>
  - Funding Level – \$200K for NH coastal communities; project range \$10-75K.
  - Due Date – May 26th
  - Eligible Project Types
    - All projects should support coastal resilience defined as:  
*“coastal resilience is the capacity of a coastal community or coastal system to adapt in a changing climate – not only measured by the capacity to “bounce back” quickly from shocks and stresses like storms, but also, and perhaps more importantly, measured by the capacity to “leap forward” by fostering sustained and equitable achievement of community goals and*

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*ensuring the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of all peoples and habitats over the long-term.”*

- Project Type 1 - building capacity projects
  - Building grassroots or neighborhood consensus around a coastal resilience concept/project
- Project Type 2 – Planning Projects
  - Developing a plan for training and education for protecting the beach and a plan for installation over time
- Project Type 3 – Design Project (up to 75% of engineering design) such as
  - Survey and mapping of pathways needed for repair/replacement designs
  - Pre-permitting design work - identify material costs and develop materials for project bidding
  - Developing a restoration plan or planning a volunteer effort
  - Signage design and purchase (could be installed on a pre-existing post)
- **Cannot** support final engineering, permitting costs, or construction
- Other grant opportunities available that cover installation
- Mr. Howley asked about Mobie Mats being non-permanent.
  - Ms. Howard noted that placing the mats seasonally or year-round would be considered installation. Also recommended speaking with Eben Lewis, NHDES Wetlands Bureau, about permitting requirements.

### III. Project Ideas

- Ms. Eberhardt shared her experience with dune restoration work – things to consider:
  - Use funds to engage residents and secure buy-in on the walkway rehabilitation approach. It will be challenging if people don't want them or want to use them.
  - Mobi mats are expensive – understanding the cost associated and maintenance logistics
    - Plum Island uses Mobi Mats seasonally – requires an agreement with DPW to collect and store; where to store – large and cumbersome when rolled up cumbersome. Needs to consider available resources and capacity
- Mr. Janvrin asked whether fewer access points should be considered. Conservation Commission thought there were too many walkways; fewer would lessen the environmental impact.
  - Mr. Howley noted their property deeds stating a commitment to having walkways at the ends of the streets to the beach.
- Ms. Dionne recommended a proposal to study the walkways (begin with the worst ones) and identify the best rehabilitation solution, which might be Mobit Mats or other ideas like dune walkovers.
- Ms. Eberhardt agreed and provided two examples
  - Hampton Beach State Park worked with UNH Engineering students to evaluate different dune walkover options. Walkovers are a great option because they get pedestrians over the dune system, provide a nice vantage point, and preserve dune functions. Dunes require wind-driven sand to accumulate and vegetation to take root, which gets disrupted by walkways that cut through the system.
  - Salisbury, MA has walkover design standards that might apply to Seabrook.
  - Part of the process would involve developing criteria for evaluating the different design options such as (cost, longevity, pass people, support ecosystem)
- There was a consensus around drafting a planning and design proposal for assessing current conditions and developing recommendations for beach walkway options with a public outreach/educational component.

## IV. Next Steps

- Town level-approvals and support
  - BOS need to approve the proposal concept
    - Mr. Manzi will add the project proposal to the next BOS meeting (4/17 @ 10:30 am)
    - Ms. Dilonno will draft a one-pager summary of the project concept and outline grant requirements
  - Beach Village District Commissioners
    - Mr. Howley will be the contact for the Commissioners and will speak to them about this project proposal
    - Mr. Howley noted that they are resurrecting the Beach Safety Committee – responsible for the signage
  - Seabrook Planning Board
    - Mr. Janvrin stated he could give the Board an overview of the proposal and request a letter of support. Next meeting is on April 17<sup>th</sup>.
    - Ms. Dionne noted that SHEA would be at the Board meeting for an Estuary Management Plan presentation and can speak to this project if needed.
  - Seabrook Village District Planning Board
    - No lead or point of contact identified
  - Seabrook Conservation Commission
    - No lead or point of contact identified
- Mr. Howley noted that the Town and the Beach Village District could be co-applicants. He would be interested in providing grant support.
- Ms. Howard shared that there are different ways to partner. The applicant can be the Town, an inter-organizational team, or another entity like a non-profit, education Institution such as UNH, or a quasi-governmental agency.
  - Ms. Dilonno was open to discussing grant responsibility.
- MD – open to that conversation