

HAMPTON COASTAL HAZARDS ADAPTATION TEAM (CHAT)

September 2023 UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

A summary of updates and announcements relevant to flooding, coastal hazards, and coastal planning intended to be shared with Hampton boards, commissions, committees, departments, and the public. Visit <http://shea4nh.org/coastal-hazards-adaptation-team-chat/> for information about CHAT.

- Mr. Bachand – Hampton Town Planner
 - Hampton Master Plan Implementation Committee continues to prioritize Resilience action items. Then, it will move on to Innovative and Collaborative action items. The Committee meets on the last Wednesday of the month. Results of the Committee’s prioritization efforts at the next CHAT meeting will be shared at the September CHAT meeting.
 - There will be an information session on proposed floodplain management ordinance updates that are part of the Flood Smart Seacoast Project at the Planning Board meeting on September 20. The Advisory Committee is recommending that 3 of the 9 higher floodplain standards be considered on the 2024 ballot. These standards pertain to critical facilities, elevation of utilities, and a sea-level rise flood design elevation option.
- Mr. Bassett – Hampton Resident Representative
 - The Greene St. and Gentian Rd. neighborhood experienced significant flooding in August:
 - Aug 18th storm with significant rain falls 1.22” in an hour with a 9.5’ high tide event and significant deep flooding 12” at the corner of Greene St. and Gentian Rd.
 - There were a total of 8 days of flooding in August. Mail went undelivered because of high water levels.
 - Blue moon with high tides on 8/30-8/31, flooding with these higher high tides carrying over into September.
 - Tropical Storm Lee brought high surf but relatively low tide levels. No neighborhood flooding observed.
 - The CHAT outreach table event on 8/26 at KB’s was successful, with several engaging conversations.
 - NHDES Water Quality Testing (9/5) on streets and in Meadow Pond continued. Bacterial levels were low in the streets but higher in Meadow Pond.
 - Mr. Basset presented at the televised Board of Selectmen Meeting (9/11) to increase awareness about flooding issues and share with a broader audience.
 - There was a great turnout at the Flood Ready Neighborhood Meeting on 9/13. About 10 residents participated. Gage Wheeler, staff assistant of Congressman Pappas, attended to listen in on the discussion.

Ms. Hale – Hampton DPW Director

- \$2 M of grant funding for working on the final design for the King’s Highway Drainage project is slated for Governor Council approval on October 4th. Once approved, the funds will go to Hampton and the final design process (which includes the final engineering design, NHDES Signoff, Bid Specifications and Construction Documents) can begin.
- Tropical Storm Lee brought more downed trees than flooding.
- There were heavy rain events over the last month including multiple Friday deluges with 2+ inches of water in less than an hour resulted in the wastewater treatment plant being inundated and areas of Hampton flooding that hadn’t before. This was an eye opener to system to capacity. The storm drains couldn’t keep up until the rain stopped.
- Ms. Howard – NHDES Coastal Program

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- The Coastal Adaptation Workgroup (CAW) submitted a Letter of Intent (LOI) for [NOAA's Coastal Resilience Challenge](#) grant in late August. CAW brought together several coastal community projects, including ones from SHEA and the Town of Hampton, equaling just over \$28M. If selected and awarded, it would provide Hampton \$1.5M and SHEA \$2.1M over 5 years. NOAA will notify a subset of applicants in mid to late October to submit a full proposal due in February 2024. The grant is competitive nationally. The overall process was a useful exercise, and it helped coordinate partners along the coast.
- Ms. O'Brien – Conservation Coordinator
 - Ms. O'Brien is working with the Coastal Resilience Coordinator and the Building Inspector on a proposed revision to Section 1.3 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the expansion or alteration of a non-conforming use. The revision is intended to streamline the building process by eliminating the need for a variance when elevating an existing structure (maintaining existing footprint) up to 2 feet above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) plus freeboard within the Special Flood Hazard Area or up to 3 feet outside this area. A variance is most frequently required for beach lots because the existing structure does not meet setbacks, and elevating a structure is considered an expansion. ZBA stated in a memo that they only want to see structures elevating above this new threshold. A draft will be presented to the Planning Board for review and feedback.
- Bob Ladd - Hampton Beach Village District
 - The Village District had to cancel the last major entertainment event due to the potential track of Tropical Storm Lee. Even though there was no flooding, major weather events still impact tourism and the economy.
- Ms. Dionne – Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance update
 - SHEA is partnering with the Seacoast Science Center to host a kayaking tour of the Hampton-Seabrook Estuary on September 23rd during National Estuaries Week.