

# CRT

SEABROOK COASTAL RESILIENCE TEAM

## Meeting #3 - September 27, 2023

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm | Seabrook Town Hall

### Draft Minutes

#### 1. Present

Jay Diener – Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance (SHEA)

Maddie Dilonno – Rockingham Planning Commission

Rayann Dionne - SHEA

Kirsten Howard – NH Department of Environmental Service’s Coastal Program (NHDES CP)

Bill Howley - Seabrook Beach Village District Planning Board

Lucy Perkins – NHDES CP

Curtis Slayton – Seabrook Water and Sewer Superintendent

Joe Titone – Emergency Management

Joe Spiller – Seabrook Beach Planning Board

#### 2. Review CRT's purpose, goals, and objectives

Ms. Dilonno reviewed the purpose of the CRT and highlighted existing documents that speak to addressing and building awareness about coastal resiliency. (See attached slides)

#### 3. Mapping Exercise & Discussion

The CRT members reviewed a map of Seabrook, discussed areas that are considered to be of high value to the community, and identified those that are susceptible to the impacts of flooding (coastal or precipitation)

Community Asset	Value	Vulnerability or Concerns
Dune System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flood protection</li><li>• Beach access</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dunes are expanding, reducing beach area</li><li>• Condition of access points</li><li>• Increased protection &amp; restoration to support flood protection</li></ul>
Roadways adjacent to or that cross the Salt Marsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency Evacuation Routes</li><li>• Daily property owner access</li></ul>	<p>When flooding occurs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interruption of basic services</li><li>• Life and Safety concerns</li></ul>
Seabrook Beach Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Desirable areas to live and visit</li><li>• Primary beach access points</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poor roadway drainage</li><li>• Drainage tanks for storing/managing stormwater</li><li>• Low-lying areas that flood easily (i.e., Nashua St, Ashland St)</li><li>• Need for a Flood Study of Beach Area?</li><li>• Flooding more from the marsh side than Ocean</li></ul>

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Nuclear Power Plant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Substantial tax base contributor (~35%)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited communication or involvement (except for emergency planning)</li></ul>
Private Homes/Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Livelihood/Culture</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase flood resiliency</li><li>• Continue to build with basements</li><li>• Building height restrictions in Ordinance conflict/interfere with elevating structures (update or revise?)</li></ul>
Wastewater Treatment Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical Facility/Service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CIP - Sewer Infiltration Study</li><li>• Sewer lines installed Mid-90's, no stormwater tie-ins</li><li>• Disconnect roof drains and sump pumps</li></ul>
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Important Community Service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Close proximity to salt marsh</li></ul>
Fisherman's Coop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Industry/Jobs/Recreation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Navigational issues from sedimentation of harbor channels</li></ul>

### Additional Comments & Topics of Discussion

- Funding is an issue for moving coastal resilience actions forward
- Mr. Spiller noted that the dunes are growing towards the water, resulting in less beach for residents and visitors to enjoy. Ms. Howard pointed out that a growing dune is a sign that the system is healthy with a good supply of sand. Hampton and Seabrook are gaining sand from other sources, and Rye is losing sand.
- Mr. Titone noted that the salt marsh elevation is getting higher but slower than rising sea levels.
- Mr. Titone shared that in Salisbury, a marsh-side wall was placed around a small neighborhood that has moved more water towards Seabrook. The water has to go somewhere – NH and MA didn't discuss the potential impacts.
- Mr. Spiller asked if the harbor was dredged to be deeper, would it help? Ms. Howard noted that the dredging would improve/maintain boat traffic but would not affect the water levels because the bridge is the major tidal restriction – it's the factor regulating the amount of water entering the harbor.
- Mr. Titone wondered if it would make sense for Seabrook to invest in a small dredge to maintain adequate navigation more frequently (i.e., annually). It would require an ongoing permit for maintenance. Could be a joint effort between Hampton and Rye Harbor. Noted that dredge materials can also contain a high level of debris; need to be careful with placement.
- Ms. Howard shared that the State has funded and is in the process of developing a coastal flood risk model that will be hydrodynamically accurate. Should be available next year. Funding is also available to apply the model to a few coastal sites – opportunity to conduct an alternative analysis to look at water flow changes depending on a different strategy/solution.

### 4. Overview of Ongoing Seabrook Projects

- a. NHDES Coastal Resilience Grant – Dune Walkway Environmental Assessment

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Ms. Dilonno gave an overview of the Seabrook Dune project. This dune assessment was selected for funding, and the project will begin in January 2024. The objective is to evaluate the community's existing dune walkways for opportunities to improve public safety and accessibility while preserving and protecting the integrity of the ecological dune systems. The CRT members will play an important role in helping to support and engage residents during this process.

b. UNH Sea Grant Flood Ready Neighborhood Project

Ms. Howard shared that this initiative is an outgrowth of the NHDES/NH Sea Grant Landowner Technical Assistance program to expand the process to a neighborhood scale. This work is funded by NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). Support teams are working with six neighborhoods on the coast (Hampton, Exeter, Seabrook, Portsmouth). The teams help to make connections and build relationships in these neighborhoods. They can provide some funding to initiate activities for building resiliency. One of the neighborhoods selected is Seabrook's South Main St around the culvert project. It has been challenging to get traction; concerns about flooding are not a pressing concern. The focus has pivoted to more broadly advertise this opportunity/program. Ms. Howard shared a draft flyer highlighting the opportunity to begin a conversation with anyone concerned about flooding and looking for helpful resources. The process involves a site visit to better understand site conditions. The hope is to connect with residents and have a post-survey to see how it went. It is also a way to reach folks who are potential champions. They might be able to participate in other ways to help the Town deal with flooding. There is at least one more year of funding with additional sources be sought.

- Mr. Spiller asked if the program identifies site-specific flooding issues. Ms. Howard responded that they review the property to help put current and projected sea-level rise impacts into context and help them understand resources for taking some action. Sometimes, there could be an easy solution.
- Mr. Spiller followed up with who currently fields calls about flood concerns.
  - Ms. Howard noted the State Floodplain Management department has information related to flooding, and Mr. Titone added that DPW and Building Inspectors also field concerns.
- Mr. Howley asked about situations where flooding is coming up through basements.
  - Ms. Howard explained that there isn't funding for installing a mitigation technique/product. Able to help the property better understand what's happening and where they might need to supply the funds or look for grant funding. Grant funding for private property work is very limited. FEMA can be a source, but it has to go through the Town.
  - Mr. Diener added that increasing their understanding is very helpful for knowing how to move forward.
- Mr. Spiller recommended that the Ashland St neighborhood might be worth exploring.
- Mr. Howley offered to help distribute the flyer.
- Mr. Diener asked what social media or community-wide communications are available.
  - Mr. Spiller responded there's the Town website, but he would need to talk to the Town Manager. The Beach District's Civic Association also has an extensive email list.

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c. NOAA Project of Special Merit – Resolving Unknown Salt Marsh Ownership & Piloting a Coastal Conservation Coordinator

Ms. Dilonno gave an overview of the work that RPC will be involved which includes working to resolve unknown salt marsh parcel ownership in the Seabrook, Hampton, and Hampton Falls. The work will involve reviewing deeds and historical documents to trace rightful ownership for these owner-unknown properties. RPC will prepare a policy toolkit that identifies the various outcomes of the deed research as well as the associated policies and procedures to resolve ownership, such as draft warrant articles Hampton Falls and Seabrook to have tax lien marshland parcels be put under the respective Town's conservation commission.

Ms. Dionne shared that SHEA's portion of the project involves piloting a part-time Coastal Conservation Coordinator position to support each of the three Town's conservation commissions. This capacity-building position will primarily focus on developing town-specific conservation land strategies to advance salt marsh protection around the estuary.

d. South Main Street Culvert Upgrade

Mr. Slayton shared that they are working to adjust water and sewer line locations before work on the culvert can begin.

- Ms. Howard added that a recent grant proposal (\$700K, no match required) was submitted for culvert construction, including elevating the low point South Main St and expanding the culvert. Designs and permits are in hand. They will find out in October if selected for a full proposal. The grant is very competitive. Senator Shaheen submitted a letter of support for the grant application.
- Mr. Titone shared that this work could help to alleviate some of the flooding on Route 286.

e. Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrades

Mr. Slayton shared a progress summary from their contractor, Weston and Sampson. They are working on engineering and designing a few select flood protection measures. Completed the site visit with engineers and draft info into DES. Contract drawings are on their way.

### 5. Brainstorm Future Meeting Topics

- Meeting Frequency
  - Interest in meeting quarterly and/or bimonthly, depending on necessity
  - Mr. Spiller recommended emailing monthly updates
- Meeting Topics
  - DPW Drainage
  - Building Regulations/Ordinances that deal with elevating structures for flood protection and height restrictions
- [SHEA CRT webpage](#)

### 6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.