

HAMPTON COASTAL HAZARDS ADAPTATION TEAM (CHAT)

FEBRUARY 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
 - 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 – Resident Representative
 - Shared a slide show featuring photos from the significant high tide flooding event photos in January and February.
 - January 20th, January 26th & Feb 20th
 - Significant high tides: January 20th (predicted 9.8'/actual 11.4'), Jan 26th (predicted 9.3'/actual 11.2'), and Feb 20th (predicted 10.3'/actual 11.1')
 - Sunny day flooding with no rain event that produced higher than predicted tides
 - Experienced road flooding - water comes up the pond, through storm drains, and spills into streets
 - 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 14th.
 - Mr. Basset and his wife wrote an opinion article for the Hampton Union (Feb 3rd) in support of the warrant article contextualizing the flooding situation and outlining the previous work and studies to address the issue.
 - Mr. Diener – Hampton Conservation Commission
 - 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).
 - 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.

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- Ms. Kravitz – Hampton Beach Area Commission
 - 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 – NHDES Coastal Program
 - 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.
- Ms. Dionne – Seabrook-Hamptons Estuary Alliance
 - Share two upcoming SHEA events
 - March 7th – Documentary on Salt Marsh Farming in NH at the Seabrook Library
 - March 21st – Update on the status of the Seacoast Greenway with Scott Bogle from RPC (virtual)

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CHAT's mission is to evaluate, assist, support, educate, and advise on current and future coastal flooding adaptation strategies for the Town.

CHAT is comprised of representatives from boards and commissions in Hampton, Town of Hampton staff, Hampton Beach Area Commission, Hampton Beach Village District, the Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance (SHEA), and resident representatives. CHAT is supported by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program and a meeting coordinator and administered by SHEA.