
Coastal Hazards Adaptation Team (CHAT) Work Session #63

Tuesday, July 16, 2024

1:00-3:00PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

1. Introductions

CHAT Members

Jay Diener – Hampton Conservation Commission
Tom Bassett – Resident Representative
Bob Ladd – Hampton Beach Village District
Barbara Kravitz – Hampton Beach Area Commission
Ward Galanis – Hampton Planning Board
Jason Bachand – Hampton Town Planner
Brianna O’Brien – Hampton Conservation Coordinator
Stephen LaBranche – Member at large
Kate Bashline – Resident Representative

CHAT Support Staff

Liz Durfee – Planning Consultant and CHAT Coordinator
Rayann Dionne - Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance (SHEA)

Guests

Bella Dziak – New England Young Fishermen’s Alliance Program Manager
Andrea Tomlinson – New England Young Fishermen’s Alliance Executive Director
Gary Bashline – Flood Ready Neighborhoods

2. Approve meeting notes from June 2024 (5 mins)

Motion: Mr. Diener moved to approve the June meeting minutes as written.

Second: Mr. Bachand

Vote: All in Favor, Mr. Galanis, Mr. Bachand, Mr. LaBranche and Ms. O’Brien abstained.

3. Relevant Flood Updates (20 mins)

Ms. Hale (via e-mail)

- King’s Highway project has not gone out to bid as expected. We have been value engineering the cost and as of this week determined that we will be able to use components of the old pump station to help in lowering the costs. The Design and Plans are being updated accordingly. The good news is that we were able to pressure test the existing forcemain and the results indicated the forcemain is intact and re-usable, also saving money.
- The BOS at their July 8, 2024 meeting approved the recommendation for the Ordinance Change for Flood Placards from Elev. 10’ to Elev. 9.5’. New educational materials will be distributed with the Parking Placards and the website will be updated.

Mr. Bassett

- Stated that “partial flooding” is the theme of this month’s updates. Many of the flood updates cover widespread flooding, but partial flooding is also common. In partial flooding events, large parts of the streets were flooded but not flooded completely. Partial floodwaters are difficult to avoid and pose similar risks to widespread flooding such as adversely affecting property and posing health risks because of contaminated water, and vehicle damage due to rust from brackish water. Mr. Bassett showed slides from June 24th and June 25th showing partial flooding.
- Mr. Bassett and Aiden Barry will be presenting at the Coastal Adaptation Work Group’s Climate Summit. The presentation will address flood water quality testing from the last few years. The presentation will also address the fruits of collaborative approaches to addressing climate coastal hazards.
- There will be a Flood Ready Neighborhood meeting on 13 August 2024. At the meeting, they will discuss the challenges of putting a berm around our neighborhood. Mr. Bassett received a report from Flood Ready Neighborhoods in March and distributed it to the neighborhood.
 - There will be discussions with DES representatives who are knowledgeable about permitting. There will also be broader discussions about what kind of approaches may be feasible that are more environmentally and wetland friendly. The group is open to solutions and thankful for the opportunity to meet with DES representatives and find potential ways forward.

Mr. Bachand

- Met last week with the town of Rye’s master plan steering committee about our implementation efforts thus far. Rye is working on their master plan, and they’re interested in Hampton’s approaches to forming the committee, lessons learned, benefits and challenges, and the coastal resilience plan.

Ms. Kravitz

- HBAC update: HBAC will meet again in September. Currently there are two projects under development.
 - The Resilience and Environmental Master Plan was recently completed, approved, and adopted by Hampton as part of the town's latest master plan and an appendix.
 - The goal for the near future is to develop a means of combining that last master plan segment with the previous ones which would be the 2018 transportation and the original in 2023.
 - The core purpose of this group is resilience and adaptation for the beach area. CHAT members are welcome to provide input.
 - A project grant committee was formed with Ms. Kravitz, Pat Bushway, and Tracy Emerick to look at opportunities to be helpful to the community in terms of funding. HBAC provided a letter of support for the Town for submission to DES.
 - HBAC’s goal is to develop meaningful ways to support the Town's efforts and provide useful information.
 - Ms. Durfee informed Ms. Kravitz about the Climate Resilience Planning Database that Southern Maine Planning Development Commission has been developing. She will share the link. This may be a helpful resource when looking for funding opportunities.
 - Ms. Kravitz stated HBAC has developed an online matrix as part of the master plan. The matrix is to be updated as needed or as available information about funding becomes available.

Ms. O’Brien

- Stated that she should be hearing tomorrow about the Coastal Resilience Grant that Hampton applied for. Thank you all for your letters of support for that project. The grant is designated for hiring a short-term consultant to help outreach efforts and amplify, organize, and align coastal resilience efforts moving forward. This will enable the Town of Hampton to advance coastal resilience efforts

and get appropriate input from the public and other partners in the absence of a full-time coastal resilience program.

- In the last few months there have been a lot of dune restoration efforts in Hampton. There has been a huge volunteer push and volunteer effort to make it happen. Several thousand plants were planted last fall at Plaice Cove and some of the plants have done well and have rooted even if they don't look like they're alive. Two residents along the Plaice Cove have donated their effort and money, planting along the beach in front of their properties and keeping them watered.
 - Plaice Cove: Ms. O'Brien would like to make dune planting at Plaice Cove an annual effort. The dune in this area needs a lot of intervention annually. The goal is to partner with UNH extension, NH Sea Grant, and some of the residents in that neighborhood to get an annual planting effort done in early spring. There's a lot of buy in from the neighborhood
 - Portsmouth Avenue dune: Many thanks to the Bashlines for their momentum and commitment to that area. Vegetation was planted 1.5 months ago at the end of the street. Some of the vegetation has rooted. A fence was installed surrounding the dune so it is closed from all foot traffic.
 - The BOS are supportive of these efforts. Based on Ms. O'Brien and Ms. Hale's recommendation, the BOS originally voted to close off the Portsmouth Avenue beach access. But the BOS decided to keep the path open based upon site visits, property lines, and the popularity of the path with the public.
 - A lot of the plants came back despite the damage to the dune during the recent storm season. Sand from the street was moved by hand back into the dune by volunteers.

4. Andrea Tomlinson, Founder/Executive Director and Bella Dziak, Communications and Content Specialist, New England Young Fishermen's Alliance (30 mins)

Ms. Tomlinson

- The purpose of the New England Young Fishermen's Alliance (NEYFA) is to educate the seacoast community on the current state of our commercial fishing industry and how coastal adaptation can affect the commercial fishing industry.
- There is a commercial fishing port in Hampton. Most commercial fishermen and women either moor in the harbor adjacent to the fishing commercial fishing pier and/or moor at slips at either Hampton River Marina or you're at the Hampton River Boat Club marina.
- Ms. Tomlinson introduced Ms. Dziak. Ms. Dziak was an intern through UN's Sustainability Institute and became a full-time employee of the NEYFA upon graduation.
- Ms. Tomlinson explained her history and background.
- She stated the NEYFA was developed to address the "Graying of the fleet" which is occurring because the current batch of fisherman worldwide is getting older. The commercial fishing industry addressed by NEYFA is for groundfish (flippers and fins, not lobsters). The average age of New England fishermen is 58. Succession is dead in the fishing industry. Family members aren't growing up to become fishermen and women like their parents. There are obstacles to becoming an entry level commercial fisherman due to financial constraints including the cost of licensing and purchasing a boat.
 - Licensing cost ~\$250K
 - Fishing boats start at ~\$150K
- NEFYA was developed to help young people start in the commercial fishing industry. Young people is defined as age 45 and younger.
 - Ms. Tomlinson started thinking about NEFYA in 2017 and was inspired by a young fisherman who had to live on his boat due to start-up expenses.

- Ms. Tomlinson and two colleagues from the New Hampshire Food Alliance started holding Dock Talks in 2019 to start gathering data. The fishing community from Southern Maine south of Portland to northern Massachusetts north of Newburyport, including New Hampshire, was invited to three different scoping meetings in different seacoast regions. Fishermen and women, families, and researchers attended.
- Attendees discussed common barriers:
 - Cost: general access to capital including loans
 - Permits: limited number of permits not for groundfish (not lobster)
 - Labor: a lack of good reliable and knowledgeable labor, difficulty finding sternmen and deckhands.
 - Government regulations: commercial fishing is the 7th most regulated industry in the United states
 - Consumer lack of knowledge: lacking knowledge about the industry and fish, crabs, lobsters etcetera.
- What the young fishermen and women asked for as proposed solutions:
 - Money management classes
 - Loan opportunities for first time applicants
 - Diversification of business advice
 - Apprentice program to train greenhorns and apprentices to work on the back of the boats
 - Help with marketing and collaborative marketing
 - Retail market for product
 - A permit bank for young fishermen and women. A permit occurs by gathering together the permits that are required by the national graphic and atmospheric administration to into one collective. The permit bank leases out the permits up to the quota.
- The concept for NEYFA started in 2017, scoping work occurred in 2019 and 48:48 we did the scoping work in 2019. In 2022 a grant application was submitted to the USDA agricultural marketing service. NEFYA received a grant for the farmers market promotion program which has nothing to do with farmers markets. The grant is for training. The USDA has provided funding for 3 years.
- Supporting partners:
 - Yankee Fisherman's Cooperative: Applicant for USDA grant
 - Rockingham Economic Development Center now called Rockingham of Southern New Hampshire: they offer business advisors for the deckhand to captain training program
 - New Hampshire Food Alliance
 - New Hampshire community Seafood: founding partner
- Grant scope:
 - The initial purpose of the grant was to develop the young fisherman's alliance which has been accomplished. NEYFA is a 501C3 nonprofit tax-exempt organization. NEYFA worked with Good Work which helped NEFYA understand how to start and run a non-profit.
 - Deckhand to Captain Training Program: NEFYA is on year of the program
 - Collaborative marketing training for captains
- What does NEYFA do:
 - The motto is “Preserving our working waterfronts for the next generation”
 - NEYFA helps fishermen and women under the age 45 by forming together as a supportive group to help them succeed.

- Networking: holding workshops for attending conferences nationwide as well as worldwide.
- Deckhand to captain training: NEYFA just received some community development funds from Congressionally Delegate Spending Funds (CDF)
- Greenhorn training program: This is funded partially by a national sea grant with a group in Rhode Island that already doing the greenhorn program. NEYFA greenhorn training program is also partnering with Fishing Partnership Support Services. The greenhorn training program should launch in spring 2026.
- Objectives are being developed to help the young fishing industry to move forward.
- As part of the CDF funding, a Resource Center for Young Fishermen and their Families is being developed.
 - The resource center will provide resources such as business management training, health care, marketing resources, loans, safety training, an permitting and regulatory assistance.
- Deckhand to Captain Training Program overview
 - Currently in the 3rd year with 60 trainees
 - Prerequisites: Trainees must have worked on the back of a commercial fishing boat for at least three years, must have an industry and a personal reference, and must have a strong commitment to becoming an owner operator within the industry
 - The training program was developed based on needs expressed in the Dock meetings.
 - The training program lasts nine months and covers a variety of topics, hands on experience, mentorship, and a business advisor. The business advisor is available to the trainee for 2 years. The full training program overview is available in the slideshow presented by Ms. Tomlinson.
- It is important for groups like CHAT to think about how coastal hazards will affect our working waterfront's efficacy. Working waterfronts affect more than just fishermen and women. Working waterfronts support shoreside support such as brokers and seafood sellers. Currently, 80% of seafood consumed by Americans is imported to include fish that is caught in US waters, processed overseas, then shipped back to the US as imports. Americans typically consume beef, poultry and pork in greater quantities than eating seafood.
- Commercial fishing is part of the cultural heritage of the US and should be preserved.
- NH currently has 4 commercial fishing boats fishing for groundfish as compared to 90 boats in 2020.
 - Some reasons for the reduction: access, cod was dramatically cut, and the changing to the catch share system
- The lobster industry is thriving, but some upcoming regulations may threaten the lobster industry.

Ms. Dziak

- Ongoing projects:
 - There is currently an ongoing video series on NEYFA's Instagram and Facebook called Dock Talk Next Gen. In this video series, Ms. Dziak has interviewed and gone out to sea with a couple of fishermen and women along the seacoast. The interviews are designed towards destigmatizing the industry and the public's view on fisheries and fishermen to get the behind the scenes visual of what it's like to be on a boat and what it's like to catch fish and lobster.
 - Brews and Crews: This is a networking event held at Throwback brewery in Hampton. Invitees include those in the fishing industry, the young fishermen and women, researchers and anyone who wants to get involved and learn more.

- Docks Talks are being held at several docks throughout the seacoast. NEYFA will be speaking to young fishermen and women to spread the word about the organization and more about the resources that are offered.
- CHAT members are encouraged to share ideas and provide input for ways to collaborate.

Mr. LaBranche

- Requested clarification about the number of NH commercial fishing boats. Ms. Tomlinson stated that boats come out of Portsmouth and Rye, and none from Hampton. She stated that it's not just a NH problem. In 2020, there were 2500 commercial fishing boats registered in New England and now there are 200.
- Mr. LaBranche asked how many participants are in the deckhand to captain program. Ms. Tomlinson stated there are nine positions per year. To date, ten people have been trained. There are currently 2 people in the captain's wheelhouse and 4 people are in the process of procuring their own boats. There are currently 6 trainees signed up for the next session, and 2 of the 6 trainees are currently in the process of buying their own vessel.

Ms. O'Brien

- Asked if there is information on how the recent season of storms affected your fishermen and women and how previous storms have affected.
 - Ms. Tomlinson stated that the infrastructure of commercial fishermen and women is in a state of disarray and collapse. The pier in Portsmouth has been condemned and there is no ice machine.
 - The storms were damaging for commercial fishing piers. The Hampton commercial fishing pier was subject to flooding. Rye is in the process of using state money to fix the damage that was done to the commercial fishing pier there. The dry docks in Rye were damaged as well.
 - Coastal flooding is affecting commercial fishing industries because of storms, flooding, and erosion.

Mr. Bassett

- Asked how climate change, specifically the warming of the oceans and sea level rise has affected the fishing industry and how is the fishing industry trying to adapt to these changes.
- Ms. Tomlinson stated cod has been relocating to cooler waters because the waters off the coast of Maine is warming faster than most water bodies. There is currently a 4° Fahrenheit temperature difference on surface waters in the gulf of Maine compared to a decade ago.
- There is huge diversification and transition in the commercial fishing species.
 - Cod is migrating to the northeast.
 - There is a reduction in the amount of recruitment of lobster which is where the small little babies finally settle to the bottom.
 - Black Sea bass is coming north which is causing tension among councils that are seeking the allotment of black sea bass
 - There is an infiltration of spiny dogfish which are predators on cod which you know real problem
 - Green crabs are proliferating in the warming waters
 - The fishermen and women are adaptable.

Ms. Bashline

- Asked about the fishing boat that has been trawling back and forth off Hampton Beach. Ms. Tomlinson stated the fishing boat belongs to a NH resident who is dragging along the sandy bottom for surf clam that he sells as bait.
- There is a stigma against draggers because of the belief that they are messing up the ocean bottom and catching sea turtles and other marine animals but that's not true. Some residents have issues

with clam shells washing up on shore. Submit any issues to Ms. Tomlinson. The boating activity is permitted.

- Ms. Bashline asked about the age of the 4 commercial boat captains in NH. Ms. Tomlinson said that only two of the boats are captained by someone under the age of 45.

Ms. Durfee

- Asked if there are specific ways that CHAT can support the efforts of NEYFA. Ms. Durfee supported the question and asked what the role municipalities can take in supporting the fishing industry and supporting young fishermen and women.
 - Ms. Tomlinson stated this is their first meeting with a municipality. She stated they would love to continue doing outreach and education comparable to what we're doing today. She encourages people to attend networking events such as Brews and Crews.
 - Ms. Tomlinson would like to have a Dock Talk in Hampton and will work with Ms. O'Brien and the Harbormaster to coordinate that effort.
 - The Dock Talk is an outreach and education exercise that is scheduled to coincide with the time that the fishermen dock. CHAT is invited.
 - There is a donation site on the website. All donations are tax exempt because NEYFA is a 501C3 tax exempt organization.
 - In the future there may be a fisherman and women's dinner down the road under a tent at Seacoast Science Center where the fishermen and women can cook their local products.
 - CHAT members are welcome to submit ideas and collaborate.
- Ms. Durfee suggested a future point of discussion concerning if and how access to the waterfront has changed in NH and New England. Part of the discussion can include how residential development affects commercial fishing.

5. Continued discussion of draft high tide documentation table (20 mins)

- a. Brief review of what we talked about in May. Ask DES for input and any status updates on getting access to the NERACOOS data. New updates to the tide gauge data availability. Look back at about a month of data now.

Ms. Durfee

- During the May meeting, ways to document high tide flooding and impacts was discussed. The documentation would enable comparison of flooding events and impacts. Information currently compiled by Mr. Bassett would be included along with other relevant information.
- Ms. Durfee shared a rough draft in Google sheets and invited discussion about interest in pursuing documentation this way. Observed and predicted tide levels along with flooding photographs would be included.
- The hydrograph data on the tide gauge website has updated allowing users to scroll back and see data from the month prior. This reduces the urgency of looking at the data so frequently.

Mr. Bassett

- Stated that the information to fill out the Google sheet would have to be gathered from different sources. He has no interest in compiling this data systematically. His data gathering interests focus on flood events. He asked: How often does Ms. Durfee foresee this data being collected and documented? What is the purpose?

Ms. Durfee

- Stated the documentation would be done during significant flood events, not daily. The objective of this discussion is to find a more user-friendly way to document this data.
- The updated hydrograph data makes it easier for Ms. Durfee to compile this data.

- A key aspect of this documentation is gathering photos.

Mr. Diener

- Agreed with the importance of collecting historic data and agreed that it is important to view predicted vs actual tides.
- It would be helpful to have residents in other areas of town to take pictures and measure flooding to compare with the predicted levels on the hydrograph.

Ms. Bassett

- Stated he is not recording the actual level of flooding. He is recording the difference between the predicted and actual high tide level.
- Mr. Diener stated this is an important distinction to track.
- Mr. Bassett stated this evidence was useful in changing the flood elevation levels on the parking placards.

Ms. Durfee

- Stated this discussion should continue when Ms. Hale and Kirstin are available.

6. Next steps for Recommendations (15 mins)

Ms. Durfee

- Presented the table of the recommendations that have been reviewed over the last few meetings.
- Outreach: This recommendation is ongoing.
 - Tabling: Let Ms. Durfee know if there are any community events where it would make sense to have an information table.
 - Mr. LaBranche suggested the Hampton Historical Society Fall Festival in October. There may be a Master Plan Implementation Committee table there and CHAT could partner with them.
 - Ms. Dionne stated that this event would likely attract more residents.
 - The Seafood Festival may not be the most productive location. Also there is a cost associated with a booth at the Seafood Festival. Ms. Tomlinson stated that the fee may be waived for outreach and she noted a lot of local participation.
 - Mr. Bassett stated there was a tabling event at KBs last year and he is happy to participate again this year. Flood Ready Neighborhoods was at this event as well.
 - Ms. Durfee stated pamphlets and personnel could be constraints.
 - Mr. Diener suggested a coffee and donuts event.

7. Future meeting topic ideas and interests (10 mins)

Mr. LaBranche

- Reminded CHAT that there were discussions a few years ago with communities along the east coast about their flood mitigation efforts. He suggested seeking an update on their successes and challenges. He also suggested having a house insurance representative come in to provide an update.
- Ms. Durfee will seek these updates.

Ms. Durfee

- Suggested revisiting some of the adaptation concepts and strategies.

Ms. Bashline

- Suggested inviting some to speak about NH statewide flood insurance trends.

Mr. LaBranche

- Asked about the CRS program. He requested a guest speaker who is on the CRS program to discuss the benefits of the program.

Ms. Tomlinson

- Stated that she will send contact information for a local fisherman to Ms. Durfee for a potential guest speaker.

Ms. Bashline

- Stated outreach and public education should be a topic

Ms. Durfee

- Stated CHAT members who want to make a presentation are welcome. CHAT is open to the public and the public is welcome to attend and make suggestions.

Ms. Dionne

- Recommended an update with RPC about the home elevation program. Also, provide an update on the Coastal Resilience Coordinator position.
- Revisit legislative updates with Rep Muns.

Mr. Diener

- Suggested a discussion with Mr. Bachand or Mr. Galanis about which recommendations are high on the priority list for the master plan implementation committee.

8. Next meeting: August 20, 2024

9. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Members of the public are welcome at CHAT meetings. Visit <https://shea4nh.org/coastal-hazards-adaptation-team-chat/> to learn about CHAT. Please contact CHAT coordinator Liz Durfee at efd.planning@gmail.com if you have questions about how to join on Zoom.

During the meeting, please:

- *Keep your microphone on mute to minimize background noise*
- *Use the hand raise function or type in the chat box if you have a question or comment*
- *Stay on topic*
- *Be respectful of all meeting participants*