
Coastal Hazards Adaptation Team (CHAT) Work Session #62

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

1:00-3:00PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

1. Introductions

CHAT Members

Jay Diener - Hampton Conservation Commission

Tom Bassett – Resident Representative

Eric Sunderlin – Hampton Department of Public Works

Bob Ladd – Hampton Beach Village District

Barbara – Hampton Beach Area Commission

Jen Hale- Hampton Department of Public Works

CHAT Support Staff

Liz Durfee – Planning Consultant and CHAT Coordinator

Rayann Dionne - Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance (SHEA)

Maddie Dilonno – Rockingham Planning Commission

Guests

Larry Quin

Anne Cox – Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP)

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

Motion: Ms. Durfee stated there is no quorum. The May minutes will not be voted on for approval until the next meeting. Mr. Bassett recommended an amendment to the minutes concerning corrected flood updates.

3. Relevant Flood Updates (20 mins)

Ms. Hale

- Stated the King’s Highway project is going up for bids at the end of June. The bicentennial wall is going up for bids with construction due to start in August 2024.
- Provided updates on the Coastal Resilience Grant with DES designed to expand the capacity for outreach to enable coastal resilience programs to move forward.
- There was a presentation last night at the Planning Board to provide information about where Hampton was in the past, current status, and what is hoped to accomplish in the future for coastal resiliency. The presentation will be available on the Hampton website and on channel 22.

Ms. Durfee

- Presented a link the Coastal Resilience update on behalf of Mr. Bachand.
- Presented updates on behalf of Mr. Bachand for the Master Plan Implementation Committee. Work is continuing. At the next meeting, there will be discussion of the results of the latest subgroup

exercise identifying responsible parties for master plan action items including resilience. Ms. Dionne will be presenting the Estuary Management Plan and Economic Flood Vulnerability report.

Mr. Bassett

- Discussed the DPW public meeting about the King’s Highway Drainage Improvement Project held June 4, 2024. The project should begin late summer 2024 pending selection of a contractor.
- Showed a slide showing the actual versus predicted tide from 3-8 June. On 6 and 7 June there was flooding, versus the typical five days of flooding each month.
- Mr. Bassett showed a slide detailing work he did removing January flood debris from Meadow Pond.

4. Economy and Flood Vulnerability for Hampton, Hampton Falls, and Seabrook – Rayann Dionne and Jay Diener, SHEA (30 mins)

Ms. Dionne

- Presented slides developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in coordination with SHEA.
- Methodology and findings:
 - The report includes detailed data and statistics on the forecast process. The full report is on the SHEA website for review.
 - The need for an economic assessment arose at CHAT identified information gaps while researching strategies for addressing flood hazards and sea level rise in Hampton. The economic impacts of sea level rise have received less attention than the physical impacts.
 - Understanding the fiscal impacts of flood vulnerability will help municipal staff, boards, and other personnel with future planning.
 - SHEA partnered with NOAA economists to develop this report. The slides detail the methodology for determining sea level rise, storm surge and the mean high high water level.
 - The impacted sectors in the report are coastal economy, employment, and residential properties.
 - Coastal economy encompasses 1,745 business designated as marine and non-marine business types. Marine businesses are dependent upon being near the water.
 - Employment includes 17, 252 employees designated as marine and non-marine.
 - Residential properties included 20,000 structures. The study looked at structure types, municipal assessed value and potential tax revenue loss. Not included in the study are apartments with five or more dwellings because those are classified as commercial property.
 - When interpreting the findings, the scope of the findings should be considered. The results of the findings can be viewed in aggregate across all three communities and can be broken out by town. This report does not detail impacts on individual businesses or parcels. The types of impacts considered in the report include temporary evacuations, minor repairs, extended closures or evacuations, and/or permanent vacating.
 - The Business findings slide detailed the number of businesses and workers that make up Hampton’s coastal economy. These numbers were broken down into non-marine (86%) and marine (14%). The graph on the slide shows how sea level rise and sea level rise with storm surge impacts the different types of business sectors.

- The Coastal Economy Employment findings slide detailed the differences between marine and non-marine employment numbers. The graph on the slide shows which demographics are most likely to be impacted by three feet of sea level rise plus storm surge.
- The Hampton Residential Parcels and Assessed Values slide detailed values of structures likely to be impacted by sea level rise with storm surge. Single family homes and condo units face the most flood threat. The accompanying slide detailed the potential residential property tax loss if the structures become uninhabitable.

Mr. Diener

- Explained how the information detailed on the Economic report could be used. He stated that the data can be used to create some “what if” scenarios and determine how to address them.
 - What of Hampton’s flood mitigation efforts aren’t successful? How can the town’s economic strength be preserved if properties are damaged or destroyed.
 - The Planning Board and Chamber of Commerce can work together on zoning and incentives designed to strengthen the business community in advance instead of waiting for some of the projected scenarios to happen.
 - How should Hampton face the potential loss of housing stock at Hampton beach? This would affect people living there currently as well as affecting people who might want to move there in the future. This forecast could be used to explore other areas of Hampton suitable for providing a variety of housing options. What sort of infrastructure would be needed to support future residential options?
 - How would losing up to 10% of annual property tax revenue impact Hampton? Would Hampton be able to provide the same level of services as it does now? Would the property tax revenue be made up by increasing tax rates or would new housing stock make up the difference? Should Hampton consider cutting some services instead? Perhaps some services could be regionalized.
 - Mr. Diener posed this question. When should the planning to address these possibilities happen and who should be at the table to discuss workable solutions?

Mr. Bassett

- Asked about assumed tax revenue loss in spite of how assessed values of homes is increasing along the coast. Ms. Dionne stated the tax revenue loss was estimated based on current values in the town database. The assessed values tend to lag behind the actual market value. The estimate was based on structures being completely removed from the town’s tax role. This assessment would possibly be changed after the next assessment, which typically occurs every five years. Mr. Diener stated that NOAA’s estimates were based on looking at properties that would be vacated.

Mr. Ladd

- Stated Hampton is in the process of assessing the value of all properties which should be completed by the end of 2024. The assessed value of beach properties will increase due to recent sales.
- The loss of beach tax revenue would increase the cost to other Hampton residents for school funding. Approximately 10% of the school population is from the beach area.
- Estimates of sea level rise is difficult to predict Future predictions don’t take into account technological advances and global climate change mitigation efforts. For example, geothermal energy and carbon capture projects are currently in progress.
- Worst case scenario planning fails to take into account the large number of properties which are being elevated. Worst case scenarios such as managed retreat may result in property owners being more hesitant about accepting the cost of elevating their properties.

Mr. Diener

- In response to Mr. Ladd, the economic impact report will be updated every ten years and will take into account sea level rise mitigation efforts. The report may differ over the years in response to what is happening at that time.

Ms. Dionne

- Stated that UNH is working on doing some modeling that includes structure elevation numbers. This could give a neighborhood view. Emerging data will provide better information in the future.

Ms. Durfee

- Asked what percentage of the Town's total assessed value is at risk in this analysis. Ms. Dionne doesn't have that information at this time. Ms. Durfee stated this information would be helpful to have for future meetings.
- Mr. Ladd stated that beach properties represent 30-35% of the Town's total assessed value. This value will increase if the Beach Casino project moves forward as proposed.

Mr. Bassett

- Asked for clarification about how property tax value loss was assessed for the report. Ms. Dionne stated that the report looked at the assessed value for the structure for identified parcels in Hampton. Geospatial monitoring looked at how those structures would be impacted. The value of the impacted structures was subtracted from the total. Only the value of the structure was included. The value of the land wasn't included.

Mr. Ladd

- Stated that the land value could be more valuable than the structure value. He stated this should be considered when considering the residential property tax loss estimates.

Ms. Cox

- Asked what the engagement plan is for the Town and residents related to this presentation. Ms. Dionne stated it was shared with the Selectmen and will be shared at the Master Plan meeting. She stated the economic impact report is a way to start conversations. Mr. Diener added that elevation plans and ordinances that have been passed started at neighborhood level conversations. The hope is that the economic report will spur similar actions related to fiscal losses.

Ms. Durfee

- Asked if NOAA has worked with other communities to provide a similar assessment for comparison. Mr. Diener stated NOAA is working on a similar assessment in Essex County, Massachusetts but they are just getting started.
- Ms. Durfee stated a number of communities have gone through the process of determining the value of the waterfront and water dependent usages. This information is valuable to communities regardless of the risk of sea level vulnerability. Ms. Durfee once worked with an organization called the National Working Waterfront Network. This organization documented water dependent uses and the associated values. These reports provide important information about what marine economies bring to this region.

5. Continue Recommendations status update (45 mins)

- a. Review recommendations and progress**
- b. Identify any amendments and additions to the recommendations**
- c. Prioritize CHAT's next implementation efforts**

Ms. Durfee

- Explained the purpose of reviewing the recommendations. The purpose is to review the recommendations and determine updates, prioritization, and steps for implementation. Outreach to the public is an ongoing goal.

- Ordinances
 - Amend Town of Hampton Code Section 805-9(M)(1) to lower the threshold for authorized parking in municipal parking lots when tides are in excess of 9.5 feet (as opposed to 10.0 feet).
 - Ms. Durfee drafted a letter from CHAT and sent it to the selectmen in May but hasn't received a response yet. Ms. Hale stated she would reach out for an update.
- Projects and Studies
 - Future modeling efforts.
 - Mr. Sunderlin stated that he will speak with Jen and determine how best to support this item. He has no input at this time.
 - Conduct an assessment for economic impacts.
 - Ms. Durfee asked if Mr. Diener or Ms. Dionne have ideas for next steps or if there is a role for CHAT to play regarding the Economic Impact Report discussed earlier.
 - Mr. Diener asked for ideas for other avenues to share the report. He also asked for any input if there was any pertinent information not included in the report.
 - Ms. Durfee suggested Mr. Diener coordinate with Ms. O'Brien to make a simple graphic to be shared through social media and the CHAT page. The graphic could be linked to the full report.
 - Ms. Dionne stated wage loss and business revenue loss weren't included in the Economic Impact report, but this type of data would be useful. This gap was shared with NOAA. It would also be helpful to remain aware of when new assessments come out because that could change the values in the report.
 - Mr. Bassett asked if Mr. Diener recalls the similar Maine study he referenced two years ago and wanted his general feeling now that this report is completed.
 - Mr. Diener stated the Maine report was linked in the chat. He stated that the Hampton report is similar in structure and approach. NOAA was able to present a little more depth in the Hampton report. The report should be updated and tweaked as needed periodically. The economic impact report met the goal of starting conversations and getting started on mitigation planning.
 - Ms. Durfee stated the economic impact report could be useful for grant applications because it shows the fiscal impact of sea level rise.
 - Ms. Durfee stated that CHAT could do more tabling and present a user-friendly factsheet highlighting key takeaways and limitations from this report as part of outreach efforts.
 - Start a visioning process about the future
 - This item builds well off the economic impact report.
 - Ms. Durfee stated progress is being made even if CHAT isn't the lead on the project. The elevation and buyout pilot program is in progress now. Mr. Diener clarified the next steps for the pilot program. This can be discussed next meeting when more information is available.
 - Ms. Dionne asked about CHAT's role in this item. Ms. Durfee stated that CHAT could have discussions and pass along recommendations to appropriate offices within the Town. Ms. Dionne suggested having more conversations at future CHAT meetings.
 - Prioritize land conservation efforts
 - Ms. Dionne stated that the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) has been completed. A conservation land strategy is being developed. Marshes and marsh migration are focus areas. SHEA is currently working with the Southeast Land Trust for a grant to

- perform outreach and hopefully lead to conservation easements on salt marsh parcels and parcels with migration pathways.
 - Mr. Diener stated SHEA has been coordinating with the Great Bay Natural Estuarine Research Reserve to identify parcels around the estuary that have the greatest potential for salt marsh migration.
 - Mr. Bassett asked how to access the reports about salt marsh migration. Ms. Dionne stated that she can share the reports. Ms. Durfee stated the mapping is readily available. A link was provided in the chat.
 - Ms. Durfee agreed with Mr. Bassett that this information would be useful if it was publicly available.
- Funding to address drainage issues
 - No comments at this time.
- Funding sources to build flood resilience
 - Ms. Durfee discussed funding sources. She discussed possible grant application to have grant funds to match town funds. It is necessary to have a better idea of specific projects that the funds would be used for prior to pushing this recommendation forward.
 - This item would benefit from having Town staff to weigh in on. Mr. Diener concurred that projects need to be identified before seeking funding. These projects would be identified in a potential CIP.
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
 - Ms. Durfee stated the CIP would provide guidance for larger capital improvement projects implemented by the Town. The CIP would also account for potential risks associated with coastal hazards over the lifespan of the project. Currently there isn't specific coastal hazard criteria to review when submitting a project.
- Capacity
 - Hire full time Coastal Resilience staff position
 - Revisit this next staff meeting when Town staff is available
- Disclosure
 - Flood risk disclosure legislation
 - HB 1320 passed recently but was not as robust as Rep Muns and CHAT representatives would have liked. The rental protections were stripped from the bill.
 - Mr. Diener asked if CHAT can help educate renters so they can investigate flood issues on their own. Mr. Bassett concurred with Mr. Diener that CHAT can play a role in providing information.
 - Ms. Durfee stated that CHAT can assist with guiding residents and realtors to publicly accessible information.
 - Mr. Diener clarified that important information for residents would include whether the property is in a flood zone and what the insurance requirements are.
 - Ms. Durfee stated that the Coastal Adaptation Work Group might be the best avenue for providing flood information to residents because this is not a Hampton specific need. CHAT and other invested agencies could provide input on the messaging to push out to potential residents.
 - Ms. Cox stated that she is part of a group working with a realtor group working to provide this sort of education. It would be an accredited course for realtors concerning flood hazards and how to share this information with potential home buyers. The pilot course is projected for September 2024. She will report back with updates after the course is in progress.

6. Continued discussion of draft high tide documentation table (15 mins)

Postponed to next meeting.

7. Next meeting: July 16, 2024

8. 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*