
Coastal Hazards Adaptation Team (CHAT) Work Session #74

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

1:00-3:00PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES

1. Introductions

Present

Ben Ritt – Hampton Coastal Resilience Coordinator

Ward Galanis – Hampton Planning Board

Brianna Hagan – Hampton Conservation Coordinator

Jen Gilbert – DES Coastal Program

Tom Bassett – Hampton Resident Representative

Jason Bachand – Hampton Town Planner

Chris Muns – State Representative

Steven LaBranche - Hampton Resident Representative

Kate Bashline - Hampton Resident Representative

Rayann Dionne – Seabrook-Hamptons Estuary Alliance

Colette Tweeddale – Hampton-Seabrook Estuary Collaborative Coordinator

2. Approve meeting notes from June 2025

Motion: Mr. Galanis moved to approve the June 2025 meeting minutes as edited.

Second: Mr. Bassett

Vote: All in Favor, Mr. LaBranche and Ms. Bashline abstained.

3. Relevant Flood Updates

Mr. Bassett

- Shared a ppt slides regarding the level of flooding in the Greene/Gentian/Meadow Pond neighborhood
 - Reported no neighborhood flooding despite high tides, attributing this to new catch basins, storm drains, and PVC pipes installed as part of the King's Highway-Meadow Pond drainage project.
 - The pump for the new force main drain system is expected to be in place by August.
 - Identified several factors contributing to the lack of flooding, including new PVC drainage pipes eliminating groundwater intrusion, and the addition of 6 new stormwater catch basins and lots of new gravel added, improving drainage.
- Raised concerns about proposed redevelopment at 931 Ocean Blvd (Corner of High St and Ocean Blvd):
 - The proposed project includes two levels of retail and three floors of residential units, with no dedicated parking for the retail space.

- The project requires variances for density, parking, and height (the building is proposed to be 10 feet taller than the current height limit).
- The developer is requesting to use public parking lots already designated for the flood parking placard program.
- Mr. Bassett and several neighbors oppose the plan, citing concerns that it will limit their access to these public parking areas.
- A letter to the ZBA was submitted with signatures from 37 neighbors, and a letter was also sent to the Hampton Union to raise public awareness, as many residents may not be informed.
- The project is not yet approved. A ZBA meeting was scheduled for this Thursday, but has been rescheduled to August 21.
- As the season shifts past summer, there's concern that fewer residents will be around to voice opposition.

Mr. LaBranche

- Reflecting on the recent flooding in Texas and the lack of alerts, he raised the question about using the community's emergency alarm system – the sirens on poles installed primarily for the nuclear power plant.
- The group discussed the potential use of existing warning sirens to alert communities about flooding and other emergencies.
- Mr. LaBranch shared an example of a district that used sirens to save lives during a flood, prompting a suggestion to test and potentially activate the siren system in Hampton.
- Rep Muns offered to contact the Fire Chief, who is also the Emergency Management Director (EMD), to investigate the feasibility of using the sirens. It was noted that other groups, such as the state Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, might be responsible for managing the system, but the EMD was a good place to start.

Rep Muns

- Reminded the group that the legislation filing period is September 9-15, with the next opportunity in November 2026.

Jennifer Gilbert

- Coastal Zone Management Funding Update
 - Confirmed level funding for the current fiscal year, but uncertainty for 2026.
 - Ms. Dionne mentioned that several entities and communities have submitted letters to Congressional Delegates to support funding. This funding is also used to support programs like NH Sea Grant and Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, in addition to the NH Dept of Environmental Services Coastal Program.
 - Ms. Hagan inquired about Chat's role in sending a letter of support.

- Ms. Dionne shared that SHEA referenced the value of CHAT in their support letter.
- There was consensus among the group that SHEA's letter was sufficient.

Mr. Ritt presented an update on coastal resilience efforts in Hampton, highlighting a database of 21 projects and plans to create a public-facing website and roadmap. Shared how the Town is working with a consultant to align new goals with CHAT recommendations and to make information more accessible to the public.

4. Review of the “Funding Flood Resilience” Workshop

Mr. Ritt discussed the challenges of securing funding for coastal resilience projects, highlighting the need for a long-term strategy to utilize various funding mechanisms. He presented different options, including grants, tax incentives, impact fees, and revolving funds, emphasizing their potential benefits and limitations. He also mentioned the possibility of implementing registration fees for motor vehicles to support transportation-based projects, while noting the importance of maintaining flexibility in funding allocation.

Coastal Resilience Funding Discussion

Mr. Ritt presented the coastal resilience funding options and website to the town residents, including an online poll for community input. He encouraged more participation in the survey to gather better data for future decisions. Ms. Dionne suggested connecting with Mr. Ladd for further outreach, while Tom expressed difficulty in presenting the information to neighbors. Ms. Bashline praised the workshop format for fostering a town-wide perspective. Mr. Ritt outlined plans for a second strategy session to refine preferred funding options and implement them in future projects.

5. Overview of the Updated New Hampshire Coastal Viewer

Ms. Gilbert provided an overview of the updated New Hampshire Coastal Viewer, highlighting its new platform and improved features while maintaining the familiar look and functionality of the previous version. She demonstrated how to navigate the viewer, access various data layers, and use tools like measuring and sharing maps. She also introduced resources such as a getting-started guide, a story map tutorial, and an introductory video created by Becca Bannon. She emphasized key features like the ability to add data, use themes, and access metadata for more information on specific layers.

Coastal Viewer Software Demo

Ms. Gilbert demonstrated the coastal viewer software, highlighting its various layers and features, including sea level rise scenarios, salt marsh information, and tidal wetlands. She explained that the coastal flood risk model, which will provide a more comprehensive analysis of future storms and sea level rise, is expected to be released in the fall. The group discussed the software's development by New Hampshire GRANIT and its useful tools for visualizing coastal

changes over time. Mr. Bassett inquired about marsh migration, and Ms. Hagan suggested finding a webinar that explains the science behind the salt marsh model.

6. Overview of Hampton's Flood Information Tool

Mr. Ritt presented two new tools for managing flood risk in Hampton: Forerunner, a property flood risk mapping tool available on the town website, and a modified version of the I-Adapt questionnaire tool being developed to provide personalized flood risk mitigation recommendations. He explained that while Forerunner is currently public-facing, the I-Adapt feature is still in development and not yet available to the public, though it will eventually allow property owners to answer questions about their property and receive tailored recommendations for flood risk mitigation. Ms. Dionne mentioned there is a potential upcoming funding opportunity, SHEA is considering apply to that could help to expand this effort from Hampton to a regional scale.

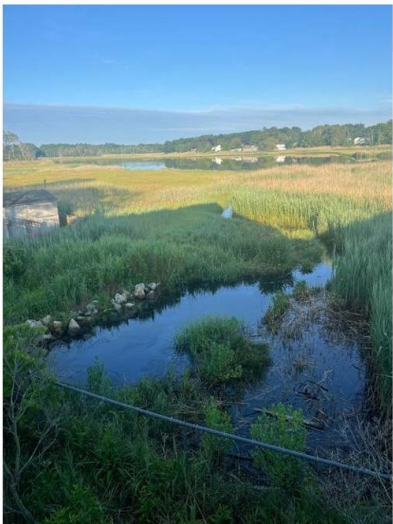
7. Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm

Meadow Pond Slides



NO FLOODING! Despite many days with high tides > 9.5 ft



June 27, 2025



June 21-29, high tides, but no floods

Date	Predicted High Tide (MLLW)	Observed High Tide (MLLW)	Rainfall	Flooding
June 21	9.6 ft	9.7 ft	0 in	No
June 22	9.9 ft	10.1 ft	0 in	No
June 23	10.1 ft	10.5 ft	0 in	No
June 24	10.3 ft	10.6 ft	0 in	No
June 25	--	10.1 ft	0 in	No
June 26	10.3 ft	10.8 ft	0 in	No
June 27	10.2 ft	10.5 ft	0 in	No
June 28	9.9	10.3 ft	1.52 in	No
June 29	9.5	10.1 ft	0 in	No

Why have we not seen high tide flooding even though the force main drain system is not fully operating?

1. Water flows into and stored in new catch basins
2. Six new storm drains and catch basins added to the system
3. New PVC pipes prevent ground water from entering the system
4. Gravel surrounding catch basins and new pipes creates French drain effects
5. Temporary outflow pipe is higher than older pipe, minimizing reverse flow

Grading and paving stages are key to flood control



Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing, July 17, 2025

Developers of
931 Ocean Blvd
seek height,
setback,
density, and
parking
variances



The request to use the same public parking lots designated in the flood parking placard program is an injustice that threatens the public health, safety and welfare of North Beach residents. (TB July 4 letter to ZBA)



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YOUR NEWS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What kind of future are we teaching toward?

HamptonUnion

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Letters to the Editor opposing developer's variance requests

To the Editor:
I sometimes wonder what kind of opulation the New Hampshire Republican legislators envision when they propose education bills that "prohibit obscene or harmful sexual materials in schools" (HB324) and prohibit "teaching discrimination" (SB100).

Fear and ignorance must be the propelling thoughts supporting HB 324. Teaching sex education, biology and anatomy are necessary educational tools for all of us humans; understanding varieties of sexual identity and sexual orientation includes facing realities of human development that for generations were considered blasphemous. Can you imagine firing a first-grade teacher for "promoting" classes by reading "And Tango Makes Three" to children?

SB 100 is more problematic, primarily because the language of the prohibition of "teaching discrimination" does not clearly (or accurately) describe what the legislators are apparently seeking to keep from corrupting students' minds: diversity, equity, and inclusion are concepts implicit in our Constitution, and they point to the need to educate all in a democratic society to learn authentic history which does not erase official acts of violence (war) and laws that enforced racial discrimination in some states. "Teaching discrimination" is exactly the opposite of what excellent teachers do: teaching anti-discrimination (equity and inclusion) is the goal of most New Hampshire school systems (excluding Frager University).

If New Hampshire wishes to attract new, young populations to our beautiful mountains, forests and beaches, we need to build a thoughtful, smart population governed by lawmakers, an education commissioner, and a governor who understands the principles and language of democracy. That would include persons who oppose SB 234 and SB 100.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Yoshio, Exeter

Don't let North Beach lose its character

To the Editor:
I write to express concern about the proposed plan for rebuilding 931 Ocean Blvd., the old Cinnamon Rainbows.

My neighbors and I look forward to the reopening of longtime local businesses. However, we do not see why the developer should be granted variances for height, density, setbacks and parking. At an already congested intersection, they want to build a very large building on a small lot. The developer claims the new building will "enhance the resort feel of the area."

I'm not sure what resort they are referring to, but five-story buildings are not the "feel" we have now at North Beach. If 931 receives this height variance, other developers will ask for equal treatment. And North Beach will gradually lose its small-town beach character.

The developer has given no reason why they need to go above the allowed 50 feet, except that they want to add six condo units (three stories) to the commercial space, without providing any parking for customers or visitors. The developer says customers and condo visitors can use the existing town parking lots.

Let's urge the town to enforce all its ordinances – height, density, setbacks and parking. Concerned residents can write the Zoning Board of Adjustments (zba@seacoastnh.com) and urge them to deny the variances. The developer can surely come up with a better, less massive plan that preserves the small-town New England feel of North Beach we appreciate so much.

Carol Spindel, Hampton

Who really runs America?
Follow the billions

To the Editor:
Consider the financial situation of a family with \$5 billion that leaves \$2.5

billion tax-free to each of two children. If the children invest it in assets that appreciate at the rate of 5% per year, in 25 years the assets will be worth almost \$8.5 billion each. If they then sell the assets and pay 15% capital gains tax on the appreciation of \$6 billion (\$900,000), each of the children will still have more than their parents did. That can continue for generation after generation.

The rich use their wealth to influence government, to lower their taxes and increase their wealth and power, as they are doing even as I write this letter. Thus, the tax code facilitates the establishment of a group of powerful families, like the former European royalty. With their wealth, they are able to prevent the government from limiting the use of money in politics, even though a majority of citizens favor it.

When Eisenhower was president, the top income tax bracket rate was over 90% and the economy did better than it is doing now. Wouldn't we be better off if the tax code were adjusted so that purchasing power was shifted to ordinary people, who would spend more of their money, and thus stimulate the economy? Unfortunately, what we now have is government of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich, which is not what led to our becoming the richest country in the world.

Mill Lernerstein, Exeter

Protect equal access to the ballot box

To the Editor:
Please contact Governor Ayotte and ask her to veto HB663.

The passing of this bill would allow cities and towns to opt out of having accessible voting systems for local and school elections if voters did not give the towns and cities "sixty" days' written notice of their intent to vote using an accessible voting system.

This bill would put the responsibility on the blind person. Presently, the everyday voter can register on the same day they vote and then fill out a ballot.

We in the disability community want the same rights without any roadblocks.

Again, please contact Governor Ayotte and ask her to veto this unfair bill. Her phone number is 603-271-2121, and her email is GovernorAyotte@gov.nh.gov.

Jean Shiner, Exeter blind voter

Developer seeks major zoning breaks for 931 Ocean Blvd. project

To the Editor:
The developer of 931 Ocean Blvd. (the old Cinnamon Rainbows and North Beach Bar and Grill) has asked Hampton's Zoning Board of Adjustments for four variances for height, density, setbacks, and parking.

The variances are required because the developer's plan does not conform to town ordinances. The proposed building would be five-plus stories high (higher than any other building in North Beach). The plan does not provide on-site parking for its stores and restaurants as required by the town's ordinances.

None of these variances are justified, particularly for parking. Article 6 of the Hampton Zoning Ordinance requires developers to provide on-site parking for stores and restaurants. But the developers refuse to do so, declaring there is "ample" space in the public parking lots north, south, and east of the proposed building. These are the same lots that Hampton residents use on beach days.

If the developer's plans are approved at the meeting on Thursday, July 17, at 7 pm at Hampton Town Hall, the town's residents will find it even harder to find a parking place at North Beach during the summer. If you do not want your public parking rights usurped by private commercial interests, make your voice heard now before it is too late. Write to Board Chair, Erica de Vries (ericadevries@gmail.com) to oppose the variance application for 931 Ocean Blvd.

Tom Bassett, Hampton

ZBA update
931 Ocean Blvd
developer has
rescheduled
hearing meeting
date to August 21,
2025

