

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

**MADISON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PLANNING MEETING MINUTES
Jan. 7, 2016**

The regular planning meeting of the Madison Planning and Zoning Commission was conducted Thursday, Jan. 7, 2016, at 7 p.m., in Meeting Room A at Madison Town Campus.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Ronald Clark, Vice Chairman Francine Larson, Secretary Christopher Traugh, James Matteson, Thomas Burland, John K. Mathers, and Joseph Bunovsky, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Amanda Kaplan and Joel Miller

ALTERNATES PRESENT

Brian Richardson

OTHERS PRESENT

Town Planner David Anderson; members of the public; MCTV taped the meeting.

The planning meeting of the Madison Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order at approximately 7:08 p.m. by Chairman Ronald Clark.

“Madison Coastal Resilience Plan” Public Information Meeting & Workshop

This public information meeting and workshop presented the vulnerability and risk assessment conducted as the initial phase of the “Madison Coastal Resilience Plan.” This state-funded Coastal Resilience Plan, which first got under way in September 2015, will identify the areas of current risk to coastal hazards such as storm surge, wave energy, erosion, and flooding. The plan will also describe the areas that will be subject to increasing risk over time. Residents and business owners were invited to provide input to the risk assessment by sharing their stories about coastal erosion and flood risks. The Coastal Resilience Plan will ultimately build on the initial ideas presented in the town’s hazard mitigation plan and develop options for adapting to coastal risks over the long term, with an emphasis on protecting people, buildings, and the town’s infrastructure.

In this first of three public meetings on the Town of Madison Coastal Resilience Plan, the focus was on assessing vulnerability and risk. Involved in this project are: Town Engineer Michael Ott; Town Planner David Anderson; Milone & MacBroom Professional Engineer and Associate David Murphy, senior project manager of water resources engineering; Milone & MacBroom Environmental Scientist Noah Slovin; and Dewberry Consultants, LLC Senior Associate Scott R. Choquette.

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Professional Engineer David Murphy stated that about a year ago, the town of Branford invited Madison and Milford to join in an effort to achieve a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), partially funded with Hurricane Sandy money, to create a coastal resilience plan. To be eligible for the grant, the three towns had to show a

variety of incomes, and there has to be a benefit for low and moderate incomes. While this public informational session was devoted to assessing vulnerability and risk, Mr. Murphy stated that the next meeting will discuss how to adapt to coastal storms, a process that usually involves four steps—prepare, adapt, withstand, and recover. A storm is known as an event; when the event occurs, there is damage and recovery. Increasing resiliency will decrease the loss; when the loss is decreased through increased resiliency, it indicates preparation and adaptation took place to reduce the loss; therefore recovery is quicker. Resilience means reducing the time to recover. Mr. Murphy stated a risk assessment has been done, and the public will have an opportunity to answer questions on a survey; he invited residents to take part in both the meetings and the survey. Vulnerability and frequency go together to create risk; if both vulnerability and frequency are high, then risk is high, according to Mr. Murphy. Earthquakes are a low risk, but flooding is a high risk; in fact, different aspects of neighborhoods have different levels of frequency and vulnerability, according to Mr. Murphy. Septic system failure frequency could be a high or low risk, depending on where a residence is located, so, too, could be daily high tide flooding, or flooding brought on by severe storms, he stated. Frequency, however, is changing due to sea level rising, and a variety of models are used to project sea level rise by decade, such as NOAA, NASA, and Columbia University models. Through these models, there is an ability to produce graphics of daily high tide flooding areas, over the decades, which will show areas that would be expected to be flooded, once a day, at high tide, without a storm, for instance, according to Mr. Murphy.

Senior Associate Scott R. Choquette explained that maps Mr. Murphy showed during his presentation looked at sea level rise, inundation, and storm surge. As project directors choose areas to focus on during the solutions phase, they will examine areas to study for impact. Mr. Choquette's PowerPoint presentation showed the similarities and differences between the Middle Beach and Circle Beach Road areas and neighborhoods, to predict how many homes would be affected by a surface water elevation, known as swell, creating inundation and surge. While there are multiple models in use that show surface water elevations, the Army Corps of Engineers model has a higher elevation than the Federal Emergency Management Administration model, for the more common frequency events, according to Mr. Choquette. Whereas wave run up and splashing is a risk for the Middle Beach Road area, it is overland wave inundation and deeper flooding that is at risk in the Circle Beach Road area, according to Mr. Choquette.

Environmental Scientist Noah Slovin stated that he would present the vulnerability side. Higher vulnerability creates a higher risk. Madison is at a crossroads; the sea level rise is increasing and the storms are becoming more frequent. Vulnerabilities include: social and economic; infrastructure, meaning roads, bridges, roadways; utilities, such as gas, water, electricity; critical facilities, such as police and fire; and natural systems. When there is damage to the infrastructure, damage to the roads, vulnerabilities take the form of needed repairs, which is economic. In terms of critical facilities, their actual locations are vulnerable to damage, or an inability to get and back forth with emergency personnel creates vulnerability, according to Mr. Slovin. His PowerPoint presentation included an illustration showing locations of all critical facilities in the town of Madison, along with roads vulnerable to flooding. Utilities, such as electricity, cable networks, water, and gas, are vulnerable during storms, Mr. Slovin stated. Natural systems, themselves, are vulnerable, for instance, when sand dunes get washed out, or the sea level rises, putting tidal wetlands at risk and causing destruction to native plants and animals, according to Mr. Slovin. Green Hill Road was the focus of an illustration showing how many houses would be inundated during daily high tide flooding, over the decades, from 2020 to 2080. At first, only a few Green Hill Road structures were at risk, but at the highest sea level rise in 2080, the daily

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high tide flooding would cause inundation in 25 structures, according to Mr. Slovin. Streets south of Neck Road become more and more at risk over time, he stated, including West Wharf and the Seaview Beach areas.

Mr. Murphy stated that feedback from the public that explains what is really at risk in town is very important to receive. Once all the comments are collected, plan writers will put together options to reduce risk and vulnerability, such as restoring sand dunes, making Middle Beach Road more resilient, and all areas will be studied and examined to make them more resilient over time, according to Mr. Murphy. Resilience options that make sense include: elevating roads, where necessary; determining how to manage the shoreline by engineering banks, restoring dunes; assisting residents who want to elevate their homes; determining what should be done in the event of septic system failures; how to prevent salt water from invading a fresh water source; and finding ways to elevate structures and systems inside and outside of buildings, according to Mr. Murphy.

During the public question and answer session, April Allen of East Wharf Road asked whether anyone knew of the plan to remove phragmites along the coast to restore the wetlands; she approached individuals she saw measuring the phragmites, and they informed her it was for removal to restore wetlands. Town Planner David Anderson stated he was not aware of this taking place, but he would definitely follow up on it. Mahlon Hale, 152 Middle Beach Road, stated that he had no damage on the interior of his house during the major storms, because his house has storm shutters; he also stated that it appears to him that most of the roads were constructed in the 1970s, yet gas lines are being installed under them. Tammy Rooney of 4 Grove Avenue stated that a gas line has been installed along Seaview Avenue, and part of it is on the beach side, at a very low level; she asked why there is not more coordination between the town and the utilities, before the utilities start construction projects. Barbara Davis of Stone Road asked for a timeline on completing the plan and how it would be coordinated with the town's capital improvements plan.

In the late spring or early summer, a draft plan will be completed, Mr. Murphy stated. It is also hoped that once the plan's proposals are made, that they will be incorporated into Madison's capital improvements plan, according to Mr. Murphy.

Mary Kay of Seaview Avenue asked about the role of the town in the gas line's installation along Seaview Avenue. Chairman Clark stated utilities are regulated by the state's public utilities regulatory authority and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). It would be ideal if those agencies, the utilities and the town could coordinate better, according to Tammy Rooney. Communication is a problem during emergencies and storms, since there are no longer any local radio stations to listen to—most radio stations are network stations with syndicated shows, according to Chairman Clark. Disappointment was expressed over the timing of the project, having started in September, with public meetings currently taking place, and a draft plan expected in the early spring; many seasonal residents, with homes along the shore, are not present to give their input. Mr. Murphy stated that they realize the schedule is not ideal, but they will work around it.

This presentation concluded at 8:08 p.m. Planning and Zoning Commissioners took a 15-minute break.

Discussion regarding a request from the Madison Land Conservation Trust for a letter of support for an open space grant application

Town Planner David Anderson reported the Madison Land Conservation Trust is seeking an open space grant to purchase land adjacent to water company property that's been given approval to subdivide. Mr. Anderson asked for the Planning and Zoning Commission's approval to allow its chairman to sign a Madison Land Conservation Trust letter, on behalf of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Chairman Clark seated Alternate Commissioner Brian Richardson for absent Commissioner Amanda Kaplan.

Secretary Traugh made the motion to allow Chairman Clark to sign the letter for the Madison Land Conservation Trust grant application; it was seconded by Commissioner Burland and unanimously approved.

Vote to allow the chairman to sign the letter passed, 8-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Clark, Vice Chairman Larson, Secretary Traugh, and Commissioners Bunovsky, Matteson, Richardson, Burland, and Mathers.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Election of Officers

Commissioner Matteson sought nominations for secretary, vice chairman and chairman, and votes took place as follows:

Commissioner Burland nominated Commissioner Traugh as secretary; it was seconded by Commissioner Bunovksy and unanimously approved.

Vote to elect Commissioner Traugh secretary, passed, 7-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Clark, Vice Chairman Larson, and Commissioners Bunovsky, Matteson, Richardson, Burland, and Mathers.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Commissioner Burland nominated Commissioner Larson as vice chairman; it was seconded by Commissioner Bunovksy and unanimously approved.

Vote to elect Commissioner Larson vice chairman, passed, 7-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Clark, Secretary Traugh, and Commissioners Bunovsky, Matteson, Richardson, Burland, and Mathers.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Commissioner Burland nominated Commissioner Clark as chairman; it was seconded by Commissioner Traugh and unanimously approved.

Vote to elect Commissioner Clark chairman, passed, 7-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Vice Chairman Larson, Secretary Traugh, and Commissioners Bunovsky, Matteson, Richardson, Burland, and Mathers.

OPPOSED: None.
ABSTAINED: None.

Commissioner Bunovsky nominated Secretary Traugh as SCROG representative; it was seconded by Commissioner Burland and unanimously approved.

Vote to elect Secretary Traugh SCROG representative, passed, 7-0-0.
IN FAVOR: Chairman Clark, Vice Chairman Larson, and Commissioners Bunovsky, Matteson, Richardson, Burland, and Mathers.
OPPOSED: None.
ABSTAINED: None.

Remarks: SCROG Regional Planning Agency ~ Secretary Traugh, representative to the commission, stated that the next meeting is the annual dinner, and a guest speaker will discuss economic growth for New Haven and its county.

Commission Chair ~ Chairman Clark stated that Guilford banned medical marijuana facilities and dispensaries.

Town Planner ~ Mr. Anderson passed out the commission's 2016 meeting schedule, and assignments were made for liaisons to ACCA meetings. Mr. Anderson discussed personnel matters briefly.

Other Comments ~ None.

Adjournment

Vice Chairman Larson made the motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.; it was seconded by Commissioner Matteson and unanimously approved.

Vote to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. passed, 8-0-0.
IN FAVOR: Chairman Clark, Vice Chairman Larson, Secretary Traugh, and Commissioners Matteson, Bunovsky, Richardson, Burland, and Mathers.
OPPOSED: None.
ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk