

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

**MADISON COASTAL RESILIENCY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
July 8, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Madison Coastal Resiliency Commission was conducted Wednesday, July 8, 2020, at 7 p.m., in a public format, through a Zoom Online Webinar with Public Participation made available through a publicly posted webinar link and password, as well as a call-in telephone number, with a webinar identification number.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Chairman Henry Maguire and Commissioners Mary Barneby, Walter Welsh, Woodie Weiss, Joseph Maco, Robert Sonnischsen, April Allen, Wayne Rigney, Anthony Doina, and Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson.

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

David Clark, Graham Curtis, Marilyn Shaw, Timothy Casey, Fred More, Clayton Patterson, Wayne Rigney, William Gladstone, Elaine Stangland, and Gregory Makoul.

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Selectman Al Goldberg.

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The regular meeting of the Madison Coastal Resiliency Commission was called to order at approximately 7:04 p.m. by Chairman Henry Maguire.

**Call meeting to order.** Chairman Henry Maguire called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson stated that Mark Aron and Thomas Hansen of the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) asked to talk to the Coastal Resiliency Commission about obtaining the commission's support in seeking funding for a wastewater study. Madison currently has a wastewater plan that dates to 1981, but the WPCA needs to update it and seek funds, possibly \$100,000 to \$150,000, the cost of which the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) would reimburse with a grant, at the rate of 55 percent of the total cost, according to Mr. Aron. Before the pandemic, Mr. Aron stated that he and Mr. Hansen spoke to First Selectwoman Peggy Lyons about the wastewater study, and she wanted to be sure that the WPCA connected with the Coastal Resiliency Commission, as well, to obtain the commission's endorsement, so the WPCA could go ahead with its plan and move it forward to the Board of Selectmen for funding approval. DEEP mandates that the WPCA come up with a wastewater plan, according to Mr. Aron. The WPCA is interested in coming up with a focus, determining the different districts and water supply needs throughout town, as well as examining a long range plan for septic systems and sewage, town wide, according to Mr. Aron. Madison currently operates under a sewer avoidance plan, he stated, but it is important for the town to create and approve a wastewater treatment plan, so the health director, through the adoption of a town ordinance, is able to enforce aspects affiliated with the plan, such as examining nitrates and nitrogen in the soils. The WPCA already does have a draft plan that is more comprehensive, according to Mr. Aron. WPCA Chairman Thomas Hansen stated that Graham Curtis is not only on the Coastal Resiliency Commission, but he is also on the WPCA, and they are trying to coordinate everything, so there will not be any overlap on efforts between the Coastal Resiliency Commission and the WPCA, but septic systems will always be an issue. Wastewater may be handled in various ways, through septic systems or sewers, but there are also sewage systems that would be able to go to community septic systems, according to Mr. Hansen. The WPCA does have a proposal on the table, and it could cost \$100,000 for a town wide study, to try to get the town to move

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in the direction of wastewater treatment facilities; what is lacking is a long range plan that looks forward to 20 or 30 years, according to Mr. Hansen. The current draft plan involves a number of responsibilities, such as soliciting engineers to give proposals, and a comprehensive plan would take about a year, maybe longer, to complete, because it follows a prescribed format by DEEP, Mr. Hansen stated. Clinton just completed its wastewater facilities treatment plan, and those projects are now eligible for DEEP funding, because Clinton now has an approved wastewater management plan, according to Mr. Hansen. Madison does not have a wastewater management plan—the long term strategic plan for wastewater management, Mr. Hansen stated. Clinton, Westbrook and Old Saybrook are all under consent orders from DEEP to update their wastewater management plans, according to Mr. Hansen. Madison's 2013 Plan of Conservation and Development called for the town to update its water facilities plan, Mr. Hansen stated. The WPCA is basically DEEP's representative in the town; it is the WPCA's charge to ensure that wastewater is properly handled to avoid pollution, and to have a plan that fulfills those responsibilities for the next 20 to 30 years, according to Mr. Hansen. Mr. Anderson stated that this is not something that would be solved tonight, but he suggested that Mr. Aron and Mr. Hansen work with the Coastal Resiliency Commission's technical committee to decide what a wastewater study would look like; it would be a parallel effort with the Coastal Resiliency Commission. Chairman Maguire stated that since Commissioner Curtis is a lead member of the technical committee, the Coastal Resiliency Commission should ask him to move forward on this.

### **Discussion and Potential Action on Flood Plain Ordinance Recommendations**

Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson stated that the primary order of business is to discuss the Flood Plain Ordinance and moving it forward to the Board of Selectmen; part of that includes deciding whether the Base Flood Elevation Plus Two feet (BFE +2) should be applied only to coastal areas of town, or whether it should be applied town wide, as well. In addition, a decision needs to be made on who would serve on the Flood and Erosion Control Board, which is currently set up to have five members. Discussion centered on how to apply the BFE +2 designation, with some commissioners in favor of doing so throughout the entire town, while others thought it should be applied only to coastal areas. Mr. Anderson showed a map of the flood zones in town, and commissioners discussed various aspects of it. Commissioner Mary Barneby presented a scenario of those who live in North Madison being told that they have to conform to the BFE +2, and they would ask why they have to conform to that, when they are not near any coastal flooding. A more conservative approach would be to make it BFE +2 for coastal areas and BFE +1 for all other areas of town, Mr. Anderson stated. Commissioner Robert Sonnischsen stated that he thinks commissioners are pushing the envelope for raising it up two feet in the riverine areas, such as North Madison. The commissioners are members of the Coastal Resiliency Commission, and it is focused on coastal areas; the situation in North Madison is truly different than the rest of the town, according to Commissioner Sonnischsen. The Coastal Resiliency Commission can agree to apply the BFE +2 to the coastal areas, and later on examine how to proceed with the other areas in town, according to Mr. Anderson. Chairman Maguire stated that he is happy to apply the BFE +2 to the coastal areas but hesitant to apply it town wide. The Flood Plain Ordinance document is easy to modify, and it is clear as a bell what areas in town are BFE +2 and BFE +1, Commissioner Woodie Weiss stated. None of the riverine towns are on the state's legislative coastal committee, Commissioner Joseph Maco stated, adding that the Coastal Resiliency Commission is a coastal issue and not a flood plain issue. Chairman Maguire stated that the selectmen view the Coastal Resiliency Commission as being concerned not only with the coastal areas along the shoreline flooding but also with the town's rivers, lakes and elsewhere in town; they're talking about a coastal town, not a coastal area. Selectmen Al Goldberg stated that all of the townspeople are going to benefit from the Coastal Resiliency Commission's actions. Mr. Anderson asked how the commission would like to populate the Flood and Erosion Control Board—should members of the Coastal Resiliency Commission also be members of the Flood and Erosion Control Board, or should a separate group of people be appointed by the Board of Selectmen?

Questions about variances and decision making were raised, and Mr. Anderson stated that the town's Planning and Zoning Regulations already state that if a homeowner wants to elevate the house two feet above the base flood elevation, no variance is required, and this is for existing structures, only. New structures would have to comply with height regulations, he stated. After asking the commissioners whether anyone had any strong opposition to having the Coastal Resiliency Commission serve also as the Flood and Erosion Control Board—and no one did—Mr. Anderson suggested the executive committee of the Coastal Resiliency Commission serve in that capacity.

**Commissioner Weiss made the motion that the Coastal Resiliency Commission adopt the draft Flood Plain Ordinance and that non coastal A and AE zones be modified to Base Flood Elevation +1 and the Flood and Erosion Control Board be removed and replaced by the Coastal Resiliency Commission Executive Committee; it was seconded by Commissioner Sonnischsen and unanimously approved.**

Vote to adopt the draft Flood Plain Ordinance, with noted changes, passed 10-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Maguire and Commissioners Maco, Walter Welsh, April Allen, Anthony Doina, Weiss, Barneby, Sonnischsen, Wayne Rigney, and Mr. Anderson.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

**Discussion of Committee/Subcommittee Progress and Next Steps ~ No discussion.**

### **General Discussion**

Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson gave a brief summary of a discussion involving Commissioner Graham Curtis that focused on projects.

### **Adjournment.**

**Chairman Maguire made the motion to adjourn at 8:21 p.m.; it was seconded by Commissioner Barneby and unanimously approved.**

Vote to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. passed, 10-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Maguire and Commissioners Maco, Walter Welsh, April Allen, Anthony Doina, Weiss, Barneby, Sonnischsen, Wayne Rigney, and Mr. Anderson.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk