



# Meeting Summary

## Jay and Keene, NYRCR Committee

November 13, 2013, 5:00 to 6:45 pm  
Community Center, Ausable Forks NY

### Attendance:

Committee Co-Chairs: Vinny McClelland, Scott McDonald

Committee Members: Randy Douglas (non-voting member), Tom Both, Gerald (Gerry) Brow, Eric Carey, Chad Garcia, Jody Hart, Tom Hickey, Corrie Miller, Marcy Neville, Jeffrey Farrell, Mike Mascarenas

Planners: Sarah Crowell

Firm Representatives: Michael Wironen, Michele McDonald, Amy Ferguson (River Street Planning), Monica Ryan (River Street Planning); Katie Jagt (Walsh Environmental)

Regional Planning Partners: Frank Bonafide, NYS DOT

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### Summary of Discussion:

The Committee meeting convened with a brief welcome and introduction, a review of the Committee Meeting held on 10/21, a review of the independent meetings which were held in the communities during the two weeks prior to the Committee Meeting, as well as a discussion about the basic elements of the Conceptual Plan. The meeting agenda was reviewed, which also allocated time for a discussion of Strategies and Projects, project implementation (including potential funding sources), and upcoming meetings/ next steps.

The group discussed the status of the Conceptual Plan (complete), Draft Strategies and Projects List, as well as the Final Asset Inventory which is underway, the Draft and Final Risk Assessments and Cost-Benefit Screening which are underway, and the Final Plan, which is currently underway and is due by March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

E & E briefly reviewed the Contents of the Reconstruction Plan, and the primary elements contained therein: Background and Vision, Asset Inventory and Risk Assessment, Needs and Opportunities, Reconstruction Strategies and Projects, and the Implementation Plan.

The first area of discussion was a review of the Asset Inventory and Risk Assessment.

- Asset Inventory & Maps (including modifications which might be needed):
  - E & E will create template maps by Hamlet and sub watershed (HUC 12 boundaries)
  - E & E has created a Web-enabled GIS (similar to Google Earth) for internal use
    - This allows E & E to overlay flood plain/land use/aerial photos

- E & E will arrange a meeting with each Town Supervisor to review the asset inventory using the web-enabled GIS
- Risk Assessment
  - No FEMA Flood maps are available for parts of the study area, so the traditional approach to delimiting risk zones will not work. Also, as noted, FEMA typically studies the rivers only, not tributaries, and tributaries are a noted source of flooding in Jay and Keene.
  - Alternative approach is either to run a hydrological model (if LIDAR or other high-quality topographic data can be obtained) or to map areas impacted by Irene/previous flood events and list them as ‘vulnerable areas’
  - It was noted that there are concerns about landslides (it was agreed the slides are more of a concern for the Town of Keene than for the Town of Jay)

Next, discussion shifted to the strategies and projects, grouped according to the six FEMA Recovery Functions: Community Planning and Capacity Building, Economic Development, Health and Social Services, Housing, Infrastructure, and Natural and Cultural Resources.

#### 1. Community Planning and Capacity Building

- E & E noted that stormwater management is a problem; it was agreed that this is a problem and that local regulations do not govern stormwater at present
  - i. Lake George was given as an example of a strong local stormwater management program; DEC has a model ordinance
  - ii. DOT roads also have stormwater management problems
- It was noted that more planning is needed but that local capacity is limited
  - i. APA used to have a circuit rider program
- It was noted that there is a need to strengthen the capacity of emergency and support services to respond during a natural disaster and sustain efforts into recovery
  - i. The idea of putting in place EMAC/mutual aid agreements for recovery was raised
  - ii. Many staff in the Towns wear multiple hats which further stretches resources
  - iii. If people are too busy, there is no time to apply for grant funding and opportunities are missed

#### 2. Economic Development

- The importance of recreation-based tourism was underscored as a key component of economic development
  - i. The idea was raised of developing a recreational trail between the hamlets that could also be used during emergencies
  - ii. The baseball tournament in Jay was given as a great example of recreation attracting tourists
- E & E raised the idea of developing willow biomass plantations in the floodplain
- It was emphasized that local businesses need resources to help them recover after a disaster and to avoid future impacts

### 3. Health and Human Services

- It was agreed that assisted living for seniors is important
- It was requested that the new medical facilities (branch of E-Town hospital) in Au Sable Forks be added to the plan
  - i. E & E underscored the importance of ensuring that these facilities are designed in a way that makes them flood resistant
- It was agreed that many other health and human service needs are organized and planned for at a larger scale than Jay and Keene and therefore were not necessarily priorities for including in the plan

### 4. Housing

- The FEMA buyout program has begun; Essex County has information that can be provided to support the planning process
- It was noted that there is a shortage of affordable long-term rental housing, given the high prices many homeowners get for seasonal rentals
- Ongoing smart growth planning efforts were noted as important for incorporation into the plan (e.g. Hamlets 3)
- Elevation of housing was discussed
  - FEMA did a cost-benefit analysis and concluded buyouts were preferable
- It was noted that Jay is in the midst of their 3<sup>rd</sup> CDBG housing rehab grant, which will assist 18-20 homes

### 5. Infrastructure

- The need for better flood warning systems was mentioned
- It was requested that water, wastewater, and septic infrastructure be added as a focus of planning strategies
- Stormwater infrastructure was highlighted as a problem in certain areas, such as downtown Au Sable Forks and Upper Jay
- In Upper Jay, it was noted that above ground utilities were significantly impacted by Irene
- There is an ongoing project to study telecoms needs in the Adirondacks
  - i. Also, Essex County is upgrading radio infrastructure to improve disaster communications capacity

### 6. Natural and Cultural Resources

- Walkability is an important issue that needs to be captured in the plan
- The idea of creating a Riverkeeper type program in the local schools was raised
- New parks are important and should be included in the plan; even though some park projects planned by the County (e.g. in Upper Jay) have already solicited funding, it is not guaranteed
- The Town of Jay is using NRCS and DEC funds to fix the eroding bank near the covered bridge

As a final item, E & E reviewed the CDBG DR funding criteria. There was also a short discussion of the bonus ‘competitive funding’ available. It was agreed that Jay and Keene should be strategic in selecting one or two categories to compete for. For example, regional coordination, innovative funding, and green infrastructure may be categories well-suited to the two Towns.

The meeting wrapped up with all reviewing next steps, including the upcoming meetings to be scheduled. The next committee meeting is planned for the week of Dec 16-20. The next public meeting will be held in January.

Action Items/ Task	Responsible Party	Due Date
Update slides per discussion	E & E	11/15
Provide GIS data on housing buyouts to E & E	Essex County	11/15
Review asset inventory with Town Supervisors	E & E	12/6
Schedule next committee meeting	E & E/DOS/ Committee	12/6