



Meeting Summary

Rye Planning Committee

August 12, 2014 6 – 8 pm

Rye YMCA

21 Locust Avenue, Rye

Attendance:

Rye CR Committee - Bernie Althoff (Co-chair), Holly Kennedy (Co-chair) Mack Cunningham, Rex Gedney, Richard Runes, Tracy Stora

GOSR – Suzanne Barclay, Rich Soto-Lopez, Alex Breinin

Consultant Team - Jason Hellendrung, Alice Brown, Julia Carlton

Local Officials and Representatives – Eleanor Militana, Steve Otis, George Latimer, Catherine Parker

Rye Residents – Peter To

Welcome and Introductions	Presenters	Bernie and Holly
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Welcome + Introduction

- Thanked the committee for being patient with the process.

Suzanne introduced Rich Soto-Lopez who will be joining GOSR as a planner assisting with Rye

Jason introduced Julia Carlton who will be joining the consultant team

Old Business

Agenda Item: Refine and Finalize the Asset Inventory	Presenter	Jason
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Committee provided the following clarification

- “Lester’s Clothing” has been replaced by “Mrs. Green’s.”
- Hospital Center no longer exists.
- The committee does not believe that freight trains pass through Rye. If they do, the tracks would be owned by CSX not Conrail. Existing tracks for passenger service are owned by Amtrak or Metro North.
- The retaining wall in question is on Theodore Fremd and should be specified.
- US Route 1 is only at risk near the Rye Nature Center and the High School.

Consultant Team presented the Risk Assessment process

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Share updates of Asset Inventory with relevant consultants	Alice	August 15

Agenda Item: **Review Needs and Opportunities**

Presenter

Jason

Discussion began by reviewing the variety of projects types (proposed project, featured project, or additional resiliency measures) and sub-recipients who may be identified to receive funding. Explained how the committee can rank/prioritize projects and how the voting will work at the end of the process.

Discussion focused on Economic Development, Health and Social Services, and Infrastructure.

- “Development” is a problematic term to use here because no new development is anticipated at this time. The primary need is stability.
- Small business owners need assistance to help with flooding in the downtown and neighborhood business districts. Businesses of all sizes need the power to be restored in a timely manner so they can reopen.
- The donor community is stressed by funding building repairs to non-profits instead of supporting expanded programming or enhancements.
- Elevated parking by train station would serve commuters and shoppers –it’s good for the tax base, provides a safe place to park cars that would normally be prone to flooding, and improves the capacity for train ridership.
- The Osborn provides a variety of health services and took in seniors who were flooded during past storms.
- Need to designate a new emergency shelter location since Rye Country Day requires Red Cross staff support and Whitby Castle is now being leased.
- People generally visit emergency shelters for a set number of hours. It is rare for Rye residents to spend the night.
- ConEd needs to improve communication systems to let people know when power will be shut down (since it leads to sump pumps failing), restored (so they aren’t at risk), or should be restored (so residents can confirm). A liaison system was established between 2004 and 2011 that worked well, but it dissolved as people retired and now needs to be reestablished and institutionalized.
- Sanitary sewer stations should be hardened.
- Cell phone towers with battery backup power should be checked to ensure that equipment is storm ready.

Action Items

Person Responsible

Due Date

Update on currently funded projects

Eleanor and Christian

September 16

Include these identified needs and opportunities in Section 2

Alice

August 22

New Business

Agenda Item: **Discuss Strategies**

Presenter

Jason

Presented the initial list of strategies, which act as idea buckets for the issues that will be addressed in the eventual project list.

Reviewed a draft list of 25 ideas, their feasibility, the level of broad support, their applicability to the program, similar proposals, and additional ideas.

Learned the following

- In addition to potential large retention pond by Anderson Hill Road, there are possible sites for two smaller ponds.
- A previous streetscape committee heard consistent requests for more open space downtown. A park between Locust Avenue and Elm Place could be built to serve this need and absorb flooding if it was offset by structured parking elsewhere in the downtown.
- Additional cost estimates for other projects, including dredging in Milton Harbor can be found in the Capital Improvement Plan.
- Westchester County is working to provide leadership and support for FEMA’s National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.
- The last property that the City acquired cost \$255,000 in 2001. While this consolidated city ownership of an area along Beaver Swamp Brook, it is too expensive to acquire additional properties in Rye.
- ConEd is resistant to burying power lines in areas with a high water table.
- Milton Fire House is as likely to flood as the Locust Avenue one.

Possible project ideas added to the list

- Solar/photovoltaic power for municipal buildings and/or key street lights.
- Subsidize home elevations with 10-20% cost reduction.
- Improve the storage capacity for the Lower Pond at the Bowman Avenue Dam.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Incorporate strategies into Section 3	Julia	September 19
Continue to develop project ideas, refine specifics, and consolidate the draft list of proposed and featured projects	Sasaki, GOSR	September 8

Agenda Item: **Looking Ahead**

Presenter

Jason and Alice

May have phone call check in with committee on August 25 and/or public event prep with education piece on September 2

Second Public Engagement Event: Tuesday, September 9 at Rye Free Reading Room from 7 to 9

Next Committee Meeting: Tuesday, September 16 from 6 – 8 (venue TBD)

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
Promote the next public engagement event		
- Hang flyers and send emails	Committee	September 2
- Reach out to local media	Co-chairs	August 22 (?)
- City-wide list serve news blast	Eleanor	September 2
Prepare for public engagement event	Jason and Julia	September 8
Agenda for next committee meeting	Jason, Suzanne, and co-chairs	September 15
