



Meeting Notes

Planning Committee Kick-Off Meeting

July 10, 2014 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Wallkill Town Hall, 99 Tower Drive, Building A, Wallkill, NY

Attendance: (Members, Planner, Firm Representatives, Invited Guests)

Town of Wallkill Grove Steering Committee:

Inder Kumar
April Haas
Robert Berman
Ronald Broas
Neil Meyer
Jeff Hutchinson

New York Rising Program

Lori DuBord

New York State Dept. of State:

William Harding
Lisa Melville

Guests

Lou Ingrassia, Commissioner of
Public Works

Dan Depew, Supervisor

Tetra Tech, Inc.:

Greg Brunelle
Susan Roth

Agenda Item: Introduction Presenter: Lori DuBord/Greg Brunelle

Summary of Discussion:

- Greg Brunelle welcomed the committee members, introduced himself and Susan Roth as the consultant planning team from Tetra Tech. He is the Deputy Project Manager for this project, and the Community Manager for the New York Rising (NYCRC) in this town will be Emily Slotnick, who could not be at tonight’s meeting. Also Cynthia Bianco is the Project Manager for Tetra Tech. She will also be at the meetings on occasion. He then invited Lori DuBord to introduce herself.
- Lori DuBord is the Regional Lead for the New York Rising Program, and the conduit between the consultant planners and the state program. She worked with the members present to form the Committee and expressed appreciation for everyone’s willingness to participate. She will be able to assist the community with any questions regarding the state program and guide this effort to a successful conclusion. Lori then introduced Lisa Melville and William (Bill) Harding.
- Other members of the committee were invited to introduce themselves and provide a brief background.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N.A.

Action Items: N/A	Person Responsible:	Due Date:
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Agenda Item: Today’s Goals Understanding NYRCR Presenter: Greg Brunelle

Summary of Discussion:

1. The NYRCR program was created in response to the need to address flooding and recovery in hard hit communities during the storm events of Irene, Lee and Sandy. The funding is from the Community Block Development Grant-Disaster Recovery (CBDG-DR, which is a federal funding source. This program is in its second round of communities. The first round included 102 communities; the second includes 22 communities across New York. The NYRCR program is unique because it allows communities to address more than just infrastructure and allows the community to address other needs, such as economic development projects that will allow the community to “build back better,” and be more resilient when facing the next flooding event.
2. The town of Wallkill is eligible for up to 3 million dollars that can be used to fund programs and projects identified during the planning phase of this program. Projects identified by the Committee must tie back to storm recovery and enhance resiliency during the next major flood event.
3. The CBDG-DR program is a federal program to help aid communities in their effort to recover from significant storm events. Projects that qualify for CDBG-DR funding include public and privately owned facilities and utilities improvements, relocation, flood capacity building, acquisition of property, clearance, rehabilitation, and construction of buildings, economic development assistance. The planning team and state will help the community understand what projects would be eligible for assistance under this program. There was some discussion of the difference between CBDG, CBDG-DR, and FEMA funding programs. CBDG-DR funding under this program can be used to help the community to “build back better” and be more resilient when facing the next storm.
4. The Committee will develop a list of projects and analyze these projects in order of the positive impact that will have on restoring the community after a flood event. These projects will also be analyzed for feasibility in terms of completion and permitting in order to ensure eligibility for CDBG-DR funding. At the end of this planning process, the committee may have identified and prioritized projects that exceed the potential funding of the NYRCR program, however, the planning team will identify other potential sources of funding that can be used to complete the projects. In summary, there will be a plan on the shelf that will identify and rank short and long term projects in the Town of Wallkill. This document can then be used to help justify the funding for these future projects when seeking grants.
5. The goals of this meeting include:
 - Establishing meeting dates for committee meetings and for the first public engagement meeting;
 - Establish the geographic scope of the planning effort;
 - Preliminarily discuss the community’s critical assets and their role in the planning process;
 - Review the impacts that resulted from Irene, Lee, and Sandy; and,
 - Establish a process to develop a Vision Statement.
6. Recently Tetra Tech (TT) planners took a tour of Wallkill and sat with the Supervisor to better understand the flooding issues and other impacts that resulted from the storms. The process of looking at available data and plans has already begun.

7. The “Rising to the Top” program is a special award for communities that exceed certain goals in their NYRCR planning process. The criteria have not been set for this program at this time.
8. Lori DuBord stated that the community is eligible for up to 3 million dollars, and that her office and the New York Department of State (NYSDOS) would be working with the community to ensure that projects selected had the potential of spending the full 3 million dollars preliminarily allotted for this community.
9. The NYCRC planning process is “bottom up process” and involves working with the community to understand the impacts of the storm events, and the needs and opportunities of the community.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N/A

Action Items: N/A	Person Responsible	Due Date
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Agenda Item: Program Steps/Plan Components	Presenter: Greg Brunelle	
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Summary of Discussion:

1. The Planning team has already begun the tasks of collecting information for the plan.
2. The Planning Team will be working with its technical group to assess existing flood modeling and engage in additional hydraulic (HEC-RAS) modeling of the community. This will support a comprehensive and science-based understanding of the flooding issues as well as the anticipated impacts upon critical assets and the potential for reducing flooding based upon actions being taken (e.g. engineering solutions, etc.).
1. Section One of the plan is due in early August. Section One includes a description of the program and its objectives and an overview of the community to include specific critical assets, economic and demographic profile, infrastructure, damage and impacts specific to the storms, other risks/threats and includes the vision statement, objectives and strategies.
2. Section Two is due in late August. This section will contain a list of critical assets, and a risk assessment of the flooding of these assets. The final part of this section will include a definition of the needs and opportunities that will advance the recovery and future resiliency of the community.
3. Decisions/Motions/Votes: N/A

Action Items	Person Responsible	Due Date
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Agenda Item: Public Engagement and Project Timeline.	Presenter: Greg Brunelle	
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Summary of Discussion:

1. Tetra Tech presented an overview of the project timeline:
 - By September a list of Strategies that will be developed.
 - In October a prioritized list of projects and actions, and the first draft of the Plan is due.

4. Based on discussion of storm impacts, existing infrastructure and the types of projects initially being considered, the Committee determined that the geographic scope of the plan will remain the jurisdictional boundaries of the town for the time being. Should projects or other aspects of the planning process emerge that require or where it makes sense to engage with communities adjacent to Walkkill, this issue may be re-visited.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N/A

Action Items: N/A

Person Responsible

Due Date

Agenda Item: Description of Damage from the Storm

Presenter:

Greg Brunelle

Summary of Discussion:

2. The committee was invited to characterize the storm events that caused the most damage. The following information in this section is a summary. Most of the damage occurred with Irene and Lee. Sandy was a wind event that did not have much precipitation, but the severe winds caused loss of power.
3. Irene was the worst event, however, Lee closely followed Irene, and the precipitation fell on saturated land and storm systems.
4. All of the Town's wells and water and sewer infrastructure serve about half the population of the Town and were affected. The town had lost one of the pumping stations, if they lost one more; the Town would have been out of water for a long time until the Town could fix it. The wells are along the Walkkill River. The Sewer Plant is back from the river, but the risers need to be elevated so that the river does not breach the risers.
5. When the power was out, all the major intersections lights were out, and the traffic had to be directed by the police force. These intersections are heavily traveled and need backup generators to keep them working.
6. Flooding occurred for these major routes: Galleria Road, the double tunnels, County Route 78 by High Barney Road, and end of 211 in Walkkill. Smaller roads with flooding included the intersection of Winding Brook and Bedami, Van Buren and Process Valley by the dam. Lee Wood flooded but residents had a second way out.
7. Major businesses that were flooded include Elliot's, the fairgrounds, Pizza Hut, Citizens Bank, the Dollar store and more businesses in that area were shut down. The Shop Rite on 211 did not flood. The drainage from the Shop Rite plaza flows under the paved and built areas, then under 211 to Silver Lake.
8. Residents in the town had a lot of basement flooding. The Town predicts that 80% of the sump pumps go directly into the sewer and is trying to educate the public to pump their basement water outside the house. It is illegal for the building department to check the sewer pump outflow as a single task. The town has to go into the home for another reason and notice it.
9. In Scotchtown, near Bedami and Loch Lomand, Sewer reversed flow because of the water pressure, and sewage overflowed into houses.

10. There was concern about flooding around Crystal Run and the ability of people to access health care. There is an issue with flooding along Exit 122, but it is being addressed and construction is underway. This project will address flooding on Crystal Run.
11. A different access road to the wells needs to be built. It is next to the river, and floods easily and the Town does not have access to the wells.
12. When there is a major flood event 17 is flooded out between exit 119 and 120. There is a culvert under 17 that is undersized for a major storm event. The road is going to be Interstate 86, and the road improvements have already been done. There are two choices to solve the problem, elevate the road or provide better storage upstream so that it does not flood. This can be analyzed in the study.
13. The Wallkill Fire Department went into the city to help rescue people. They also helped pumped out basements in the Town. The Wallkill Fire department is run by volunteers.
14. There is a dam on Silver Lake that is a high dam and was completely rebuilt 15 years ago. The dam in Pocatello Lake is an earthen dam that has not been maintained, and the Town does not have any control over the flow. The Town has an agreement with the owners of Silver Lake and access to it when it should be lowered prior to a storm event. The dam is owned by the Association of Silver Lake. Under an emergency declaration the Town has the authority to open the dam. On Jays Lake, the dam is made of wooden board that they would break if they need to release it.
15. During Sandy, the Town of Wallkill was out of power for three days. What more directly impacted the Town was the lack of fuel from the people coming from New Jersey to get gas. Rationing had to occur. It may be important to develop gas storage for emergency vehicles. Power outages affected the ability to pump water, and maintain intersection traffic flow. The intersections are too busy and lack of control on the intersections affected the ability of people to get needed services and affected the safety of the roads. The Town does not have many auxiliary roads and one shut down affects traffic in the entire area.
16. Orange County is an evacuation pathway for New York City and for emergencies related to Indian Point, and this should be a consideration when planning for future emergency events.

Agenda Item: Regional Plans

Presenter: Greg Brunelle

Summary of Discussion:

1. TT presented a list of regional plans, and invited the committee to determine if the list was complete. The Town of Wallkill recently completed a water infrastructure plan. It defines the infrastructure and provides a list of the infrastructure, its capacity, age, and condition. The Town is currently working on a similar plan for sewer infrastructure plan.
2. Supervisor Dan Depew mentioned that the Town did a Hazardous Mitigation Plan in conjunction with the city of Middletown which includes many of the areas that were affected by the Wallkill River. The Town of Wallkill received a \$90,000 grant to do the project.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N/A

Action Items: Obtain copies of the Towns Infrastructure Plans Person Responsible: Emily Slotnick
Due Date: ASAP

Agenda Item: Vision Statement Presenter: Greg Brunelle

Summary of Discussion:

1. Greg Brunelle provided a description of the purpose of the vision statement and provided examples. He asked one of the members of the committee to head the process of creating a vision statement.

Decision/Motions/Votes: Neil Meyer will head the process of putting together the Vision Statement, which will be discussed at the next meeting. The committee agreed to give him ideas by Tuesday the 15th, and Neil will craft a draft to be mailed out by Friday the 18th.

Action Items: Develop vision statement Person Responsible: Neil Myer Due Date: 7-18-2014

Agenda Item: Public Engagement/Meeting Dates Presenter: Greg Brunelle

Summary of Discussion:

1. The committee discussed ideas concerning the public meeting outreach. Tetra Tech is also exploring using a dial in system. The Town has a Facebook page and can post a notice on their website.
2. The committee meetings will generally be the second and fourth Thursday, from 5-7. However the Public Engagement meeting was set for the 24th and the committee will meet on the 17th. The committee meetings in August will be on the 14 and 28th of August. There will be a meeting next week to discuss critical assets.
3. The following was discussed as the best ways to reach out to the public:
 - o The town has the ability to live stream the meetings, and if a community member could not make it, they could tune into a public channel and watch the meeting. In addition, questions by email could be accepted in real time and be answered at the meeting. After the meeting, a copy of the proceedings could be taped and addition comments from the public could be solicited.
 - o The water bills go out quarterly, and a water bill just went out. The tax bills do not go out until January. This could be used as a way to advertise future public engagement meetings.
 - o The Town has an email blast list and a Facebook page that can also be used to inform the public. Public announcements appear on Channel 23 and Channel 6. These televised announcements would be free.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N/A

Action Items: Start advertising the Public Engagement Meeting, and set up an email that can be used during the public meeting for remote comments Person Responsible: Tetra Tech Due Date July 14, 2014

Agenda Item: Conclusion/Additional Items

Presenter: Greg Brunelle/Lori DuBord

Summary of Discussion:

1. The committee members are required to attend meetings - a policy of non-attendance may be adopted.
2. The committee chairs will have a prominent role in the process, and will be the local face of the committee and this process.
3. The ethics policy will be emailed to the committee members. All members are required to sign that they received and read and agreed to the terms of the ethics policy. Send questions about the ethics policy to Lori DuBord.
4. Lori DuBord stated that any programmatic questions needed to be sent to her to answer. Emily Slotnick would be the committee's point of contact for the contents of the plan.
5. Tetra Tech Hydraulic Engineers will be coming to the meeting to talk with the committee at an appropriate point in the process.

Decision/Motions/Votes: N/A

Meeting adjourned

Action Items:

Person Responsible

Due Date
