

The Coastal Resiliency Action Committee
MEETING MINUTES - TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021, 4:00 P.M.

In accordance with the Governor’s Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 30A, § 20, relating to the 2020 novel Coronavirus outbreak emergency, **the January 12, 2021 public meeting of the Coastal Resiliency Action Committee shall be physically closed to the public to avoid group congregation.**

Alternative public access to this meeting shall be provided in the following manner:

1. The meeting will be televised via Falmouth Community Television.
2. Real-time public comment can be addressed to the Coastal Resiliency Action Committee utilizing the Zoom virtual meeting software for remote access. This application will allow users to view the meeting and send a comment or question to the Chair via the Chat function. Submitted text comments will be read into the record at the appropriate points in the meeting.
 - a. Zoom Login instructions:
 - i. Instructions and the meeting link for this specific meeting can be found at the following web address: <http://www.falmouthma.gov/CoastalResiliency>
 - ii. Please plan on 10-15 minutes of preparation time to log in though it may be less if you have previously used Zoom on the device you will use to access this meeting.
3. Additionally public comments may be sent in advance of the meeting to concom@falmouthma.gov at **least 5 hours prior** to the beginning of the meeting. Documents and audio or video files may also be submitted via email. Submitted email comments and documents will be made a part of the meeting record and may be read into the record, summarized or displayed during the meeting at the discretion of the chair.

Present: Charles McCaffrey, Chair
Melissa Freitag, Vice-Chair
Jamie Mathews
Paul Dreyer
Andrew Ashton (left at 5:20 p.m.)
Ed Schmitt, Alternate

Mr. McCaffrey opened the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

Agree on a general meaning of a "resilient coast"

Mr. McCaffrey: Paul submitted four different definitions of resiliency.

Ms. Freitag: I submitted one also.

Mr. McCaffrey: The first definition defines it a “bounce back”. The second is process oriented - when process takes action. The third is good but doesn’t get to what we are looking for in a definition – how do you measure resiliency, e.g. is the loss of money level reduced?

Ms. Freitag: I could explain a national capital account if you want.

Mr. McCaffrey: The fourth is about minimal damage to social systems.

Ms. Freitag: Adding the IPCC definition – anticipate, absorb or accommodate the improvement of resiliency not the coastal damage.

Mr. McCaffrey: I like the expression in the fourth – “with minimum damage”. We could paraphrase these in the introduction to the report.

Mr. Dryer: I like the last one. It’s not reactive and easy to understand. It says what we’re trying to do.

Mr. McCaffrey: We could use that one. Would you like to blend this with the IPCC one?

Ms. Freitag: Yes.

Mr. McCaffrey: Would you take a crack at combining them. What might be the measures of resiliency – the reduction in value of damages?

Ms. Freitag: In national capital accounting it states that hurricanes can be good for GDP because of building construction, etc. but bad in other ways.

Mr. Ashton: It helps the economy to build a bridge, but you’ve also lost a bridge.

Ms. Freitag: Exactly.

Continue to discuss and vote priority actions from the MVP Workshop, Vulnerability Assessment, and prior Town studies.

Mr. McCaffrey: At the last meeting we only looked at the recommendations on pp. 96 and 97. The recommendations begin on page 41 and continue throughout the report. Which ones do we agree with and want to present to the Select Board? They received the report from Woods Hole Group (WHG) but nothing was done to accept it. Turn to page 41 in the Vulnerability Assessment (VA) through page 45 of recommendations. They are general and then get site specific. On page 41 it’s conceptual – alternative adaptation strategies – avoid, accommodate, protect and retreat are general. A specific recommendation will fall into one of those categories.

Ms. Freitag: These are options. Are we telling them how to do it or just recommending actions?

Mr. McCaffrey: We are telling them what we think are good strategies.

Ms. Freitag: Protecting things is short term.

Mr. McCaffrey: It’s good for us to endorse the VA report. There are specific recommendations that we disagree with.

Ms. Lincoln: Are we making recommendations?

Mr. McCaffrey: We have already said yes in the Velocity zone and in certain A zones. If another Committee had done this it would be good to know. On page 44 there is a general description on how buildings and structures might be protected.

Mr. Mathews: Almost all of those are in the Building Code.

Mr. McCaffrey: How much more restrictive are we in the Velocity zone or parts of the A zone? It’s essential to resiliency to have effective rules. On page 45 there is a specific recommendation.

Ms. Freitag: Do you want us to go through them and give a yes or no?

Mr. McCaffrey: Yes.

Ms. Lincoln: Some of these things we will have to do anyway.

Mr. McCaffrey: What’s the purpose of the report? We haven’t given recommendations.

Ms. Lincoln: How many homes does it support? Using this report going forward.

Ms. Freitag: Lists of things from the VA are already in the report.

Mr. McCaffrey: But it’s not done consistently – it’s random. This is a check to see what makes sense.

Ms. Freitag: It's in the body of the paper. Ms. Freitag read specific areas in the report. They are already listed.

Mr. McCaffrey: What is the recommendation?

Ms. Freitag: We don't have them but they are highlighted and the Select Board knows that things have to be done.

Ms. Lincoln: When it comes to specific things, we can't tell them what to do.

Ms. Freitag: The report says we have to figure out what to do. WHG says that by 2030 the Park Road Sewer Station will be under water. We have to report it.

Mr. McCaffrey: But that's not a final systematic review on what we agreed on.

Mr. Mathews: In a broad sense we did.

Mr. McCaffrey: Each of us may have made comments and Andrew disagreed with one suggestion in the VA.

Ms. Freitag: There is no line item on today's agenda that we are going to vote on recommendations.

Ms. Lincoln: It does say that on the agenda. If you want to go step by step through them we can.

Ms. Freitag: Are there any objections to one of them?

Mr. McCaffrey: Let's go through them – like the Park Road Sewer Station.

Ms. Lincoln: We don't have enough knowledge to determine what should be done.

Mr. McCaffrey: Do we agree with the recommendation? This allows discretion for the Town agencies to look at the recommendation. There is no reason not to agree. These are just the considerations to look at. There is a recommendation re the upwellers on the pier on page 49.

Are there any issues with the recommendation of WHG? For the VA.

Ms. Lincoln: In time it will have to be raised.

Mr. McCaffrey: The pier is an historic structure.

Ms. Lincoln: Yes it is. The Town redid it.

Mr. McCaffrey: What about the drawbridge in Woods Hole?

Ms. Lincoln: We have to keep it functioning.

Mr. McCaffrey: For the long term? There is extreme vulnerability to the Woods Hole channel – it may be abandoned.

Ms. Lincoln: In the meantime the Town will do all it can to keep it functioning.

Mr. McCaffrey: Do we agree with the recommendation?

Ms. Lincoln: I do.

Ms. Freitag: We have all read the report. Can we go through and glance at it.

Mr. McCaffrey: Okay. Re Town Hall – I have an objection. As we've discussed, the berm approach may be okay until 2070. This reflects what we've talked about – protect Town Hall and Main Street for now.

Ms. Freitag: I recommend the berm. The Surf Drive Study recommended a berm.

Mr. McCaffrey: The Surf Drive Study didn't need to be looked at yet.

Ms. Freitag: I think we should consider doing it until 2070. Any objections?

Mr. Mathews: I agree with the recommendation.

Mr. McCaffrey: Yes, but saying that by 2070 we may move Town Hall undermines the berm approach.

Mr. Mathews: Because that's 50 years away.

Mr. Schmitt: The berm around Town Hall won't hold up in a storm. What about the parking lots? Will there be a berm around them also?

Mr. McCaffrey: It's not about Town Hall.

Ms. Lincoln: It's about Sider's Pond.

Mr. McCaffrey: We have to protect from sea level rise and storms.

Mr. Schmitt: Would the berm last until 2070?

Mr. McCaffrey: Yes. And we also protect Main Street with it.

Mr. Schmitt: Will it hold up when a storm comes? What do we know about berms?

Ms. Freitag: It would be a lower cost to put in a berm than to move Town Hall.

Mr. Schmitt: I would support a feasibility study before deciding on a berm.

Mr. McCaffrey to Ms. Lincoln: Do you know when the FEMA grants will be available?

Ms. Lincoln: I'm looking it up right now.

Mr. McCaffrey: There is a series of recommendations relating to parking lots at beaches. Any concerns?

Ms. Freitag: My only concern is we don't know if we will be using parking lots in 50 years. Shuttles, etc. may be a solution.

Mr. McCaffrey: It does say by 2030 we may need a perimeter landscape wall. Also, portable bathhouses may be necessary so in mayor storms they can be moved and not damaged.

Ms. Freitag: Are you talking about bathroom facilities?

Mr. McCaffrey: Yes, and bathhouses.

Ms. Freitag: How many do we have?

Ms. Lincoln: There are two at Old Silver. There is one portable bathhouse at Menauhant Beach. There is a bathroom and a changing room.

Mr. McCaffrey: We should move sooner than later. The VA was based on the flooding elevation and didn't consider a Category 3 hurricane.

Ms. Lincoln: The Town should be looking at fixed structures being replaced by portable ones that are easy to be removed.

Mr. McCaffrey: There is no reason to delay consideration.

Ms. Freitag: In the report we remind them that after a bad storm the timeline moves up.

Mr. McCaffrey: We don't have to wait until 2030 to start planning. There is a question about spending \$200,000 on repairs to the tennis courts. Is this reasonable?

Ms. Freitag: We should bring it up at precinct meetings.

Mr. McCaffrey: It's something the CPC is considering.

Ms. Freitag: We should suggest CPC read the VA.

Mr. McCaffrey: If it's a flooding risk how long does a tennis court last?

Ms. Lincoln: I'd like to reach out to Joe Leonard first. The Recreation Department is not thinking about that.

Mr. McCaffrey: What is the life of the investment? It's not going to be inundated until 2040. I don't know the answer. This could influence on how significant improvements will be. Anything else? Docks and piers – any recommendations?

Mr. Mathews: That's on page 64.

Ms. Freitag: It starts on page 60.

Mr. McCaffrey: The Bike Path is next. I have an exception to the recommendations on the Bike Path – it says in 2070 we should elevate the low sections of the Bike Path. I think we should consider doing that earlier.

Ms. Freitag: We can direct them to the Surf Drive Study.

Mr. McCaffrey: I'm in general agreement with the recommendation but it should be moved up in the timeline. Any objections?

Mr. Ashton: What about putting it on piers?

Mr. Mathews: It is referred to in the Surf Drive Study.

Mr. McCaffrey: If we are looking at the Great Sippewissett Marsh we have to look at the Bike Path. Considerations should not be put off until 2070.

Mr. Ashton: It contradicts itself.

Mr. McCaffrey: Is there general agreement on this?

Mr. Mathews: Yes.

Mr. McCaffrey: The docks recommendations are straightforward. Any concerns?

Mr. Mathews: No.

Ms. Freitag: Is bunkering around the piers are a concern?

Ms. Lincoln: What do you mean?

Ms. Freitag: The pumps are not Town owned. Should we be moving them or protecting them to prevent oil spills? The MVP report said it could be an environmental nightmare.

Mr. McCaffrey: It's a coastal infrastructure. It gets into it, but there is not really a recommendation. There is a paragraph at the end of a bulleted list on page 65.

Mr. Mathews: There is a general recommendation for further study.

Mr. McCaffrey: Some of the study will come from our recommendations re sediment management. Is that fair to say? Any comments?

Mr. Dreyer: If you're looking for information – there was a meeting on December 17th re wastewater, sediment and dredging. I can send it to the Board as it has a well done summary.

Mr. McCaffrey: When we get to look at the Coastal Resiliency Working Group (CRWG) we will see recommendations re removing perpendicular structures. We'll see how many of these recommendations we carry forward.

Mr. Dreyer: It's a good report.

Mr. McCaffrey: It's very firm re removing structures.

Mr. Dreyer: It's another report about removing the Menauhant Bridge. It's interesting.

Mr. McCaffrey: Have they received the State and Federal permits for the groins at Menauhant?

Ms. Lincoln: They are going for the State permit but haven't filed yet. They have the certificate from EOEa but not the State permit. Menauhant is on our agenda for January 20th.

Mr. McCaffrey: It's one of Andrew's concerns.

Mr. Ashton: At the western end of Washburn Island they say that intervention is necessary, but it is probably not needed unless it is affecting the Yacht Club.

Ms. Lincoln: Washburn Island?

Mr. Ashton: They say it's affecting the coastline on Eel River.

Mr. McCaffrey: We may need to use careful words re roads and bridges. There are a few we need to be careful about, i.e. Chapoquoit Road. There is a recommendation on page 68. Town Meeting is considering spending nearly one million dollars to protect Chapoquoit Road at this Town Meeting.

Ms. Freitag: How many miles of coastline do we have? That should be our next focus of study.

Mr. Schmitt: There is a lot of private property along our coastline.

Mr. McCaffrey: But the road to it is public property and expensive to maintain.

Ms. Freitag: It's very expensive to maintain them.

Mr. McCaffrey: More study should be done before anything is done to Chapoquoit Road. Otherwise it could have adverse effects.

Ms. Lincoln: The project was started prior to this Committee being formed. I understand the Committee's concerns but it has been in progress for years.

Ms. Freitag: The Town has to come up with solutions. There are certain steps to take re legal action. The Town is slowly retreating from road maintenance. There is less risk of being sued.

Mr. McCaffrey: Before further investments are made to Chapoquoit Road, there should be studies conducted.

Mr. Mathews: That should be the case with all roads.

Mr. McCaffrey: We can't wait until 2070 especially with Clinton and Scranton Roads.

Ms. Lincoln: We should group all roads together.

Mr. McCaffrey: Some are less complicated than Chapoquoit Road. We need specific recommendations for Clinton and Scranton Roads.

Ms. Freitag: We can do it in one paragraph for all roads.

Mr. Mathews: I agree 100%.

Mr. McCaffrey: What are we saying about special recommendations here?

Ms. Lincoln: Before 2030 we can't be saying that bulkheads must be raised. Some are on private property.

Ms. Freitag: Perforated seawalls are no help.

Ms. Lincoln: They are on privately owned parcels also.

Mr. McCaffrey: You are not as supportive of the ideas?

Ms. Lincoln: It's not that we're not supportive – we may want to consider them. We can't just pick one. We don't know what will happen. Are we going to recommend that by 2070 the corner of Scranton and Clinton Roads will be turned into a waterfront park? I don't see it.

Ms. Freitag: This is brainstorming. We are recommending the general directions of the VA.

Mr. McCaffrey: We have to make recommendations.

Ms. Freitag: These are living documents.

Mr. Mathews: This is a Committee and it's everyone's opinion. We are trying to give general recommendations and we need to take a broader look at roads in general. Now is not the time to get specific about each one.

Mr. McCaffrey: I'm not saying that. Is the report going to make recommendations or not?

Mr. Schmitt: We don't have to address it.

Ms. Lincoln: The Select Board is looking for action items. There are plenty we can give them but not on each road.

Mr. McCaffrey: If the VA made specific recommendations, we should address it. Some will be general and sometimes, as we agreed, there should be, i.e. portable bathhouses.

Ms. Freitag: This is like a wish list. In general there is nothing wrong with this report. I think they're all valid. The Town needs to know we looked at the studies and we may need more studies.

Mr. McCaffrey: That's what I'm trying to say now.

Ms. Freitag: But we're getting too specific.

Ms. Lincoln: We're getting into the weeds.

Mr. McCaffrey: We've gone through 20 comments with reasonable recommendations. These are ideas that can be considered.

Ms. Freitag: We're including the VA in our report.

Mr. McCaffrey: It's meaningless. We wanted the VA information to do our report.

Ms. Lincoln to Mr. Dreyer: Any comments? I'm with Melissa and Jamie. The VA is a great document and gives a lot of information.

Mr. McCaffrey: Should we say "something" can be considered?

Ms. Lincoln: We can give an endorsement of the VA and note that the Town should consider all suggestions. We shouldn't be too detailed.

Mr. McCaffrey: You don't think we'll be asked that?

Ms. Lincoln: Some recommendations we wholeheartedly support and there are some things we don't.

Mr. Mathews: Do we need to take an official vote to include the VA in our report? The report will recommend a lot of things and some things will need a further report. We could suggest that some things need special looks and officially put the VA within our report.

Ms. Lincoln: We should put all the studies in the report.

Ms. Freitag: We can do a footnote that states see page (?) in the VA in appendix 1.

Ms. Lincoln: It's the information we've been working with for 3 years. We're taking all that information and writing a report for the Select Board.

Mr. McCaffrey: That's what I'm trying to determine now relative to the report.

Mr. Mathews: Can we vote the VA?

Ms. Lincoln: I don't think it's necessary. All the reports should be in the report.

Ms. Freitag: Move as a Committee that we generally accept the recommendations in the VA.

Mr. Mathews: Second.

Mr. McCaffrey: Freitag, aye; Dreyer, aye; Mathews, aye; Schmitt, aye; McCaffrey, aye.

Unanimous, so moved.

Mr. Dreyer: I don't think we have to so specific.

Mr. McCaffrey: Anything from pp. 70 to 95 I think is worth recommending in our report. Are there any ideas or specifics in the rest of the report that we would like to recommend to the Select Board?

Mr. Dreyer: I think we should defer the discussion to the next meeting.

Mr. McCaffrey: For the next meeting read the pages we haven't covered and note any recommendation that we need to consider or anything that we strongly disagree with. I will ask you individually if there is anything we should include or object to.

Ms. Freitag: We've already included policy recommendation in the report.

Discuss future schedule of tasks and public outreach

VOTE MINUTES

The following minutes 12/ 22/2020 will be voted at the next meeting.

Mr. Mathews: Move to adjourn.

Ms. Freitag: Second.

Mr. McCaffrey: Freitag, aye; Dreyer, aye; Mathews, aye; Schmitt, aye; McCaffrey, aye.

Unanimous, so moved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Cronin, Recording Secretary