
PLAINFIELD FLOOD RECOVERY GRANTS WORK GROUP
Tuesday, October 22, 2024 @ 10 a.m.

Attending:

Karen Hatcher (KH)
Michael Zahner (MZ)
Gary Smith (GS)
Josh Pitts (JP) – not available
Karl Bissex (KB)
Michael Billingsley (MB) -
Denise Wheeler (DW) – via Zoom
Arion Thiboumery (AT) –
Bram Towbin (BT) – not available

The focus of the meeting today was meeting The Integrity Group (TIG), a Disaster Recovery Consultant from Tallahassee, FL. They will be with us all day and do site visits around town, then for a 1pm FEMA exploratory call, then to work with Gary and others who can/want to learn more about FEMA PA.

Introduction and roles of grants team

The Integrity Group

David Gillespie, Exec. VP.; Olivia Schmidt, Lauren Scott & Sheila McGraw
Each project is unique as it should be.

They share ideas across the team and rely on the expertise of the entire team. They will be looking at Plainfield's vision for building back stronger and assisting in and advocating for Plainfield to get as much funding as possible. TIG is knowledgeable in federal funding, how \$ flow to the state, and can offer recovery solution ideas, project management, attention to detail, and assist with damage inventory.

Questions: How might other towns be included? Opportunities for joint projects? River community? Goddard College project?

Lauren and Sheila will work with Gary on damage inventory and pending RSM. They will set up a meeting with a smaller group to review and discuss the damage inventory items.

– TIG will review all RFPs, grant applications, and FEMA submissions to ensure they are compliant.

Lauren - said FEMA's PA program does not reimburse individuals for volunteer mileage. Reimbursement is generally focused on eligible costs incurred by governmental entities and certain non-profits in response to

disasters. If you're looking to recover costs related to volunteer activities, this should be something we focus on adding to the updated "emergency

policy" in the town's charter and how to appropriately articulate that for future disasters. We can however capture it to add to the offset of your match.

KB – We need a way for the community to ask questions and receive updates – add page on Town website with link to Flood Recovery, add Q&A section.

MB reiterated his concern with Vtrans and the Mill St. Bridge project. How will the funding come in? KH explained repairs are under FEMA PA and relocation goes under Hazard Mitigation. He is very concerned about the project as we approach winter.

AT – Village Extension Project survey had 75 responses – community input is key and as important as end result – funding infrastructure thru FEMA – \$1M+ project costs – replacing destroyed infrastructure might be eligible for FEMA. Need a sewer study. What category does the Village Expansion Project fall under? The Village Expansion Project now has a website for this project: <https://sites.google.com/view/plainfieldvillageexpansion/home>

Lauren – repair & replacement only eligible if it already existed before the flood.

Other items not to lose track of:

MZ - HMGP application: filed pre-application \$10-15M – Great Brook is like a sand pit – 8 bridges washed out or damaged – town hasn't decided how to proceed – repairs need to be made before winter in the short term – there is money to get this done – JP heard no scoping or engineering money is available per Ross Vtrans – where and how do we get funding for scoping and engineering studies – JP is working w/ Dubois and King – Pat Moulton may be able to assist in finding funding. Michael Z will reach out.

KH - George Springston is working with us on the water shed protection project (EWP Grant). Next steps are to contact ANR and landowners to see who is interested in applying and/or learning more about the grant.

- New Item: Posting of minutes and FAQ re: activities on town webpage (Karen) – will be working on this and posting notes

- KH (filed this week) CVRPC shovel ready projects puts housing and infrastructure as the top 2 priorities for Plainfield Rises and Resiliency \$50M – encouraged to go big Fed & State funds available.
- TIG funding thru ACCD who gets funding from Feds thru legislation - HUD website CDBG – HUD may fund unmet needs \$\$ to alleviate historical problems.
- CDBG funds need to tie back to low income housing – community housing impact – infrastructure not funded thru FEMA or Hazard Mitigation – projects don't fall under current funding – it comes later (1 year) – falls under 4810 - federal money is granted to states then to communities
- MB - Paul Charon can answer questions from 2023 flood – review his 2020 document (10/29 agenda) –
- TIG – request ACCD to get Plainfield on the list – disaster \$\$ available after 2 years based on % of impact – housing is on the regional priority list goes to committee then to Gov. office and legislature.

TIG - Only benefit of a disaster is the Influx of money – there are alternate ways to use leftover money – converted new damage inventory will go thru them one by one and move forward – site review inventories.

Recovery scoping meeting. – FEMA & state, PMG, historic preservation – review estimate and # of projects – review damage inventory to create project formulation – once project is obligated do an RFR (invoice can be submitted as often as we want depending on funding needs) – can receive funding reimburse as you go along – at exploratory call identify more projects then maybe needed – must prove damage of everything – photos, proof of repairs – burden of documentation is on the Town to prove damage by disaster – need proof of historical repairs from last year and re-damaged this year – need Vtrans records for repairs and funding.

GS – separate projects into temporary and permanent – JP & Michael Bingham will need to be scheduled when Chris (FEMA) comes to be available to do FEMA site inspections – don't sign site inspection at day of inspection – request time to review – FEMA will pressure to sign immediately don't do it – if signed FEMA submits immediately then it's a done deal – TIG will review everything before submission to FEMA and be on all calls w/ FEMA – the town needs to maintain control – don't let FEMA take control – make sure town formulates projects not FEMA because staff leaves or revolves – FEMA cycles employees every 180 days then they go on break and new staff are assigned.

TIG - FEMA will pay for a damage investigation identifying and what is eligible for FEMA reimburse – TIG MZ – does any part of infrastructure fall

under mitigation? – TIG said inclusive study is the best way to mitigate future damage thru study paid for by FEMA – mitigation is competitive.

KB no town buildings damaged – yes infrastructure damage – if there is insurance reimbursement that is deducted from FEMA money.

Water & sewer bills impacted – no town forgiveness? Conduct meter damage inventory for replacement – documentation of business interruption increases funding outside of insurance.

Action Items:

KH & MZ will share documents already sub w/ INT

KH- Update Town website with easy to find links to Flood Recovery and Village Ext. project links.

JP- Conduct water meter damage inventory

MZ- Request ACCD to get Plainfield on the list – disaster \$\$ available after 2 years based on % of impact – housing is on the regional priority list goes to committee then to Gov. office and legislature.

Next meeting is Tuesday, October 29, 2024 at 10 am

Mission Statement: Identify, explore and secure resources for flood recovery – no dollar left behind.

**FAS stands for Federal Acquisition Service, which is part of the General Services Administration (GSA) and is responsible for procuring goods and services for the government.*