

Plainfield Flood Recovery Grants Work Group Meeting
Tuesday, February 25, 2025 @ 10 a.m.

Attending:

Karen Hatcher (KH) - via Zoom
Michael Zahner (MZ) - via Zoom
Gary Smith (GS) - via Zoom
Josh Pitts (JP) - via Zoom
Karl Bissex (KB) - via Zoom
Michael Billingsley (MB) - via Zoom
Denise Wheeler (DW) - via Zoom
Arion Thiboumery (AT) - not available
Bram Towbin (BT) - not available
Carter Ivey (VEM Recovery Team) - not available
Sheila McGraw & Lauren (TIG @ 11 am) - not available
Celina Barton (Goddard) (CB) - not available

Agenda: 10 AM (via Zoom)

KH - following up with CVRPC regarding the mapping project that MB suggested and we discussed last week, to help us lay out the plan for projects along Brook Rd and surrounding areas (with FEMA and FHWA delineated). This work will help us prioritize projects and identify places where we may have overlap between funding sources.

Since next Tuesday is Town Meeting day, we will not meet. Hopefully we'll have maps to work with by March 11th. We also have Kristie Farnham scheduled to join us to tell us about Northern Borders and CATALYST grants that day.

KH - has been talking with Lauren Gieger (Plnfl. resident) and she will be joining the grants team - she is active with the Village Expansion Committee and has a fundraising background.

GS - tried to submit an extension request for unfinished damage work & debris category but it kept coming back needing more information. GS worked with Carter and Kim and weren't able to file the extension. Reclassify Brook Rd. to lower priority item since it is also listed for FHWD.

MB - top FEMA officials getting conflicting information every few days from the federal administration - we should go slow.

GS - Rec. Field and Gore Rd. and 3 other projects relisted as high priority. Moved town garage access as a high priority. Townwide architecture item (Brook Rd.) listed as a high priority - drop down to low priority because there is funding for this through FHWA. Byron consolidated damages - GS & team went in and reprioritized.

MZ - Completing the Advance Assistance application - Haz. Mit. Grant through VEM - there is a rolling grant filing system - waiting for Roy Schiff for timing, scoping and cost estimate. George Springsten is working to complete the flood inventory

summary. Great Brook top to bottom assessment and how it flows with the road. 100% funded (including local share). Waiting for a scientific study to be completed.

MB – Batchelder Dam study – 100% funding cost \$800K for potential dam removal – VEM will pick up town share and have them pay contractors inside of town paying and then reimbursing town later. Arion is working with contractors. Benefit Cost Analysis (Michele Clark) history of damage and infrastructure of what properties were damaged. KH – is the grant for eng study? MB – both including demolition costs. Roy Schiff doing preliminary report/study. Haz. Mit. Comm feasibility doing a study paid for with one pot of money. Scoping study for dam removal and how it is demolished another pot of money. Grant to Friends of the Winooski - this is a phased study

KH – Josh is working through the Vtrans process to get a project manager. Josh & Karl to set up time to meet with Ross Gouin – add'l work to do on 2023 DDIR submissions.

KH – conversation with CVRPC about mapping project – Brian Voight (mapping specialist) – need to follow up to see what additional GPS information is needed for CVRPC to do the work. The project is moving forward. Pull in JP, GS & MZ to work with CVRPC.

MB – CVRPC taking on Americorp intern position to work with MB and doing GIS work. CVRPC will be providing housing for the intern.

KH – need coordination between FEMA & FHWA – need to pull a meeting together with all representatives to look at everything together and prioritize projects and strategies.

MB concerned about putting Brook Rd. back as it was, consider an alternate road route and what that could mean for future damages?

KH – need to confirm with funding parties and what makes sense. How would Ross Gouin feel about this?

MZ - Ross would react well and is interested in rebuilding Mill St. Bridge. We need to get everyone on the same multi-threaded path.

MB – Brook Rd. still passable with changes to the configuration.

JP – possible to break down difficult locations and move the road – break the road into separate pieces working with the design engineers with alternative options.

KH – next steps

1) Get mapping done, review and make adjustments – check in with Ross Gouin on prioritizing projects

2) MB – send maps to SLR to review for rebuilding Brook Rd.

3) KH wants to reassure funding partners that we have a good plan and process so they understand and have faith in what we are doing.

4) KB – in favor of having a meeting so everyone knows what is happening. All agreed it is good to have an informational sharing session as long as the grants group knows the boundaries of information to share

KH – CDBG grant

Nathan Cleveland – state Commerce & Community Dev. – interested in non-competitive funding for Plnfld. – strong interest to support Plnfld. and funding project recovery manager – with FEMA matching funds.

MB – possibility for Comm. Development block grant to purchase land for Village Exp. Project KH – may delay the project due to the need for studies, permits, infrastructure, etc. though could also fund a community center, affordable housing, senior housing, etc. and funding for CDBG project manager among other things.

MB – problem with storm water drainage/runoff and additional cost. CDBG DR funds are not for a quick fix – lots of hoops to go through are not as easy as originally hoped.

MB – tried reaching out to Joe Flynn (Vtrans) & Julie Moore (ANR) regarding the potential in next few months of Great Brook flooding since Vtrans removed debris and created more potential for flooding – waiting for Vtrans/ANR plan to prevent further damage – will follow up with Josh.

Meeting ended at 11 am – next meeting 3/11 Kristy Farnham

Attached:

Date: February 24, 2025

To: Plainfield Select Board

From: Plainfield Recovery Grants Work Group

Re: Recovery Grants Update

We are closely watching what is happening with federal funding as things unfold in Washington. At this point, there have been two occurrences of funding being held or withdrawn. We received word last week that there is a moratorium on new contracts for the Emergency Watershed Protection. The four eligible property owners have been informed and we await new information at this point. Also, funding for the Americorp intern for Emergency Management was withdrawn. We are exploring other ways to fund this important position.

Updates this month on grants in process:

1. FEMA Public Assistance:

- a. Gary and The Integrity Group are now working with our third FEMA PDMG, and they have realigned the FEMA portal with our Disaster Inventory.
- b. Priority permanent projects will include sites outside of Brook Rd right of way.
- c. Site visits won't begin until the end of March awaiting good weather
- d. Reimbursements for emergency repairs should begin processing within the next couple of weeks

2. FHWA:

- a. Hiring a project manager for the Mill Street Bridge project is underway. This is our first permanent repair project under FHWA.
- b. There are 13 project "sites" identified with FHWA. Each one will have its own Project Manager and process.
- c. George Springsten will be asked to help choose project managers to ensure that sufficient river/watershed experience is included in the decision.

3. ADVANCE SYSTEM FUNDING GRANT:

- a. Michael Zahner is working with Steve Libby of VEM on this application, which will provide a comprehensive H&H study top to bottom of the Great Brook.
- b. The estimated request is \$150K, with a 25% match.

4. EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION GRANT:

- a. These funds are now under a moratorium.
- b. Qualified properties: 1495 Coburn Road, 99 Brook Road (in buyout program); 203 Martin Meadow, 125 Barre Hill Rd.

5. MUNICIPAL PLANNING GRANT:

- a. \$30K available, 10% match
- b. No decision has yet been made about the focus of this grant; the deadline for application is March 31.

6. CDBG, VCDP GRANT: a. Arion is heading up this application which is for a \$60K planning grant to support the final engineering of the Village Expansion project. 10% match, which can include in-kind hours.

7. CDBG-DR GRANT: a. \$68M to Vermont; \$55 Million to Washington and Lamoille Counties. \$10 Million maximum on project application.

- b. Plainfield was on the list of the top five areas to fund provided to Secretary Lindsay Kurrl.
- c. We are awaiting details but understand housing and infrastructure are primary focus areas. Application not yet open, expect to hear more in March.

8. ANIMATING INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT:

- a. Met with Jesse Cooper to discuss use of \$5K design grant application
- b. We've reached out to Jamie Spector to include Parks and Public Art for their involvement; awaiting response
- c. Thoughts are to use this grant to kick off a public engagement process about the new green space in the village

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hatcher, Town Grants Administrator
On behalf of the Grants Work Group:
Gary Smith
Michael Zahner
Josh Pitts
Arion Thiboumery
Michael Billingsley
Karl Bissex
Denise Wheeler