

Plainfield Flood Recovery Grants Work Group Meeting

Tuesday, December 17, 2024 @ 10 a.m.

Attending:

Karen Hatcher (KH)

Michael Zahner (MZ) – not available

Gary Smith (GS)

Josh Pitts (JP) - not available

Karl Bissex (KB)

Michael Billingsley (MB)

Denise Wheeler (DW) – via Zoom

Arion Thiboumery (AT) – via Zoom

Bram Towbin (BT) – not available

Thad Leugemors, PMP (VEM Recovery Team) - not available

Carter Ivey (VEM Recovery Team) via Zoom

Sheila McGraw & Lauren (TIG @ 11 am) - via Zoom

Celina Barton (Goddard) (CB)

Agenda: 10-11AM

- **Planning Grants- Which ones, how best to use these:**

MB - said planning is hazard mitigation not flood recovery.

KH at this time we are in flood recovery - think about future projects 1) emergency at hand and initial work done; 2) what projects to rebuild, restore, relocate; 3) housing, infrastructure and what resources are available

1. **Municipal Planning Grant options/discussion** - map out priority projects, Brook Rd., relocating water treatment plant, consulting grant is limited to

Plainfield Flood Recovery Grants Work Group Meeting

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Page 2

\$30K - what are the most urgent projects - look at our list and make recommendations to the SB.

GS - repairs are a one year plan; recovery is long term (ie, temporary rebuilding Brook Rd. to get money) then use 428 money to figure out resilience projects (climate, community & economic);

MB- Raised the RAMP project work that was done in town before the pandemic.

KB - after 2023 flood initially the community was excited and engaged and then it waivered because no one from the community championed continuing efforts;

Celina how do we get community members to stay involved?

MB said when the community stopped meeting together the groups fell apart because there was no clear sense of a guiding principle with someone to bring everything together - groups became siloed - likes a transition town model where groups keep getting together and discuss progress;

KH said UPenn students recommended a designated town staff member guiding projects through - town needs a coordinating point person

MB - Mont. Alive seeking funding for projects

KH - every grant has funding for administrative support (ie., town administrator?) - current staff can't or can't be expected to manage funds - KB agrees grant management can't be handled by current staff - in the past the town has declined grants because it didn't have administrative staff.

Celina suggested using new tools (AI) and other new resources to map out projects (visually helps people see the projects) - KH get experts on board (goals, roles, responsibilities, plan) then get funding and how do we map out projects from beginning to end? - KH relying on a volunteer team is not sustainable. Over the next 5 years what staffing do we need?

Back to Municipal Planning Grant:

GS- Number one priority for planning grant is Brook Rd.

KB - need to know costs before decisions can be made by SB

Plainfield Flood Recovery Grants Work Group Meeting

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Page 3

KH what is the right timing? If we have already engaged a consultant we can bypass the RFP process, we can use the current consultant (TIG). Can TIG do all the work?

KB - Chris from TIG said they have resources and could come up with a plan and do the work.

GS - Brook Rd. think about giving up one type of funding and we can still use other type of funding (428, PA)

MB - Raised another item for the FEMA Damage Inventory on Brook Rd near Peter Young's house, need to remove retaining wall blocks and move them back to the brook freedom to widen naturally - the rain of 12/11 had the brook up to its banks and he feels it will flood again in spring 2025 - brook doesn't have capacity and needs stone moved back and silt removed

AT - yes we need administrative support and also need to consider expanding and using the town road crew - they could do alot of the work more cost effectively - increase more road crew and water staff use our own staff a lot more cost effectively

MB need our own town engineer - Josh has DuBois & King on call as needed

Celine - hopes Goddard secure a home acceleration money grant (through municipal planning grant) weave Goddard into forward thinking and 5 year plan

KH - need to focus on a 5 year plan identifying with the community - where and when does this happen?

AT - identify specific problems that need to be addressed - local facilitator to help identify specific aspects of town needs - engage the community

MB - is someone at Goddard looking at housing needs? Does Goddard have a developer/planner? Celina - we have someone on staff working on development planning (housing) - they will be launching available rentals this week - Goddard is integrating economic and housing into its long range plans

KH - current municipal planning grant to be used for Brook Rd. as a priority and options around it to inform other ideas -

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Page 4

KH will send an email to the SB that this group recommends using the current planning grant funds for Brook Rd.

Future of ongoing planning priorities - identify other planning grants for infrastructure projects

Arion suggested focusing our efforts by listing our Top 5 questions for next 5 years: These could be:

1. Brook Rd.,
2. housing,
3. economic development, services (laundromat),
4. Safely getting around: walkability, green spaces, etc.
5. infrastructure/resiliency

Identifying specific projects attracts more public attendance and focus -

MB- suggests a community development director as a town employee could do this.

KH - how do we assure safety of ways in and out of town (access) - what are our vulnerabilities? How do people get from here to there? GS - how do we put Batchelder Dam on damage inventory? MB and MZ.

11AM-Noon

FEMA PA (Gary has set this agenda) Sheila and Lauren from TIG; Carter Ivey, State Public Assistance Coordinator

GS - Byron Daniels said not to add 428 projects to the damage inventory list? Yes that is correct - rename them for FEMA - TIG will remove 428 titles and rename them.

GS/KB - Chris Scarlet & Michael Bingham - Thursday morning meeting this week. Gary will join.

New damage inventory item - add silt buildup in Great Brook that almost brought brook to flood stage (12/11/24 storm)

Municipal planning ideas - need to make a decision. Is Brook Rd. going to remain a rural highway connector? If not building it back as was, settle on other options? KB

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Page 5

needs information for town meeting discussion - planning grant to evaluate Brook Rd. options and pieces, timing, costs - have funds to hire help to get more information.

GS - Concurrently need estimates to know if there is a way to know the range of money and where will it come from?

Sheila - will talk to Chris Scarlet about it and get a money range - need lowest and highest repair options - MB said restoring access as a useful road not necessarily rebuilding it like it was.

KB needs a cost estimate - does Chris have better insight? Also need river health and engineering study for the long term to give a full picture and costs and when the project will be completed? Town meeting item on this is informational only.

GS - Meetings week of 12/23 & 12/30 do we need to meet? FEMA group switched to Monday, 12/30 at 10 am no meeting Christmas week.

DI progress has slowed and there is much to do - GS cleaning up descriptions, verifying GPS coordinates and pictures - Lauren waiting to meet w/ Chris Scarlet - working on verbage, GS needs to identify individual culvert numbers with Michael Bingham

- Identify to do's so that the work to completing the DI continues - GS to identify priorities - TIG will do cost estimates
- How to effectively keep Byron Daniels (FEMA) in the loop until formal sharing of DI (a weekly progress update/other??) - Carter works w/ Byron on other projects and will be liaison and communicate Plainfield updates to him - Lauren/Sheila - DI still needs edits and then needs State approval - Carter to communicate on town's behalf to convey and confirm to Byron (FEMA) there is a solid plan and the town is in good shape.

Meeting ended at 11:40 am (no meetings Tuesday, 12/24 or 12/31)

Also Happening This Week:

Two online presentations this week for those who would like to attend:

Plainfield Flood Recovery Grants Work Group Meeting

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Page 6

- UPenn Design Studio Final Presentations- Monday 12/16, Plainfield section starts at 12:45-1:45 Zoom Link: <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/93750504381>
- Flood Insurance and Housing Panel- Tuesday 12/17, 12-1:30pm [Registration link](#)