

Branford Coastal Vulnerability ad hoc Working Group
Town of Branford, Connecticut

Paul Muniz, Tracy Everson, Jonathan Waters, Peter Hentschel (chairperson)
invited: Curt Johnson, Sharon Huttner



Zoom Meeting **Minutes:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 5:00 PM

- Call to Order at 5:00 pm
- Roll Call – PH, TE, SH, PM
- Approval of Meeting Notes for 3/26/24 -- notes approved unanimously
- Discuss status and next steps on the following initiatives:
 - a. CIRCA sea level monitoring and emergency notification system trials – Branford participation
 - Goal 1: to acquire new data on tidal sea level cycles and resulting road flooding.
 - Goal 2: to allow Branford to use their alert system to put out “micro-alerts” to neighborhoods.
 - PH met with the First Selectman and Jim Finch regarding possible expenses. If there are expenses to the Town (TBD) then these will be provided thru a request to draw down the Coastal Resilience Fund.
 - PH met with John Hoeffler regarding proposed station locations. These have been documented and sent to CIRCA for final review.
 - b. Community Reporting Network re Roadway Flooding – “MyCoast” Application
 - Goal 1: to engage the community in the photographic collection of roadway flooding data
 - Goal 2: to work with the MyCoast application software group in CA to facilitate uploading data
 - PH met with the First Selectman and Jim Finch regarding the cost of the MyCoast application (\$100 per month). Jim will determine if those costs can be taken care of thru one of the IT accounts.
 - PH will ask MyCoast if they have any materials that could be used in a press-release regarding this initiative.
 - Emergency Management Services Resiliency – work with Chief Mahoney regarding key locations of road flooding which impact delivery of emergency services
 - Goal: to identify critical locations and research resiliency solutions to each
 - The key locations of concern to the EMD have been discussed and documented.
 - Those will be used to focus our study of possible protective measures.
 - We need to contact engineering/GIS to see if there is any way to support Chief Mahoney’s GIS initiative to create neighborhood subgroups to be used in emergency flooding notifications.
 - d. Roadway Flooding – finding solutions for the community
 - Goal: to investigate possible resilience actions, consult with key regulatory authorities including DEEP, and determine DEEP’s response to - protecting low roadways, nuisance flooding retention walls, etc.
 - John Lust has indicated he will assist us in the next steps for approaching DEEP to determine their areas of concern regarding the installation of low-height tide-walls. This will give us guidance on how to address other areas on concern in Branford.
 - PH will set up the next meeting with John to review what has been discussed with Chief Mahoney and with CIRCA.

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Mai Estepin
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- e. Zoning Regulation and Town Ordinance tools - PZC / CVWG joint working group - status
Goal: to determine actions to build resilience through ordinances and/or zoning regulations.
- The Working Group discussed ways to proceed and feels that a regional approach would be best.
 - PH will contact CIRCA to see if they can be of active assistance in establishing detailed changes to zoning regulations or point to other towns who have successfully developed new coastal regulations.
 - Building community agreement regarding the goals of increasing regulation of coastline development is needed.
- f. Community Presentations – Branford River Neighborhoods presentation status report and possible recording of Sara Crosby's current marshland studies in Branford
Goal to build public awareness, feedback, and public involvement.
- Sara Crosby did not agree to record a "Blackstone Library Presentation" talk regarding marsh ecosystems. She has sent a recommendation on other resources for this.
 - CVWG presentation on Branford River still pending – no work has been done.
- g. WWTP vulnerability study – status of Phase 2, preliminary design of conceptual solutions
Goal: to promote the "hardening" of the town's sanitary system and treatment plan.
- We are waiting for an update from Paul on the Phase II working group WPCA/CVWG (just established).
- h. Cattle Crossing flood gate study – status report
Goal: to track this project and to determine how AMTRAK has responded to issues regarding flooding against their elevated track beds
- Tracy will check with the town on progress.
 - We need to locate and post the results of the Cattle Crossing study. John Hoeffler should have access to those.
- i. Stony Creek CV sub-group – status report
Goal: work with the SCA subgroup to initiate actual resilience projects in Stony Creek.
- The sub-group has not made any progress.
 - They are waiting for direction from the CVWG
- j. Approaches to resilience by other towns and states – Status of calls to these towns
Goal: to determine if other towns have taken innovative steps to resilience.
- On hold
- k. CVWG page of Town Website - Q&A portal, Facebook page, FEMA page status report
Goal: to make our webpage more interactive and responsive to public needs regarding coastal resilience.
- No Progress

Peter Hentschel, Chairperson