

**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, May 28, 2024, 5:00 PM

- Call to Order at 5:05 pm
- Roll Call PH, TE, PM, SH
- Approval of Meeting Notes for 4/23/24: Motion to approve (PM), second (TE), all in favor.
- 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.
      - Update on calls with CIRCA and installation preparations. CIRCA suggests 1 monitor at Stony Creek, 1 at Waverly Street bridge, 1 at Birbarie bridge, 1 at Schoolground Road. No indication of CIRCA cost needs, CIRCA to determine installation dates and will provide insurance certificate to work on Town property. May be in service by July 2024 for data collection before connection to emergency services.
  - 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
      - Update regarding payment for the system and current status: Payment will come from IT Department; activity is ready to initiate. CVWG to provide press release to describe program using descriptive text requested from MyCoast.
  - c. 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.
      - Update on recent discussion with John Lust regarding approach to DEEP.
      - Update on scheduled meeting with John Lust to discuss next steps. John has agreed to further discussion of feasibility of low tide-wall installations to prevent nuisance flooding for future presentation to DEEP. A meeting is scheduled for Thursday 5/30/24.
  - d. 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.
      - Update from Paul on the Phase II working group WPCA/CVWG meeting. Paul reported that the sub-group will develop an RFP scope with Engineering Department and assess the possible costs of that study. Funding will likely come from the Resiliency Fund with approval of the RTM.

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*Tracy Everson*  
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- e. 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
- Update from Tracy. Tracy forwarded the final CIRCA study report to the Working Group. CVWG recommends adding Engineering capacity to address project implementation. Further discussion with the Town after the Town has hired a new Sustainability and Compliance Officer will clarify next steps.
- f. 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
- Discuss ways to support Chief Mahoney's GIS initiative. CVWG (TE) to contact Chief Mahoney to determine what GIS resources are necessary to advance his initiative for advanced emergency services notifications.
- g. 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.
- Discuss next steps to build community agreement regarding the goals of increasing regulation of coastline development. SH agreed to set up a zoom meeting with CIRCA to discuss the dilemma of local vs regional coordination of regulatory actions.
- h. 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.
- CVWG presentation on Branford River still pending. SH agreed to call the Land Trust to see if they can identify resources for a presentation of Marsh ecology in the face of rising sea level that can be posted on the Town website.
- i. Stony Creek CV sub-group – status report  
Goal: work with the SCA sub-group to initiate actual resilience projects in Stony Creek.
- Status report. SCA waiting for more info from CVWG. Town gave ROW to adjacent property owners, which may hinder preparation of emergency access road in the Village.
- j. 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.
- Status report – progress is still pending.
- k. Additional members are needed with an emphasis on expertise in engineering, legal, and funding aspects of work to be done.

Peter Hentschel, Chairperson