

TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY

Minutes for SLR & SS Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 24, 2014 at 1:00 Location: South Bethany Town Hall

Agenda Items Covered

1. Meeting called to order by George Junkin at 1:00.

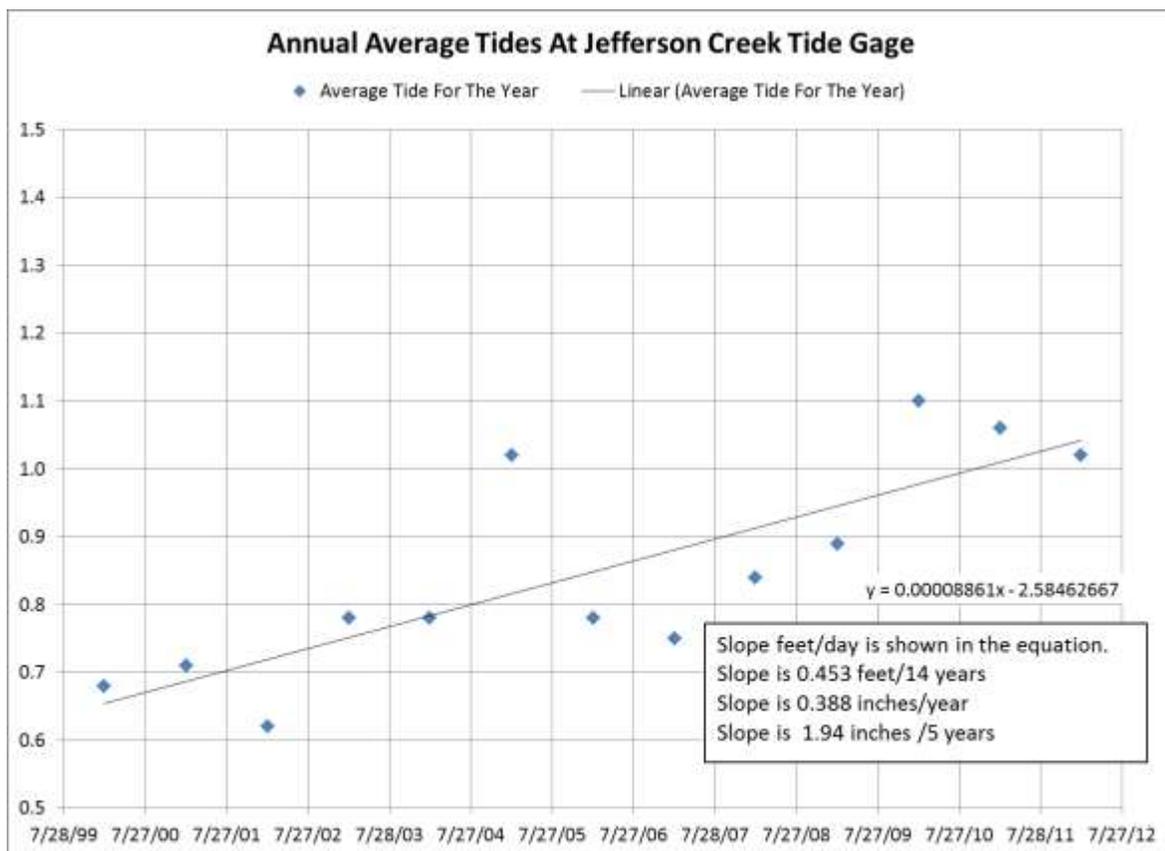
Members present were; George Junkin (Chair), Jim Gross, Dick Oliver, Dave Wilson and Al Rae. Members absent were Jay Headman and Frank McNeice. Members of the public included Tony Caputo, Margaret Oliver, Pat Voveris, and Jack Whitney.

2. Discussed results from Council Workshop relative to code changes required to adapt to SLR & SS and develop a go forward plan.

George reported the Town Council expressed their thanks for the work that the SLR & SS Committee had completed, however they voted 4 to 3 to not go forward, at this time, with the recommendations of the committee to require 3 feet of freeboard and allow the height limit to be increased. The majority of the council members felt that the recommendations should be optional rather than "required." The Council tasked the SLR & SS Committee to develop alternative approaches. The Council Members also committed to supply in writing to the SLR & SS Committee their suggestions for optional approaches. The SLR & SS Committee's recommendations on changing bulkheading requirements did not even come to a vote.

The committee felt that the Council was significantly influenced by two factors.

The first being that many people do not believe the data that says SLR has been significant in the past and they believe that it is not likely to increase faster in the future. The committee unanimously believes that Robert Coleman's presentation, that there was essentially no Tidal rise over the last 14 years was significantly flawed. They believed that it is not correct to only look at one day in each year to determine a trend. George Junkin presented a chart where he took the 880,000 data points that were used in George's analysis which showed the canal water level had increased 0.43 feet in 14 years and divided the data up into the individual years. He then calculated the average for each year. The chart below shows the results of that analysis and arrives at the same rate of increase as the previous analysis.



The second item that influenced the Council, possibly more than the first, was that requiring the freeboard would be a significant financial impact to a homeowner who wants to make “substantial” improvements to a home which currently does not meet the new freeboard requirement. (Substantial improvement is defined as “Any repair, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement.”) If the code “required” freeboard then the homeowner would incur the expense required to raise the home to the new level.

The committee also responded that data at other locations on the East Coast, including Ocean City and Lewes, show an increase in sea level on the order of magnitude measured in S Bethany.

Jim Gross suggested that the Committee should base the argument of future Sea Level Rise on data from NOAA, the COE, DOE, USGS and other federal agencies as stated in their December 2012 report rather than on linear extrapolation of our canal data.

Based on the above the committee decided to do no further work at this time relative to bulkheading issues. They decided to concentrate on the freeboard issues. To this end they felt that two efforts were required. The first addresses that more effort needs to be spent on educating the public and the Council Members relative to the issues. The second was to propose Code language that would allow increased house elevation with “optional freeboard”. George assigned this task to each member.

3. Review presentation material for the public meetings

The draft presentation was reviewed slide by slide. The most significant changes were;

- Move the historical section to the beginning of the report.
- Add a chart that shows the peak water level during Sandy vs the BFE for the AE zone
- Do not go as deep into the details. Simplify the charts. Put less information on each chart.
- Emphasize damage that has occurred in the past.
- Take out the NAVD – NGVD discussion.
- Only use NAVD.
- Put in a picture of the tide gage, where it is located and a link to the site.
- Define Substantial Damage.
- Take out ice age discussions.
- Take out page with link to FIRMs.
- Add elevations for Sea Side Dr.
- Take out tide history chart for Hurricane Sandy.
- Take out picture of house being raised or move it to a later section.
- Take out the chart that showed a linear extrapolation of the canal tide data.
- Add yearly information on the flooding of York Rd.
- Add a picture that shows house on Holland Island from National Geographic Magazine.
- Explain that committees' recommendations would apply to all new houses. They would not apply to existing houses unless there was a substantial repair.
- Take out info on Elevation Certificates. This is way too confusing.
- Add a sheet that has definition of terms, like BFE, FIRM etc.
- Have a hand out sheet with the definition of terms that the audience can use throughout the presentation.

Dick Oliver suggested that we have slides that show different style homes and what substantial repairs would mean to the different types of home. George asked if Dick would draft such slides and Dick agreed.

Dick also volunteered to review each slide with George for presentation clarity after the next draft is complete.

Pat Voveris also volunteered to review the slides.

The committee agreed that we should all get together again to review the slides before the presentations are made.

4. Adjournment at 3:00