

TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY SLR & SS Committee Meeting MINUTES
Wednesday, May 27, 2015 at 1:00 PM
Location: South Bethany Town Hall

1. Call meeting to order	George Junkin
2. Review minutes from previous three meetings	All
3. Discussion on what we did well during the past year and what we could improve on	All
4. Discussion on recommendations for membership for the next year.	All
5. Discussion on Status of South Bethany's FEMA FIRM.	All
6. Discussion and possible vote on recommendations that should be forwarded to Council on Code changes relative to SLR & SS Issue. These issues could include bulkhead height and access stairs in the setback.	All
7. Grant Status	George Junkin
8. Community education and outreach topics and tasks	George Junkin & Jay Headman
9. Planning for public meetings/outreach in the fall	All
10. What else should we be doing?	All
11. Adjournment	

Agenda Item 1. George called the meeting to order at 1:00. Committee members present were; George Junkin, Dave Wilson, Jim Gross and Dick Oliver. Guests were Frank Weisgerber, Jack Whitney Tony Caputo, and Joe Danshes.

Agenda Item 2. The committee members had reviewed the previous minutes. Jack made the comment relative to the discussion recorded in the minutes "There was lots of discussion on "licensed" vs "registered" professional engineers, surveyors and architects. The consensus was that "registered" was the correct word to use." Jack pointed out that the correct word is "licensed." Jim Gross commented that he agreed with Jack but that we used the word "registered" since registered is used throughout the South Bethany Code, the International Residential Code and many FEMA documents. The DNREC sample ordinance was inconsistent with many different definitions used meaning the same thing.

Agenda Item 3.

What the committee did well during the past year.

- Response to the FEMA requirement to update The Code of South Bethany, Chapter 145, Zoning, Article XIV, "Coastal Floodplain Regulations".
- Work to encourage freeboard by ordinance allowing optional two feet of house height if there is two feet or more freeboard.

- Completed elevation survey of all South Bethany roads, bulkheads and storm drains.
- Received grant from DNREC for Sea Level Rise Adaptation – Multi Criteria Evaluation.

What the committee can improve on

- The committee caused a lot of controversy when they recommended that freeboard be mandatory.
- Education, Outreach and Communication. If the community does not support recommendations, the Council will probably not support them either.
- A mandatory freeboard requirement could be written to only apply to new construction. Substantial Improvement and Substantial Repair could be excluded from a freeboard requirement. Meeting BFE requirement could not be excluded. This would not get any credit for CRS, however it could be a step towards increasing freeboard.
- The public does not like “mandatory” anything. Committee needs to work on ways to educate and encourage change.
- Should we get property owners to sign off that they have been informed about sea level rise, flood surge and freeboard issues, so that if something happens they cannot say that they were not told? After Sandy many people said that they did not know they could flood like they did.
- Let experts influence what the committee focuses on. Like the current study we have with Ram Mohan.

Agenda Item 4. George solicited the current members to resign up and asked the guests if they were interested in serving on the committee for the coming year. George pointed out that Council will be approving the recommendations for committee chairs and recommendations for committee members at the next workshop meeting. The consensus from the committee for membership is as follows;

- George Junkin, current member and chair
- Jim Gross, current member and leads effort on recommended code changes. He also agreed to research what DNREC is doing relative to “Proposed Draft of the Regulations Governing Beach Protection and the Use of Beaches.”
- Jay Headman, current member and leads Review of Community Rating System (CRS) and assists with community outreach/education
- Frank McNeice, current member assigned to review/research of utility issues.
- Dick Oliver, current member and supports SLR & SS issues being incorporated into the Town Comprehensive Development Plan
- Dave Wilson, current member with bulkhead construction information has agreed to research flood control and check valve issues.
- Frank Weisgerber, proposed new member. He has volunteered to work on community outreach/education issues.
- Tony Caputo indicated that he would like to work on water quality.

- Jack Whitney indicated he was already on CWQC, and on the Planning Commission. He indicated that he would be willing to help with the Ram Mohan grant.

Agenda Item 5. George briefed the committee on the presentation made by FEMA on May 21. He pointed out that the preliminary FIRM probably will not become official for at least 18 months and that the Town had hired a consultant, Taylor Engineers, to help us understand whether an appeal would have a chance to succeed. The report is due soon.

Agenda Item 6.

The consensus of the committee was that we should recommend to Council that the code should be changed to allow homeowners to raise their bulkheads, if they wanted to. There was also a consensus that we should not recommend at this time that rebuilt bulkheads should be required to be raised. The suggested recommendation is “Homeowners should have an option to increase their bulkheads up to one (1) foot above the road adjacent to their lot.” The recommendation of one foot is to limit how high the homeowner could go. If Council wants a different height limit that is OK with the committee.

The consensus of the committee was that we should not address the issue of steps in the setback at this time. The current code states that site drainage is to be toward the road.

Agenda Item 7. Danielle Swallow from DNREC report by e-mail on 5/27/2015 “Good news, the Secretary signed the paperwork and a Purchase Order was cut and is now awaiting signature. This is the last step before you get the green light to begin work on the project. It should be any day now, I suspect. I will be in touch when we have that go ahead.” [Since then Danielle has reported on 6/3/2015 “Good news! The Coastal Management Assistance Grant contract has been signed and the purchase order cut for South Bethany. You may begin work on this project now.”]

Agenda Item 8. Education and outreach topics suggested were;

- Educate community to new FIRM
- Educate that raising houses is good
- Communicate what we learn from the current SLR grant to be performed by Ram Mohan.
- Find a person who can speak on flood insurance issues. (Some suggestions were George Henderson, Denise Beam, George Bunting.)
- Educate homeowners on the costs of raising a house and on the sources of funds to raise a house.
- Readdress some of the topics covered in last May’s presentations

Agenda Item 9. There was consensus that we should have public meetings in the fall to cover some of the items above. This is also REQUIRED by our grant proposal. Danielle Swallow and Susan Love have agreed to help us create a flyer that “sells” the benefits of freeboard. Jay Headman, Frank Weisgerber and George Junkin have agreed to help in the education/outreach effort.

Agenda Item 10. What else should we be doing? Jim Gross suggested that we should be learning more about the DNREC Beach Regulatory Advisory Committee. More info is available about this committee at <http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/swc/Shoreline/Pages/Beach-Regulatory-Advisory-Committee.aspx>

Agenda Item 11. The meeting adjourned at 2:35.