

Town of Shandaken

SAFARI Meeting Notes

Shandaken Area Flood Assessment and Remediation Initiative

July 14, 2020

Shandaken Town Hall, 7029 Route 28, Shandaken, NY 12480

Attendees In-Person: Brent Gotsch, Aaron Bennett, John Mathiesen, Rob Stanley, Eric Hofmeister, Howie McGowan

Attendees via Zoom: Leslie Zucker, Kevin VanBlarcum, Adam Doan, Phil Eskeli

Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic SAFARI did not meet for the months of May and June 2020. The April meeting had been cancelled previously for unrelated reasons.

Supervisor's Report

The Town Supervisor reported that there has not been a lot of floodplain development or related activity in the Town. This is likely in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He did report on a few instances where there were concerns. This includes a structure in Woodland Valley where a garage was being built at ground level. Technically the homeowner could build it this way, but it would increase the flood insurance for the structure. Also, the Peekamoose Restaurant created more outdoor seating to comply with State public health mandates during the pandemic, constructed an additional deck with a set of stairs. They did get a floodplain development permit for this. There was also a concern about a soon-to-be constructed resort at the end of McKinley Hollow. The old Mountain Gate Lodge buildings were demolished, and new structures will be ultimately be built. Much of the land in this area is in an Approximate A Zone and will be subject to floodplain regulations.

LFA Implementation

Mount Tremper

NYS DOT Route 28/Route 212 Project Updates: Rob S reported that the Mt Tremper Post Office remains committed to having an office in the Mount Pleasant-Mount Tremper area. It is unclear where exactly it will ultimately end up, but more than likely it will be on the grounds of the Emerson Resort and Spa or on the other side of Route 28 where new commercial space is being constructed.

Rob S also reported that the NYS Department of Transportation has said that the project had been delayed somewhat due to the COVID-19 crisis as well as habitat concerns (a bald eagle nest is in the vicinity). Additionally, from July 29 through September 4 (Friday before Labor Day), Route 212 will be closed to all but local traffic. The existing berm has been removed and portions of the new Route 212

have already been constructed. Despite these delays the project is progressing and is still on track for completion in the spring of 2021.

Mount Pleasant Bridge Demolition Update: John M reported that the contractor is nearing completion for the bridge demolition. Asbestos, lead, and cyanide have been abated. The contractor plans to drop half (the Route 212 side) of the bridge into the Esopus within the next two weeks and then remove it. The remaining portion near Riseley Road, would follow suit roughly two weeks later. The contractor hopes to be done by late September.

Phoenicia

Bridge Street Bridge/Floodplain Enhancement: Currently no movement on this project.

Shandaken/Allaben

General: Rob s indicated that there have been several requests for elevations in this area. Unfortunately, many have been deemed ineligible because the structures are in the floodway. The Catskill Watershed Corporation will not fund feasibility studies for, nor the elevation of residential structures in the floodway. This is consistent with program guidelines from the federal government, NYS government, and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection.

Brent G indicated that the AWSMP will hold a workshop later this year on Floodway Encroachments and No-Rise Certificates, which may be of interest to location officials and AWSMP partners.

Community Rating System

Community Rating System Update: Aaron B has been in contact with FEMA's ISO contact Garrett Byma. He indicated that municipalities such as the Town of Shandaken, can be only be admitted into the Community Rating System (CRS) in the fall or the spring annually. For Town residents to begin to get the benefits of CRS in May 2021, the town will need to get all of the materials to FEMA/ISO before November 2020. This start-up process has been slowed because of COVID-19 but Rob S indicated that he will reach out to Mr. Byma to initiate this process. Rob S will also reach to Mark Carabetta of MMI, the town's CRS consultant, to participate in the kick-off meeting.

Shandaken recently updated its Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan in part to gain maximum points in the CRS program. A Repetitive Loss Area Analysis (RLAA) was also completed to gain CRS points as well. Shandaken had requested a courtesy review by FEMA/ISO of the Plan and the RLAA. The review resulted in 140 points for the RLAA (which is the maximum). During the initial review they received 253 points (out of a possible 382 points) for the Plan. On the second review, additional points were awarded bringing the total to 269 points. Additional information was then subsequently submitted, and the expectation/hope is to ascertain up to 362 points.

The CRS is divided into classes that increase every time a community achieves 500 points. To get to a Class 9, which will net a 5% reduction in flood insurance rates community-wide, a community needs to

get at least 500 points. In all likelihood the Town of Shandaken will have enough points to get into either a Class 8 or a Class 7 which will net them a flood insurance reduction of 10% or 15%, respectively.

TetraTech BAT Tool: The BAT Tool is software which helps a community keep track of its identified activities (54 were identified) from the flood hazard mitigation plan. It is designed to be more user-friendly than keeping track on a regular spreadsheet and is all online. The first year of this tool is provided for free, however that will expire on September 1. Aaron B suggested that at the next SAFARI meeting we try to determine whether they want to continue to use the tool and pay for a subscription, which is expensive. There is talk of trying to get Ulster County to purchase a subscription that can be used by multiple Towns.

Other Items

Mount Tremper Project Slide Show: Aaron B showed a slide show that he created of the progress that is occurring at the Mount Tremper site from February through July 1, 2020.

Next Meeting

The meeting will be held on August 11, 2020. Rob S will reach out to NYSDOT in hopes that there may be an opportunity to visit the Mount Tremper project site. When site visit is complete the meeting will be held in the Shandaken Town Hall Meeting Room where adequate social distancing can be accomplished.