

Town of Shandaken

S.A.F.A.R.I. Meeting Notes

Shandaken Area Flood Assessment and Remediation Initiative

June 18, 2024 - 10:00am – 12:00pm

In-Person at AWSMP Office, Shokan, NY

Or attended remotely: <https://meet.goto.com/186340189>

In Attendance:

In Person:

Peter DiSclafani, Town of Shandaken
Supervisor
Eric Hofmeister, Town of Shandaken Highway
Superintendent
Adam Doan, Stream Project Manager,
UCSWCD
Bobby Taylor, CSBI Coordinator, UCSWCD
John Mathiesen, Environmental Engineering
Specialist, CWC
Heidi Emrich, Environmental Planner, UCDOE

Remote:

Aaron Bennett, Flood Hazard Mitigation
Coordinator, NYCDEP
Andrew Emrich, P.E., Sr. Engineering, UCDPW
Adam Trescott, P.E., SMP Ashokan Basin
Manager, NYCDEP
Max Kelly, Watershed Educator
Tim Koch, Lead Educator, AWSMP

Action Items:

- Schedule a CAV follow-up meeting to look at remaining issues.
- Town to finalize flood hazard mitigation plan update additional committee members
- Town send Relocation feasibility study to Heidi. (✓)

News and Announcements

- **CWC:** John shares that he is retiring. His predecessor will be working on flood hazard mitigation program exclusively. The position is posted now and John is planning to stay on for a few years to train the new hire.
- **UCSWCD:** Bobby Taylor will be serving as Acting Program Manager, covering Adam's role when he vacates the position in early July. Adam's position is also now posted.

Town of Shandaken Updates

- **Floodplain Administrator outreach, assistance, permits, issues, applications, etc**
 - Black Bear Campground (Phoenicia) called last week. Owner is nervous about losing land; streambank is eroding. Is there funding for stabilization?
 - Owner states they've lost about 8 feet in the 10-years they've been there
 - Within the LFA Study Area
 - The floodplain bench is being studied in coordination with Bridge Street Bridge project, but its not likely that any floodplain enhancement would be planned for that bank of the creek, however this stretch of the river is being thoroughly studied with design and engineering imminent, if the land owner can wait a bit for results.
 - UCSWCD can do a site visit
 - Review remaining concerns & next steps from DEC CAV-follow up letter (5/30/24)
 - 5 parcels have remaining concerns. Peter suggested a meeting be scheduled with Donna and Heidi.

- One being the wood chip pile at Town Hall. Eric says its almost gone.
 - Town's wood chip pile will be relocated to the lower parking lot at Glenbrook park
 - The elevation certificates that had issues / incorrect numbers- most were done by a local surveyor. Donna was going to be in touch with him to have them corrected.
- **Town of Shandaken Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**
 - A letter went out to Tetra Tech for more information / details proposal. Leslie shares that TT is aiming to have a detailed estimate and scope later this week or early next week
 - Peter made an announcement at the last town board meeting, and welcomed anyone who wanted to be on this committee. The town will need to finalize committee members by the time Tetra Tech is contracted and ready to engage.
 - *Note. New Fire Chief is Gary Carr.*
- **Town of Shandaken Town Hall / Highway Complex Relocation**
 - The group discusses the DEP is reviewing the proposed sketch plan. Abbie in Land Acquisition (DEP) reported to Heidi that one of the hurdles will be the need to figure out extinguishing or modifying the conservation easement over that portion of the land to be conveyed to the town (assuming the swap discussion moves forward).
 - Extinguishing or modifying the bounds of an easement can be difficult under normal circumstances. This is further complicated by the fact that this easement was filed and it associated with several other properties, not even necessarily contiguous, or even in the same county. So the process will affect those lots as well.
 - Leslie suggests that this would be a good example to bring before Tom Snow (DEC head of Watershed issues), to make him aware of this specific matter before it his desk and gets buried.
 - Heidi also updates the group that the town's application for Congressionally Directed Spending has not been advanced to the appropriations committee.
 - Heidi has put in a request to learn why the project did not qualify, as several similar, if not smaller, capital projects were advanced. Heidi speculates it could be that an actual relocation site has not been finalized or purchased.
 - Aaron asks: is the DEP parcel the town's top choice for relocation?
 - This opens larger discussion: The town hall feasibility study has been furnished to the town. (Peter will send to Heidi).
 - Peter has shared the report with the Town Board members but no one has followed up, and they haven't had an in-depth discussion yet.
 - If / when the town does put it on the agenda to discuss, Heidi offers to be present. She would like to provide
 - There is an argument to be made for the **Phoenicia Elementary School**, however 214 could become flooded and impassable.
 - In major storm events, Route 214 is not always flooded for *too* long, maybe a few hours...
 - If the town hall was moved into Phoenicia School, the town could build the highway garage with a meeting room, emergency operations center at DIFFERENT, upland (non-floodplain) location.
 - There may be energy grants and other "smart communities" funding for an adaptive re-use project like this.
 - Other towns have turned schools into town halls with great success, partnering with other organizations too, like ARC, etc.
 - Could co-locate county sheriff's office, or other
 - School is going to remediate the old floor tile with asbestos in it, before a new buyer gets in there!

- **Stone Kill Farms parcels on Rte 28** are dry, out of the floodplain, these are also good taxable parcels. The owner is potentially willing to work with the town, but Peter states it is hard to take any of these off the rolls.
 - Eric points out most southerly lot associated with Stone Kill Farms, maybe selecting this site would still allow for the rest of the marketable land to be developed.
- The site plan could feasibly be engineered on just 4-5 acres.
- There is further discussion on the previous attempt to relocate the town hall when locating funds for construction was unsuccessful.
- Aaron shared his experience with Olive Fire Department. The bottom line was that there was real dedication from the town and firehouse to work diligently to select the parcel.

Design & Implementation Project Updates

- **Design & Feasibility Phoenicia Bridge Street Bridge project in coordination with Phoenicia Main Street Bridge & Floodplain Enhancement studies** (funded in part and in full by AWSMP, respectively)
 - Waiting on SLR to provide initial report for Phoenicia Main St. modelling. The information expected from that report will help the Bridge Street bridge project advance.
 - Leslie to request status from SLR
 - Andrew hopes the town can prioritize this project, when they speak to SLR, because otherwise the Bridge Street project on hold.
- **Pine Hill LFA Implementation: Bonnie View Ave Project Sites 1 & 2 Feasibility and concept design** (funded by AWSMP)
 - Leslie to check in on bonnie view status.
- ***Side Note:** Peter has been also been working with SLR on stormwater design for Pine Hill, to submit for construction funding from CWC.*

Stream Restoration Project Updates

- **McKenley Hollow (funded by AWSMP)**
 - Waiting on revised report from SLR.

Partner Updates

- **AWSMP**
 - “Conservation through Connection” 2024 Ashokan Watershed Conference, June-October 2024
 - Tim shares that for the Ashokan Watershed Conference there will be 11 public events, primarily in Shandaken; each aimed at promoting a deeper connection with streams and nature.
 - 2 events so far; health benefits of being near water.
 - Riparian forest bathing – well attended.
 - Next: municipal plant walk
 - Coming: early July: stream snorkeling & river yoga.
 - NYSFSMA: “Navigating Substantial Damage Admin Procedures” June 27th 12-1:30
 - Heidi would love to present at AWSMP as a “viewing party”
 - Landowner Quick Guide on Substantial Improvement and Substantial Damage will be available digitally and in print very soon!
 - Also coming... Landowner Quick Guide which comes out of a request from Olive: ‘Stormwater Management on Private Property’

- Since legal issues will be difficult to address, this guide will focus on best management practices. UCSWCD will be advising on the guide as it's put together.
 - AWSMP would like to hear more feedback/detailed concerns from other highway department too.
- **CWC**
 - Updates from recent feasibility studies
 - There is a new Jay Street landowner who has applied for a feasibility study.
 - This landowner stated that they hope to start a domino effect.
 - CWC does not have the capacity to follow up with folks after they receive their study. So often, CWC does not hear anything for some time after they've been furnished.
 - Plank Rd parcel owner has come back with an application for design. This application will be reviewed with DEP.
 - Landowners in Phoenicia are concern with the "look" of elevation, ADA compliance, etc. It will also be challenging to do this work while trying to run a business.
 - There have been 10 feasibility studies and /or design applications in Phoenicia. People are thinking about it. They're interested in it. They may not be ready to pull the trigger yet, but this could be a big opportunity to elevate or retrofit all of Main Street.
 - The group discusses how to leverage this interest?
 - Storm Act
 - NYS Bonding for Climate Change
 - Army Corps
 - Jason Sha, Laura Ortiz – may be good USACE contacts
 - Aaron shares some information from NYSFSMA conference – other communities are building workforce to make these elevations happen. There are MILLIONS of homes nationwide in floodzones that should be elevated.
 - Discussion about building out local workforce for elevations (so contractors know how to do this work):
 - John may talk to Clark Companies about workforce training.
 - NYCFFBO Demo updates
 - Kirkpatrick & Sage/Shurter: both are in the demo plan and safe-work plan phase with LaBella. Those are expected to be ready in late summer/early fall.
 - Damiana / VanBaren: pre-demo surveys will be making their way to CWC next week. **Hopefully all four will be demo'd by the end of the year.**
- **NYCDEP**
 - No other updates.
- **Ulster County (Planning, Emergency Services, DPW, DOE)**
 - No other updates

Review Notes

Adjourn

Next Meeting:

Tuesday July 16, 2024 @ 10:00 am