

THE COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MICHAELS
300 MILL STREET
P.O. BOX 206
ST. MICHAELS, MD 21663

Settled 1670-1680
Incorporated 1804

Telephone: 410.745.9535
Facsimile: 410.745.3467

Climate Change/Sea Level Rise Commission
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 5pm

CALL TO ORDER –Meeting opened at 5:00 pm. Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Roy Myers, Dennis Glackin, John Marrah, Dr. Andrew Thaler, Dr. William Boicourt, Don McCann, Town Planner Steve Ball, and Town Staff Kris Kakabar. Guest Presenter: Casey Rauch, Chris Schoenster, and Shelley Rentsch. Public attendees: one in person and none via zoom.

Election of Officers

Mr. Myers opened the floor for the election of officers. Dr. Boicourt made a motion to nominate the current officers to maintain their current positions, Mr. Roy Myers as Chair and Mr. Dennis Glackin as Vice Chair. Seconded by Don McCann and carried on a vote of 5-0.

Minutes

Mr. Myers noted date corrections for the MDEM Advanced Assistance Grant project schedule. Mr. Myers requested a motion to approve the Climate Change/Sea Level Rise minutes from December 14, 2023, with the corrections as noted above, moved by Dr. Boicourt, seconded by Dr. Thaler, and carried on a vote of 5-0.

Public Comment:

None

Items from CC/SLR Commission for discussion:

A warm welcome extended to Don McCann as a new member of the CC/SLRC.

MDEM Advanced Assistance Grant – Input session with Casey Rauch, Rauch Engineering and Shelley Rentsch, Annapolis Landscape Architect

Mr. Myers gave a synopsis of previous Sea Level Rise studies the CC/SLRC has performed to date, including an overview of this MDEM Advanced Assistance Grant. Casey Rauch and Shelley Rentsch were then introduced and proceeded with their PowerPoint Presentation. Mr. Rauch provided the statistical and engineering findings related to sea level rise as related to the NAVD88 elevations and a 1.02ft average elevation potential of the tide (the difference between MSL and MHHW). These findings have been reviewed and developed to incorporate the protection which would be achieved if at elevation 5ft for the Town and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) into the year 2050 and are depicted in their presented mitigation strategies and concept designs for this current study area.

Two Possible Concept Options we will need to consider:

Mill St./Burns St. become private access roads for the CBMM or remain public roads

If this road becomes private, the Town would need to consider a request for an easement access to the infrastructure in this area. If it remains public the Town needs to maintain access to the Crab Claw and buildings on Mill and Burns Street for emergency equipment. The option of raising the culvert on Mill Street comes with concerns of its own: as it would limit access to the CBMM maintenance building which is not feasible. Another challenging factor is the flooding in the area at elevation 2 will be the flooding water entering from the northside of Mill Street by the pumping station. In this scenario, a tide gate option completely flooded the drainage area behind it, therefore removed from consideration. The CBMM Collections Building would need additional protection. Hence, whether the road is public or private, we need to determine the type of use for these roads and consider the plans for raising the road to elevation 5 (at a cost of over \$1million dollars) versus tolerance of not raising the road it flooding for a few hours until the flood event resolves. Additional considerations to be considered are Hollis Park, Honeymoon Bridge, Harbor Promenade and Boardwalk and the CBMM ticket space.

Dr. Boicourt, CBMM liaison for the CC/SLRC, commented that the CBMM has not developed their master plan to that extent at this time, but these ideas should be posed to the Museum.

Concept schemes were explained by Shelley Rentsch, Annapolis Landscape Architect.

1. Scheme 1: Amphitheater – Plan to raise the bulkhead to the terrace grading to elevation 5 and will allow for controlled inundation of water with an architectural embrace. Trees will gradually need replaced over years of water inundation. Access from Cherry Street to the CBMM entrance will need to be considered as plans progress. A concern is for the B&Bs in this area and water inundation on their property.
2. Scheme 2: Pavilion Overlook – Public Open Space purchase of this property allows for development of a public park but regulations within this purchase will determine future use for the Hollis Park area. Controlled resiliency around the gut, with fill at the bulkhead to the pavilion to elevation 5. There would be a drop-off parking lot. The walkway will be reconstructed to 7-10 feet wide to meet the ADA requirements (currently 5 ft wide). Consider skate park parking lot could be developed into parking/turnaround/civic space combo. Dr. Boicourt suggested coordination with CBMM for evening events at both facilities and the ability to utilize their parking area if no event conflicts. The question arose if moving the pumping station in the future was an option? Casey Rauch performed a study with Ray Clarke and has already developed an exhibit design depicting the utilities in this parking area.
3. Scheme 3: Open Space & Natural Systems – A traditional open pavilion with a circular lawn and walkway edges. Along the Promenade either keep the current solid bulkhead elevation or an open elevated walkway, connecting Cherry Street further up Cherry Street to the end by Crab Claw, allowing tides to naturally flow underneath while rejuvenating the edges. Kayak rentals as a possibility. Minor retaining wall or hill to keep water inundations intruding into the CBMM and also on the East side. The Victoriana property has options for their property that we can work with them to show them options. This plan brings the public across down to the Gateway walkway to the museum and allow access to the park from this area. There are slips along this bulkhead walkway we need to consider and at Honeymoon Bridge there are 10 Town slips which is utilized by boaters. Floating finger piers are an option in this area; however, we would need to consider the Harbor line in this area. We need to consider the historic feature of wooden flower boxes on Honeymoon bridge and preserving this detail.
4. Scheme 4: Mill Street Bridge & Park Facilities – Water will be allowed to come in higher onto the landward side and build a 2ft high retaining wall which would cross their current walkway access to the parking area and access to the CBMM entrance. More affordable. Elevated boardwalk. Option for Mill Street to be a bridge over the culvert area in this scheme, assuming Mill St./Burns St. are being raised to 5 ft. Casey Rauch feels a bridge would be more expensive and involves a new culvert. The water from the south will come around a berm. Moving the

protection to the south could be an option based on funding options at time we go to build. A berm option is possible for the Victoriana property to protect their beautiful older tree.

5. Scheme 5: Play Park & Nautical Theme – A stage with an amphitheater back toward the water, with a lawn area, space for food trucks, a nautical play space and destination area, exploration area for kids, climbing ropes like on ships, and possible electric controlled boat rentals in the lagoon. At elevation 5 with no mitigation.
6. Scheme 6: Elevation 5 and we do nothing. A little bit of fill only. B&Bs will be underwater. 5 foot is the protection line.

Any development in the critical area buffer line shoreward needs mitigated. In a modified buffered area, it will be at a maximum of 25 feet as you are grandfathered in, as long as you apply for a reduction of the buffer line. Mr. McCann voiced concern to protect the investment for buildings at 25 years. Dr. Boicourt explained that the sea level rise estimates and studies show this will give us protection to potentially 2075 for most events. Ms. Rentsch commented that we should place as little infrastructure in the low-lying land as possible.

Cherry Street Presentation recommendations:

We are sending a letter to the Cherry Street residents tomorrow and a follow up letter the week before to invite them to an in-person meeting on January 25, 2024. The presentation to the Cherry Street residents and B&Bs should include all ideas you presented to us and be transparent with all scenarios/options which are only ideas at this time. We recommend including a context map depicting the 5ft elevation line along with the slide where we do nothing so they understand the impacts on their property. The CC/SLRC members who will be involved in this meeting will include: Roy Myers, Dennis Glackin and Dr. Boicourt.

Summary: 2 Options: Mill St./Burns St. (public and private) and two options for the end of Cherry Street/Honeymoon Bridge – Walkway. Once we have the Cherry Street residents meeting and the CBMM we will be able to hone down the options. In May it will be presented to the COSM.

DNR Outcome 2&3 Grant Submission update for Back Creek Living Shoreline and Tide Gate Assessment
Steve Ball, Town Planner has submitted a grant to DNR for an Outcome 2&3 for Back Creek Park Living Shoreline and the San Domingo Creek Tide Gate Assessment. Thank you for your hard work.

Potential future grants to apply for

We are currently trying to define which grant to seek for West Harbor Road/East Chew Avenue final design. Steve has submitted a letter to MDE for a capital grant and Roy is sending a letter to MDEM request their assistance with grants. We have a meeting with Envision the Choptank regarding a grant writer assistance, to follow up on the North Street area. We need to follow up with Rural Maryland regarding looking into a grant to supplement our MDEM Advances Assistance grant, which would be due the end of March.

Public Comment

None.

Discussion Items

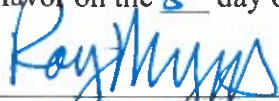
No additional discussion items.

Adjournment

Mr. Myers made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Moved by John Marrah and seconded by Dr. Thaler and carried through on a vote of 6-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:53pm.

Minutes approved as submitted by 50 vote in favor on the 8th day of February 2024.



Roy Myers, Chairman