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Climate Change/Sea Level Rise Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 5pm

CALL TO ORDER –Meeting opened at 5:02 pm. Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Roy Myers, John Marrah, Dr. William Boicourt, Doug Rollow, Don McCann, and Mark Allen and Jim Tapp from the Waterways Management Advisory Board (joined via zoom) and Town Staff Kris Kakabar. Guest Presenter: Casey Rauch from Rauch Inc. Public attendees: five in person and one via zoom.

Minutes

Mr. Myers requested a motion to approve the Climate Change/Sea Level Rise minutes from February 8, 2024, moved by Mr. McCann and seconded by Dr. Boicourt, Mr. Rollow abstained from the vote, which carried on a vote of 4-0.

Public Comment:

A new resident from Rio Vista attended the meeting to learn more about Climate Change/Sea Level Rise in St. Michaels. Also present were representatives from Grace Street and Cherry Street.

Items from CC/SLR Commission for discussion:

MDEM Advanced Assistance Grant – Status Update on Cherry Street/Honeymoon Bridge-Harbor Walkway/Mill Street/Burns Street Study

Our goal is to provide Casey Rauch with information to develop two concept plans to move forward. Mr. Myers provided a summary of the previous input meetings held with Cherry Street residents and Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Mr. Rauch has agreed to do some additional modeling of the area for possibilities of a water retention area located on Mill Street. The possibility of moving the CBMM maintenance buildings in the future was presented, with an option of the Town utilizing this space for a water retention site. These discussions will need to be held between the Town and the CBMM. See the attached CC/SLRC Monthly Meeting overview for the highlights of these meetings.

Shelley Rentsch, Annapolis Landscape Architects, developed two sketch options for the east-end of Cherry Street by Honeymoon Bridge which were presented at the last meeting and Mr. Myers summarized tonight. Prior to making any final determinations for the Cherry Street area, it is prudent that we speak with the Bed & Breakfast owners in this vicinity and present these sketches and conceptual flooding. The Victoriana owner was present at the meeting on January 25, 2024. John Marrah clarified that initial interactions regarding the Hambleton Inn were held a year ago with Debra Alms when the Town was considering mitigation to 4 feet MSLR. One option was to raise the end of the walkway on Cherry Street with a retention wall and brick sidewalk on top and potential berm at the Victoriana and raising the Bridge. The other option is raising the

walkway on Cherry Street at the 5-ft MSLR elevation, as well as Honeymoon Bridge, but will be open beneath for water to flow under but maintain pedestrian access to the Promenade.

Mr. Rollow is more inclined to favor the option avoiding heavy infrastructure investments. A local resident in this vicinity, Mr. Fulton, explained that the height of the flooding waters we are referencing are like those during hurricane Sandy and higher than Isabelle in 2006. At present it is not very common, however the occurrence will become more common and 1.7 feet higher as we move toward 2050. Nuisance flooding would bring the water level to 4.2 feet, it would take an additional significant storm surge to achieve 5 feet.

Mr. Allen, Waterways Board, inquired about the waterman parking spaces near Honeymoon Bridge. At this time, the parking spaces and how to address the slips are still an open question. Option 1 – all the parking slips are gone, while Option 2 would allow for parking slips to remain.

In summary, we need to arrange additional discussion with the B&Bs in this area.

Scenario 1: Amphitheater,

Scenario 2: Raise the bulkhead to 5 ft from CBMM to Honeymoon Bridge, allowing for some flooding into the lagoon. The pavilion versus open space, general support for an open performance lawn. Raised walkway with backfill to 5 feet except where the small retaining wall is near the lagoon. It was suggested to move the retaining wall left, closer to the lagoon and Honeymoon Bridge.

Backfill on the Town side would require less than 1000 cubic yards, while the CBMM property has a hardscape investment they do not wish to address at this time, hence they would have a raised bulkhead and walkway with no fill. The approximate cost comparison for (Scenario 2 on the Town side) backfill and building an at grade walkway = \$273, 000 versus a raised walkway on wooden pilings and bulkhead with no fill = \$360,000. A hybrid Option 7 could be a hybrid model of the Town property with the bulkhead and walkway at 5-ft backfilled to the bulkhead to maintain as much lawn space as possible. At the transition to the CBMM property, the 5-ft bulkhead would continue with a raised walkway with no fill to the bulkhead. The CBMM will need to use a little fill to obtain a reverse grade along with creating a means to drain the rainwater from the “culvert” out to the gut or a stormwater facility on site, this scenario will also need a water collection area on their property. Rauch will devise a sketch reflecting this for the next meeting. Mr. Rauch recommends use of fill as a preferred option on the Town side.

There was an inquiry if we are cognizant of any restrictions which are on the property secondary to the open space grant in which Hollis Park was purchased. Rauch currently is building the outside envelope and leaving the park space as a blank canvas. These options are with the understanding of raising Mill Street and Burns Street to 5 ft and the proposed future restaurant at the current site of the Crab Claw be elevated for 5-ft also.

Concept 5: There remains an issue to determine how to preserve the boat slips/piers (in this scenario they will be underwater). This option has no raised bulkhead only a raised walkway. A performance lawn is here.

Concept 6: Do nothing, let everything flood.

Concept 6a: Raised walkway with performance lawn in the center.

Public question: Option 2- The plan is to raise the bulkhead to 5 ft and place the walkway on top of this. This is with the assumption that Burns St., Mills St., and the future restaurant are elevated to 5-ft. This would create a drainage issue. Casey is looking to develop a stormwater management retention pond to collect the rainwater in

this area and discharge it out to the gut. He will investigate further to prevent flooding, especially during high tide at 3.7ft over MSL, of the lot with this design.

It was decided for Rauch to further develop two options: Option 2a and Option 7 a hybrid model

Option 2: Raised 5ft. bulkhead with walkway on top of the bulkhead and backfill for the entire area including the CBMM. (with an estimate of backfill cost analysis for the CBMM)

Option 7: Raise the bulkhead with raised walkway on top to 5ft. on pilings all the way across – minimal backfill

Option _ : Hybrid option- Raised 5ft. bulkhead the entirety with backfill and walkway on top of the Town property transitioning into a raised walkway on pilings with minimal retrograded backfill on the CBMM side. A stormwater management concern with this scenario would be at the property line on the CBMM side, during high tides there would be a “lake” abutting the Town property, with potential to crest at the edges. This scenario would infer additional costs to the Town for a discharge system (pipe) for the pooled rainwater on the CBMM side to the gut. An option would be to drain the water at that area to the Harbor (possibly requiring consideration of a pump) versus gravity through a swell.

Other areas:

- Surrounding roads – Mill Street and Burns Street raise to 5 feet
- Cherry Street – sketches need to be reviewed with B&Bs
- Skateboard Park - undetermined future use – at present leave as a parking lot with minor modifications
- Park Preferences – consider use of Morgan State Landscaping students in the 4th quarter to devise design options - will leave as a green space at this time
- Boat Docks/Access - floating vs. fixed docks still requires further discussion
- Honeymoon Bridge – leave the same or raised and rebuilt in-kind
- CBMM Maintenance Buildings – assumption probably moved and in concept plan show as being moved to a higher elevation.

Casey Rauch is working on additional modeling of the area to reflect the impact of storms on these buildings if they remain in current location. This modeling evaluation is necessary to determine appropriate sizing of the future box culvert for this area. Mr. Rauch will have an early draft for the April meeting of the next concept designs.

The other concept plan possibilities will be removed at this time and left as an open green space park with the option to inquire into utilizing Morgan State Landscape Architects to develop designs at a later date. After the green space is approved, we will have them work with Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Request for Mark Allen to go back to the Waterways Advisory Board to further discuss their recommendations for the docks in this area and advise us on their input at the next meeting.

Contracts with Amanda Pollack, P.E. Water Resources Engineer with Center for Watershed Protection, Inc.
The contracts were presented to the Commissioners of St. Michaels and have been signed with the Watershed Protection in conjunction with Envision the Choptank to assist the Town with grant funding sources. Later this month, we have a meeting to discuss how to proceed with grant funding for the West Harbor Road/East Chew Avenue.

Direct Technical Assistance (DTA) Grant application with FEMA – submitted 2/29/24

Mr. Myers reached out to FEMA inquiring if the Town is eligible to apply for the DTA grant to assist with planning to develop future BRIC construction grants. They encouraged the Town to apply, hence the

application was submitted on February 29, 2024. We should hear about the determination around the end of the second quarter this year.

Presentation to Sea Level Rise Seminar Sponsored by the Garden Club of Eastern Shore at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum Steamboat Building on 3/13/24

Compliments by Dr. Boicourt for Mr. Myer's presentation and answers to the questions.

Public Comment

Mr. Fulton expressed sympathy for the B&B owners, Cherry and Mill Street need to be raised with private property on both sides. Mr. Myers stated: We want to provide the courtesy to the B&B owners to entertain their thoughts and ideas, however we are not recommending or financing what they choose to do on their properties. Mr. Marah recalled the grading analysis performed by Rauch Engineering to ensure functional degrees of grading access onto their properties from Mill or Cherry Street.

Discussion Items

No additional discussion items.

Adjournment

Mr. Myers made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Moved by Dr. Boicourt and seconded by Mr. Marah and carried through on a vote of 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Minutes approved as submitted by 5-0 vote in favor on the 11th day of April 2024.



Roy Myers, Chairman