



CITY OF GLOUCESTER
HARBOR PLAN COMMITTEE
February 16th, 2022
2:00 P.M.
Remote Meeting
Richard Noonan, Chair

MINUTES

Present Members: Rick Noonan, Al Cottone, Tony Gross, Tom Balf, Tessa Brown, Katie Kahl, Vito Giacalone, John McCarthy

Absent Members:

Staff: Gregg Cademartori, Gemma Wilkens

Consultant Team: Matthew Littell – Utile, Will Cohen – Utile, Taskina Tareen – Utile, Zoë Mueller – Utile, Jason Hellendrung – Tetra Tech, Jamie Fay – Tetra Tech / Fort Point Associates, Nasser Brahim – Woods Hole Group

Other Attendees: Andree Robert, Deborah Eliason, Karen Ristuben, Maggie Rosa, Mortillaro Lobster, Thomas Burger, Valerie Nelson

I. BUSINESS.

- A. Meeting Minutes Approval (15 min)
- B. Continued Discussion (45 min)
 - a. Coastal Infrastructure & Flood Resilience
 - b. Sub-Area Study & Considerations
 - c. Regulatory Plan Opportunities
- C. March Public Meeting Content & Format (25 min)
 - a. Public Meeting Agenda/Format
 - b. Public Meeting Content
 - c. Economic Strategy HPC Discussion Recap
- D. Next Steps (5 min)

II. CONTINUED DISCUSSION -

- Coastal Infrastructure & Flood Resilience
 - i. Big picture takeaway: in terms of flood risk, we are dealing with degrees of uncertainty and projection. However, ultimately FEMA flood maps are a helpful planning tool for all properties dealing with flood risks
 - ii. Flood risk thresholds:
 - 1. Katie: What community is this data based on? Nasser: Not sure if publicly communicated, this is Marshfield (gets flooding pretty frequently)
 - 2. Nasser: if people are not naturally ready to do investment, if 50% of your building is destroyed by flood, you have to comply to code (15')
 - 3. Katie: Do you have good examples of businesses and property owners providing investment?
 - 4. Nasser: In South Boston, along Fort point channel. Property owners are providing easements for the City to provide flood protection. Some examples

in the Cape where there is shoreline erosion. They created a memorandum of understanding, creating trust and property owners take part in shoreline protection

iii. Flood Code Compliance:

1. Tony Gross: At Harbor masters office, we put in vents for water to drain out, and drywall.
2. Gregg Cademartori: Is this applicable on retrofit or new construction? Zoe: understanding it is for both. Matthew and Nasser confirm.
3. Nasser: wet floodproofing is only practical to a point, if becomes extensively frequent then have to rethink
4. Vito: Appreciates the presentation content and having the content experts in the room. Note that we cannot raise certain streets like Rogers, and that this kind of information is very helpful for property owners and should be embedded in the harbor plan.
5. Katie: Are there examples or adaptation strategies - how do you plan for the future and do the right thing, but also have functional and reasonable business solutions right now?
6. Zoe: Describes movable dock systems. The wet flood proofing for ground floor uses is more of a short-term use, as Nasser mentioned, as flooding is frequent, the value proposition of that space diminishes.
7. Matthew: Chart House in Boston in Long Wharf - the restaurant gets flooded regularly. Mechanical system on roof. Many Adhoc ways to approach the situation. Becomes issue when thinking about how someone's investment is being used.
8. Gregg: To Vito's point, current operations and relations to waterside and building site - if some of the reinvestment in the site is taking in flood compliant design, there needs to be understanding of lifespan before investment is made. Trying to understand the impact of flood insurance, flood construction standard if accurate for current risk with understanding that there is a point where you can't tolerate current risk and have to account for further risk. If we did some analysis, we could lower elevations but what are the trade-offs?
9. Nasser: Answer is different depending on who's shoes you're wearing - developers and property owners have different time horizons
10. Tony: Regarding news from FEMA yesterday, how realistically are we looking at redevelopment on vacant lots? Is this a question we need to answer before all others?
11. Zoe: (clarifies Tony's question) Given flood risk profile of priority sites, we should determine risk before considering development approaches
12. Tony: Where we are trying to get to, and how we are trying to get there, and where we are going (we know what we have).
13. Zoe: Flood risks create two economic impacts on Harbor. Reemphasizes marine dependent uses. favors higher price point uses, to pay for infrastructure to work on the site.
14. Vito: (To Tony's point) What about phasing and to what extent. Rather than appeal to FEMA and lower interim flood level so that more people can develop, Phasing allows everybody to know where things are going. 50% or more improvement to property is a deal breaker to many. The idea of putting together a plan to phase elevation levels even to 14' would be a great idea to pursue.

15. Gregg: Agrees with Tony and Vito. Timeframes - if current FEMA flood elevations are a significant impediment to development, then nothing happens.
16. Matthew: Burdensome for smaller properties in Harbor cover to have one more barrier to development. Another factor to think about.
17. Vito: Fisherman wharf is right at 10'. A lot of harbor cove properties are well below 10'. We can visualize a dock to 14'. Can envision temporary phasing from 12', that can help people stay in business. Questions the scientific reasoning behind sea level projections on harbor being different from other places like East Gloucester.
18. Nasser: mentions flexible infrastructure such as bollards with higher heights. If waterside infrastructure can be flexible as land is being raised, those things are compatible. Fixed pier docks in water is not wise as only adapting to day's elevations and not 30 years from now.
19. Vito: if phased, design could be adapted to today and next projections.
20. Jason: (asks Matthew) - wasn't this embedded in Boston Resiliency guidelines?
21. MAtthew: For existing buildings - conceptually simple, but have to consider how this relates to access to building i,e ramp up and ADA accessibility.

- Sub-Area Study & Considerations

- i. Harbor Cove:

1. John: Anything built on I4C2 would have to be on pilings, is this affected by 2014 changes?
2. Kathryn: Really talking about flow tidelands. if building on filled tidelands can be up to 20% supporting use.
3. Tony: questions viability of I4C2
4. Matthew: Gregg shared past proposals for I4C2. Takeaway is that the challenge that makes I4C2 not commercially viable. Future uses will need some future subsidy or support for some uses. Low elevation, quality of fill.
5. Gregg: Identifying a water dependent use or mixed-use project that reinforces the harbor as a whole and complies with DPA regulations is the million dollar question. Not sure if strictly open space is a long term use for DPA.
6. Kahrynn: open space only parcel is not a licensable use in DPA

- ii. Large-Lot Industrial Area:

1. Tony: Need for processing and how do we get that? Question is: What does Gloucester need for its fleet? What do we have and what do we need? What do we need to reserve on the harbor. Has there been any thought on seeing our competition? - why are other ports successful, when we have facilities here readily available. What advantages do other communities that are doing processing have that we don't, or is this insurmountable for Gloucester?
2. Zoe: big picture reason why seafood processing is not growing in Gloucester, because at local and national level it is shrinking. Skews towards inland areas with large facilities. This is external to Gloucester. The intent here is to see how we can support businesses in Gloucester.
3. Tony: thinks we would be remiss if we didn't look at what types of opportunities can be afforded to Gloucester in these small lots.
4. Jamie: Distinction between initial construction and maintenance is an important one. Wind facility in Salem makes sense because they have space

- and ample water depth for equipment and construction. It's a different piece of pie when talking about ongoing servicing on smaller lots.
5. Tony: wants more comparison with communities to understand obstacles for Gloucester. Need to dive into details to answer questions.
 6. Tom Balf: agrees with Tony. A good comparison would be with Boston - while they harvest less fish, processing is going well. It would be a useful comparison.
 7. Zoe: Asks to table conversation for next meeting in the interest of time.
 8. Vito: Sewer and water rates are big barriers to Gloucester - Thinks comparison to New Bedford and other communities would be helpful
 9. Tom: Has summary of rates available,

III. MARCH PUBLIC MEETING CONTENT & FORMAT

- Zoe presented an overview of content to be presented to the public and notes that content will be a summary of findings and content presented to HPC to date, and distilled in an accessible and clear manner.
- Rick: Regards with live polling has been clunky in the past - refers to social pinpoint used in last meeting's engagement.
- Zoe: the live polling is built into the Zoom platform

IV. MEETING MINUTES

- May 12th, 2021 Meeting Minutes: Approved
- July 14th, 2021 Meeting Minutes: Approved
- August 11th, 2021 Meeting Minutes: Approved
- Dec 1st, 2021 Meeting Minutes: Approved

V. ADJOURNMENT

1. Motion to adjourn was made by Rick Noonan.