



# The Town of Fenwick Island

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## **INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING MARCH 30, 2021 *MEETING HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE***

### **MINUTES**

#### **In Attendance**

##### Infrastructure Members:

Chairman Bernie Merritt, Mike Houser, Bill Weistling, Pending Appointment: Becka McWilliams & Gardner Bunting

##### Staff in Attendance:

Town Manager Tieman, Building Official Schuchman, Public Works Manager Locke, Town Clerk Menominee

##### AECOM Members:

Erik Hughes, Project Manager & Kyle Gulbranson

26 other people attended the meeting.

Chairman Merritt called the meeting to order at 9:30.

#### Approval of minutes from February 19, 2021 meeting

A MOTION was made by Mike Houser seconded by Bill Weistling to approve the minutes from the February 19, 2021 meeting. The MOTION passed unanimously.

#### **For Discussion and Possible Action**

Chairman Merritt started the meeting by recognizing that all the Streets in Town need to be looked at. Some are better than Farmington and some are worse, but he did want to inform everyone that this is a Town-wide project.

Town Manager Tieman stated that drainage in Fenwick Island has always been an issue and will continue to be an issue. She said that Fenwick Island is the only town in Delaware that lies entirely in the 1% chance special flood hazard area- formerly known as 100-year special flood hazard area zone. This means that any location in Fenwick is subject to a 1% chance of flooding each year and that it is almost guaranteed, stated Town Manager Tieman.

Town Manager Tieman presented background on the drainage projects and studies that have been conducted in the Town since 2013. She stated that in 2013, an inventory of the Town's stormwater infrastructure was completed. In 2014, Phase I of Dagsboro Street drainage improvements were done. Bay Street was worked on in conjunction with Sussex Conservation District. She also stated that Bora Bora Street and North Schulz Road was worked on. In 2015, Phase II project of Dagsboro Street was completed along with a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability study. In 2016, the Town did multiple street drainage improvements, West Indian, West Farmington, and Delaware Avenue. In 2017, Bayard Street, Bayard Street Extended and Bora Bora Street had drainage improvements done. In 2018, Maryland Avenue was looked at, but no work was completed. Town Manager Tieman said the State of Delaware will be working on this project because it involved Route 54. In 2019, we worked on Bay Street, West Bayard Street, Madison Avenue, North Schulz Road and West Essex Street. In 2020, work/minor repairs have been done on North Schulz Road, West Dagsboro Street, Surf Avenue, South Schulz Road, Bayard Street, South Carolina, West Farmington- where a 150-foot trench was dug, with work continuing with Ebb Tide Cove, Bayard Street and Bayside Drive. Town Manager Tieman concluded her background by stating that there is still considerable work to go in the Town along with a few more studies.

Kyle Gulbranson, Project Manager for AECOM, proposed improved drainage and storage as much as allowed under the conditions of a high-water table on West Farmington. He said that it will not prevent flooding under a storm situation but will improve drainage and eliminate ponding under a moderate rain event.

**Erik Hughes presented Farmington Street Project.**

Chairman Merritt wanted to be clear that this project would alleviate small ponding issues, but it would not be a correction of everything. West Farmington will still be dealing with large rainfall ponding.

Town Manager Tieman tied up the conversation by stating Fenwick Island is in the “process of flood mitigation, not flood prevention.”

**Public Participation**

Phil Chapman, 1 W. Farmington- Mr. Chapman questioned how the south side of W. Farmington would be impacted along with driveways.

Scott Negley, 2 W. Farmington- Mr. Negley questioned the timing of the project and urged the Infrastructure committee to add this project to the Capital budget.

Geri Verlaque, 23 W. Farmington- Ms. Verlaque questioned whether the Committee could discuss the major flooding events that happen at the end of West Farmington closest to the bay.

Robert Warburton, 10 W. Farmington- Mr. Warburton believes the back flow preventers have created more problems than the project is worth and the maintenance on them has been nonexistent.

Jay Snowdon, 25 W. Farmington- Mr. Snowdon questioned if there were plans to move the project further down the street. His biggest concern is the ineffective flapper valve on the south side of West Farmington.

Sue Clower, 12 & 14 W. Farmington- Mrs. Clower stated that the current valve is not working and is happy that there is a better solution in the works.

Gail Warburton, 10 W. Farmington- Mrs. Warburton stated that when the tides are high, the pipe that is discharging water from the catch basins was not submerged. She believes that even more of a problem will be created from this project when all the water is flowing to one catch basin. Mrs. Warburton questioned whether this project was going to work and questioned what type of a maintenance schedule is needed.

A MOTION was made by Mike Houser seconded by Bill Weistling to present AECOM’s project to Town Council for approval in the Capital budget. The MOTION passed unanimously.

Chairman Merritt assured everyone that they have the Town’s commitment to seeing this project through. He also decided to call another meeting after hearing what Council recommends.

**Adjournment**

A MOTION was made by Mike Houser seconded by Bill Weistling. The MOTION passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 10:32 AM.