

DREDGING COMMITTEE MEETING

OCTOBER 28, 2021 AT 1PM

MINUTES

DRAFT

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

W. Rymer, G. Murphy, J. Armstrong, S. Magdeburger – via zoom

OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS:

S. Bagnall – Anchor QEA Engineering

T. Pratt – T Pratt Consulting

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

R. Menominee, several residents and members of town council

Rymer called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm

After the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the committee discussed and approved the draft minutes from the September 30, 2021 meeting that were previously provided to the committee.

Rymer mentioned the need to re-arrange the order of discussion for the meeting.

The first topic discussed related to a recent conference call with the local developer.

- The conference call included the primary representative from the local developer, their engineering consultant, Pratt, Bagnall, Rymer and Mayor/President Carmean.
- After a recent decision by Sussex County, the developer is reviewing options for the front part of their property adjacent to Rte 54 (most recently proposed location for dredge material) and is not able to commit to an MOU or receiving dredge material in the future. Focusing their time and efforts on accelerating their residential development. Since Fenwick is not able to provide dredge material this Fall, there is no opportunity to place material in their residential development. May be willing to revisit placing dredge material on that front parcel of property at a later date.
- It is clear that Fenwick must proceed forward to find alternative locations for dredge material but will consider discussions with developer prior to finalizing another location.

As a result of the above discussion/change in direction, Rymer has begun discussions with a local community (Seatowne) regarding the placement of dredge material in their wetlands/eroded beachhead along Assawoman Bay. About 6 years ago, that community discussed with DNREC the option of replenishing/building up the wetlands and DNREC was supportive of their goals. They were not able to proceed since the community did not have access to any dredge material. Will schedule a site visit and continue to investigate this option in the coming weeks.

In addition to this local community option, the team will research other options such as rebuilding previously eroded islands in Assawoman Bay, recreating habitats/wetlands or expanding the beach head near the kayak launch just north of Fenwick.

All of these options will require significantly more time and effort (and expense) since the sites will need to be approved/authorized by DNREC and the US Army Corps of Engineers ("USACE") as well as other interested parties. To achieve approval/authorization, significant testing/surveying and review of wildlife/habitat impacts will be required. This is very different and more difficult than an upland placement of dredge material for a real estate developer.

Update on two tests previously approved:

Archaeological Survey - \$33,000 – proposed project plan has been provided to DNREC and USACE. Awaiting comments/approval to begin work. Expect the surveying to begin by November 15 and then another 30-45 days for final report.

Round 2 of sediment testing - \$18,000 – sampling was completed last week and samples have been sent to the lab. Test results/final report expected in 30-45 days.

There were no public participation comments.

The next meeting of the committee was not scheduled given the uncertainty of timing of next steps. Rymer will communicate with the committee members to determine the best date/time possible for the next meeting. This date will then be posted on the town's website/public calendar.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Rymer and seconded by Murphy to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm