



The Town of Fenwick Island

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INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

February 11, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

Members Present: Jack Armstrong (Zoom), Jay Ryan (Zoom), Susan Brennan (Zoom), Tim Leahy (Zoom), Jon Miller (Zoom), Geri Verlaque (Zoom), Tim Bergin (Zoom),

Others Present: Janice Bortner (Zoom), Ann Riley (Zoom)

Staff Present: Kathy Grab

Flag salute and call to order at 10:01 a.m.

1. Approval of prior minutes from January 14, 2025

Motion to approve January 14, 2025 minutes on a Jack Armstrong /Jon Miller motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Update from Tim Leahy and the Bayside Stormwater Management and Flood Protection Working Group.
 - a. Design for the bayside flood and stormwater protection (dependent on FEMA grant).
 - There has been no update yet and we do not expect significant news from the State anytime soon.
 - The RFP has been updated and will be sent out soon. The scope is being adjusted, with a shift in focus from ongoing design/planning to a master plan type concept with a focus on demonstration projects of the highest priority problem areas.
3. Update on Hesco Barrier Pricing for Possible In-House Project at Farmington Street End.
 - a. Tim Leahy gave details of his site visit to Farmington Street.

- The group initially thought the town could handle some demonstration projects, but after Tim Leahy visited the site, he determined that demolition of the traffic barrier would be too complex for the town to manage.
- There are a couple options, change the design and leave the barrier there or look for another site. It is possible to find out the costs involved and hire a contractor to do it.
- Geri Verlaque stated her spouse believes it can be done leaving the existing barrier there and is willing to help out.
- He stated that maybe the group needs to step back and take a look at other designs for Farmington and look at other places and have a conversation with Mike Locke about his ideas of other places, that the town resources might be utilized for upgrades.
- Susan Brennan asked if permits are needed to do the work if we own the property.
- Tim Bergin advised that based on the meeting with the two from DNREC, there is a certain part at the end of the street that they have jurisdiction, but they would be willing to work with the Town. He feels this is critical to show everyone the direction the committee is trying to go.

Motion to move forward with incorporating the information from Department of Public Works to create a feasibility project a Tim Bergin/Tim Leahy motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

- Tim Bergin discussed whether the town staff or contractor should manage the project. There are people who are willing to volunteer.
- Susan Brennan is going to the RASCL summit that is specific to resiliency and feels this may be a good opportunity to ask these questions.
- Jay Ryan has done some research on the HESCO barriers, and it seems like the industrial size ones are 3x3x3. He also found one at Home Depot that were 5", not sure if this was a scaled down version for residential use or not. The 3x3x3 were only \$25.

- Jay Ryan feels the barrier at the end of the street is not an obstacle and the 3x3x3 will be better at keeping cars out of the bay than a roadblock.
- As far as the DNREC permits, Jay Ryan came away from the meeting feeling that if the existing riprap was not disturbed and stayed on the land side, they were fine with anything we chose to do.

Motion to move forward with a feasibility study of a potential demonstration project for street end flood mitigation on a Tim Bergin/Geri Verlaque motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

4. Update on Street Maintenance – Susan Brennan and Mike Locke.

a. Mott MacDonald.

- A meeting with Paul Caldwell of Mott MacDonald was held in October. Paul has reevaluated all of our streets and provided his location recommendations and initial cost estimate. It was more than twice the budget. Discussions are continuing.
- Susan Brennan gave a brief explanation of Paul Caldwell and Mott MacDonald who will function as the Construction manager handling the contractual, advertising, bidding, as they did for us in the first round.
- The Base Bid would complete S. Schulz Rd, from W. Dagsboro St. to the end. The Add Alternates would be to crack seal Wright St., W. Essex St., Ebb Tide Cove, W. Houston St The Add Alternates are based on priority, budget, and mobilization to allow for the most concentration in an area.
- The contract has been forwarded to Natalie Magdeburger for review by the Town Solicitor. The contract format has not changed since last year. Once approved, Mott MacDonald will send out the bid packages, pre-bid meeting is on February 20th.
- Jon Miller asked about the estimated range of construction costs and what Mott MacDonald's piece represents as a percentage. Susan Brennan is not sure of the answer to the question whether it is a percentage of our budget or what we expect to get done. Or if it is based on what was done last year.
- Geri Verlaque asked to clarify that Mott MacDonald monitors the project. Susan Brennan stated yes, in 2022 the Town approved a budget for a 10-year street maintenance project, based on a study provided by AECOM. The maintenance

work started in 2023 with the worse roads, and it made more sense to do sections. Mott MacDonald handles all aspects of the project, from bidding to inspections.

- Tim Leahy gave an insight into the decision from the past. The AECOM report set street priorities, but as time passes, priorities may change. The committee should review the list annually and focus on agreeing on priorities, not contract details.

5. Old Business

- a. None

6. New Business

- a. Larry Bortner has resigned from the committee, sorry to see him go.

- b. RASCL - Delaware's Resilient and Sustainable Communities League.

- Susan Brennan will be attending Aiming for Action, Adopting, Innovating, and Mitigating the Impacts of Delaware's Climate Change. She will report on the summit at the next meeting.

- c. Tim Bergin spoke of his opinion what he has been thinking and had written about for a while, it is called the Resilience Coordinator Position that speaks to the idea that we, along with other coastal towns will need to hire a person to focus on resiliency, attend meetings and work with engineers and groups like ours. The job needs someone who solely focuses on resiliency and has the proper background.

- d. Introduction Discussion Regarding a Resiliency Fund.

- Tim Leahy advised that given expected support may not arrive, it is time to research and conduct a feasibility study on setting up a resiliency fund, as mentioned in the 2022 AECOM report.
- The group should initiate a feasibility study to research how to set up a resiliency fund, similar to what Lewes introduced. This is important for long-term self-sufficiency, as grant funding for construction projects is unlikely, and having a resiliency fund will be crucial over the next decade.

Motion to recommend to Town Council to establish and conduct a feasibility study for the creation of a resiliency fund, which includes options for funding and implementation on a Tim Leahy/Tim Bergin

Motion passed unanimously.

- Tim Bergin felt that this is something that should be going to the Town Council and they should set up a separate group.
 - The motion needed to be adjusted after discussion.
- e. Climate Change Committee email.
- Susan Brennan shared that a woman from Dewey, part of a Climate Change Committee, reached out after attending a coastal towns meeting on resiliency held in South Bethany last November. She found Fenwick Island's August Resiliency presentation helpful and is working on a subcommittee to create resiliency efforts in Dewey Beach. Susan invited her to the meeting for further discussion.
 - Tim Bergin stated that he has a friend John Russell who is a retired surveyor and advised us when we were beginning the bulkhead surveying is on the Bethany Resiliency Committee and inquired about survey updates. Tim Bergin shared progress and plans. John Russell is sharing insights with Bethany Beach into the survey process, and we are learning from each other's efforts.

7. Public Participation

- a. NONE

8. Next Meeting

- a. March 11, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 11:07 a.m. on a Jack Armstrong/Jon Miller Motion.

Motion passed unanimously.