



The Town of Fenwick Island

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INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

January 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Town Hall

MINUTES

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

Others Present: Ann Riley (Zoom), Natalie Magdeburger (Zoom)

Staff Present: Kathy Grab, Mike Locke (Zoom)

Flag salute and call to order at 10:02 a.m.

1. Approval of prior minutes from December 9, 2025.

Motion: Approve the Minutes of December 9, 2025.

Moved by: Jon Miller

Seconded by: Geri Verlaque

Motion Passed. (Vicki Carmean abstained.)

2. Straughan Environmental Update.

- a. Tim Leahy Update.

- Tim Leahy provided a project update connected to the Comprehensive Plan, including monthly updates with new items highlighted and a proposed public meeting in the spring.
- Work is continuing on drainage improvements, and the Farmington Street project is underway.
- A grant with U.S. Fish and Wildlife through the University of Maryland did not proceed; additional funding opportunities will continue to be explored.
- Straughan Environmental is approximately 30% complete and continues work on detailed mapping and area prioritization.
- Road elevations, berms, bulkhead elevations, bioretention, and living shorelines are all currently being reviewed as a solution that could address the wave action in the northern and northwestern areas of the bayside directly facing large open areas of Assawoman Bay. Reef systems around Seal Island are another mitigation under study.
- The prioritization matrix presented in December is nearly complete, and the committee will review and determine next steps.

- Federal BRIC grant cancellation was overturned, but the committee will continue with town budget and apply for other grant opportunities.
- Natalie Magdeburger advised the committee of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA 2026) for projects and the assistance the Town could receive from the Army Corps Engineers.
- Seal Island could be a priority project for it and Tim Leahy will draft a proposal and send it to Natalie Magdeburger to submit.
- Tim Leahy asked the committee if anyone would be interested in joining a working group to meet and review Straughan Environmental 's information and will discuss bulkhead and road height changes per Straughan Environmental 's recommendations. They will meet a couple of times.
- Jon Miller, Tim Bergin, and Scott Negley agreed. Tim Leahy will send out a date and time.
- Discussion on planning years for infrastructure projects continued. Natalie Magdeburger suggested 2050 as a suitable date based on bulkhead life expectancy is 20-25 years. Committee members agreed.
- Jay Ryan asked about the sea level rise and the real-life date that Straughan Environmental mentions, because he feels Tim Bergin's data is real life. Tim Leahy will ask for clarification.
- Jon Miller asked about the process of selecting the 8 projects and Tim Leahy advised that he thought in the March timeframe.

3. Street Maintenance 2025-26 Update.

a. Susan Brennan Update.

- She noted that review of roadway conditions raised broader questions related to street elevations, road crowns, and coordination with Straughan Environmental.
 - Several significant roadway depressions were identified on the southwest side of Fenwick, including a pinch point at Glenn and Madison Streets.
 - Susan advised that, based on recent flood mitigation insights, Straughan Environmental should be consulted before proceeding with repairs to avoid duplicative or conflicting work.
 - Street maintenance discussion is temporarily paused pending Straughan Environmental 's recommendations regarding roadway crown elevations and hotspot analysis.
- Brief discussion occurred regarding whether raising road crowns would affect building height measurements under the current code.

4. Farmington Street Project Update.

a. Susan Brennan advised that the project is underway.

- Photos of the Farmington Street Project were shared with the committee. Kathy Grab will send the photos to the committee for their review. Natalie Magdeburger has requested that we keep photos of the progress to show the development of the project to be shared on Facebook and the website.

- Committee members emphasized the importance of showing before-and-after examples at public meetings to support public education on flood mitigation projects.
- Discussion highlighted that homeowners may proactively raise bulkheads without committee approval, but consistent standards are needed to avoid inadequate or uneven construction.
- It was noted that individual property improvements may not address roadway access during flooding, underscoring the need to consider both private and public infrastructure impacts.
- The committee agreed that developing clear bulkhead height recommendations—based on a defined design year and sea-level rise projections—would provide needed guidance and improve overall resilience.
- Natalie Magdeburger encourages sharing Tim Bergin’s data with the project engineers while ultimately relying on engineer-certified data to ensure legal defensibility. If the additional data does not change the engineers’ conclusions, the committee should proceed with their recommendations.
- Jon Miller asked about phasing in mandatory bulkhead requirements, including guidelines, potential incentives, and eventual enforcement.
- Natalie Magdeburger explained that updated bulkhead height requirements could be applied immediately to new permits, while a no-grandfather mandatory requirement would be more legally challenging. She also advised that many bulkheads are nearing the end of their lifecycle, making timely ordinance updates important once engineering data is finalized.
- Relying on engineer-supported standards is essential for legal defensibility, with related issues such as boat ramps to be addressed within the ordinance framework.

5. Old Business.

- a. None.

11:16 am Tim Leahy left.

6. New Business.

- a. Patricia Colonel has asked to leave the committee.

7. Public Participation.

- a. None.

8. Date of Next Meeting.

- a. February 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

9. Adjournment.

Motion: Adjourn. 11:17 am

Moved by: Tim Bergin

Seconded by: Jon Miller

Motion Passed Unanimously.

