

New Castle City  
Flood Resiliency Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
November 19, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.  
1 Municipal Boulevard, New Castle, DE

Members Present: Alice Riehl, Chair  
Tish Gallagher  
Fred Gallagher  
Gail Seitz

Absent: Mike Smith  
Timothy Moore  
Florence Smith

Also Present: City Administrator Antonina Tantillo

Ms. Riehl called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call followed and a quorum to conduct business was declared.

Ms. Riehl stated that Ms. Florence Smith had been appointed to the Flood Resiliency Committee.

### **Minutes**

A motion was made by Ms. Gallagher to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Seitz and unanimously passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Gallagher to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2024 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Riehl and unanimously passed.

### **Discussion of Contacts With Funding Sources**

- DNREC – Ms. Tantillo stated that she is working with Emily Dhringra to contact DNREC to discuss grants, including the Service Water Matching Planning Grant to check storm drains and ensure that there are no blockages and everything is flowing properly.
- FEMA – Ms. Tantillo stated that she and Ms. Dhringra are also working on contacts at FEMA, but she had no update yet.
- NOA – Ms. Gallagher opined that she did not have much hope for NOA grants due to the current political situation. She added that there is one grant that appears to be for resiliency and prevention with funding from \$100,000-\$750,000, which could help with flood mitigation. Ms. Gallagher added that in 2024 National Fish & Wildlife put out proposals for the National Coastal Resilience Fund grants for natural solutions to flooding; and approximately \$140M will be invested in 2025 projects. Ms. Tantillo will research applying for those grants.
- Corps of Engineers (Corps) – A phone meeting has been scheduled with Ms. Riehl, Souder and Seitz, Stephen Rochette, Corps Public Affairs Officer, and Ed Voigt, Corps Government Affairs Officer to discuss what is available through the Corps. Ms. Riehl added that the Corps does wait for towns to ask for help and they do flood risk

management projects. The process is very long and involved, a 25% contribution is required from the city, and all phases of the project must be approved through the Congressional offices. Ms. Seitz suggested that Senator Coons' office be contacted to see if they have a dedicated contact with the Corps. At Ms. Riehl's request, Ms. Tantillo will ask Ms. Dhringra to join the call as well.

### **Strategies Going Forward**

- Smaller Projects – Ms. Riehl suggested that the City might be able to contract with someone who could direct the FRC as to the best way to approach smaller mitigation projects. Ms. Tantillo noted that the Service Water grant that she and Ms. Dhringra are applying for would cover that type of project. She added that Townsend was awarded that grant and explained what was involved in the project as it related to storm drains.
- Sub-committee – Ms. Seitz suggested creating a sub-committee to work with Kevin Donnelly and Ms. Tantillo and Dhringra to draft a plan. Ms. Riehl was uncertain that Mr. Donnelly would be available. Ms. Tantillo suggested that if Mr. Donnelly is unavailable Chris Rogers could be part of the sub-committee. Ms. Riehl suggested focusing on the Rt. 9/Ferry Cut-Off area and The Strand.

In response to a question from Ms. Tantillo, Ms. Seitz explained the increasing issues that residents on The Strand are facing relative to flooding; noting that the river comes over the banks at least 6-10 times each year; and typically the water recedes within a couple of days. She noted that Nor'easters have caused flooding in some resident's basements at least once a year. Ms. Seitz also noted that small berms that were built by some of the residents on The Strand appear to be quite effective for those properties.

Ms. Riehl noted that the Corps has flood plain management services to address the needs of people who live in flood plains; and they have a Flood Plain Management Service Program that provides program funding to develop a scope of work and assemble the appropriate study team for the effort being requested at no cost.

Ms. Seitz noted that Senator Poore obtained funding for the Conservation District to study the issue on The Strand.

There was further discussion of "filling the gaps" between existing berms and the need for an Engineer to study that. Ms. Seitz recommended that Senator Cooke and Representative Minor-Brown be contacted.

### **Vote for New Chair**

Ms. Riehl stated that she would be resigning as Chair and suggested that a vote for a new Chair be postponed to the next meeting when more members will be in attendance.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Next Meeting**

The next Committee meeting will be scheduled in January, 2025.

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There being no further business to discuss Ms. Riehl called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Gallagher. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gallagher. The motion was unanimously passed and the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen R. Weirich  
City Stenographer