

MINUTES
Morris County-Flood Mitigation Committee (MC-FMC)
30 Schuyler Place – 2nd Floor, Morristown, New Jersey
December 16, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Louise Davis, Chair.

Members present:

Louise Davis	Tom Pepe
Joseph Pawelczyk	Andrew Crawford

Members with an excused absence:

Betty Cass-Schmidt	Gary Large
Julie Baron	

Also attending:

Christine Marion, Director, Office of Planning & Preservation
Joseph Barilla, Assistant Director, Office of Planning & Preservation
Virginia Michelin, Flood Mitigation Program Coordinator, Office of Planning & Preservation
Jason Rotter, Assistant Planner, Office of Planning & Preservation
Stephen Shaw, Freeholder Liaison

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Louise Davis announced that in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting had been provided and filed with the Town of Morristown, the Morris County Clerk, the Daily Record and the Star Ledger.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the October 21st meeting were reviewed and on a motion by Joseph Pawelczyk, seconded by Tom Pepe, the Committee approved said Minutes. The closed session minutes were reviewed and on a motion by Joseph Pawelczyk, seconded by Tom Pepe, the Committee approved said Minutes.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Virginia Michelin provided the following updates:
FEMA pFIRMS/SRP - no update from FEMA.

NJDEP PMR – The NJDEP is working with FEMA to conduct partial and detailed studies of rivers and streams throughout the county as part of their partial map revision. FEMA sent a letter to all affected municipalities on November 26, 2019 with an attached table of engineering models and a breakdown of communities affected by each individual study.

CRS Users Group – Last meeting occurred on November 12th and was immediately followed by the Morris County Office of Emergency Management’s draft risk assessment review meeting. Tetra Tech presented on their Baseline Assessment Tool (BATool) and the NJOEM gave a presentation on the benefits and obstacles of setting up a County wetland mitigation bank as part of a presentation on mitigating repetitive loss / severe repetitive loss (RL / SRL) properties. There needs to be at least 5 acres of open space acquired without funds from the NJDEP (Blue / Green Acres) to create a wetland mitigation bank. The next CRS meeting is February 18, 2020.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – The attached flyer includes a link to a survey open to all County residents. Virginia encouraged members of the Committee to complete the survey as it will provide useful public input while the County completes the 2020 update. Virginia attended an online meeting on December 12th regarding the BATool, which is being used by municipalities to complete and track projects and streamline the overall hazard mitigation planning process. Progress is being made on the HMP update, which is due for completion in August 2020.

NFIP Update / Risk Rating 2.0 – The NFIP has approved another short-term reauthorization which expires December 20, 2019. As stated at previous meetings, Congress had been working on reforms to make the NFIP more sustainable a few months ago, but progress has stalled due to other ongoing priorities at the federal level. Risk Rating 2.0 implementation has also been pushed back until October 2021, a year past its original date.

USACE Technical Assistance – Lincoln Park’s Team was awarded the US Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jackets Technical Assistance in October, and the kickoff meeting and initial site visit has taken place. Virginia provided maps of areas of interest for post-acquisition restoration work in heavily flooded neighborhoods of Lincoln Park where few homes remain. The USACE is working with Lincoln Park Borough, Rutgers, the NJDEP and Morris County to develop plans for 2 areas which may include walking trails and other passive recreation in addition to wetlands, habitat and flood storage. Virginia had a presentation scheduled with the Lincoln Park Council on December 9th which will be rescheduled due to inclement weather, at which time she will present maps of the areas of interest for post-acquisition efforts. The Committee had a chance to review these maps at this meeting. The next team meeting with the restoration team will take place in January.

- Survey – Lincoln Park advertised a survey for residents through social media, flyers, etc. regarding flood buyouts and post-acquisition efforts, as part of the restoration planning work that is being undertaken. As of December 10th, 50 people had responded, of whom 47 are residents. The results indicate an overwhelming majority of those asked are aware that flood buyouts have taken place in the Borough, but also showed roughly 15% of respondents are interested in a buyout. Additionally, about 75% stated that they are likely or very likely to take advantage of future recreation opportunities, and about 90% stated that restoration-planning efforts in Lincoln Park are important.

Grant Revision – Diversion Discussions – The potential revision of the FMP rules relating to diversion of FMP acquired properties in the County’s grant agreements was discussed. Virginia is waiting to hear back from John Napolitano in regards to draft grant language, and at this time it seems as though this will not be an issue, as the NJDEP does not allow diversions on sites acquired with Blue or Green Acres funds. Virginia will continue to reach out to John regarding this issue.

Duplication of Benefits – FEMA’s database of NFIP insurance claims is currently offline, without a known date for when the database or data itself will be available again. The information has been used since the formation of the Flood Mitigation Program (FMP) to verify that homeowners spent

federal assistance money appropriately by checking receipts for repairs etc. against the claim amounts listed in the database (DOB process). Until the data is available, Virginia will rely on information provided by the homeowner for new homes coming into the program. Virginia reached out to Assistant County Administrator Deena Leary to discuss the County Agriculture Development Board's waiver program, and requested the Committee's input as to whether the FMP should include a similar policy for the DOB process as it's been 8 years since the last major flooding event. After some discussion, the Committee determined that they are not in favor of a waiver for the FMP, and that homeowners should continue to sign the Homeowner Affidavit stating that they spent federal assistance money properly on repairs, contractors, etc. DOB process will continue as is.

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:51 p.m. on a motion by Tom Pepe, seconded by Joseph Pawelczyk, the FMC closed the open portion of the meeting pursuant to P.L. 1975 Ch. 231, the Open Public Meetings Act, and per the Committee's standard resolution language, voted to conduct a closed session wherein the subject of real property acquisition shall be discussed.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

At 6:03 p.m. on a motion by Joseph Pawelczyk, seconded by Tom Pepe, the FMC returned to open session by unanimous vote.

The following actions were taken, as a result of Closed Session deliberations:

- **Resolution 2019-07 – Lincoln Park – South-2 Project Area – 15 Walnut Street – Final Approval** – CORE acquisition funding in the amount of \$30,000 to cover Morris County's 75% cost-share and a recommendation that the corresponding Grant Agreement with Lincoln Park be executed. The Committee granted Final Approval by unanimous roll call vote.
- **Resolution 2019-08 – Lincoln Park – South-6 Project Area – 65 Lincoln Boulevard – Final Approval** – CORE acquisition funding in the amount of \$60,000 to cover Morris County's 75% cost-share and a recommendation that the corresponding Grant Agreement with Lincoln Park be executed. The Committee granted Final Approval by unanimous roll call vote.
- **Resolution 2019-09 – Lincoln Park – Central-4 Project Area – 46 Forest Ave – Final Approval** – CORE acquisition funding in the amount of \$37,500 to cover Morris County's 75% cost-share and a recommendation that the corresponding Grant Agreement with Lincoln Park be executed. The Committee granted Final Approval by unanimous roll call vote.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no new correspondence to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Freeholder Shaw thanked the volunteers and staff present for all of their efforts and was appreciative of all the time and effort that is spent by the volunteers on the various committees and boards

throughout the county. Christine Marion indicated that Freeholder Shaw will be the next Deputy Freeholder Director in January.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Joseph Pawelczyk, seconded by Tom Pepe, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 27th, 2020 in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of the Schuyler Building, located at 30 Schuyler Place, Schuyler Annex Building, in Morristown, New Jersey.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Michelin, CFM