

**MINUTES**  
**Morris County-Flood Mitigation Committee (MC-FMC)**  
**Via WebEx - Events**  
**September 20, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Louise Davis, Chair.

Members present:

Louise Davis*	Julie Baron
Betty Cass-Schmidt	Joseph Pawelczyk

\*Members with asterisk called into the meeting

Members with an excused absence :

Gary Large	Andrew Crawford
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Also attending:

Virginia Michelin, Flood Mitigation Program Coordinator, Office of Planning & Preservation  
Jason Rotter, Assistant Planner, Office of Planning & Preservation  
John Napolitano Esq., Legal Counsel  
Stephen Shaw, Commissioner Director

**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.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Replacement Member** – Joseph Barilla, informed Virginia that the Board of County Commissioners will be looking to appoint a new Flood Mitigation Committee member in January 2022. Tom Pepe passed away earlier this year, his term was scheduled to expire at the end of 2021. Tom was the Vice Chair of the Flood Mitigation Committee.
- **Election of Vice Chair** – On a motion by Julie Baron, seconded by Joseph Pawelczyk, the Committee elected Betty Cass-Schmidt to be the FMC Vice Chair by a unanimous verbal vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Louise Davis read the Virtual Meeting Statement related to members of the public attending the meeting and/or making comments. There were no members of the public present.

Commissioner Director Stephen Shaw thanked the Committee for their efforts and acknowledged the late Tom Pepe's contributions to the Committee. Tom will be missed and remembered for his efforts to benefit the residents of Morris County.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the March 15, 2021, meeting were reviewed and on a motion by Betty Cass-Schmidt, which was seconded by Julie Baron, the Committee approved said Minutes. The closed session minutes

were reviewed and on a motion by Joseph Pawelczyk, which was seconded by Betty Cass-Schmidt, the Committee approved said Minutes.

## PROGRAM UPDATE

Virginia Michelin provided the following updates:

- **FEMA Maps**
  - **pFIRMs** - FEMA and NJDEP held a public meeting in May regarding the pFIRMs that came out in 2017. FEMA stated that the tentative date for Morris County communities to receive a Letter of Final Determination (LFD) was August of this year. The date was pushed back to September and subsequently to December 15, 2021. pFIRMs will become effective for all 36 communities six (6) months after municipalities receive the LFD. Virginia will continue coordinating with NJDEP, post updates on the County website and provide the updates to the Flood Mitigation Committee.
  - **SRPs** – Lincoln Park, Pequannock, and Montville are still meeting with FEMA on a regular basis. No tentative date is available at this time for preliminary maps which will be adopted in a separate process.
  - **NJDEP PMR** – The NJDEP is working on hydrologic / hydraulic studies as part of ongoing physical map revisions for portions of the County, there is no schedule for preliminary maps at this time. Virginia will update the website and forward information to the Committee regarding these efforts as it is received.
  
- **NFIP Update** – The NFIP is tentatively scheduled to expire 9/30/21. Virginia discussed factors impacting the Program, including a potential funding lapse if the federal government fails to pass the budget for fiscal year 2022 by the end of this month. It is likely that the NFIP will receive a short-term reauthorization which may also be retroactive to account for a possible government shutdown. Officials have indicated that there will be efforts to pass NFIP reforms early next year.
  - **Risk Rating 2.0 (RR 2.0)** – New NFIP rates will be released next month. Premiums have been increasing for policies in and out of the SFHA flood zones. Training is ongoing to aid in understanding the complexities of the new rating system. Preferred Risk Policies (pre-FIRM grandfathered policies and properties in low-risk zones) will be phased out, with premiums gradually increasing over ~5-7 years to actuarial rates. CRS discounts will apply to full-rate policies in participating communities regardless of flood zones. Betty asked if coverage would change. Virginia indicated, coverage provided by the NFIP is not anticipated to change under RR 2.0.
  
- **Tropical Storm Ida**
  - Virginia recently sent an email to the Committee with an emergency issue of the NJDEP's Floodplain Communicator containing information and resources for affected communities. Virginia discussed the impacts of the storm, which were severe for Somerset and Middlesex Counties. Flooding did not reach the scale of Hurricane Irene in Morris County. Basement flooding and road closures were the main issues due to Tropical Storm Ida.
  - Louise Davis added that she and Virginia have been corresponding about federal funds available for individual and community assistance related to streambank erosion and debris removal to return places to pre-storm conditions. Louise discussed her role as the President of the NJ Association of Conservation Districts, and stated that she was informed by the NRCS State Conservationist that reimbursements are available at 75%, and may be as high as 90%. The Morris County Soil Conservation District (MCSCD) can assist with the submission of claims and required documentation.
  - Commissioner Director Stephen Shaw discussed the Disaster Recovery Center which opened today, September 20 on Jim Fear Drive in Morris Plains. A press release included

information for County residents. Louise indicated the MCSCD will let communities know about it as well.

- **NJAFM Conference - October 26-28** – In-person at the Hard Rock Hotel in Atlantic City. Virginia plans to attend, and she noted that there are interesting presentations scheduled.
- **CRS Community Recertifications** – Per the 2021 Addendum to the CRS Coordinator’s Manual elevation certificates now need to be reviewed annually by ISO for all communities. Recertifications are ongoing for scheduled communities.
- **BRIC Application Period - Opens September 30** –. NJ municipalities will submit applications to NJOEM by November 15 and be sub-applicants to NJOEM for this FEMA grant program.. NJOEM will submit its application to FEMA in January 2022.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

At 5:49pm, on a motion by Julie Baron, 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 5:56pm, on a motion by Julie Baron, seconded by Joseph Pawelczyk, the FMC returned to open session by unanimous vote.

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

- **Resolution 2021-05 – Lincoln Park – South-8 Project Area – 120 Riveredge Rd – Final Approval** – CORE acquisition funding in the amount of \$186,682.10 to cover Morris County’s 75% cost-share and a recommendation that the corresponding Grant Agreement with Lincoln Park be executed. On a motion by Joseph Pawelczyk, seconded by Julie Baron, the Committee granted Final Approval by unanimous roll call vote.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Joseph Pawelczyk, seconded by Julie Baron, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 5:58pm.

### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 18, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via WebEx.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Michelin, CFM, AICP, PP