

MINUTES
Morris County-Flood Mitigation Committee (MC-FMC)
30 Schuyler Place – 2nd Floor, Morristown, New Jersey
January 27, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Virginia Michelin, Program Coordinator.

Members present:

Julie Baron	Thomas Pepe
Andrew Crawford	Louise Davis
Betty Cass-Schmidt	

Members with an excused absence

Gary Large	Joseph Pawelczyk
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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

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Virginia Michelin 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.

BOARD ORGANIZATION

- **Reappointed Members:** Virginia Michelin thanked Gary Large, Julie Baron and Andrew Crawford for volunteering to serve for another term on the Flood Mitigation Committee. All three were reappointed by the Freeholder Board for another term.
- **Election of Officers:** On a motion by Julie Baron, seconded by Tom Pepe, the committee elected Louise Davis to be the FMC Chair by a unanimous verbal vote. Chair Davis assumed control of the meeting. On a motion by Julie Baron, seconded by Betty Cass-Schmidt, the committee elected Thomas Pepe to be the FMC Vice-Chair by a unanimous verbal vote.
- **Member Roster [handout, inside binder pocket]:** FMC members were provided with a roster of current members and Freeholder liaisons.
- **2020 Meeting Dates [handout, inside binder pocket]:** Meetings will be held on the 3rd Monday of the month, at 5:30 pm in the 2nd Floor Conference room of the Schuyler building, located at 30 Schuyler Place, Schuyler Annex Building, in Morristown, New Jersey. There are four exceptions: meetings will be held on the 4th Monday of the months of February 2020 and January 2021; The August & December 2020 meetings will be held the 2nd Monday of the month. The meeting schedule is as follows:

February 24, 2020

March 16, 2020

April 20, 2020

May 18, 2020
August 10, 2020
November 16, 2020

June 15, 2020
September 21, 2020
December 14, 2020

July 20, 2020
October 19, 2020
January 25, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the December 16, 2019 meeting were reviewed and on a motion by Tom Pepe, which was seconded by Andrew Crawford, the Committee approved said Minutes. The closed session minutes were reviewed and on a motion by Tom Pepe, which was seconded by Andrew Crawford, the Committee approved said Minutes. Betty Cass-Schmidt abstained from voting for both the open and closed minutes.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Virginia Michelin provided the following updates:

- Press Release – An article (<https://morriscountynj.gov/2020/01/freeholders-approve-grants-to-buy-flood-prone-lincoln-park-properties/>) on the County's website posted January 6th has generated new interest in the Program. Virginia has received positive feedback and calls from interested homeowners, but some are located in towns that are not participating in buyouts. Tom Pepe asked if all calls were positive, Virginia Michelin responded they were.
- FEMA pFIRMS / SRP – FEMA has published information online (<https://floodsrp.org/panels/>) about Scientific Resolution Panels (SRP) nationwide, including decision dates, panel members, etc. At this time, no panel members are listed for either appeal (Pequannock decided to submit their appeal separately from Lincoln Park and Montville). Once the towns receive a list of technical experts provided by the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS), the municipalities and FEMA will select professionals to form the two SRPs. When the SRPs are formed, there is a 90-day window for them to render their decisions. According to the information available online, the majority of SRP's conclusions have rejected appeals and upheld FEMA's determinations. Virginia stated that at this time, she is estimating the preliminary FIRMS to be adopted sometime in 2021.
- NJDEP PMR – There is no update on the NJDEP Partial Map Revision at this time.
- CRS Users Group – The first quarterly meeting of the year will take place on February 18th. Virginia provided the Committee with copies of the draft agenda.
- Hazard Mitigation Plan for Morris County – The public participation survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/morrishmp2020>) is still open to County residents and a consultant is meeting with municipalities. No public meetings are scheduled at this time.
- NFIP Update / Risk Rating 2.0 – No reforms, but the Program has been reauthorized through to 9/30/2020. Hopefully there will be policy changes in order to make the NFIP more

sustainable within the next year. Risk Rating 2.0 has been pushed back a year until 10/1/21, and will include commercial and multifamily housing properties in addition to single-family houses. The rates will be implemented at one time rather than the original phased approach. Additionally, an attached article (<https://www.eenews.net/stories/1061707701>) discusses an ongoing issue of private flood insurance companies ‘cherry picking’ lower risk homes, leaving the NFIP with more vulnerable properties, which could become a more severe issue in the future. An attached chart of the top 5 Hazard Mitigation Assistance project types by funding in 2019, published in FEMA’s weekly Mitigation Minute email. Flood control and property acquisitions were the first and second highest categories of projects for the year, clearly indicating that flooding is an ongoing major national hazard.

- USACE Technical Assistance – The post-acquisition restoration team (USACE, Lincoln Park Borough, Rutgers, the NJDEP and Morris County) was set to present maps of the two areas of interest for restoration work in the Borough along with related data to Lincoln Park Council in December, the county did not attend due to the weather. The presentation will now take place next Monday, February 3rd. Hopefully, the USACE can start doing fieldwork in early spring.
- Grant Revision – diversion discussions – Virginia sent the most recent FMP grant language to John Napolitano and is waiting for a response. Mr. Napolitano also answered land ownership questions related to wetland mitigation banking, as the state is interested in creating a bank. He indicated that lands owned by the Municipality, County or State can sell mitigation banking credits while retaining ownership of the land, and that properties acquired through the FMP would be eligible for mitigation banking if a bank were set up. Virginia will keep following up with John Napolitano on the grant language.
- Flood Mitigation Program Signs – Virginia reached out to John Napolitano, and he stated that the County should make the signs and provide them to the towns. The Morris County Park Commission makes their own signs. Christine is going to reach out to the Park Commission to discuss potential Flood Mitigation Program signage and provide the Committee with updates.

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:43pm, on a motion by Betty Cass-Schmidt, seconded by Julie Baron, 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 Betty Cass-Schmidt, the FMC returned to open session by unanimous vote.

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

- **Resolution 2020-01 – Lincoln Park – South-5 Project Area – 12 Dubrow Street – Final Approval** – CORE acquisition funding in the amount of \$135,000 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 Betty Cass-Schmidt, seconded by Tom Pepe, the Committee granted Final Approval by unanimous roll call vote.

- **Funds Extension Request – Lincoln Park – Central-3 – 7 properties (6 houses remaining, 1 closed)** – Request to extend the expiration date for the project area by 6 months from March 28, 2020 to September 28, 2020. On a motion by Tom Pepe, seconded by Julie Baron, the Committee unanimously granted the extension. This is the second of two possible funds extensions for this project area.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no new correspondence.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Tom Pepe, seconded by Betty Cass-Schmidt, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 24, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. 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