

Memorandum from the Flood Mitigation Strategy Committee

To: Board of Selectmen
Date: May 14, 2010
From: Craig J. Flaherty, P.E., Chair
Re: Recommendations

The recommendations are listed in no particular order. No assumption of priority level should be made by the order listed.

1. Hire a consultant to prepare a Letter of Map Revision or Letter of Map Amendment to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the Stony Brook Watershed. This would incorporate information from the recently completed Milone& MacBroom report. Estimated Cost: \$20,000.
2. Continue to incentivize property owners to bring structures into compliance with National Flood Insurance Program standards.
 - a. Staff assistance with completing paperwork and applications to NFIP for grants.
 - b. Waive land use and building permit fees for NFIP grant eligible properties.
3. Support the Town purchase of properties within the floodplain through the NFIP grant purchase program.
 - a. Staff assistance with completing paperwork and applications to FEMA for grants.
 - b. Provide grants of up to 25% for properties eligible for 75% FEMA grants.
4. Prioritize the purchase of open space within floodplains.
 - a. To the extent needed, amend the 2006 Town Plan of Conservation and Development to this end.
 - b. Develop an Open Space Priority List with specific prioritization criteria and/or noted properties.
 - c. Consider developing a revenue stream to use in efforts to acquire prioritized properties. For example: The Planning & Zoning Commission could revise the Subdivision Regulations to allow for a fee-in-lieu of the required open space set aside for both standard and open space subdivisions.

5. Maintain funding for development of the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS). This multi-department work is now funded via a consulting line item within the Planning & Zoning Department budget.
 - a. Incorporate the recent aerials and topography.
 - b. Orient property boundaries to best-fit the underlying data.
 - c. Update and supplement storm drain information (catch basins, manholes, pipes, culverts, swales, ditches, easements, bridges, etc.).

6. Allocate adequate additional staff, or annually contract with a consultant, to fulfill multiple roles related to floodplain management and stormwater runoff, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Standardize Stormwater Management Reviews supporting the Building Permit and Land-Use Processes. Potential funding source for additional cost: adjust building permit fees.
 - i. Review of all building permit applications and land-use applications (P&Z, EPC, & ZBA) for compliance with town and state regulations, requirements, and recommendations.
 - ii. On-site inspection and observation of privately and publically constructed stormwater management systems.
 - iii. Post construction review of private and public drainage maintenance agreements to assure compliance.
 - b. Act as administrative staff supporting the functions of the Flood & Erosion Control Board (see recommendation #12).
 - c. Assist with the fulfillment of these recommendations.
 - d. Assist with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Phase II compliance.
 - e. Assist with the advancement of GIS mapping of the town's stormwater management system.

7. Maintain watercourse channels deemed critical to town interests where the failure or erosion of the channel banks would have negative impacts on the movement of flood waters and threaten the stability of occupied structures or roadway crossings.
 - a. Post Road to Renshaw along the Stony Brook: 40% of the town drains through this section, it floods Renshaw Road, the walls are failing, and continued failure and erosion could conceivably threaten occupied structures and the Renshaw bridge abutments.
 - i. Secure an accurate, field-based, property and topographic survey to A2/T2 accuracy classes.
 - ii. Design a solution that provides incremental enlargements/improvements to the channel during this process by widening it and/or chamfering its banks.
 - iii. Establish a standard design detail to follow when segments of the channel walls require repair.

8. Pursue fixes to the flooding that occurs in the Kelsey Street neighborhood. This is currently being evaluated by Milone & MacBroom as a part of the Noroton River Watershed Study.
9. Engage the Department of Transportation to recognize flooding caused by the presence of the railroad tracks. Seek solutions and resolution of same. Apply pressure on multiple fronts including local, state, federal, executive, legislative, and/or judicial to secure necessary fixes. This includes Kelsey Street, Heights Road, Stony Brook, Goodwives River, Leroy Avenue, The Post Road, and Raymond Street. Review with Town Counsel any standing the Town may have in such matters.
10. Continue efforts to involve and educate the public on the importance of flood control and proper watershed management.
 - a. Determine best methods: email, mail, internet, Channel 79, current forms of communication, social media, town-sponsored seminars, watershed activity days, community groups, newspapers, press releases, etc.
 - b. Look for community groups to partner with the Town's efforts to accomplish this task.
 - c. As a part of public reach-out, pursue voluntary removal of watercourse obstructions.
11. Install a rain gauge near, and stream gauge in, the Goodwives River to collect data to help level the Goodwives River Watershed Study. Estimated Cost: \$10,000
12. Separate the Flood and Erosion Control Board from the Environmental Protection Commission.