

Coastal Resiliency Advisory Committee
Tuesday, April 25, 2023
Via Zoom

*Meetings are audio- and video-recorded

Members present: Mary Longacre, Gary Beller, Sarah Bois, Carl Borchert, Peter Brace, Matt Fee, Rachael Freeman, Jen Karberg, Christy Kickham (arrived at 10:10am)

Members Absent: Ian Golding, Joanna Roche

Staff present: Vincent Murphy, Leah Hill

Others: Jesse Bell, D. Anne Atherton, Rick Atherton, Jason Grazaidei, Susan Campese

Recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTcFkukxmME>

1. Call to Order

10:00 a.m.

2. Meeting announcements

Script for remotely conducting Open Meetings, read by the Chair

The meeting is being audio / visually recorded

3. Updates and Announcements

- The Nantucket Historical Association presented “Food for Thought: A Conversation on Coastal Resilience with Rachael Freeman and Claire Martin” on April 20th.

- Training sessions for the Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model (MC_FRM) are being offered by CZM, contact Julia Knisel, julia.knisel@mass.gov (617) 626-1191 for details.

Recordings of the sessions will be made available on their YouTube channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/user/masseea>

There are three sessions: • Level 1: Basic Products, Tuesday, April 11, 1:00-3:00 pm • Level 2: Products & Applications, Thursday, May 4 9:00-11:00 am • Level 3: Technical Usage and design guidance, Thursday, May 11, 9:00-11:00 am

4. Presentation by Rachel Freeman from the Nantucket Islands Land Bank on 2023 Annual Town Meeting Article 102 “Real Estate Acquisition: 31 Easy Street” and Article 103 “Real Estate Conveyance: 31 Easy Street” Presentation attached to the end of minutes.

Ms. Freeman began by sharing a presentation pertaining to Articles 102 and 103 that will be voted upon at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting on May 6th. The presentation began by depicting flooding on Easy Street and highlighting impacts to the property at 31 Easy Street. Ms. Freeman continued by describing the predicted flood elevations and frequencies in the area through 2070. She emphasized that this area is a critical component to the Town and the

Steamship Authority's coastal resiliency planning as demonstrated by the predicted flooding. Her presentation contained images developed by Michael Van Valkenberg Architects during the Land Bank's Easy Street Park design process. These images show an expansion of the current park design into the property at 31 Easy Street and a potential new location for the Steamship Authority terminal. Lastly, she briefly reviewed the state of the purchase negotiations and why the concept of eminent domain was included in the article. Ms. Bell added that the Coastal Resiliency Plan clearly states the Steamship Authority is the most important lifeline for the island and also one of the most at risk.

Ms. Bois asked for details regarding discussions with the current landowner. Ms. Bell responded that negotiations never truly started because when provided an offer, the owner sent information on enhancement value for abutters. The Land Bank, Town and Steamship Authority requested to commence negotiations and the owner asked that everyone involved sign a non-disclosure agreement, which public entities are not legally allowed to do. Ms. Bois followed up by stating that she felt this could be seen as precedent for taking property by eminent domain for coastal resiliency purposes and so it was important for people to know that the owner was provided with a fair offer. She also asked what would happen if the articles were approved at Town Meeting. Ms. Bell said that the taking is still a tool of last resort and the owner would be paid fair market value. However, she added that she understands how takings can be a difficult issue.

Ms. Freeman asked whether she could get feedback from the Committee on the concepts of retreat and relocation. She asked Committee members if they could share what they would consider a justified reason for retreat and relocation. Ms. Longacre requested feedback from the Committee. Mr. Beller asked whether there was a proposed offer price within the warrant article? Ms. Longacre requested that Ms. Hill put Article 102 on the screen. Mr. Beller noted that the value of this property should be low as it is going to be underwater and this is a perfect example of where eminent domain should be used because of the importance of this site for Town and Steamship Authority planning. Mr. Brace asked whether the location shown for the Steamship Authority Terminal was based on discussions with the Steamship and whether Mr. Arno did have a purchase price in mind and the Land Bank felt the value was lower? Ms. Longacre stated that the Steamship will be ready to commence planning within 5-6 years and will be completed within 10 years. However, the location of the terminal has not been identified as the planning process hasn't begun. Mr. Brace followed up seeking more information about the offer price of the property and the Owner's unwillingness to sell. Ms. Bell noted that the Owner may want to begin negotiations as he did go as far as to ask the other parties to sign a non-disclosure agreement and she continued by qualifying that the design plans depicting a relocated Steamship Authority terminal were simply ideas and the location of the terminal was in no way finalized.

Ms. Karberg responded to Ms. Freeman's question by noting that this may not be a retreat location but an adaptation location. She continued to explain that because we need the Steamship Authority, this is an adaptation and Town ownership of this property may foster the adaptation process. Ms. Karberg asked whether examining this site in the same way the Land Bank and Woods Hole Group modelled Washington Street may be worthwhile as it would further our understanding of what adaptation could look like, how effective it would be and where this

property fits into the bigger picture strategy for the area. Ms. Longacre brought up that elevation of the land and flooding is important to consider in the adaptation strategy because buildings may need to be on piers.

Ms. Bois added that some aspects of this discussion are very understandable but it may be worthwhile to establish what triggers would result in an eminent domain taking. She was wondering why this needed to happen now versus in subsequent years. Mr. Borchert asked whether the Steamship had an interest in acquiring this building. Ms. Bell responded by explaining current ownership in the area and that, if this property were acquired by multiple entities, each entity would pay their proportional amount of the purchase price based on land area. She also added that the planning and permitting of this property could take up to 5-10 years and that needs to be factored in when we discuss why now.

Mr. Fee stated that this is one of the last remaining parcels that is needed to allow the Steamship to plan accordingly. He added that he doesn't see this as a retreat situation but a protection effort and that he feels Mr. Arno would be better off to sell now as his property value is likely to drop moving forward. Ms. Longacre noted that construction costs are also likely to increase overtime even if the property value drops. Ms. Bell said that if Mr. Arno chooses not to sell and litigation ensues, that could further delay planning. In addition, she thinks that there is always a possibility that a private buyer could purchase this property, which would also cause further delays. Ms. Longacre thanked Ms. Bell and Ms. Freeman for their presentation to the Committee.

5. Discuss potential site visit to Codfish Park and Sconset Bluff to view existing conditions, which would be guided by Natural Resources Director Jeff Carlson.

- What information are we interested in learning?
- Logistics for transportation
- Open Meeting Law requirements
- Recording by cell phone and drone footage

Ms. Longacre opened the discussion of a potential site visit to Codfish Park by asking whether Committee members agreed this was a good idea. Ms. Bois stated that a site visit was a great idea but wanted to understand the goals of the visit to make the best use of everyone's time. Mr. Borchard agreed that he would be very interested in a site visit as well. Ms. Longacre stated that this idea grew out of a request from Ms. Roche that everyone have a common understanding of the history and current state of the Sconset Bluff project. Mr. Brace asked whether we would visit other sites throughout the island that are important as well. Ms. Longacre noted that this site visit could be a template for other visits. Ms. Karberg added that she would be interested in seeing other locations on island that are prioritized by the Committee or prioritized for potential retreat and relocation planning. Ms. Longacre briefed the Committee on the rules pertaining to open meetings versus site visits. Mr. Murphy explained that this was meant to be an informative site visit and discussion was not permitted. He added that he liked the idea of looking at the East end of the island and not only Codfish Park and that perhaps a future visit could be to Madaket to look at issues on the West End. Ms. Longacre said the site visit would start at Codfish Park,

travel to the bluff walk, descend to the beach and walk north on the beach while viewing the geotubes. She added that starting site visits at this location was important because the CRAC has been asked to provide an opinion on the issues along the 'Sconset Bluff. Ms. Longacre and the Committee agreed to hold the site visit during the regular meeting time on May 9th. Mr. Brace offered his van for transportation and Ms. Longacre noted that Leah Hill will send out more information regarding logistics. Committee members were encouraged to reach out to Ms. Hill with any questions they would like addressed at the site visit.

6. Discussion of recordings of joint Select Board & ConCom workshop meetings on Sconset Bluff erosion protection and best next steps

- March 21 meeting recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4df5f52Oe7s>
- April 11 meeting recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EogzDhvXigs>
- A report will be produced by the facilitators and made available at some point

Ms. Longacre asked for thoughts or comments on the recordings of the joint Select Board & Conservation Commission workshops on 'Sconset Bluff. Mr. Beller stated his concern over there being no additional funding being offered by the homeowners that live on the 'Sconset Bluff. He continued by stating that the funding issues are substantial and he cannot imagine there being a resolution. Mr. Brace offered that there is money for the removal of the geotubes but there is not money for continuing the project. Ms. Longacre requested that the Committee to provide their thoughts about next best steps for the entire Sconset Bluff area including Baxter Road. Mr. Brace said that he feels the next best step is relocating the road and that retreat is the best option in the area that will then be followed by removal of the geotubes. Mr. Fee said that the people who benefit the most from the situation should fund the project. He continued by saying that the Town needs to figure out what the next best steps are, define triggers, determine how it will be paid for, work with neighbors and then move forward. He acknowledged that it can be challenging when neighbors are not on board with a plan and gave the example of moving the Sheep Pond Road. He emphasized that he doesn't think the 'Sconset Bluff project is hopeless and that there are still opportunities to move forward and have this be an example project. He sees it as an important first step for the Town to negotiate with the neighborhoods and get the necessary agreements (hold-harmless etc.) to reduce the liability and risk for the Town. He also stated that a small non-profit is insufficient to be funding and managing projects like these and that the Town needs to be the group that is overseeing these projects. Mr. Beller acknowledged that there are two issues: the geotubes and Baxter Road. He stated that there is money for removal of the geotubes but not for maintenance and that it is challenging on Nantucket to get people to agree. In reference to the move of Baxter Road, Mr. Beller gave an example of the airport providing three options for employee housing to the neighbors and when nobody could agree, the airport staff chose what they felt was the best option and moved forward. Mr. Beller stated that Arcadis provided three options for the move of Baxter Road and because the neighbors can't agree, the Town should select one and move forward. Mr. Fee added that the Town will likely choose an option for moving Baxter Road and move forward. However, it is important to remember that Arcadis has said removal of the geotubes will be catastrophic in the short term. He followed up by stating

that he is seeing more agreement in the meetings between the Conservation Commission and the Select Board on the fact that this is a challenging issue and that they are getting closer to finding a path forward.

7. Public Comment

Ms. Atherton joined for public comment and stated that the CRAC meetings are becoming increasingly informative, interesting, and relevant. She also requested that the site visit to ‘Sconset include the area beyond the lighthouse and up to the public access at the Beach Club because there has been increased erosion in this area and it is where the machinery accesses the beach for maintenance. Ms. Atherton continue by acknowledging that the Nantucket Coastal Conservancy thinks there is an island wide policy issue in that public property, the beach below the bluff, is being used for the benefit of private real estate in ‘Sconset. If the property below the bluff was owned by the private homeowners to the high-water line, they feel there would not be the issues there are now.

8. Approval of Minutes from Feb 14th, March 14th, and March 28th.

February 14th minutes were approved with a motion by Mr. Fee and Mr. Beller second. Minutes for March 14th are not ready and minutes for March 28th were just recently received and will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

9. New business, Committee & Natural Resources Dept. reports from Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board, Select Board, Advisory Committee of Non-Voting Taxpayers, and other committee members.

- Date announced for the 2023 Islands Coastal Conference presented by Coastal Zone Management and Woods Hole Sea Grant is June 12, 2023

Ms. Hill provided details on this free, in-person conference as she is involved in organizing it. <https://seagrant.whoi.edu/regional-topics/storms-erosion-flooding/mvncc/2023-ncc/>

Lina Loring Nature Foundation and the Natural Resources Department went out to the area by first bridge, planted grass, and added straw waddles to prevent additional stormwater runoff into Long Pond.

Mr. Murphy asked that CRAC submit letters of support for the MVP and CZM grants. The MVP grant is for the climate action plan and the CZM grant is for planning associated with the downtown flood barrier. The Committee voted and approved that Ms. Longacre be authorized to write these letters.

Mr. Beller requested that he be allowed to obtain a copy of the CRAC quarterly report to the Select Board to share with the Advisory Committee of Non-Voting Tax Members. Ms. Hill did not see any problems with this and will share the report with Mr. Beller.

10. Discussion of upcoming meeting dates and topics: Next Meeting date is May 9, 2023

11. Motion to adjourn at 11:22am

31 Easy Street



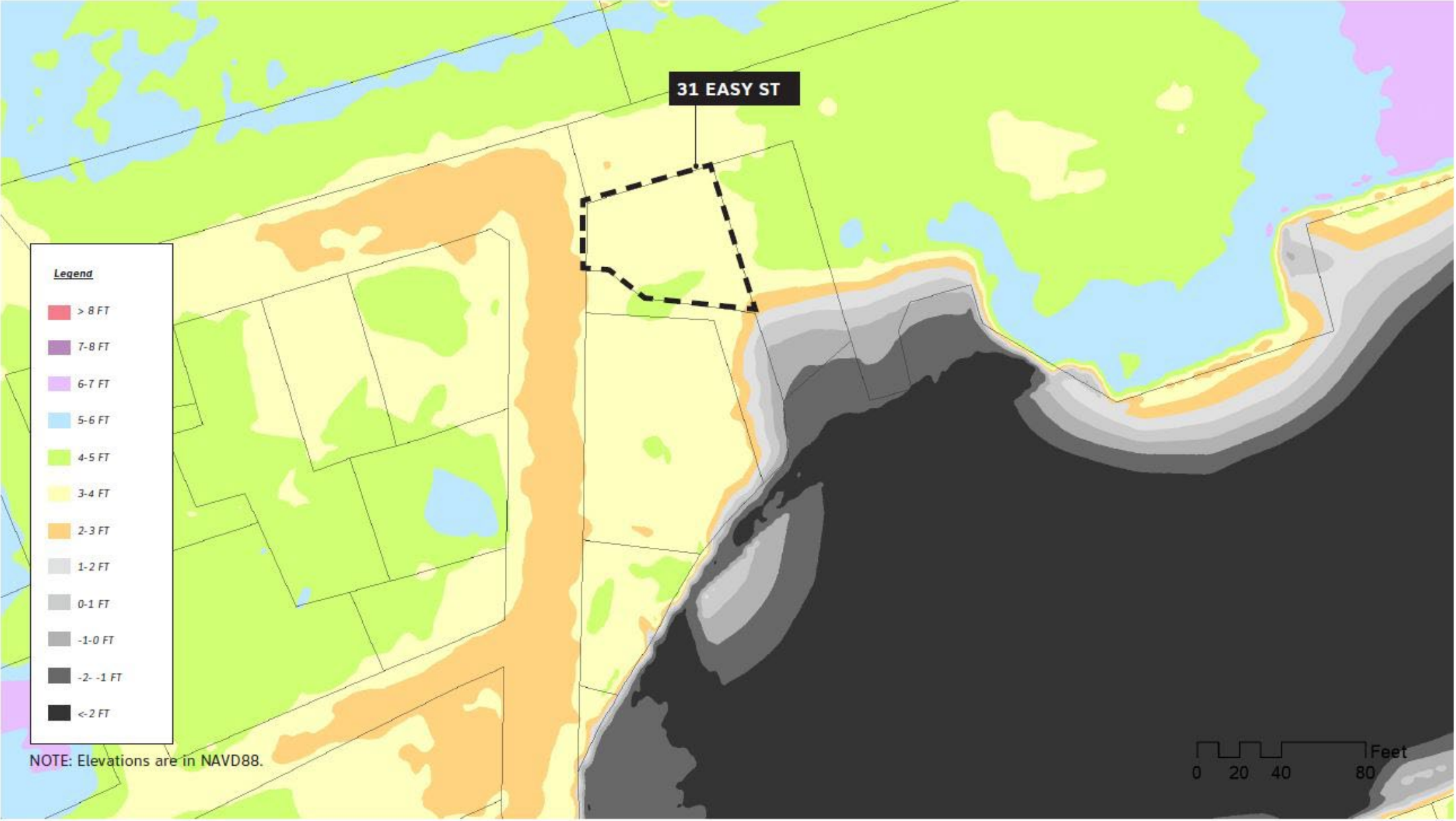
Nantucket Annual Town Meeting 2023
Articles 102 & 103

PRESENT AND PROJECTED TIDAL BENCHMARKS

TIDAL BENCHMARK	PRESENT DAY (FT, NAVD88)	2030 (FT, NAVD88)	2050 (FT, NAVD88)	2070 (FT, NAVD88)
Mean Low Water	-1.4	-0.4	0.9	2.6
Mean Tide Level	0.1	1.2	2.5	4.3
Mean High Water	1.6	2.9	4.2	6.0
Mean Higher High Water	1.9	3.2	4.5	6.3
Mean High Water Springs*	2.3	3.6	4.9	6.7
Highest Annual Tide	2.8	4.1	5.4	7.2
Annual Storm Level	3.5	4.8	6.0	7.8

* This would result in flooding occurring for a few high tides every 2 weeks on average. These are estimated values for some of these benchmarks as we don't have a full tidal epoch to calculate these items. This is especially true for MHWS.

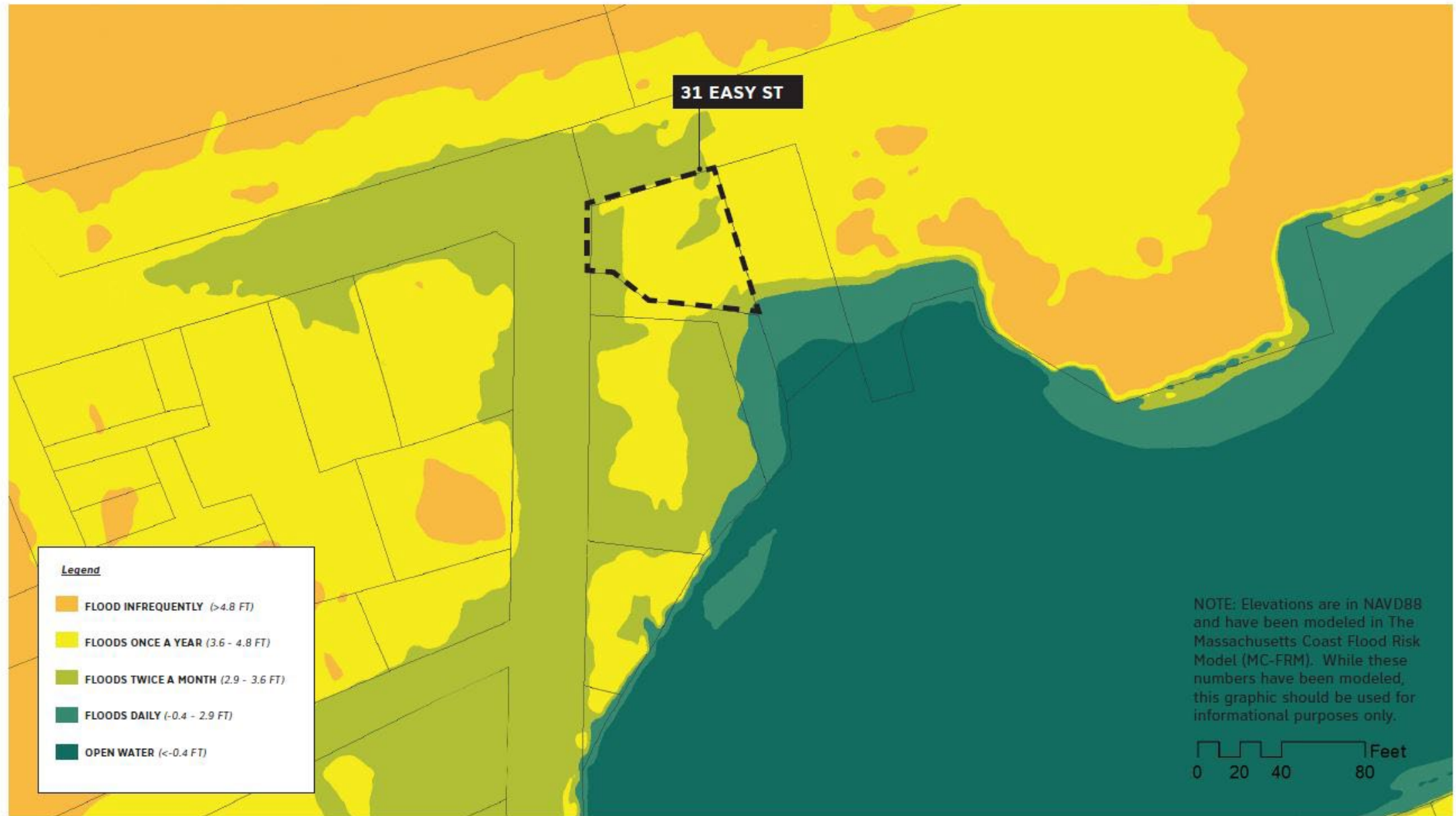
PRESENT ELEVATIONS: NAVD88



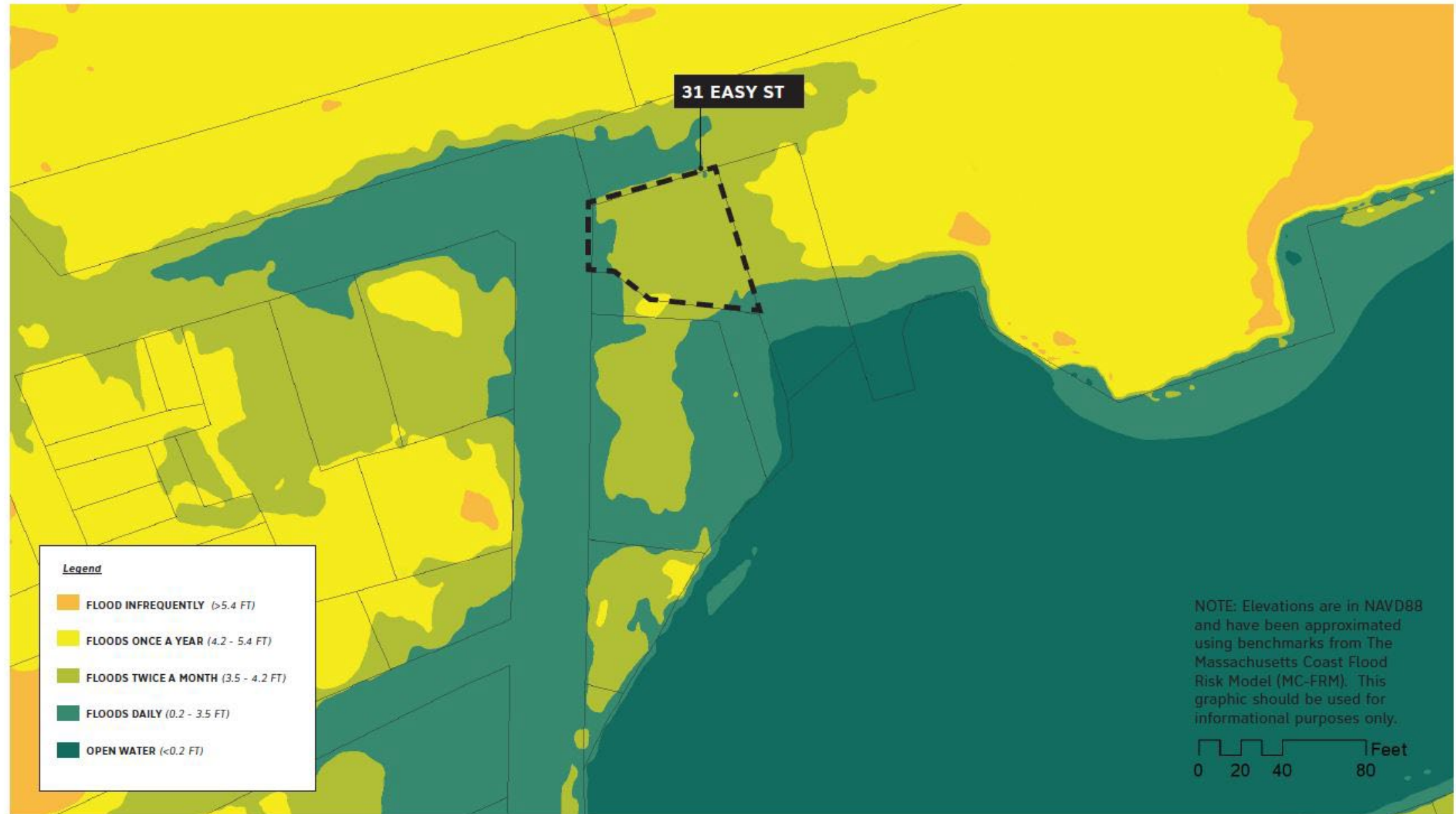
PRESENT TIDAL BENCHMARKS



2030 TIDAL BENCHMARKS



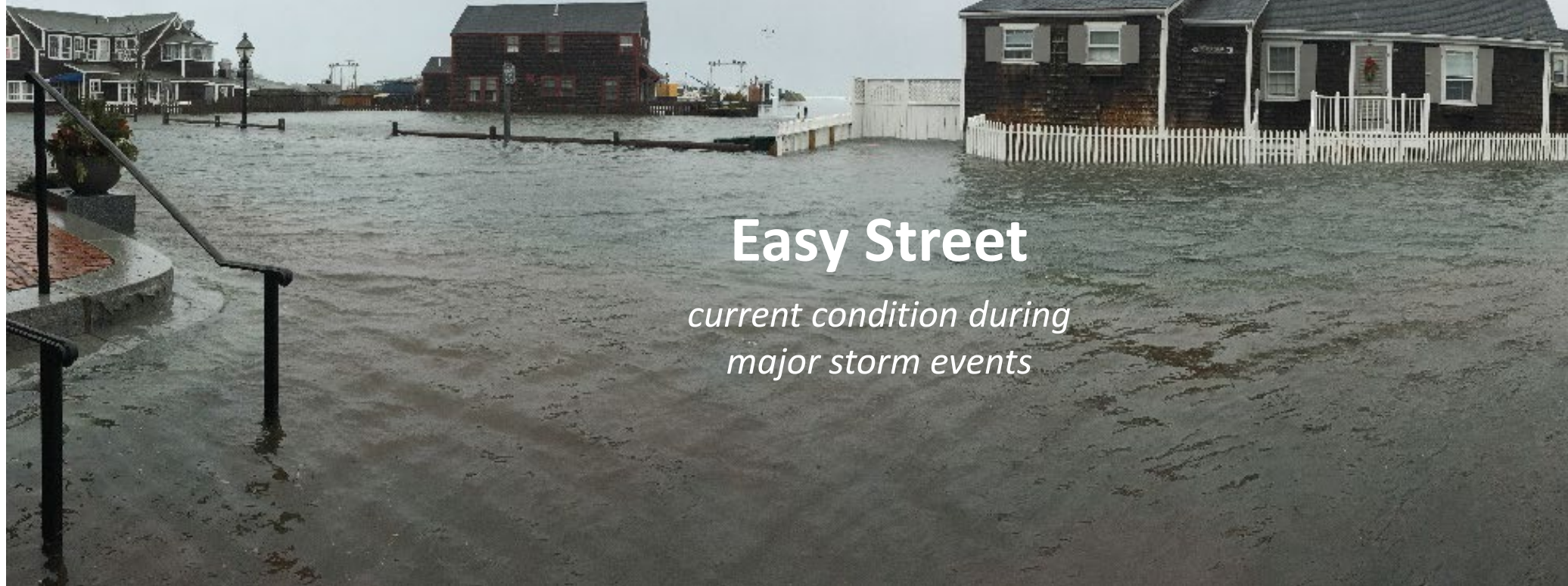
2040 TIDAL BENCHMARKS



2050 TIDAL BENCHMARKS



31 Easy Street



Easy Street

*current condition during
major storm events*

Lower Broad St during a major storm event



31 EASY STREET



EASY STREET PARK





**Easy Street Park
Sunny Day Flooding
During High Tide Events
(full/new moons)**



Example of Potential Landscape Plan 10 years

Please Note: This diagram is conceptual and meant only to illustrate what improvements might be possible with this additional property (e.g., separation of pedestrian and vehicle traffic; widening the turn radius for trucks and other vehicles; additional park space to help mitigate flooding in the area).



Example of Potential Landscape Plan 15-20 years

Please Note: This diagram is conceptual and meant only to illustrate what improvements might be possible with this additional property (e.g., improved gateway entrance to downtown; additional public access to the water; terminal building relocated inland... all to be determined throughout an extensive public planning process).