

Nantucket Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee (CRAC)

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Via Zoom

*Meetings are audio- and video-recorded

Members present: Gary Beller, Peter Brace, Dr. Sarah Bois, Matt Fee, Rachael Freeman, Dr. Jen Karberg, Christy Kickham (joined 10:10), Joanna Roche (joined 10:18), Doug Rose

Members Absent: Tim Braine, Abby De Molina

Staff present: Vince Murphy

Scheduled Speakers: Sunny Daily, Exec Director, Community Foundation for Nantucket;

Members of the public: D. Anne Atherton, Rick Atherton, Alan Bartels (Urban Harbors Institute), Anne Dewez, Shelly Lockwood, Kim Starbuck (Urban Harbors Institute), RJ Turcotte, Amy Keohane

Recording available here: <https://youtu.be/-e8a9UC-vNw?si=mfiOwh7C3JHZqn8e>

1. Call to Order – 10:03am

- the meeting was called to order by chair Peter Brace

2. Meeting announcements

- Script for remotely conducting Open Meetings
- Meeting is being audio/visually recorded

3. Public comment on topics not on the agenda

- Kim Starbuck, Senior Research Associate for Urban Harbors Institute (UHI), introduced herself and her associate Alan Bartels, Graduate Research Assistant, as consultants to the Nantucket and Madaket Harbors Action Plan Update Committee (HAPUC).
 - *Starbuck indicated that the Harbor Plan is in the draft stage, and that the HAPUC is eager to align with CRAC as that plan takes shape.*
 - *Bois indicated that it would be beneficial to have this topic as a CRAC agenda item as early in the process as is possible.*
 - *Brace advised that he plans to represent CRAC at an upcoming meeting of the HAPUC, and will add the Harbors Plan to an upcoming CRAC agenda.*

4. Discussion and update on Offshore Wind grant opportunities by Sunny Daily, Executive Director of the Community Foundation for Nantucket (CFN)

- Daily briefly outlined the goals of the Offshore Wind Community Fund (OWCF) and the grant application process
 - *The OWCF has a \$2M grant budget, which will be awarded in cycles. A share of the budget will be allocated to Town projects, some to Nantucket Preservation Trust projects, and some to community initiatives. Coastal resilience has been identified as one of four areas of focus. Project-based initiatives are preferred, ideally with finite timelines that bring the project to completion within one year. Progress reports will be due at 6 and 12 months. Review of applications for the first cycle opens 1/31/24; the grant review committee hopes to begin awarding grants in March-April, 2024.*

- *In answer to questions from Brace, Bois and Murphy, Daily indicated that:*
 - ◆ *any coastal resilience projects with clear objectives and finite timelines would be considered;*
 - ◆ *while fully-implementable projects are generally preferred, important planning projects would also be considered;*
 - ◆ *there is no word count restriction on the applications;*
 - ◆ *Daily was uncertain as to whether there might be a cap on the number of grants that any one applicant (a department, committee, or organization) can submit.*
- *Committee discussion ensued:*
 - ◆ *Bois asked if the committee or chair had already decided what projects would be applied for grant funding; Brace responded that CRAC had not yet voted on what those projects would be;*
 - ◆ *Beller argued that CRAC should proceed with a grant application for translation of the CRP, based on past committee discussions;*
 - ◆ *Fee urged the committee to weigh all CRP projects before committing to any one application, and added that it would be important for applicants to show how critical each project is, how many people would benefit, and so on;*
 - ◆ *Karberg expressed concern with timing, and the need to get to work on applications with a sense of urgency;*
 - ◆ *Bois expressed opposition to deciding to pursue one project in this meeting, positing that this grant application cycle is an important decision worthy of a more fulsome committee discussion;*
 - ◆ *Roche concurred, arguing that this OWCF grant opportunity should be used to fund a critically strategic CRP project, and that other sources for funding of translations and print materials can be found.*
- *Motion was made (Bois) and seconded (Rose) that as homework, committee members should nominate CRP projects for OWCF grant application to Brace and Hill for consideration at the 1/9 meeting, and that members come prepared to make decisions in that meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.*

5. Discussion on pools in designated flood plains

- Beller, Roche and Fee suggested that CRAC advise the Nantucket Conservation Commission (ConCom) prior to its 12/14 meeting, in which the permitting of pools on Mariner Way is scheduled to be discussed.
- Brace and Murphy cautioned against reacting to individual permit applications that are before the ConCom, and rather to focus on broad principles relating to construction in areas that are prone to coastal storm flowage.
- Karberg and Roche opined that it would be within the purview of CRAC to submit a letter to ConCom expressing broad support for the principles of the CRP, and in particular the issue of construction within flood plains.
- Public comment:
 - *Anne Dewez voiced concern with what she characterized as a concerted effort by various interests to delay updating of the regulations.*

- *RJ Turcotte stated that the position of Nantucket Land & Water Council (NLWC) is that as the current regulations stand, ConCom already has the authority to decline permit applications that fail to meet certain performance standards in flood prone areas; he specifically referenced the language in Performance Standard 4 and 5 of Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage.*
 - A motion was made (Fee) and seconded (Beller) authorizing chair Brace to write and submit a letter from CRAC advising ConCom to use its current authority to require applicants to follow best resilience practices, especially within land subject to coastal storm flowage. The motion carried unanimously.
6. Update on the Harbors Sediment Transport Study and Dredge Plan by Vince Murphy, Town of Nantucket Sustainability Programs Manager
- Murphy described the current state of the project:
 - *Currently eight months into an 18-month project (due to be completed Oct 2024)*
 - *Progress has been made collecting water level data, bathymetric studies, mapping of eel grass beds, and sediment sampling from all three harbors.*
 - ◆ *Sediment generally appears to be free of pollutants, and appropriate for re-use.*
 - *Next stage will be modeling to identify opportunities and risks for future dredging.*
 - ◆ *Risks include starving wetlands of natural sediment flow.*
 - ◆ *Opportunities include leveraging this study to apply to the Coatue Erosion Management & Dune Resilience CRP project (ID #4-3).*
 - *Still to be done: identify a suitable island location for stockpiling reusable sediment*
 - Regarding the Sediment Sourcing & Transport Study for Nantucket's outer shores:
 - *Murphy posited that because this work is expensive, it should be undertaken in segments (e.g., South Shore), with each segment tied directly to a specific CRP project.*
7. Discussion on developing an informational sheet regarding coastal risks and coastal resilience issues on Nantucket to hand out to real estate agents (see packet)
- Brace advised that this topic will be postponed until next meeting due to Hill's absence.
8. Discussion on what to include on the Town's Coastal Resilience web page (see packet)
- Brace asked for comments/suggestions:
 - *Roche suggested adding a section on financing strategies;*
 - *Fee suggested that this section also address the general principle of apportioning costs to those who most directly benefit;*
 - *Bois suggested adding accomplishments, a direct link to CRAC meetings on YouTube, and a list of members and their respective terms;*
 - *Beller suggested adding Communications as a tile.*
9. Update on the 2023-2030 CRP recommendations that have not been started yet and discuss a prioritization list (see packet)
- Brace advised that this topic will be postponed until next meeting due to Hill's absence.

10. Update on Article 10 regarding coastal resilience funds by Leah Hill, Town of Nantucket Coastal Resilience Coordinator
 - Brace advised that this topic will be postponed until next meeting due to Hill's absence.
11. Public outreach ideas/strategies from committee members
 - Media scorecard summary by Doug Rose (see packet):
 - *Eight organizations have re-posted at least one post in the first 4 weeks of the campaign, including Town of Nantucket, Nantucket Conservation Foundation, Nantucket Land Bank, Nantucket Coastal Conservancy, ReMain/Envision Resilience, Maria Mitchell Association, UMass Nantucket Field Station and ACKclimate.*
 - *Others who have expressed openness to sharing CRP-related content include: Nantucket Land & Water Council, Linda Loring Nature Foundation, Nantucket Civic League and Nantucket Chamber of Commerce.*
 - *On average, the CRP outreach campaign is generating 10-20,000 impressions per week, and a total of 64,000 impressions in the first four weeks.*
12. Approval of minutes from November 14, 2023
 - with one correction, motion (Fee) second (Beller), approved unanimously (9-0).
13. New business, Natural Resources Dept. & Committee reports from Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Harbor and Shellfish Advisory Board, Select Board, Advisory Committee of Non-Voting Taxpayers, and other committee members.
 - WPI presentation on 12/12/2023 at 1pm in the Community Room, 4 Fairgrounds Rd
 - [*The coastal resilience project from 1:10-1:30*](#)
 - Murphy shared information on two topics:
 - [*NOAA historic storm mapping tool*](#)
 - *Brace asked if Nor'easters were searchable; Murphy to investigate*
 - *MA Coastal Resilience Districts*
 - *Not to be confused with Nantucket's CRP project funding model of the same name, this new program under the state's Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) seeks to align resilience planning for all 78 coastal communities in Massachusetts.*
 - *Nantucket was the first community that CZM has met with; the new director and deputy director attended the initial meeting with Nantucket Town staff.*
 - *Their current focus is risk assessment.*
 - *Rose asked whether there was any discussion of a cooperative strategy for Federal grant applications; Murphy indicated that has yet to be fleshed out.*
 - On a related issue, Freeman asked what the proper order of events should be for advancing Nantucket's CRD funding model, particularly with regard to zoning and planning; Murphy responded that this is still to be determined.
 - *Fee argued that the Town's focus should be on what can be accomplished now, working within existing betterment law.*
 - Kickham advised that in a recent Capital Committee (CapCom) meeting, two items

relating to the CRP came up for discussion:

- *In the Strategic Retreat and Relocation Program, it was unclear how the funding should be handled, i.e., should it be drawn from the existing \$1m approved for coastal resilience initiatives.*
- *Regarding the Folger Marsh Bridge Design and Permitting project, CapCom asked for clarification on the timing between plan development to implementation (~2035).*
 - *Murphy said that he and/or Hill will circle back with Kickham on that.*
- On a more general note, Fee urged CRAC to pivot from a focus on studies and planning, and place greater emphasis in each meeting on project implementation.

14. Discussion of upcoming meeting dates and topics:

- Next Meeting is January 9, 2024, on Zoom

15. Motion to adjourn:

- moved (Fee), seconded (Roche), approved unanimously (9-0).