

Washington Street Workgroup
September 28, 2023
Land Bank Conference Room
22 Broad Street

Participants:

Matt Fee, Brooke Mohr, Libby Gibson, Claire Martin, Leah Hill, Vince Murphy, Rachael Freeman, Kristina Jelleme, Jesse Bell, Allen Reinhard

Call to Order 11:05am

Ms. Bell opened the meeting by offering to bring up the Washington Street framework plan and all present agreed. Ms. Bell reviewed the history of the project, highlighting that preparedness for increases in sea level and groundwater rise, safer pedestrian and bicyclist passage, and habitat enhancements were the primary drivers of the plan. However, to fully develop the plan, she stated that the existing conditions of the site still need to be explored and documented. She continued by explaining that the primary engineered aspects include stormwater storage on the inland side of Washington Street with tide gates to store and control the release of stormwater and the raised berm that will absorb and buffer wave energy. Ms. Bell highlighted the 3 major flood pathways to Washington Street and raised the height of the berm as an ongoing viewshed concern. Ms. Mohr stated that there is a need to encourage multiple modes of transportation to reach downtown and that the view will be compromised in the future if action isn't taken. Ms. Jelleme added that she felt the berm obstructing the view of the ocean would be an issue for people using Washington Street. Ms. Gibson suggested that public outreach including an alternatives assessment could reduce concerns over the height of the berm impacting the viewshed. Mr. Fee added that one alternative could be closing Washington Street, and that nobody would be happy with that. Mr. Murphy suggested authorizing a viewshed study that considers the berm and any added vegetation to aid in public outreach.

Ms. Bell asked about the timeline for the move of the Saltmarsh Center and whether these parcels should be included or excluded from the plans? Ms. Gibson stated that there is no real timeline for moving the Saltmarsh Center but if she had to estimate, it could be about 10 years. Conversation continued regarding the potential move of the Saltmarsh Center and ideas for the site were discussed.

Ms. Bell asked about the status of the Harbormaster building plans. Ms. Gibson responded that the TON has an architect re-examining the plans as the original bids came in over budget.

Ms. Gibson asked if we should plan a stakeholder meeting and incorporate the feedback into the design and Ms. Jelleme agreed and added that whether there is interest from neighbors in collaborating on this project is also important to know. Ms. Gibson asked whether the berm is the same height along the length of the street as there are other areas of the island where bulkheads are of different heights and this can be challenging. Mr. Murphy stated that the berm was designed to be above the flood zone and therefore to withstand the MHW in 2070, which is predicted to be 7.25 feet. He added that it would be helpful if this value could be incorporated into some of the local codes but that it is difficult to get consensus from all organizations. Ms. Gibson noted that Coastal Resiliency Districts may alleviate this issue. Mr. Fee returned to the discussion of hosting a stakeholders meeting and suggested that the group use the downtown sidewalk project as well orchestrated and the public outreach was very successful.

Ms. Bell asked participants to review the design scope from SCAPE before the next meeting. Ms. Freeman raised that the scope is for the Francis / Washington Street corner while the stakeholders

meeting and much of today's discussion revolved around the area incorporated into the Washington Street Framework plan. Ms. Mohr asked if we could get a fixed price for a stakeholder's workshop from SCAPE and posed the question of who should be there.

Ms. Bell redirected the conversation back to the Washington Street / Francis Street corner and noted that she would like to see a 50/50 cost share between the Town of Nantucket and the Land Bank with respect to the project. Ms. Gibson stated that the Town of Nantucket is willing to split the costs with the Land Bank on this project. Mr. Fee added that he was grateful for this partnership and excited to be working on this project.

Meeting Adjourned 12:05pm