

Nantucket Coastal Resilience Advisory Committee (CRAC)

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

Via Zoom

*Meetings are audio- and video-recorded

Members present: Gary Beller, Peter Brace, Dr. Sarah Bois, Rachael Freeman, Dr. Jen Karberg, Christy Kickham, Joanna Roche (joined ~10:07), Doug Rose

Members Absent: Tim Braine, Abby De Molina, Matt Fee

Staff present: Leah Hill

Scheduled Speakers:

Members of the public: R.J. Turcotte of the Nantucket Land & Water Council (NLWC), Gerry Connick, Shelly Lockwood, D.Anne Atherton, Claire Martin

Recording available here: <https://youtu.be/xeZQNLqddUk?si=-XOUan03W-EE82NN>

Packet available here: <https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/03262024-13644>

1. Call to Order – 10:00am

- 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

- RJ Turcotte, on behalf of NLWC, urged CRAC to submit another letter in support of the ConCom's efforts to update Nantucket's wetland regulations. He advised that the Commission has continued to receive extensive resistance to some of the proposed changes, and that the public comment process has become repetitive. Turcotte also advised that he and a consultant (Kathryn Barnacle of the consulting firm Ilex Environmental) urged the Commission to move away from explicitly referring to MC-FRM model for sea level rise (SLR), and to instead use broader language, i.e., to base decisions on the latest and best model available.
 - *Freeman commented that she would like to better understand the pros and cons of the various SLR models.*

4. Approval of minutes from November 28, 2023; January 9, 2024; January 23, 2024; February 13, 2024

- motion (Beller) second (Rose), approved unanimously (8-0).

5. Approval of CRAC's 4th quarter 2023 update for Select Board

- Hill reviewed the draft presentation.
 - *Rose suggested that Hill could mention that over 93,000 impressions were generated in the CRP awareness campaign for the period.*
 - *Brace suggested that the word "grant" be added to the slide regarding the Offshore*

Wind grant application.

- motion (Bois) second (Kickham), approved unanimously (8-0).

6. Discussion on ranking 2023-2026 Coastal Resilience Plan (CRP) recommendations that have not been started.

- Hill teed up list of candidate projects. CRAC member comments followed:
 - *Brace commented that he recently observed water over-washing the road at Folger's Marsh during low tide, but acknowledged that ranking it vis a vis other projects is a tough call.*
 - *Karberg suggested that Folger's Marsh and Madaket Road Raising projects are very similar projects, and in her estimation, the infrastructure impact of Folger's Marsh is likely to be greater and more imminent.*
 - *Bois suggested that force-ranking the list may not be productive, given that there are so many variables (funding, etc) that can affect the actual order of implementation, and that the list can be simply identified as CRAC's highest priorities of those which have not yet been started. As an example, if a new grant opportunity arises that is specific to stormwater management, that could potentially accelerate the Town's ability to implement that project ahead of others on this list. Brace concurred.*
 - *Roche asked where things stand on #1-11 Sediment Budget; Hill answered that the Sediment Budget cannot happen until the transport study and dredge plan is completed, which is anticipated Fall 2024. Roche also indicated that DPW has applied for a grant regarding stormwater management, which might argue for it to be moved up the list.*
- Rose made a motion to convert to a bullet pointed list of priorities without force ranking; motion was seconded (Karberg) and approved unanimously (8-0).

7. Discussion on Nantucket Harbors Action Plan's coastal resilience section of the goals and recommendations matrix

- Reflecting on the 3/18/24 joint meeting, Bois commented that there may be some misperceptions within the Harbor Plan committee or Urban Harbors Institute (UHI) as to CRAC's purview.
 - *Brace advised that CRAC is likely to be asked to oversee/guide certain tasks within the Harbor Plan.*
 - *Hill advised that there will be additional opportunities for CRAC to weigh in on the plan.*
- Beller commented that everything within the Harbor Plan should be consistent with the CRP.
- Karberg suggested that she may submit comments to the Harbor Plan Committee independently; she also recommended that the language regarding the Town "taking over" flooded areas should be revised to connect to the wording of the Strategic Relocation Plan project in the CRP.
 - *Brace encouraged her to submit those comments to Kim Starbuck at UHI.*
 - *Hill suggested that CRAC members with comments should submit them to her.*

- Bois reiterated the importance of connecting explicitly to the CRP wherever possible.
- Freeman discussed the opportunity to introduce forward-looking recommendations related to “living with water” that, while potentially inconsistent with *current* DEP guidelines, could help position Nantucket to take advantage of future solutions as regulatory and legal standards evolve.
 - *Brace clarified that the Harbor Plan is not regulatory, but is a set of recommendations. In that spirit, Brace suggested that the Harbor Plan is a good place to capture progressive concepts such as living with water, so that it can help shape future regulatory changes.*
- Kickham cautioned that CRAC should take care not to “muddy” implementation responsibilities.
 - *Brace commented that the CRP pre-dates the Harbor Plan, and any reference to it should only strengthen the Harbor Plan.*
 - *Hill concurred, opining that any redundancy between plans is a good thing, and that as long as the champion of each project is consistent, that should ensure role clarity.*
- Rose underscored that rather than reinventing the wheel, the Harbor Plan should directly reference the CRP wherever possible, given the depth of thought that went into it.
 - *As a parenthetical point regarding the Relocation program, Rose cautioned that “retreat” is a loaded word that can trigger defensive reactions from property owners.*
- Beller asked if the Harbor Plan committee has responsibility for implementation.
 - *Brace clarified that the Harbor Plan committee is responsible for creating a plan that will include clearly defined accountabilities for implementation; it’s likely that upon completion of that plan, a new implementation committee may be created.*

8. CoastSnap installation update by Leah Hill, Coastal Resilience Coordinator

- Hill provided a summary on how to use the new CoastSnap cradle located at end of Hummock Pond Road.
 - *Kickham applauded this initiative, and suggested Folger’s Marsh might be a good future location.*
 - *Brace suggested that this be the subject of another social media post; Hill confirmed that the Town’s Communications office did one within the previous week.*
 - *Karberg endorsed this initiative, and offered to make Nantucket Conservation Foundation (NCF) location(s) available for future installations.*

9. Public outreach ideas/strategies from committee members

- Beller suggested that the Strategic Relocation Program could be the subject of a future CRAC meeting, ideally with a guest expert.
 - *Rose concurred.*
- Beller circled back to RJ Turcotte’s suggestion to (re)submit a letter of support to the ConCom regarding the proposed regulatory update.
 - *RJ Turcotte suggested the letter could be similar to the last one.*
 - *Brace reminded the committee that in order for CRAC to offer advice to other*

- committees, it must first go through the Select Board for approval.*
- *Bois suggested that the SLR model could point to a consistent authority for guidance.*
 - *Hill suggested that Brace could read the original letter at the next public hearing of the ConCom.*
 - *The committee consensus was to pursue the path as outlined by Hill.*

10. Discussion of upcoming meeting dates and topics:

- Joint meeting with Harbor Plan Committee on April 1, 2024.
- Next Meeting is April 9, 2024, on Zoom

11. Motion to adjourn:

- moved (Beller), seconded (Karberg), approved unanimously (8-0).