

Francis Street Beach Improvement Project

WASHINGTON STREET WORKING GROUP

August 9, 2024



SCAPE

REMAIN

TODAY

- **Abutters Focus Group Feedback(7/29)**
- **Community Open House Debrief (8/7)**
- **Next Steps:**
 - **Public Feedback Synthesis (upcoming)**
 - **Pre-Design Kickoff (upcoming, 8/23)**

ABUTTERS FOCUS GROUP

- Are there ways that you have already adapted your property to deal with flooding?
- How do you anticipate adapting to increased flood risk in the future?
- Discussion Question #2: Washington Street Resilience (20 minutes)
 - How can the Town, Land Bank, and neighbors collaborate to reduce flood risk and enhance access?
- Discussion Question #3: Francis Street Beach Improvements (15 minutes)
 - How do you use the site today?
 - What would you like to see here in the future?
- Share Out (10 minutes)



ABUTTERS FOCUS GROUP: OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

Discussion Question #1: Experience with Flooding

Has your property been flooded? If so, how frequently?

- Several abutters noted that they had experienced flooding in basements or crawl spaces.
- One noted that his lower level had mold and he had to apply bleach periodically.
- Several stated that stormwater flooding is the primary flooding concern in the area.
- One noted that flooding had caused him to pause construction on his Meader Street properties.
- Some noted that they have not experienced flooding.

Are there ways that you have already adapted your property to deal with flooding?

- One noted that he had adapted the coastal side of his property with a dune.
- Another built up a low wall to reduce flooding.
- One noted that her house is elevated and on pilings.
- Another stated that he elevated his house when he moved it across the street.

How do you anticipate adapting to increased flood risk in the future?

- One abutter noted that she planned to raise her house in the future.
- Others stated that they would consider building up a permanent dune or bulkhead along the beach, but could use permitting assistance.

ABUTTERS FOCUS GROUP: OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

Discussion Question #2: Washington Street Resilience

How can the Town, Land Bank, and neighbors collaborate to reduce flood risk and enhance access?

- Several abutters raised concerns about the preliminary long-term Resilience Framework, developed as a conceptual study and posted in the Nantucket Current and on the Town's website, which did not include current home locations in the plan. They requested that this plan not be shared anymore.
- Waterside owners expressed concern for that representation potentially driving down their property value, while the drawing was being used as a sales feature for landward properties on the market.
- The group discussed opportunities for neighbors to tie into elevated features that could be developed on Town and Land Bank properties.
- Some attendees did not support the idea of a public elevated boardwalk along Washington Street, noting that they currently allow public access across their properties on the beach side.
- After the meeting, some neighbors approached staff and said they would like to collaborate as the project progresses and they implement resilience strategies on their properties.

ABUTTERS FOCUS GROUP: OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

Discussion Question #2: Washington Street Resilience (continued)

- Several neighbors just want to see Washington Street raised instead of the integrated dune and floodwall.
- Noting shallow depth to groundwater, some neighbors do not think nature-based solutions (NBS) or low impact development (LID) solutions are viable in this area and think more engineered solutions such as pumping would be better options. In the near term, they also stated that stormwater management could be improved by more regular cleaning of catch basins and potentially using permeable pavement for Washington Street.
- Another idea put forward by some residents was to convert Washington St. to a one-way road to make room for elevation and tie-ins.
- Some owners suggested changing the local building height restriction to allow for elevation of homes.

ABUTTERS FOCUS GROUP: OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

Discussion Question #3: Francis Street Beach Improvement Project

How do you use the site today?

- The site today is not well-utilized. One attendee noted that they had seen one person on the beach with many kayaks lined up that day.
- One attendee noted that the site is not as well utilized as Easy Street Park or Children's beach because of a lack of surrounding retail/food and beverage.
- Attendees stated that they hardly see any people use the Town and Land Bank parcels that are parks or vacant lots.

How would you like to use the site in the future?

- Generally the group was in favor of the improvements to the Francis Street beach side of the conceptual plan. No objections were stated.
- Several noted a desire for repairs and improvements to stormwater outfalls to reduce stormwater flooding (we noted that this is included in the project).
- Concerns were raised about the rain garden shown on the inland corner of Francis Street and Washington Street. These included the high groundwater table, rats, and mosquitos.

ABUTTERS FOCUS GROUP: OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

Other Observations

- One resident raised concerns about water quality at the stormwater outfalls along Washington Street, particularly at the corner near Washington Street/ Commercial Wharf (we explained how this was being addressed through other Town efforts).
- Same resident is concerned with the “muck” in the harbor in front of her property.
- Abutters expressed a desire to see the overhead power lines relocated underground, which could free up more space for a multimodal path.
- Abutters on the water side do not like boats beaching in front of their homes and unleashed dogs.
- One resident questioned climate change projections and expressed how environmental concerns like global warming (now climate change) and the thinned ozone have not panned out as the projections predicted.
- Some residents stated that they will have their properties forever.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE DEBRIEF

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE



NEXT STEPS

