

MINUTES
Morris County-Flood Mitigation Committee (MC-FMC)
30 Schuyler Place - 4th Floor, Morristown, New Jersey
August 21, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Chair Louise Davis.

Members present:

Betty Cass-Schmidt	Gary Large
Andrew Crawford	Michael Obremski
Louise Davis	Joseph Pawelczyk

Members with an excused absence

Thomas Pepe

Also attending:

Deena Leary, Director, Department of Planning & Public Works
Christine Marion, Director, Planning & Preservation Division
Jennifer McCulloch, Coordinator, Flood Mitigation Program, Office of Planning & Preservation
Mark Semeraro, Esq. of Kaufman Semeraro & Leibman, LLP

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Chair Louise Davis announced that in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting had been provided and filed with the Town of Morristown, the Morris County Clerk, the Daily Record and the Star Ledger.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the May 15, 2017 meeting were reviewed and on a motion by Betty Cass-Schmidt, which was seconded by Joe Pawelczyk, the Committee approved said Minutes.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Ms. McCulloch provided the following updates:

- **Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (pFIRMs)** – the release date for Morris County’s pFIRMs has been moved from July 28th to August 22nd. When the maps are received we will file a press release, notify all municipal Administrators/Engineers and update all the pertinent websites.
- **Flood News**
 - New Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) Director has been named – William B. “Brock” Long [doc. A] – Mr. Brock was formerly an EVP with Hagerty Consulting and Alabama’s Emergency Management Agency Director.

- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Legislation - There are 6 pending bills before Congress regarding the reauthorization of the NFIP, which is due to expire on September 30th. A bipartisan group of senators, led by Sen. Eric Menendez, has proposed a bill that would cap premium increases at 10%/year, create more accurate flood maps, and offer low-income homeowners vouchers to help pay for insurance coverage and loans to elevate buildings. [doc. B]
- Hurricane Forecast – the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) has raised their hurricane forecast for an above-normal season from a 45% to a 60% chance, and increased the number of expected hurricanes from 11-17 storms to 14-19 storms. This is an unusual, mid-season announcement. [doc. C]
- **CRS Assistance Program** – the CRS User Group will meet on August 22nd. Major topics will include:
 - Watershed Management Plan (WMP) – after discussions with CRS’s WMP reviewer, we may be able to obtain a waiver that will allow us to not include the Pequannock Watershed in our WMP; as such, the project may be feasible now.
 - Regional Program for Public Information (PPI) - discussions continue about forming a sub-committee to develop a regional PPI, we are currently assessing if the CRS points earned justify the work involved.
- **State legislation – new laws**
 - P.L. 2017, c.154 – expands the definition of “Acquisition” to include “the demolition of structures on, the removal of debris from, and the restoration of those lands to a natural state or to a state useful for recreation and conservation purposes”. [doc. D]
 - P.L. 2017, c.199 – removes deed restrictions preventing the elevation or construction of buildings to accepted flood standards. [doc. E)
- **Federal Executive Order (EO)** – repeal and replacement of EO 13690, “Federal Flood Risk Management Standards”. [doc. F]. President Trump’s new EO creates a “one Federal Decision” plan and establishes a two-year goal to process all federal actions required by law in the environmental review and permitting of major infrastructure projects. Implementing this new review process will be the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Action Plan; the CEQ will also mediate interagency disputes.

The national Association of State Floodplain Managers has come out strongly opposed to this new Executive Order. [doc. G]

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:46 p.m., on a motion by Betty Cass-Schmidt, seconded by Andrew Crawford, the FMC closed the open portion of the meeting pursuant to P.L. 1975 Ch. 231, the Open Public Meetings Act, and per the Committee’s standard resolution language, voted to conduct a closed session wherein the subject of real property acquisition shall be discussed.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

At 6:20 p.m., on a motion by Betty Cass-Schmidt, seconded by Joe Pawelczyk, the FMC returned to open session by unanimous vote.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to address.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Andrew Crawford, seconded by Mike Obremski, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 18, 2017 at 5:30 pm in the 4th Floor Conference Room of the Offices of Planning & Public Works, located at 30 Schuyler Place, Schuyler Annex Building, in Morristown, New Jersey.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer N. McCulloch