

Commercial Township
Special Meeting
August 27, 2024, at 6:00PM
BRIC DTA
Commercial Township

Deputy Mayor Klaudi calls meeting to order.

Announcement that the special meeting has been advertised in two newspapers, South Jersey Times and Daily Journal, it is being electronically recorded, and being held in full compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act.

Flag Salute.

In Attendance:

Joseph Klaudi	Deputy Mayor
Meghan Wren	FEMA
Heather Miller	Township Clerk
Robert Welch	Township OEM

Deputy Mayor Klaudi turned the meeting over to Meghan Wren. Meghan Wren asked for introductions of those in attendance

Barney Hollinger	Commercial Twp Bayshore Consultant
Elena Gable	County Planning
Doug Whitiker	County Planning

Those attended via Teams

Robyn Williams	CDM Smith
Sean Nelson	CDM Smith
Dana Kochnower	Resilient Action, supporting FEMA
Tyler Kinney	NJDEP Fish & Wildlife
Dr. David Bushek	Director HSRL
Iris Burt	HSRL
Jessica Yorke	Executive Director, Bayshore Center
Tony Klock	Board of Trustees, Bayshore Center

Meghan Wren- The NJ Resilience webinar is coming up on Thursday, 11:30 to 1pm. Commercial and Maurice River are a part of the Coastal cohort. The webinar will be focused on historic buildings and a few different agencies will be presenting.

The Action Plan was discussed.

- The Action Plan is a living document that serves as a place to track, assign responsibilities and establish timelines.
- Goal 1: Administrative task- Encompasses the task required to maintain meeting coordination, engage stakeholders in digital information sharing, building a resilience strategy, and establish CERC partnerships.
- Goal 2: Resilience Plan- Captures the work that was completed before DTA started, which includes the Resilience Accelerator. Focuses on starting the Resilience Team as understanding the resilience needs and matching DTA services to implement those needs. An example of this is the Building Codes Up Application.
 - Meghan added that actions include the Resilience Accelerator, the hazard mitigation plan (HMP) update, and the Bayshore Recovery Plan. The hope is after the 36-month contract is over the Action Plan will provide a foundation to continue the Resilience Plan.
- Goal 3: Develop BRIC DTA Grant Sub applications- Outlines the development of a viable BRIC project. DTA will provide support to develop application files including the benefit-coast analysis (BCA)
- Goal 4: Working Waterfronts- Focuses on coordination with waterfront land business owners.
 - The September 12th meeting aligns with this goal.
- Goal 5: Navigating Agency Support- This goal will ensure that state agencies like DEP and OEM are on board.
- Goal 6: Partners and funders- This goal is to establish funding sources outside of BRIC such as the Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation Act (STORM Act). This is a revolving fund that would provide access to loans that are capped at a 1% interest rate with an amortization rate of 20 to 30 years. This could provide a good cost match.
- Goal 7: Capacity Building Activities- The goal covers opportunities to get training that are of interest to the township members.
- Meghan added that an important part of the Action Plan is Navigating Agency Support goal and helping agencies understand their stories.
- Rob asked about the revolving fund. The loan would be an opportunity to provide a match for BRIC funding. He expresses that getting a loan may be a challenge.
 - Meghan explained that since Commercial Township is a Community Disaster Resilience Zone (CDRZ) community that only need a 90-10 cost match.
- David Bushek asked who would lead this to keep it going.
 - Meghan mentioned herself and the CDM Smith staff involved right now. Eventually, the idea is for the Resilience Team to step up and take over.
 - David said the first tasks are critical and wondering if there is a structure to fill the role, such as the mayor for example.
 - Meghan mentioned that passing an ordinance to put a Resilience Team together would help ensure that it is likely to stay in place.
 - David said these tasks are not small and if someone keeps up with this in their free time, it may move slower. There should be a position created for this plan and goals to keep it going.

- Meghan mentioned that with the Building Codes Up there will be additional funding to support staff.
- Sean mentioned that this is a working document and where there are bottlenecks there is still an opportunity to find solutions. For example, a BRIC scoping grant will provide an opportunity to fund staff support.
- Elena pointed out that Task 2.10 (Goal 2) can be completed by the State Office Of Planning Advocacy.
- Meghan mentioned that Rutgers did a flood vulnerability assessment.
- Elena mentioned that South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization has one as well.
- Meghan said that it is important to include resources that have been developed.
- Elena said that she is not sure how Task 2.7 (Goal 2) would be required. She suggested that the Resilience Plan should be incorporated into the Master Plan, so that she is not sure if it is necessary. Instead, they should have a comprehensive plan that can be included in the Master Plan. The Master plan must be updated every 10 years.
- Meghan said that the plan is to have people involved in the building of the Resilience Plan so after 36 months they can keep it going.
- Sean mentioned Goal 3 and touched on how developing BRIC application would include the Alternatives Analysis or architectural and engineering (A&E) services, data collection, technical feasibility and benefit cost ratio (BCR). Robyn briefly mentioned the Alternatives Analysis that was completed for Maurice River Township.
 - Meghan mentioned that the meeting on the 12th will be focusing on asking the right questions and gathering the right data for the A&E services. If people aren't on board, then they may scale it back and look at a smaller project.
 - The sluice gate project in Mauricetown is likely not a good candidate for an H&H study.
- Goal 7 Capacity Building: Training on FEMA GO, BCA, coastal erosion, etc. Provides guidance on FEMA and HMP resources a menu of slide decks to review. For example, looking into how Commercial Township can be a Community Rating System (CRS) community and provide better opportunities for BRIC Funding.
 - Jessica said as were rolling into storm season is there an immediate task force in place. Is there data that needs to be collected?
 - Rob said he gathers data, pictures, and videos whenever a storm comes through. Ben Stowman also put together some data based on USGS gage readings at Bivalve.
 - Dana said data, such as photos, can be helpful with developing stories. She shared that it is not only the quantitative data that goes into the application it is also the story that you are telling as well.
- Goal 5 Navigating Agency Support.
 - David mentioned that he would reach out to the Jacques Cousteau Center about compiling data to tell a story.

- Meghan said that MyCoast:NJ has a repository data to pull from.
- Robyn will send a comprehensive list of things they need to look for during storm events.
- Dana said that the next steps for Goal 5 will be to pull together an internal group to meet and work on the messaging and narrative. Then build a good solid plan and working group schedule in the next couple of weeks.
- Meghan said that Barney and Ben Stowman jumped on board to be a part of the team, Rob said that he will provide support to Barney if he needs it. David said he could also have himself or someone at the lab be a part of the team.
- Logistics for the upcoming workshop meeting.
 - Elena created a flyer and there will be a letter sent out on 8/29 to provide additional details.
 - There will be multiple stations, an interactive map on a screen and paper copies of the map.
 - Brian and Sarah will be there to provide support. Elena and Doug will also be participating.
 - Meghan said that the purpose will be to understand if this is the type of project that people want. We need to understand how property owners will adapt to changes that may occur to the property. Their participation is important because this will not work if only a few people want to participate.
 - Tyler said that he would pull together comments from groups that have input about the economic resilience at the mouth of the Maurice River.
- 1. Scheduling for future meetings.
 - a. Quarterly meetings will be held on the fourth Monday at 2pm.
 - b. Resilience Team meetings will be on the first Wednesdays.
 - i. The next meeting will be held on October 2nd at 6pm.
- 2. Action Items.
 - a. CDM Smith will send of list of data collection needs.
 - b. Stakeholder meeting will be September 12th at 4-7pm EST at Commercial Township Hall
 - c. Next joint meeting will be September 23rd at 2pm EST in MRT.
 - d. Next Resilience Team meeting will be on October 2nd at 6pm EST.

The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:
Heather Miller, Township Clerk