

Coastal Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Town of Marshfield, Massachusetts

Selectmen's Hearing Room — Marshfield Town Hall
2015 December 08

COMMITTEE PRESENT:

- Ben Cowie-Haskell (Acting Chair)
- Jack Sullivan
- Sean Robinson (Clerk)

COMMITTEE NOT PRESENT:

- Thomas Fleming

ALSO PRESENT (in audience):

- Greg Guimond (Town Planner)
- Jason Burtner (Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, South Shore Regional Manager)
- Rod Procaccino (Town Engineer)
- Julia Knisel (Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, Flood Plain Manager)
- Joe Rossi (Marshfield Citizens Coastal Coalition)
- Brent Corschene
- Joe Pecevich

1. Call to order

Mr. Cowie-Haskell called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

2. Approval of Clerk's Minutes

Mr. Cowie-Haskell called for objections or corrections to the minutes of the 2015 April 30, 2015 May 27, 2015 October 7, 2015 November 19, and 2015 December 2 meetings of the Committee. Seeing none, he declared the minutes approved as distributed.

3. Presentation on Restoring the Natural Buffer by Julia Knisel, Floodplain manager for MA Coastal Zone Management
4. Question and Answer with Julia Knisel

These two agenda items were discussed together.

Mr. Cowie-Haskell gave a short introduction about the Committee's work and the span of possible adaption strategies. He stated that the Committee has not talked much about strategies in the "retreat" category, so he invited Ms. Knisel to talk about that.

Mr. Sullivan interjected that "retreat" is a difficult word for many people to accept. He pointed out some alternate terms that have been thrown around: "managed retreat", "realignment", "restoration of flood plain values", "restoration of flood storage". Attendees indicated that they agree this is an important issue and that perception is important for getting things done.

Ms. Knisel then began her presentation along with Mr. Burtner, indicating that the presentation should include active discussion. The following points are a sampling of statements made during the presentation and discussion:

- Restoration of natural landforms can make waves break farther away from land and structures where people are highly invested.
- Some discussion of municipal grants from CZM, the types of projects funded, and the schedule of the grant cycle:
 - "Community Resilience Grants" have been awarded from \$20k to \$500k.
 - "Green Infrastructure Grants"
- Accommodations
 - Home elevations actually help restore landform function.
 - Mr. Guimond notes: "utility bumpouts" passed at the most recent Special Town Meeting.
- Types of green infrastructure:
 - beach, berm, dune, compatible sediment, native vegetation
 - coir rolls and other biodegradable and natural fibers
 - new shellfish beds
 - fringing salt marsh
- Ms. Knisel indicated that with Marshfield's coast being a narrow natural buffer and a northeast facing shore, a point of focus should be on getting sediment back into the system.
 - Existing hard structures cutoff the beach from upland sediment sources.

- The Hurricane Sandy Project (federally funded project of The Nature Conservancy and Mass DMF) will study submerged break waters for habitat creation and coastal resiliency via wave attenuation. The Marshfield-Scituate area is a potential target area for this work.
- One class of adaptations involves shifting development away from vulnerable areas. The following spectrum of options was discussed. (A “warning” was given that this class options may be even more difficult to execute than the previous set.)
 - Capital improvements/utility plans: decreasing investment in public infrastructure
 - Conservation easements/estate planning: landowner agrees to limit development or transfer development
 - Transfer development: relocate development with tax incentives
 - Buyouts: acquire vulnerable properties and convert to open space
 - Downsizing/overlay: limit potential uses of vulnerable areas
 - Rolling setbacks: require redevelopment to be sited upland based on erosion rates or sea level rise projections
 - Real estate disclosures: require property sellers to disclose risks
 - General disclosures: make maps publicly available

No motion or votes on this agenda item.

5. Adjourn

Mr. Robinson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Sullivan seconded the motion. No further discussion. The Committee voted 3-0 in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Robinson
Coastal Advisory Committee Clerk