

Cromwell Resilient Connecticut 2.0

5-9-22

Held virtually over Zoom

*Present: David Murphy (CIRCA), Mary Buchanan (CIRCA), Margot Burns (RiverCOG), Stuart Popper (Cromwell Planning and Development), Bruce Driska (Cromwell Planning and Development), Jon Harriman (Cromwell Town Engineer and Assistant Director of Public Works)*

**Overview:** CIRCA met with the Town of Cromwell and RiverCOG to describe the expansion of Resilient Connecticut into the RiverCOG planning region and provide a forum to the local hazard mitigation plan team to comment on the status of actions in the Cromwell annex of the Hazard Mitigation Plan adopted in 2021. These meeting notes will be provided to the Town and RiverCOG for appropriate filing related to the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

David commenced the meeting by providing an overview of the Resilient CT project and Resilient CT 2.0 future plans. During the discussion, the local planning team reviewed the Town’s hazard mitigation actions, and attendees had an open discussion about the Town’s needs related to climate change and natural hazards.

**Review of HMP Actions:**

Activity #	Goal/Obj	Activity Description	Status Reported by Location Planning Team
1	1-1	<p><b>Maintaining Shelter Supplies</b>                      Maintain an inventory of cots, blankets, food supplies, and other supplies for emergency shelters and provide additional supplies where necessary.</p>	<p>This is ongoing. The town hall is the shelter and has an emergency natural gas generator, showers, a former gym for use as a sleeping area, and a kitchen facility. The senior center is also located at the town hall. The building is air-conditioned and could theoretically be used as a cooling center, assuming the administrative authorization was obtained.</p>
2	1-1, 2-1	<p><b>Reduce and Manage Debris</b>                      Update and implement the debris management plan, including the Tree Management Plan. Ensure budget allocates appropriate money necessary to maintain and remove dead, dying, dangerous, and diseased trees in rights-of-way and other town-owned land, especially along the CT River.</p>	<p>Status unknown – check with the Public Works Department.</p>
3	2-1, 3-1	<p><b>Promote Private Property Mitigation</b>                      Support residents search for funding for elevation and flood proofing their property by disseminating HMA</p>	<p>The town GIS system shows the floodplain areas for public reference. No further outreach has been conducted.</p>

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		grant information, educating real estate agents, and making HMA informational brochures and pamphlets available at public places such as town halls and libraries. Maintain a public webpage with relevant links and necessary contact information for floodplain managers and town officials. Support home/business owners with benefit cost analysis. (new)	
4	2-1	<b>Implement mitigation strategies</b> identified for South Street near railroad overpass and at Nooks Hill Road near the railroad overpass to prevent street and property flooding in those areas.	Two problematic underpasses are an ongoing concern for the town. The railroad tracks are owned by the state, so the town's ability to address this is limited. There was severe flooding of the underpasses last year during the summer 2021 storms. Building an overpass would not be feasible; one approach for mitigation would reportedly be cleaning out the brook (on private property) near the South Street underpass to remove sediment and lower the water level. At the Nooks Hill Road underpass there is an adjacent culvert that is likely undersized.
5	2-1	<b>Mitigate Riverside Drive Bank Erosion</b> Perform an engineering study on the river bank adjacent to Riverside Drive. Install heavy rain drains to limit rainfall erosion and investigate bank stabilization projects. Assist homeowners in finding solutions to protecting property near the area of erosion, including grant funding.	This is private property, and not currently a priority for town action. There are only a few properties on the river, and there has reportedly not been a major flooding issue over the last few years. Attendees believe this problem has not been raised by property owners in ten years.
6	2-1, 3-1	<b>Inventory Generators at Essential Facilities</b> Some non-critical facilities are essential for public function during an emergency, such as grocery stores, Walmart, and gas stations. For these essential facilities, inventory which have functional generators. Encourage gas stations and grocery stores without generators to identify funding for them and provide technical assistance. (new)	Many private generators were installed last year, but most of these were at private residences rather than essential facilities. Town staff are not aware of any gas stations that have implemented generators to keep themselves open during power outages, but there may be one gas station with a generator that serves a cell tower. Town staff will check whether this generator is sufficient to operate the fuel pumps.
7	2-1	<b>Dam Inundation Study</b> Perform dam inundation studies or identify dam inundation mapping to identify the flood risk posed by the loss of the Northern Pond Dam and the two additional dams on Shadow Lane, and any potential future dam failure.	This is in progress. The town hired an engineer to do a study on the two Shadow Lane dams due to concerns with Shadow Brook and undersized infrastructure downstream, but has not yet received the results. There is reportedly a flooding concern along the

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			corridor of Shadow Brook. This is related to the Nooks Hill Road flooding (see action #4) and sometimes requires road closure. There is also a commercial property with warehouses in the vicinity that has experienced flooding (including multiple feet of water in the building in 2021).
8	2-1	<p><b>Support Repetitive Loss Properties</b></p> <p>Provide information, support, and financial advice to homeowners of Repetitive Loss properties regarding possible mitigation activities. Assist with grant applications and associated benefit cost analysis.</p>	No progress here. The town has no current plans to acquire any RL properties for open space, but it might be an applicable strategy in some sites in the future.
9	2-1	<p><b>Replace Culverts prone to Flooding</b></p> <p>Identify and replace culverts along the Connecticut River that contribute to flooding and water quality issues.</p>	This is still needed. One of the identified culverts is the South Street culvert that conveys Cromwell Creek, which is related to the South Street underpass concern (see action #4). Another culvert of concern runs under Pierson Park and also conveys Cromwell Creek. There are also two culverts on Evergreen Road that were overtopped last year; Evergreen Road required some repairs afterward. There is also a culvert on Cedar Drive that was overtopped three times over the last year. Storm waters picked up a lot of debris on private property, which then clogged the culverts and led to overtopping. CIRCA will check to make sure these areas are reflected in the delineated Zones of Shared Risk for Resilient Connecticut 2.0.
10	2-1, 3-1	<p><b>Protect Historic and Cultural Resources.</b></p> <p>Use recently published GIS inventory or historic and cultural resources, along with published best management practices to inform owners of methods and resources to make at risk resources more resilient</p>	No progress here. The town reportedly does not have that many historic resources at risk of flooding. There are some older homes, but most are on higher ground. There are a few older homes near the Connecticut River but nothing specific has been done about improving their resiliency.

**Open Discussion on the Town’s Needs:**

- The fire department office and police department complex are located at 5 West Street, in the 500-year floodplain. Both were flooded last year during the severe summer 2021 storms.

- Some of the park space along the river reportedly did not flood during last year's storms, but may be a concern in the future.
- There are a large number of buildings within floodplains and other areas of flood risk; the town staff referenced the Stop & Shop building specifically.
- David asked if the many clustered high-density residential developments in Cromwell presented any climate-driven risks such as isolation during flood events. The town staff are not aware of any reported access issues to the residential complexes, and report that most have backup egress.
- There is a significant concern in the vicinity of Shunpike, where the failure of property owners to maintain a stream (the headwaters to Willow Brook) in the north part of town has created a 10-acre pond that wasn't there 10 years ago. The pond is located behind Noreastern Motor Sports. As a result, the whole sewer trunk line between Geer Street and Shunpike Road is now under water. This also affects the sewer pumping station.
  - o CIRCA will check to make sure that this is reflected in a delineated Zone of Shared Risk.
  - o Rich Peck is the Sewer Administrator and will know more of the technical details related to this concern.
- There are reportedly no flooding concerns with the wells used by the Cromwell Fire District.

**Follow-up:**

- Please take a look at the map viewer for the Zones of Shared Risk and offer any corrections/additions. Link here:  
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9a4f68dd99f44dc58b93fd85bcfe1255/>
- (Note: the Editor tool within the viewer does not always save reliably, so please email [mary.buchanan@uconn.edu](mailto:mary.buchanan@uconn.edu) with any changes you'd like to see reflected in the Cromwell ZSR layer.)

Bruce will be the main contact going forward.