

Middletown Resilient Connecticut 2.0

5-4-22

Held virtually over Zoom

Present: David Murphy (CIRCA), John Truscinki (CIRCA), Mary Buchanan (CIRCA), Margot Burns (RiverCOG), Chris Holden (Middletown Public Works), Marek Kozikowski (Middletown Director of Land Use), Kim O'Rourke (Middletown Recycling Coordinator)

Overview: CIRCA met with the City of Middletown 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 Middletown annex of the Hazard Mitigation Plan adopted in 2021. These meeting notes will be provided to the City 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 City's hazard mitigation actions, and attendees had an open discussion about the City's needs related to climate change and natural hazards.

Review of HMP Actions:

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description | Status Reported by Location Planning Team |
|------------|----------------|---|---|
| 1 | 1-1, 3-1 | NFIP Community Rating System Participation. Work with FEMA's contractor to complete a "quick-check" to determine if ongoing activities in Middletown would qualify it for a class 9 rating in the CRS. If so, join and identify additional activities for additional points. | No progress; City staff are not aware of any current conversations related to joining CRS. Chris noted that since this action was proposed they have reorganized the land use and economic development offices; as a result, Marek is likely now the floodplain manager for the city. |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description | Status Reported by Location Planning Team |
|------------|----------------|--|---|
| 2 | 1-1 | <p>Update the Debris Management Plan. Annually survey trees that need to come down. 35-50 per year. Add requirement for on-call trimming. Create an inventory of ash trees and management plan.</p> | <p>The city has completed a full ash tree inventory and has allocated funds for ash tree removal. This year they have removed approximately 150 trees. Next year additional tree removal is planned (see budget info in action #3) and a list of target trees is being developed.</p> <p>Debris management involves bringing all debris to the city transfer station. City staff note that it might be helpful to have multiple locations in the city so debris does not have to travel as far; this discussion is ongoing.</p> |
| 3 | 1-1 | <p>Budget appropriate money necessary to maintain and remove dead, dying, dangerous, and diseased trees in rights-of-way and on town land</p> | <p>Completed. The City's usual budget includes \$40,000-\$50,000 for tree removal, but the increased need for ash tree removal as well as oak trees from gypsy moth damaged has led to an increased budget of approximately \$150,000 for tree removal.</p> |
| 4 | 1-1, 3-1 | <p>Comprehensive River Management Plan. Update and research property acquisition strategies for undeveloped property(ies) along the river front.</p> | <p>A river and brownfield assessment is in progress, in collaboration with RiverCOG. A multifaceted project is possible for the site at the Sumner Brook confluence with the Connecticut River, and would include brownfield remediation, compensatory floodplain storage with riverfront development, and public park space.</p> |
| 5 | 1-1 | <p>Flood Prone Area Mitigation Materials. Increase inventory of flood prone mitigation items (i.e. sand bags and barricades. Items necessary for flooding in all flood prone areas.</p> | <p>More sandbags are still needed. The process for deploying the sandbags also needs to be clarified and responsibility allocated between Public Works and Emergency Management. Some residents have requested sandbags for the ends of driveways, which the City has deployed in the past.</p> |

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| 6 | 2-1, 3-1 | <p>Flood Study(ies) for RLP on Millbrook Road. Conduct a flood study South of Randolph Road for a feeder brook into the main stem (Sumner Brook) that may address strategies for flooding on Millbrook Road</p> | <p>A flood study of Sumner Brook in the Millbrook Road area was completed by BL Companies in fall 2021. Conclusions from this include the need for dam removal (not town-owned) and the need to increase the size of two DOT culverts across Randolph Road. The South Fire Department is located in this area and faces flood-related access risks. David has asked for a copy of this completed flood study.</p> |
| 7 | 2-1 | <p>Bank Stabilization. Conduct remediation project at RLP - Canoe Club, Harbor Drive to stabilize river bank and increase storage capacity.</p> | <p>A portion of brownstone wall previously caved in and borings were completed in the area by MMI/SLR. The town tried to obtain FEMA funding for this but has not so far succeeded. The site seems to have stabilized.</p> |
| 8 | 2-1 | <p>Financing and Mitigation for Nejako Drive RLPs. Study was conducted with mitigation strategies recommended. Implement strategies. Research funding sources.</p> | <p>This neighborhood experiences flooding from the headwaters of West Swamp Brook, as does Basswood Drive, which is located nearby. There is poor drainage in this area. A two-pipe culvert at Congdon Street that was previously blocked has been cleared. CIRCA will check to ensure that this neighborhood has been captured in a Zone of Shared Risk. This is currently listed as under the remit of the Land Use Office in the HMP, but might be better suited to Public Works.</p> |
| 9 | 2-1 | <p>Evacuation Routing. City working with contractor to improve current system and increase efficiency(ies) for evacuation routing.</p> | <p>The current status of this is unknown. This is currently listed as under the remit of the Land Use Office in the HMP, but might be better suited to the emergency manager.</p> |
| 10 | 2-1 | <p>Business Continuity. Continue to improve COOP (City Hall)</p> | <p>This is partially complete but was disrupted by the lead person passing away. The plan has not been finalized.</p> |
| 11 | 1-1, 3-1 | <p>Debris Management Plan. Continue to develop an updated debris management plan town wide.</p> | <p>See action #2 for details on current debris management practices.</p> |

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| 12 | 1-1 | <p>Critical Facilities.</p> <p>Currently the senior center needs a generator to operate elevators for evacuation. Conduct analysis of gas stations and supermarkets for cost of generators.</p> | <p>Unknown whether the senior center received a generator. The City will be opening a new recreation center in the fall at the site of the former Woodrow Wilson school, which will have a generator and will be able to serve as a warming/cooling center and charging station (although will not meet the requirements for an official shelter). Middletown High School is the shelter for the city and can also serve as a warming/cooling center. The library can also be used as a cooling center. The police department also has the potential to be used, although this might be limited by COVID restrictions.</p> |
| 13 | 2-1 | <p>Upgrade Wells and Facilities. Replace two wells below the 100-year flood at J.S. Roth Well field. Well Improvements/Storm Hardening.</p> | <p>City staff believes this is completed, but this needs to be confirmed. David will check with the Water and Sewer Department.</p> |
| 14 | 2-1 | <p>Harbor Park Pumping Station. Abandon some facilities and install watertight grinder pump.</p> | <p>Harbor Park is being upgraded as part of an upgrade to a restaurant on Harbor Drive; currently the site is under construction. City staff believe the pumping station is included in this, but this needs to be confirmed.</p> |
| 15 | 2-1 | <p>Johnson Street Pumping Station. Upgrade Storm Wall.</p> | <p>Current status unknown</p> |
| 16 | 2-1 | <p>Adder Brook Dam. Repair Diversion Chamber.</p> | <p>City staff believes this is completed, but this needs to be confirmed. David will check with the Water and Sewer Department.</p> |
| 17 | 2-1 | <p>South Main Street. Replace station to upland site.</p> | <p>Completed</p> |
| 18 | 2-1 | <p>Adder Brook Dam (see Dam Hazard Report). Repair outlet at gatehouse. Spillway needs improvement and dam raised to pass ½ PMF</p> | <p>See action #16, needs to be confirmed. David will check with the Water and Sewer Department.</p> |

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| 19 | 2-1 | Mt. Higby Dam. Using Dam Hazard Report perform improvements to spillway and dam raised to pass ½ PMF. | No improvements have yet been made on the Mt. Higby Dam. |
| 20 | 2-1 | Laurel Brook Dam. Intake improvements and dike repairs to pass ½ PMF. | Some culverts have been replaced; unknown whether the full improvements have occurred. |
| 21 | 2-1 | Saw Mill Interceptor. Need waterproof repair tops. | Current status unknown |
| 22 | 2-1 | #3 Dam. Improvements needed to spillway. DOT Project (Route 66 Widening Project) is complete. | This is located on Rt 66 between Reservoir 3 and Reservoir 2. This is completed. |
| 23 | 2-1 | Coginchaug River Sewer. Raise all structure tops above flood elevation. | No progress |

Open Discussion on the City's Needs:

- There are a number of unimproved city-owned streets that experience erosion during storm events. Many of these are on shallow bedrock, making conditions difficult to install drainage.
- Sumner Brook and the South Fire Station is a potential project site (see action #6). This is already captured in a CIRCA-delineated Zone of Shared Risk.
- David asked whether there is anything in the downtown area that might have potential for a climate resilience project.
 - o The city tries to regularly plant trees to provide shade, although this is challenging due to limited space.
- David asked whether there are challenges related to municipal water and sewer, given the importance of these utilities to community resilience.
 - o The Red Road sewer pump station experiences flooding. This may be related to a beaver dam in the pond connected to the catch basins.
 - o Water system interconnections with neighboring water utilities are not yet done.
- The Mile Lane area contains both critical infrastructure and flood risk from West Swamp Brook and East Swamp Brook.
 - o Mile Lane contains a culvert that failed twice during the storms of summer 2021.

- Lawrence School access could potentially be cut off by West Swamp Brook crossing Kaplan Drive.
- Middletown High School is in the vicinity and it has some egress risks.
- The Emergency Management facility on Mile Lane has potential isolation risk.
- This area is partially captured in the CIRCA-delineated Zone of Shared Risk; CIRCA will adjust the boundaries of this to capture the critical infrastructure.
- The Mile Lane corridor has experienced some development and Ridgewood Road has recently been further developed with new residential properties, potentially increasing risks due to a higher population in the area.
- There is a Sustainable Middletown group that meets once a month. The town is categorized as Silver under Sustainable CT.
 - David can join one of their virtual meetings. Margot and Marek are also interested.

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 with any changes you'd like to see reflected in the Middletown ZSR layer.)

Chris Holden and Marek Kozikowski will be the main points of contact for this project going forward.