

SAFARI Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2015
AWSMP Office, 3130 State Route 28, Shokan, NY 12464
10:00am to 1:30pm

Members Present:

Brent Gotsch, CCEUC
Mark Carabetta, MMI
Leslie Zucker, CCEUC
Don Brewer, Shandaken Planning Board
Danyelle Davis, NYC DEP
Adam Doan, UCSWCD
Aaron Bennett, UC Department of Environment
Rob Stanley, Shandaken Supervisor
Eric Hofmeister, Shandaken Highway Superintendent
Mark Loete, Trout Unlimited

Guests:

Bobby Taylor, UCSWCD
Allison Lent, UCSWCD
Tiffany Runge, UCSWCD
Nate Hendricks, CWC
Phil Eskeli, NYC DEP

Past Meetings Minutes

Leslie Z. distributed past meeting minutes.

Town Supervisor Update

Rob S. attended Main Street Boot Camp. This event was meant to provide an opportunity for municipal officials to learn about using Consolidated Funding Applications (CFA) to acquire grant money for Main Street improvements. Rob S. would like to consider tying in potential CFA funds with Local Flood Analysis (LFA) and NY Rising Community Reconstruction program resources to expand projects in Phoenicia. He plans on forming a Phoenicia Visioning Committee to determine what types of CFA opportunities to pursue. The training was sponsored by the Mark Project, the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC), the O'Connor Foundation, and NY Housing Authority.

MMI Report

Review of Hydraulic Modeling Results

Phoenicia Study Area—Floodplain Benches

MMI included an additional flood bench along Station Road in addition to the two original benches. Substantial excavation would be required. With the added floodplain bench, there is a total of 2.4 feet of water surface elevation reduction of 100-year floodplain upstream of the Bridge Street Bridge and 4.4 feet of reduction downstream of the bridge.

During flows with the same discharge as Tropical Storm Irene, when expanded floodplain bench project is incorporated into the models, water surface elevations decrease approximately 1.5 foot along Main Street in Phoenicia.

Rob S. would like to consider effects on flood duration. Can duration changes be “animated” using 2D models in public presentation? During Tropical Storm Irene some roads were flooded for 30-60 minutes or more. If projects could reduce inundation times would be public safety benefit. May improve Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA).

For public presentations show zoomed in slides of Main Street. MMI can create maps at any scale to highlight areas of detail that would be of public interest.

The engineered floodplain bench does not show water on it during a flood. This is because the ground elevation data has not been modified. MMI can create a cross-hatching decal over benches to indicate flooding.

High Street Well Station needs to be mentioned in LFA to be considered for CWC funding. Town of Shandaken needs to protect existing homes and provide a loop for the Phoenicia water district. There is a concern about channel migration bordering the station and homes. The BCA tool only looks at water surface elevations, doesn't incorporate migration. Rob S. and Eric H. have identified possible relocation sites for High Street Well Station.

Consider firehouse on Tremper Avenue for relocation. Town would like to include in BCA as a critical community facility.

Danyelle D. requested that identification of flows and how data was determined for the models be included in LFA report appendices.

Phoenicia Study Area—Main Street Bridge

Removing bridge from model showed a 1.8 foot reduction immediately adjacent to the bridge location during the 10-year storm. There was minimal reduction in water surface elevation along Main Street. It would be challenging to redesign the Main Street Bridge given the confines of the area (homes immediately adjacent to it, Route 214 intersects there, difficult to realign road if bridge was widened). The bridge is maintained by New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) and any redesign would have to be coordinated with them. The bridge is not very old and is not slated for replacement in the near future.

Bridge removal combined with floodplain benches does produce a significant benefit over bridge removal alone

Mount Tremper Study Area—Dredging Scenario

Danyelle D. requested that during public meetings cross sections be shown to better illustrate the design.

Reductions are not substantial. Would not be sustainable long-term.

Mount Tremper Study Area—Levee Enhancement/Relocation

Levee enhancement increased water surface elevations in the stream channel. Pulling levee back further inland on the floodplain would also increase water surface elevations. Requires substantial fill in the floodway. Creating a floodplain bench along bend would require a number of home relocations.

Moving levee back and creating a floodplain bench lowers water surface elevations but most of area still floods. FEMA would be reluctant to relocate structures behind a levee.

Mount Tremper Study Area—Floodplain Bench and Route 28 Bridge

Route 28 bridge removal provides benefits at 100-year flood, but not 10-year flood.

Creating a floodplain bench in area of current flood control project and removing bridge would provide benefits. Benefits are small during a 10-year flood with floodplain bench added to bridge removal. (A 10-year event floods homes in Mt. Tremper.)

During the 100-year event, bridge removal plus floodplain bench construction results in 6.8-foot reduction in flood elevation upstream of bridge. Flood reductions extend well above Mt. Pleasant bridge.

The group noted the irony of removing a flood control structure to help reduce flood elevations.

Next phase of LFA will evaluate feasibility of these projects. Having a Benefit Cost Ratio greater than 1.0 opens up more federal funding possibilities. Important to think short- and long-term. Raise NYS DOT awareness of flood reduction benefits of bridge replacement.

Benefit Cost Analysis Discussion

The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of moving specific projects forward to the BCA process. The Town of Shandaken requests the following projects receive a full BCA:

Phoenicia Study Area

1. Bridge Street Bridge Replacement (with longer higher span)
2. Phoenicia Floodplain Benches (requires removal of structures along both banks)
3. Floodplain Benches and Bridge Street Bridge Replacement
4. Dredging Channel (for public illustration purposes)
5. Elevation of Structures

Mount Tremper Study Area

1. Route 28 Bridge Replacement (with longer, higher span, includes spanning of floodplains on both banks)
2. Floodplain Benches Upstream and Downstream of Route 28 Bridge (requires removal of structure on both banks)
3. Combination of Floodplain Benches and Route 28 Bridge Replacement (with longer, higher span)
4. Dredging Channel (for public illustration purposes)
5. Plank Road Bridge Replacement
6. Floodplain Bench (along Beaver Kill to prevent inundation of Route 212)

Town requested rough costs for Phoenicia Main Street Bridge improvements, but full BCA not necessary.

Rob S. suggested that during the upcoming public meetings MMI talk about sources of funding and that projects like dredging will require taxpayer funds since agency funding is not available.

Phil E. suggested that once the group exhausts infrastructure changes consider other alternatives (e.g. elevations of existing properties). Need to come up with some ballpark figures for elevations. Need to estimate first floor elevation. Does the structure have a basement, etc.? Elevation certificates may not exist for all structures but elevations should be included as a recommendation.

Timeline for Next Steps

MMI will work on BCAs. They will develop some numbers and cost estimates to share with the hamlets and then schedule the final hamlet public meetings. There may be some final ideas that come out of these public meetings. Afterwards MMI will issue a draft Final Report for the Phoenicia and Mount Tremper study areas. It will be a single report with two chapters (one for Phoenicia and one for Mount Tremper). The Final Report will be reviewed by agencies and Town Board. MMI will incorporate feedback to refine Final Report.

BCA can take 1-2 months. MMI needs Town to return property spreadsheet as soon as possible. MMI is missing some assessment data (basement types, square footage, etc.). MMI needs spreadsheet to complete BCAs. MMI requested another meeting with SAFARI prior to public meetings.

Nate H. summarized CWC's Flood Hazard Mitigation Implementation Program and Sustainable Communities Program. Program provide funding to Towns with a completed LFA. Shandaken is not ready to apply in June 2015.

Task Order

BCA will take some time because it is labor intensive. Other tasks are on schedule.

Tax Parcels Going for Auction in April

Aaron B. reported on tax parcels in the Town of Shandaken going to public auction in April. Town may request Ulster County hold properties. The Town identified two parcels near LFA study areas where potential for flood mitigation projects justifies a hold request.

Future Agenda Items

BCA for projects that moved forward. Schedule public meetings.

Next Meeting

Tentatively scheduled for Wednesday April 22, 2015 from 10:00am to 12:00pm pending BCA progress.