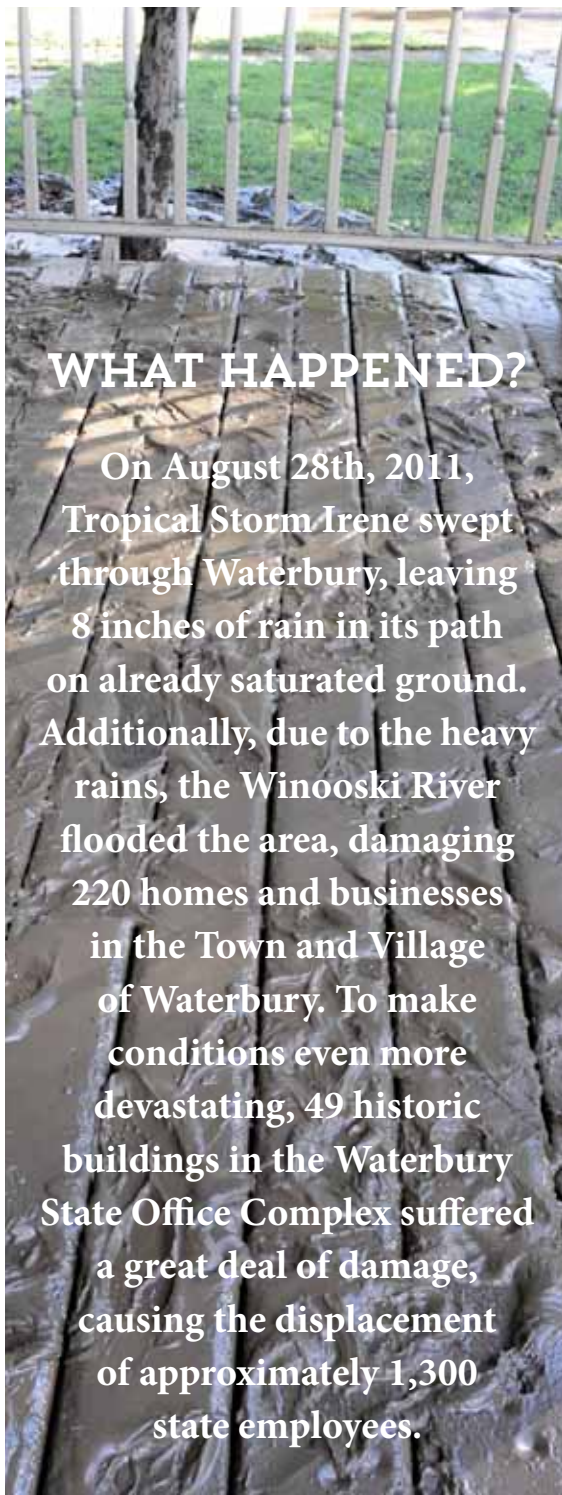




TROPICAL STORM IRENE- 3 YEARS LATER 2011-2014



WHAT HAPPENED?

On August 28th, 2011, Tropical Storm Irene swept through Waterbury, leaving 8 inches of rain in its path on already saturated ground. Additionally, due to the heavy rains, the Winooski River flooded the area, damaging 220 homes and businesses in the Town and Village of Waterbury. To make conditions even more devastating, 49 historic buildings in the Waterbury State Office Complex suffered a great deal of damage, causing the displacement of approximately 1,300 state employees.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING? THERE'S GOOD NEWS! THERE ARE SEVERAL RECOVERY PROJECTS IN THE WORKS FOR WATERBURY!

CONSTRUCTION:

MUNICIPAL BUILDING: The new municipal building will be an extension of the Janes House, where the current Waterbury Library is housed. The new site will maintain the historical features of the Janes House while adding enough space for the Municipal Offices (which were displaced by Tropical Storm Irene), the Historical Society, and the Library (which will move to an addition onto the building). Construction is scheduled to begin in April, 2015.



COURTESY STATE OF VERMONT, BGS

WATERBURY STATE OFFICE COMPLEX

STATE OFFICE COMPLEX: The biggest economic investment in Waterbury Village following the 2011 Irene flooding is the revitalization of the State Office Complex at \$124 million dollars. Approximately 1,300 state workers were displaced creating a hole in Waterbury's economy. Currently there are 170+ construction workers on site where the historic core building is being preserved and flood proofed while a new addition and heating plant are being built. Approximately 900-1,000 state workers will start moving back into the new office space in 2016. Tours of the complex are offered the first Saturday of each month during the summer season at 9:30am at the Weeks Parking Lot. The last tour for the season will be on October 4 at 9:30am.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: The Main Street Apartments housing project on the site of Ladd Hall is underway. Upon completion in the spring of 2015, it will provide affordable apartments for 27 families in the Village of Waterbury.

CHILDCARE CENTER: The non-profit Hunger Mountain Childcare Center (HMCC) has signed a Purchase and Sales Agreement with the State for the property they occupied at the time of the flooding plus the adjacent house at 121 South Main Street. They hope to own the former state property in September and plan to start construction this fall with a grand opening a year from now. It is anticipated that the HMCC will serve between 45-55 children and it will be adjacent to the new State Office Complex and Main Street Apartments housing project.

COMMUNITY:

MILONE AND MACBROOM STUDY: The engineering firm of Milone and MacBroom is in the process of conducting two major studies for the Waterbury area. One is to evaluate the potential of lowering the 100-year base flood elevation by reconnecting and restoring floodplain areas. This involves evaluating a stretch of the Winooski River from approximately the sewage treatment facility to the bridge over the Winooski at the Waterbury/Duxbury line. If this project is successful funds may



be awarded to implement the strategies developed. The other study is to determine economic potential of communities in floodplains by evaluating possible build-out areas and mitigation measures to prevent future damage to residents, businesses and infrastructure. Both of these studies are being done with grants, public and private matching funds in conjunction with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission.

VILLAGE TO LITTLE RIVER STATE PARK CONNECTOR TRAIL: The town has received a planning grant to connect the Waterbury Village to the Little River State Park with connecting trails. A group of volunteers and consultants are working to determine feasible routes.

COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM: A Floodplain Management Working Group was designated by the Select Board to advise the Planning Commission on several aspects of mitigation projects to prevent future flood damage and to develop strategies to lower the National Flood Insurance Premiums for those properties in the floodplain by developing a Flood Hazard Zoning update and a Community Rating System application to be reviewed by FEMA.

RESOURCES

www.waterburyvt.com

www.fema.gov/hazards/floods

www.fema.gov/information-property-owners

<http://floodready.vermont.gov>

Or call the Town of Waterbury Planning & Zoning:
802-244-1012 • 802-244-1018
1-888-FLOOD29

WHAT CAN I DO?

1. PURCHASE FLOOD INSURANCE

- Flood damage is not covered by standard homeowner's insurance.
- Be covered in a flood. Have a policy with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). It's important to note that the coverage goes into effect only after a 30-day waiting period.
- To ease the burden of this cost, Waterbury is currently applying to the NFIP's Community Rating System (CRS) to earn NFIP policy holders a discount in their flood insurance rates.
- Contact your insurance agency or the town offices for more information on the NFIP.

2. PROTECT PROPERTY FROM THE HAZARDS OF FLOODING

- If the floor level of your building is lower than the "base flood elevation" indicated on FEMA maps, consider elevating your entire structure to bring it out of the floodplain through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)—See "Resources".
- Make sure your furnace, water heater and electrical panels are above the base flood elevation and be sure your fuel tanks are tied down.
- You can install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.
- Basement walls can be sealed with waterproofing compounds to prevent seepage.

ZONING: PLEASE PERMIT

Please keep in mind that although you may have completed post-Irene recovery work on your home without a permit, an after-the-fact permit is still necessary for your construction to be considered in compliance. The Town and Village of Waterbury is expecting FEMA to be auditing our permit records in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene to ensure that structures and flood damage was repaired in accordance with the Town and Village of Waterbury Flood Hazard Regulations. The Waterbury Flood Hazard Regulations require a permit for any man-made changes to property in the floodplain. This includes the replacement of mechanical equipment and repairing and replacing any building materials which were damaged by floodwaters. In addition to assisting in Town and Village compliance, proper permitting also assists in maintaining Waterbury's good standing with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)—this could lead to flood insurance discounts for you and your neighbors (please see above)!

RW REVITALIZING Waterbury

As part of the Vermont Downtown Program, Revitalizing Waterbury was awarded a Community Development Block Grant in 2012 to work with Arnett, Muldrow & Associates to complete a Retail Market Analysis, Community Brand Identity Guide, Wayfinding system and Downtown Master Plan.

The Community brand has been adopted by many Waterbury groups including the Municipality, Police, Library, Waterbury Tourism Council, Waterbury-Duxbury School District and local businesses. The branding toolkit is designed to help promote Waterbury and its businesses to locals and visitors alike. For more information or access to the community files, contact Laura Parette, Brand Steward, laura@lauraparette.com or 233-0576.



A finalized Downtown Master Plan (DMP) will be completed this year with recommendations for how to maximize public areas in the downtown, how they interact with private investments and creative links among and between districts. The

DMP also assesses physical recommendations for individual buildings in the downtown.

WHAT ARE MY NEIGHBORS DOING?

Flooding can seem like an unlikely thing to happen twice in a lifetime and it can be easy to put off taking preventative measures. However, we never know what the future holds and in the case of a flood, it's certainly better to be safe than sorry.

Here is what one Waterbury business owner has done towards flood preparedness in an effort to help themselves, and the community.

CHAD RICH: Everyone knows Chad as the owner of the Prohibition Pig Restaurant, but did you know he is also opening a new micro-brewery on Elm Street that connects to the renowned BBQ spot?



2 ELM STREET, HOME OF A NEW MICRO-BREWERY AT PROHIBITION PIG RESTAURANT

Reconstruction of this new building is well under way, and because Chad knows it is in the floodplain, he has taken several extra steps to make the structure more flood resilient and truly built to last. He has:

- Used 3/4 inch plywood instead of drywall. This is material holds up much better when exposed to water than drywall.
- Used stainless steel trim screws, which will not rust if exposed to water
- Used dense pack and spray foam insulation.
- Has elevated the historic building above the 100 Year Base Flood Elevation.

By using these materials, in the event of a flood Chad can disassemble the walls, take out the damaged material, replace the plywood and spray insulation in without needing to demolish or fully rip out any structural elements.

When asked when the brewery will be open for business, Chad answered, "Only a foolish man would guess when construction will be complete."

TOWN OF WATERBURY: The town has also made great strides in the area of flood preparedness. Several projects are completed or underway. Emergency generators have been installed at Thatcher Brook Primary School (TBPS) and the sewage treatment plant. Additionally, the Village received \$115,000 CDBG Disaster Recovery grant for flood-proofing the pump station at the sewage treatment facility.

Also, there are several homes that had been damaged by Irene that have been restored but are now waiting on FEMA to announce 10 home elevation pilot projects for Randall Street and 2 other locations. If awarded through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, elevations are likely to take place next summer and get the first floor living areas above the 100-year flood elevation. Some of these homes will have their basements filled in. Why you ask? Because it will lower their flood insurance payments under the National Flood Insurance Program and prevent future flood damage.

The Town is in the process of working with homeowners in flood-prone areas to elevate utilities, (think electrical boxes, oil tanks, furnaces, wiring) that are below the 100 year flood level, mostly in basements. Homeowners and businesses are the first line of defense when it comes to protecting their own properties. By doing this, flood insurance premiums may be reduced as well.

The Waterbury Planning Commission is undertaking a re-writing of the Flood Hazard Area Regulations and encourages public input and participation. The times and dates of the Planning Commission meetings can be found at: www.waterburyvt.com/calendars/municipal/



JEREMY AYERS: The Ayers family has lived in Waterbury for generations, and currently, Jeremy Ayers and his family live in the Elm Street home. During Tropical Storm Irene, Jeremy, his wife and young son lived with his 93 year old late grandfather in the home and were forced to evacuate during the flooding. The family lost a great deal to Tropical Storm Irene: Jeremy's pottery studio in the basement of the house was flooded, as was much of the first floor. However the Ayers have rebuilt stronger, and are continuing to take flood preparedness measures. In the home, the Ayers have used foam insulation and elevated all of their electrical panels above floodplain levels. Additionally, they have tied down their fuel tank, which prevented the tank from floating away during Irene. The family is also converting the barns on the property for new uses. Once construction is complete, a portion of the downstairs space will be used as Jeremy's pottery studio with a small adjoining store, and there will be two apartments for rent in the upstairs space. Foam insulation will also be used in the barn structure, and electric panels have already been elevated above floodplain levels.

CURTIS HOOPER AND SUSAN ALLEN: Curtis and Susan were the owners of their rental house at 5 Parker Court during Tropical Storm Irene. Although the couple did not live in the home at the time of Irene, the damage was devastating to both the couple and their tenants. The home received several feet of water, filling the basement and over a foot of the first floor. Like many Waterbury residents living in the floodplain, the tenants of the house lost many of their possessions when the basement was flooded and the foundation caved in. After taking stock of the damage, the homeowners were then faced with the decision to either allow the home to remain in its dilapidated state, or to rebuild and sell the home. Hooper and Allen ultimately chose to take matters into their own hands and began rebuilding in September, 2011. They elevated the house with foam blocks to bring it above the 100-year floodplain elevation level, gutted and renovated the interior, used spray-foam insulation, and anchored the newly installed fuel tanks both to the home and to the ground. Mr. Hooper noted that the Town of Waterbury was cooperative with the permitting and zoning processes in regards to the construction on the home.



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MAPS!

New mapping resources have been developed to help residents better understand the floodplain and the status of their property. Here are some new resources to explore!

- Village of Waterbury Floodplain Map: http://www.waterburyvt.com/fileadmin/files/Zoning_Planning/8.Village_Firm.pdf
- FEMA Flood Mapping Service Center: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>
- Flood Ready Vermont has many great resources. Explore the website and check out the mapping tool! http://floodready.vermont.gov/assessment/vt_floodready_atlas