

**WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**Monday, February 24, 2014**

Members present: Becca Washburn, Chair; Ken Belliveau; Mary Koen; Judi Kamien; Jason Wulff  
Staff present: Steve Lotspeich, Clare Rock, Patti Spence  
Guest speaker: Roy Schiff, Milone and MacBroom

DRB Members Present: Jeff Larkin; Martha Staskus

Public: Ben Judy, Rebecca Ellis, Everett Coffey, Natalie Howell, Dave Washburn, Roy Lloyd, Rich Drill, Michael Rossi

The meeting was opened at 7:00 pm. The Development Review Board did not have a quorum therefore they did not hold a formal meeting.

**FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Roy Schiff of Milone and MacBroom, Inc. presented information on the Lake Champlain Basin Program, EPA funded project which Waterbury will be part of. Preliminary mapping was presented. Implications for policies related to flood hazard area regulations were discussed.

**BACKGROUND:**

Milone & MacBroom was the successful consultant for the Lake Champlain Basin Program EPA funded project to examine the costs and economic benefits of floodplain protection and regulation. Waterbury and Willsboro, New York, are the two communities being addressed in the case studies for this project. Roy Schiff, works in the Milone & MacBroom office in Waterbury and is a Resources Scientist and Engineer. He is the project manager for both of these projects.

The goal of the study is to determine where the balance is in the community for development within the floodplain.

Roy's presentation outlined whether the benefits of floodplain protection outweigh the costs as follows:

**DRAFT BENEFITS**

- Reduction of flood damages
- Lower recover costs
- Increased health and safety
- Enhanced ecosystem services
- Social benefits

**DRAFT COSTS**

- Possible loss of economic opportunity
- Possible reduced tax base
- Floodplain restoration cost
- Increased building costs to flood-proof structures
- Recovery of structures remaining in the floodplain
- Demolitions

The following hypothesis was presented:

1. The benefits of floodplain protection outweigh the costs over the long term because a complete accounting includes the high value of ecosystem resources.

Floodplain Management areas:

1. FEMA floodway and floodplains.
2. Revised floodplains.
3. Post-restoration floodplains.
4. Downtown district.
5. River corridor/fluvial erosion hazard (FEH) zones.
6. Buffers.
7. Critical elevation for flooding.

The following comment was made: Add the Village "historic district" to this list.

Vermont has statewide draft floodplain rules (Act 138) in process, which is primarily for State facilities. Some of the rules, or modifications thereof, are being looked at for flood-prone areas throughout Vermont.

Regarding the Milone and MacBroom study, modeling will be done to determine the economic costs and benefits of different build-out scenarios and regulatory options.

Various maps of the FEMA floodplain area were reviewed.

Road construction projects in Waterbury were discussed. When the road construction projects take place in Waterbury, the State will be required to stay within the current elevations and not change flood levels in the areas of construction. These projects, including the roundabout at the corner of Route 100 and Route 2 near the Post Office, and the Main St. Reconstruction project are required to treat stormwater for water quality.

Various options for policies that relate to drafting new flood hazard area regulations were discussed. The following topics and issues were identified:

1. Redevelopment vs. development
2. Mitigation zone - credit system
3. Impact fees
4. Where might the downtown area be in 50 years if circumstances worsen and the business area in the floodplain needs to be moved?
5. Consider Act 138 and how those restrictions might apply in Waterbury - i.e. a no adverse impact requirement.
6. Route 100 corridor and Thatcher Brook floodplain.

Clare Rock distributed a hand out to review prior to the next Planning Commission meeting on March 10th meeting that will be relevant to the continued discussion of FHA regulation revisions. Clare and Steve will prepare a matrix of policy options for the meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup> that will be used to develop approximately five scenarios for regulating the floodplain. These scenarios will be given to Milone and MacBroom to use in their study.

The anticipated date for the public meeting will after March 10th. It was agreed to involve public input in the discussion of scenarios for mapping and regulation. The focus of the public meeting will be on policy issues. We should publicize the meeting and invite individuals who may have a highly vested interest.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Jeff Larkin, Chair of the DRB suggested the Planning Commission and the DRB have future joint meetings. He also asked what other zoning issues the PC would be addressing and what the timeline might be. The Planning Commission requested that the DRB members identify their top priority changes to be considered in amending the Zoning Regulations.

**NEXT MEETING:**

March 10th, 2014.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 09:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Patti Spence  
Secretary

\*These minutes were approved on 3/24/14 \*

