

**GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: Plainfield Public Library
Plainfield

DATE: November 5, 2014

MEETING CONVENED: 7:30PM

NOTE:

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided informing the public of time and place according to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ray Murray . Green Brook	George Ververides . Middlesex County Planning
Bill Crosby . No Plainfield	Theodore Bassman . Scotch Plains
Frank McArdle . No Plainfield	Alice Tempel . South Plainfield
Richard O'Connor-Engineer, GBFCC	John Madden . Middlesex
Robert Greco . USACE	Richard Jacobs . Green Brook
Ken Herrmann . Green Brook	Lisa Bogart . Bound Brook
Stephen L Black - Watchung	

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Murray read items of correspondence received by the GBFCC for the months of September & October. The GBFCC maintains a correspondence file that is available for inspection as may be necessary and upon request.

MINUTES

The minutes of the 09/03/14 meeting were approved. A copy of the approved minutes is available on the GBFCC website.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bill Crosby provided the monthly report and bills for September & October. Bills for the months of September & October were approved for payment. All counties & municipalities have paid their dues. Copies are available for inspection upon request.

BUDGET REPORT

Chairman Murray entertained a motion to approve the 2015 budget. The budget was voted on and approved.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

No report.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Mr Crosby presented the nominations as follows:

Chairman . Ray Murray
Vice Chairman . John Sweeney
Treasurer . Bill Crosby
Legislative . Frank McArdle

The nominations were approved by the GBFCC members.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Murray stated that bids were received for professional services. Grotto Engineering Associates and Winning Strategies were the only two respondents. Posting of the RFQ was posted in the GBFCC website & Courier News. The respondent's fees remained the same as 2014. Chairman Murray entertained a motion to appoint Grotto and Winning Strategies. Both consultants were retained for 2015 by voice vote of the Commission.

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Robert Greco of the USACE reported as follows:

Mr Greco reported that there will be an anticipated carryover of \$8.2 million into FY15. This was a result of change orders from contractors working in Bound Brook. Segment B2 was not awarded in September otherwise the carryover would have been \$4 million. The USACE is anticipating an additional \$11 million from the President's budget. The USACE is operating under a continuing resolution authority and have not requested any funds because Green Brook is fully funded. They will not request any funding until they received funding from the President's budget in March 2015.

Cost update of GRR - Award is behind schedule due to negotiations with URS. The URS estimate is higher than the government estimate. Since the PET meetings, Joe Skupien asked if the decision table within the GRR would be modified to show the impacts to the lower basin from the detention basin in the upper basin. The USACE is proposing (in addition to the cost update) to update the H & H model so they can better assess the impact of revisions to/elimination of the detention in the upper basin to determine how it affects the lower basin. USACE anticipates awarding a contract in December 2014.

LOMR (letter of map review) process with FEMA . USACE has to notify property owners subjected to potential increased flood elevations impacted by the Bound Brook construction. This encompasses 500-800 properties with elevation differentials less than 0.02 feet. USACE will be generating letters by mail merge and mailing after Thanksgiving. NJDEP needs to review the letter and the GBFCC will also have a chance to review before mailing.

Bound Brook

Segment U (bendway weir) . Tri State provided the final as-builts to the USACE in late September 2014. USACE is near completion of review of as-builts for incorporation of comments. The bendway weir is currently working as intended. At Segment U there is soil accumulation adjacent to the floodwall as opposed to soil eroding.

Queens Gate apartments - The contractor excavated holes into the levees. The contractor planted trees within 15 feet of the levee and the trees had to be removed. Due to USACE regulations the holes need to be properly filled.

Segment T (levee) . Topsoil and seeding has been completed. The south side of Main St has also been completed.

E Main Street (storm sewer) . The contractor is now working on the E. Main St storm sewer line. A gas line was found and PSE&G will be re-locating the gas pipeline. PSE&G will be excavating in the NJ Transit parking lot and USACE's archeological team will be checking for historical artifacts during the work. USACE anticipates completion of the E Main St storm sewer line by December 2014 (weather dependent).

Segment R2 (levee tieoff) . The contractor has ordered materials for the manhole adjacent to the gate and has installed the stockwall structure materials. On the weekend of 11/22/14, they will commence weekend work that is expected thru January or February 2015.

Mr Greco received an email from a Bound Brook resident inquiring the timeframe of when FEMA will be issuing the LOMR. He responded with updates and that completion is expected by February 2015. He also advised that the issuance of LOMR would be approximately March 2015 and the LOMR by FEMA should be issued by June 2015.

Wyckoff Mills-Monroe Twp & Cranbury (mitigation sites) . The USACE's Office of Counsel are reviewing the RFQ's (request for quotes). The USACE will then be able to award for 2 mitigation sites in the Raritan Basin.

Middlesex

Segment B1 (O & M manual) . The draft of the manual has been released and copies will be released to NJDEP, URS and Middlesex County. The USACE is awaiting comments from NJDEP and Middlesex County to include in the manual. Middlesex can issue a contract to operate the O & M for their site (Segment B1).

Chairman Murray questioned what the turnaround time is for comments to the manual. Mr Greco indicated it is approximately 1 month.

Segment B2 (floodwall) . The USACE is trying to obtain easements from 10 properties. Mary Daley has provided offers for the rights of way. Two of the property owners have contacted their attorneys. The RTA (right to advertise) is expected by December 2014 and award by February 2015. Ms Daley requested a final date for obtaining the properties. Mr Greco indicated they will need real estate by July 2015 to be able to award a contract in 2015. The USACE has to show progress to headquarters and avoid substantial carryover of funds.

Chairman Murray questioned the engineering for Segments B3 and B4. Mr Greco stated that the design for Segment B3 & B4 was awarded to Jacobs Engineering on 9/30/14. He noted that 95% of Segment B3 is on Middlesex Borough property. If Segment B2 is awarded, there will not be enough funds to award all of B3 which includes the pump station, floodwall & levee. B3 will cost approximately \$15-20 million. He has requested the schedule from the A/E. He will then be able to move forward with real estate by February/March 2015. If B2 isn't available, they will move onto construction of B3 which will take approximately two years to complete. The USACE will then work back to B2 & B4. B4 has approximately 17-18 properties that are impacted. Mr Greco & USACE personnel took a trip to view Segments C, H, B & D to view the areas of construction for levees/floodwalls. Of all the areas viewed, Segments B2 & B4 are the worst due to the closeness of the properties.

Mr McArdle questioned if the B4 floodwall is easier to work with than the levee. Mr Greco indicated yes. He noted that in order to access the B4 construction site, the USACE will need to determine if certain homes will need to be bought out.

Mr McArdle questioned if the USACE is seeking a 30 or 50 foot easement? Mr Greco stated they only need a 15-18 foot easement. Mr McArdle questioned if it is wider during the construction phase? Mr Greco stated that it is roughly 20 feet during construction.

Chairman Murray questioned that USACE advertised for appraisals on B4 and then pulled back. Mr Greco spoke with Mary Daley indicating that B2 & B3 are priority and B4 will follow. USACE A/E division needs to determine if 4-6 homes should be purchased based on its survey.

Segment H (South of Middlesex landfill) . USACE is having their Engineering division reviewing for survey requirements.

Segment B5 (landfill area) . USACE originally thought they would be moving B3 to B5 while they were working on B2 & B3. Cleanup for B5 is scheduled between 2017-19 and they won't have the property until 2020. It is thought they will skip over Segment H depending on how the project is scoped. USACE needs to consult with FUSRAP group as Segments B & H may be one continuous levee depending on how the project is configured. USACE expects to have issues with property owners due to the impact on the properties.

Upper Basin

The USACE has assembled a project management plan (PMP). The Green Brook project delivery team has reviewed the PMP comments and is editing the PMP. Once the PMP is completed, it has to be signed off by USACE's senior management and then sent to NJDEP and GBFCC for review. The PMP will specify funding requirements from NJDEP and the Federal government. USACE will start with the LRR because they anticipate keeping Skytop & Hopeway at the current locations. If they are not able to keep them at the current locations, then the LRR will be converted to a GRR (general reevaluation report). USACE is currently investigating whether re-authorization will be required if a conversion to a GRR is necessary. USACE senior management is reviewing that aspect at this time.

Mr McArdle questioned whether the negotiations with URS on the GRR cost update and if the scope would impact the LRR? Mr Greco indicated they will take H&H information that URS is updating to be used in the LRR. URS is looking at Hopeway & Skytop detention sites and not changing the layout.

Mr McArdle questioned if the USACE does nothing on the upper basin, what impact is it to the lower basin? Mr Greco stated the USACE will take the model URS provides and then remove the upper basin detention to determine what impact it has on the lower basin.

Mr McArdle questioned if the USACE will include the entire lower basin (Piscataway, Scotch Plains, Bound Brook, Middlesex). Mr Greco stated that C,H,B, and D which includes Plainfield and into Cedar Brook will be in the revised single model to be done by URS for the project.

Mr McArdle . questioned if URS will also be doing the cost estimates to bring them up to today's standards? Mr Greco indicated they will but they are not changing the design.

Mr McArdle . questioned if the USACE will be looking at the necessity for a design change. Mr Greco stated yes but they will need information from the update of the GRR to make that decision.

Mr Greco indicated the USACE is working toward the goal of working up in the upper basin and will make a determination of whether Segment B is impacted. Segment C will be effected if the detention basin isn't built in the upper basin.

Mr McArdle . questioned if Stony Brook is on hold. Mr Greco stated no but that it is a separate issue.

Jefferson Ave Bridge (removal & emergency access) . USACE anticipates the project to be awarded in February 2015.

Mr Crosby . If the project is awarded in 2/15, will it be completed by 6/15? Mr Greco stated yes.

Chairman Murray . Since the idea of splitting the project into two segments was to encumber funds before 9/30/14, why wouldn't the entire project be done now? Mr Greco indicated that it is in a flood hazard area. He was advised by Kim Reichert that the bridge removal and emergency access road could not be installed within 2015. To proceed (officially) without avoiding NJDEP permit issues requires the deletion of the cul-de-sac at this time.

Chairman Murray questioned if the USACE had received anything from NJDOT regarding what was needed for the closure of the bridge. Mr Greco stated no. He only received an initial reply that was forwarded.

QUESTIONS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Black - What will doing the model to alleviate the detention basin and its overall affect prove at this time? Mr Greco stated that Joe Skupien (Somerset County) requested to see what the worst case conditions and the H & H impact if the detention basins aren't built. USACE may have to build larger levees and higher floodwalls if they can't build anything in the upper basin. They need to know this information now before beginning Segment C.

Chairman Murray added that USACE doesn't want to go back and add (i.e. another 2 feet) to a levee on C,H,B and D.

Commissioner Black . He understood there was a PMP that had been created some years ago. Mr Greco was unsure if there was but it would be outdated by now.

Commissioner Black . Can any of the old plans be used? Mr Greco stated yes . from the GRR. For the LRR, the USACE will look at the current detention sites, update the H & H to post-Katrina standards and meet with the municipalities to see if they are willing to move forward with the detention sites. He noted that there are many trees to be removed because of it being a low point. There will be a raising of one of the access roads (Connell property) to use the detention site.

Commissioner Black . What is USACE's timeframe to sit with the Connell personnel? Mr Greco was unsure at this time but anticipates the summer of 2015.

QUESTIONS FROM MIDDLESEX COUNTY

None.

NJ DEP

No report.

GBFCC ENGINEER

No report.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr Jacobus (Green Brook) . Is anything being mentioned regarding Ambrose Brook? Mr Greco indicated the USACE & FEMA bought out some homes and a levee was to be built but was determined there was no need for a levee due to the sale of homes as one side of the brook was high enough.

Chairman Murray thanked Plainfield Public Library for the use of their facility and their continued support of the GBFCC.

Listed are the GBFCC meeting dates:

2014

**January 7, 2015 – Green Brook
March – Middlesex Public Library
May – North Plainfield
July – Scotch Plains
August – American Legion Gazebo (behind Middlesex Library)
September – Middlesex County Planning
November - Plainfield**

A motion was made and approved to adjourn.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:25 PM

HAPPY HOLIDAYS !