

**GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: Green Brook Municipal Building  
Green Brook

DATE: January 7, 2015

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  
Bill Crosby . No Plainfield  
John Sweeney-Middlesex Boro  
Frank Farrell-Engineer, GBFCC

George Ververides . Middlesex County Planning  
Theodore Bassman . Scotch Plains  
Alice Tempel . South Plainfield  
Robert Greco . USACE

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Chairman Murray reported no receipt of any correspondence received by the GBFCC for the months of November & December. The GBFCC maintains a correspondence file that is available for inspection as may be necessary and upon request.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the 11/05/14 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 November & December. Bills for the months of November & December were approved for payment. Copies are available for inspection upon request.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

No report.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No report.

**ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

Robert Greco of the USACE reported as follows:

Mr Greco reported the USACE has \$11 million for FY2015. He noted they have \$4 million from FY2014. FY 2014 funding was used to award the Jacobs contract, design for Segments B3 & B4 and NJDEP permitting.

Cost update of GRR . Additional H&H (hydrology & hydraulics) scope changes were given to URS in late November/early December. USACE expects a revised proposal by late next week. Once URS includes the changes, the USACE can then manipulate the model to see what

impact the upper basin has on the lower basin. The USACE anticipates award of contract by late January/early February 2015. The cost update is expected to take one (1) year because it ties into the project cost cap. Contract cost is expected to be over \$ 1 million.

Ms Michaels questioned if the USACE expects to utilize all authorized funding for the GRR? Mr Greco indicated they will use the funds in the future. Once URS updates the total project costs to 2015 cost level, the USACE will be able to determine when they will be at the cap.

## **Bound Brook**

LOMR (letter of map review) process with FEMA . Based on FEMA regulations, USACE has to notify over 400 property owners (who may be impacted) by letter. Mr Greco indicated that Joe Skupien (Somerset County) is reviewing the area to see if the floodway can be squeezed so the Bound Brook project would be outside of the floodway. This finding would eliminate the need to contact 400 + residents. FEMA requires the USACE to obtain a levee certification based on the flood plain mapping. If the flood plain mapping needs to be revised, it could result in reduced insurance premiums to the home owners.

Ms Tempel questioned what is causing the base flood to rise? Mr Greco stated the Bound Brook project is built in a flood plain. According to the model, it is increasing the base flood elevation to over 400 properties by 0.01 feet (less than 1 inch).

Ms Michaels . By base flood elevation, does this mean the risk of flooding? Mr Greco stated that if there was a 100 year flood event, there would be an increase of elevation by 0.01 feet (100<sup>th</sup> of a foot) of impact. Mr Skupien's review of the floodway will also be coordinated with H & H engineers so that the levee isn't impacting the floodway.

Segment T (levee) . Project is 99.9% complete. It has been raised and widened. Seeding is complete.

E Main Street (downtown low spot-storm sewer) . Project is behind schedule due to unexpected gas main issues. The pipe had to be re-configured and PSE&G had to shut off the main valve. The USACE had to make design changes and they negotiated with RenCor to provide funding changes to them. USACE expects the project to be completed in late February/early March. Mr Greco indicated that Dale Lubner (Bound Brook) has requested a video of the layout of the pipe/utilities for future use.

Segment R2 (levee tieoff) . Project is expected to be completed by late March 2015. There could be a delay due to any weather issues.

Mr Greco noted that all work in Bound Brook must be completed before FEMA will issue a LOMR (letter of map revision). The notification to the 400+ homeowners is part of the certification.

Ms Michaels questioned when the insurance premiums are due. Mr Greco indicated that October is the scheduled month.

Ms Michaels noted that Winning Strategies is trying to coordinate a meeting with new Congresswoman (Bonnie Watson Coleman) to review the project areas. She will notify the GBFCC of the date/time.

Wetlands mitigation (credits) . The USACE is advertising for qualifications and costs from two (2) mitigation banks (Wyckoff Mills & Cranbury). They anticipate quotes by 1/18/15. The credits

are needed to build out Segment B. The USACE expects to use the wetland mitigation bank for future use due to issues with other projects. The Manville site (Round Valley) has been discussed to use as a possible mitigation site.

## **Middlesex**

Segment B1 (O & M manual) . Project is essentially complete. Final punchlist items remain and the final as-built drawing requires revisions from the architect.

Chairman Murray noted that the Middlesex sign (north side of bridge) needs to be reinforced. Mr Greco will send an email to address the issue.

Mr Greco noted that final submission of as-builts and operation of maintenance manuals for Segment B1 are expected by mid January 2015. He will get an update from their construction department by next week.

Mr Greco was advised by Middlesex County that Middlesex will take over the O&M services on 3/20/15. The final O&M manual has been issued to them.

Segment B2 (floodwall) . The USACE has commenced condemnation procedures. They expect to award by August 2015. With the condemnation procedures, the award process may take upwards of a year. Ms Michaels and Chairman Murray indicated it may be less since it is Federal project. Mary Daley is researching the timeline.

Chairman Murray noted that out of 8 properties one (1) owner said yes, two (2) are awaiting a re-design (USACE is removing the easements), two (2) are condemned and three (3) have not responded. Ms Daley will be re-contacting the non-responsive homeowners. Chairman Murray asked to be advised of any feedback. At that point, the Mayor can be involved.

Mr Sweeney questioned how much of the B2 design work is done. Mr Greco stated that it is 95% complete. The USACE needs some ATR (agency technical reviews) and NJDEP LURP has to provide permits.

Mr Greco noted that some of the property owners have requested details of the appraisals that they were given. Government regulations don't allow details to be provided. Ms Daley advised the homeowner to obtain an independent appraiser. The USACE's Baltimore District Counsel office is handling whether the details can be provided.

Segments B3 & B4 - Jacobs Engineering anticipates providing preliminary plans/specs by 1/19/15. Once the USACE reviews the plans, Jacobs will have to incorporate USACE comments. NJDEP will also review the plans/specs. Jacobs will issue local co-op sheets (real estate) and provide NJDEP with the permit package by early February 2015. Jacobs will identify what easements USACE will need for B3 & B4. The only sliver of property that would be needed is owned by a mechanic shop. With no issues, USACE expects to award B3 in 2015.

Ms Michaels questioned what the cost is for B3? Mr Greco stated it will be \$15-20 million. He noted that the USACE has \$4 million in carryover, \$11 million from 2015 budget and \$4million of non-Federal funds. If B2 can't be awarded, they will skip to B3. The USACE won't have the real estate issues with B2 as they will with B3 & B4. There are 17 properties in B4. Five (5) of the properties will have to be bought out because of access to the floodwall site. He noted that Jacobs AE has been given the locations of the 5 properties to confirm or change locations and the impact they will have. Mr Greco discussed the various properties that will be impacted.

Ms Michaels questioned how long it will take to complete B3: Mr Greco indicated it will be 2 years of construction. If B2 is completed first, it would give a 40 year level of protection. Without B2 in place, it will only give a 10 year level of protection. He also noted that USACE's real estate is working to identify the B3 & B4 property owners. USACE anticipates some issues with B4 properties with regard to acquiring easements and removal of some garages. Mr Greco toured the CHBD area and noted the B2 & B4 areas are the most difficult areas to put a levee in due to the tightness.

Mr Sweeney questioned the MCI line and municipal sewer line. Mr Greco noted that Jacobs Engineering has seen the area and is aware of where the MCI line is. Jacobs will coordinate with MCI in relocating the line. Once the design is completed, MCI can be called for test pits to be done. Mr Sweeney indicated that Middlesex is coordinating with Jacobs regarding the sewer line.

Mr Greco also noted the USACE is moving ahead with the survey and geo technical engineering work for Segment H. Segment B runs into the landfill. Behind library there is the recycling center and B3 levee ends just beyond the recycling center. The landfill has to be cleaned out by 2019. They anticipate all of Segment B to be completed by 2021. He indicated the USACE has allocated funds for Segment H. Ms Michaels questioned who is responsible for the clean-up. Mr Greco noted FUSRAP will be doing the clean-up.

292 Greenbrook Rd . Mr Greco noted that USACE has purchased the property and the oil tank has been removed by the property owner. Chairman Murray suggested that the utilities should be shut off due to cold weather and the property being unoccupied.

Jefferson Ave Bridge (raising) . The USACE is scheduled to initiate advertisement of the bridge removal/raising & the emergency access road by February 2015 and award contract by April 2015. NJDOT questioned whether they have jurisdiction as it is a tri-county bridge. Chairman Murray noted that monthly inspections are being done due to concern that the bridge is a superstructure. If the bridge is deemed deteriorated, it will be shut down.

### **Upper Basin**

Mr Greco stated there was a conference call with the North Atlantic division and USACE headquarters regarding the USACE plan to proceed with the LRR/GRR. Mr Greco advised USACE headquarters that it is their intention to move forward with the LRR (limited reevaluation report) and have a public scoping meeting to obtain approval with the Hopeway & Skytop detention sites. If they receive massive opposition they will have to convert to a GRR. Headquarters will have to advise whether they can proceed with an LRR or GRR.

Chairman Murray suggested approaching the issue as to whether they are buildable and then whether they are willing participants before making a decision to continue. Mr Greco indicated that USACE has to determine if it is engineering & environmentally feasible. They have toured the area several times (along with the GRR) and have determined there have been no changes. Plans as currently envisioned can still be built. The H&H needs to be reviewed and a more detailed engineering/environmental analysis is needed. Both of these will entail an LRR. Mr Greco is waiting for an answer from USACE headquarters.

Ms Michaels noted that members of Congress have been advised that those areas cannot be used. Mr Greco stated it is uncertain whether those areas can or cannot be used. Their findings have indicated there have been no changes since the late 90s. Areas that may be used would not impact the buildings that were already built. Ms Michaels noted they were advised that the removal of the Torricelli amendment indicated they were not allowed to look at

anything in the upper basin. Congressman Lance was the primary objector and is still concerned as is Berkley Heights. Mr Greco informed USACE headquarters there has been a change in the political structure. Removal of the Torricelli amendment allows them to investigate whether they can construct a detention basin at Skytop. It is their intention to investigate before going to a GRR.

Ms Michaels . Does any new construction in the lower basin affect what is intended to be done in the upper basin? Mr Greco indicated no but they need to have the H&H model to see when changes are made as to how it may affect the lower basin. Based on current information, the USACE has determined that what is being built in Segment B will be okay. Starting with Segments C, H & D could affect what will be built in the upper basin. The USACE needs to move forward with at least an LRR along with a PMP (project management plan). The PMP is being reviewed USACE in-house and they expect to provide it to NJDEP by late January. If Connell or Berkley Heights objects, the USACE will have to look at other areas and will then require a GRR. There is a cost share for LRR (75/25) and GRR (50/50). Chairman Murray noted there is an approved plan with no restrictions. It will be necessary to consider if going to other areas is feasible at this time.

Ms Michaels noted that a trip to Washington DC is being considered in February/March. She also questioned if a meeting with USACE headquarters could be considered to lend support to the LRR request. Mr Greco will contact his management and will advise.

QUESTIONS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None.

QUESTIONS FROM MIDDLESEX COUNTY

None.

NJ DEP

No report.

GBFCC ENGINEER

No report.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

Chairman Murray thanked Green Brook Municipal Building for the use of their facility and their continued support of the GBFCC.

Listed are the GBFCC meeting dates:

**2014**

**March – Middlesex Public Library, 1300 Mountain Ave**

**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: 9:05 PM