

**GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: Middlesex Public Library  
Middlesex

DATE: March 4, 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	Theodore Bassman . Scotch Plains
Bill Crosby . No Plainfield	Alice Tempel . South Plainfield
John Sweeney-Middlesex Boro	Paul Woska . Borough of Middlesex
Frank McArdle . North Plainfield	John Vidal . Borough Middlesex
Richard O'Connor-Engineer, GBFCC	Richard Jacobus-Twp of Green Brook
Mark Hardenburg . Twp of Piscataway	Ute Biedermann . Borough of Middlesex
Dave Pattson . Twp of Green Brook	Robert Greco . USACE (via phone)
Tony Prantatelli - Bound Brook	

CORRESPONDENCE

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

MINUTES

The minutes of the 01/07/15 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 January & February. Bills for the months of January & February were approved for payment. Copies are available for inspection upon request.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

No report.

NEW BUSINESS

No report.

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Chairman Murray reported with Mr Greco via phone as follows:

Chairman Murray noted his reporting is taken from a continuing document provided by Mr Greco at the monthly coordination meeting.

Cost update . A revised proposal was received from AECOM (formerly URS) on February 12, 2015 and award is expected in March 2015. Mr Greco indicated this proposal was needed to

update the LRR. He also noted the GBFCC would be receiving the LRR PMP by the end of the week. Chairman Murray stated that information on the report and updates will assist in determining revised costs in the lower basin as future work continues.

FY16 Presidential Budget . \$7.5 million has been allocated to the USACE projects which are less than the 2015 allocation of \$15 million. There were real estate acquisitions issues in project segments that slowed down the project and resulted in less funding being allocated.

Chairman Murray & Mr Crosby will be going to Washington, DC to meet with two US Senators, Representative Coleman and Congressman Lance to request support for additional funding. Congressman Lance's office is also setting up a meeting with USACE headquarters to discuss same. Mr Greco added that USACE may request where/how quickly the funds will be obligated. He also noted that Segments B2 & B4 are the issue due to the real estate acquisitions.

Segment H - Mr Greco stated the USACE is looking ahead and has a contractor who will be obtaining surveys of the levee and locating/taking borings of the levee. He noted there also is a bridge raising at that segment.

Chairman Murray advised the new attendees that Segment B1 involves the bridge, pump station, levees and floodwalls at Sebrings Mill. Segment B2 is adjacent to B1 that affects 7 property owners who are in negotiations with the USACE to obtain temporary & permanent construction easements. As a result, residents in the B1 area only have a 10 year level of protection. With B2 is complete, they will have a 40 year level of protection. It is imperative to those area residents that the project moves along. Some residents have retained attorneys and some have chosen demolition of their properties.

Segment B3 is the next segment (which is not sequential) to be built. It is located behind the library that ends near a storage area by B5. Most of the property is Middlesex Boro property. Mr Greco added that the USACE has pushed the floodwall adjacent to the garage and closure structure. The floodwall will be pushed into B4. Chairman Murray indicated that until the pump station is operational (behind the library), the loop cannot be closed between here and Sebrings Mill Bridge because water has to have a way of getting out. The pump station has to be built here before it can be closed off and allow a continuous levee/floodwall system from here to Sebrings Mill Bridge.

Mr Greco added that when B1 thru B4 is completed there will be an approximate 100 year level of protection. The USACE has to tieoff into the Middlesex Boro land site. Due to radiation contamination, a cleanup by FUSRAP needs to be done. Middlesex Boro is responsible for cleanup of other areas on that site and sample data will need to be provided to the USACE. It appears the cleanup will not be completed until 2019. He added that this cleanup schedule should comply with the completion of B1 by USACE.

Chairman Murray noted there are elements of B3 (pump station) and B4 (closure gate/floodwall) that are expensive to build due to the real estate acquisitions. These acquisitions are necessary based on visual observations and the close proximity to the stream.

## **Bound Brook**

LOMR (letter of map review) . USACE & FEMA are in the process of a levee evaluation that is necessary to obtain FEMA certification. This includes a conditional letter of map review and a letter of map revision which is necessary to reduce/waive flood insurance for the affected property owners.

Segment T (levee) . It was necessary to raise the levee due to post Katrina standards. Work is substantially complete. The USACE is working with the County to install an access ramp on the wet side of the levee. This would involve a modification with the contractor.

Downtown low spot-storm sewer/Segment R2 tieoff . This is a structure that will span the railroad tracks and give additional protection in that area. Construction completion is anticipated for April 2015.

Wetlands mitigation (credits) . The USACE needs 2 credits (1credit = 1 acre) of wetlands mitigation for Segment B. They have identified a Cranbury site that is operated by Green Vest. Currently, Green Vest only has a ½ acre available. They are creating an additional element (weather dependent) that would provide the total credits needed. When the Green Vest site is available, they will submit plans to NJDEP LURP to be reviewed for approval. When approved, the USACE can then continue with the project.

## **Middlesex**

Segment B1 (Sebrings Mill) . Final punchlist items are being addressed by the contractor (Montana) at the bridge/pump station. Final as built drawings were provided by the contractor. URS (construction engineer) & USACE are reviewing them to confirm that all comments were incorporated in the final as-builts. The pump station is operational and 100% complete. The contractor is also working with Middlesex County to obtain information needed to program the alarms, etc.

Segment B2 (floodwall) . Plans were provided by AECOM in late January 2015. They have been sent to NJDEP for review & approval. This process can be a 60-90 day process. Mr Greco noted that URS was coordinating a pre-application meeting with NJDEP LURP & USACE.

Chairman Murray noted that out of 8 properties two (2) owners have signed agreements to sell, two (2) are in the process of condemnation, one (1) is forthcoming with condemning, two (2) have agreed to sign offers and one (1) is close to signing an offer. USACE legal counsel has met with the questionable homeowners and Ms Daley will be providing their decisions to Mr Greco.

Segments B3 & B4 . 65% of the preliminary plans/specs were submitted for review on January 23, 2015. The DQC (district quality control) is taking place. The AE is addressing comments and is now waiting for structure design comments that are expected to be complete by March 9, 2015. The AE will then provide the 90% plans/specs to USACE. These plans will include real estate sheets identifying the impacts on B3 & B4 properties. Ms Daley will engage negotiations with the B3 & B4 property owners and have the properties appraised. USACE will then meet with the owners to provide them with the appraisal process results. Segment B4 (Middlesex) does not have as many property owners as B3 has.

Mr Sweeney . Questioned if the USACE has adjusted the ~~B~~+segments so that B3 is now south of the original location (going beyond upstream). Mr Greco stated that he and Matt Embetholtz had a conference call with Jacobs Engineering. It was thought that B3 would include the closure structure but determined that the floodwall that ties into the structure on the south side will require (as a temporary construction easement) space up to the bay doors of the garage. This will be a real estate issue and the USACE needs to readily obligate an award on B3. For the USACE to move quickly on B3, it is best to stay on the Middlesex Boro side at this time. Mr Greco will provide a copy of the plan at the next PDT meeting.

Jefferson Ave Bridge (raising) Mr Greco stated the USACE is going to utilize a small business sub-contractor (Dilorio) provided from their database. Solicitation of the contract is going out this month and USACE expects the return of proposal by April and award of contract in May 2015. The project will include bridge raising and an emergency access driveway to the school.

Chairman Murray . When does the USACE anticipate availability of the plans and could a copy be provided to school officials? Mr Greco noted that he will provide plans to school officials.

### **Upper Basin**

Mr Greco reported that a draft of the LRR and a project management plan which identifies the costs/tasks has been prepared for review by NJDEP, Somerset County & GBFCC. USACE headquarters believes the LRR should be a GRR. Mr Greco is releasing the LRR PMP for review with a caveat that it could change based on a decision by USACE headquarters. The LRR PMP draft will be available by March 9, 2015.

Mr McArdle . Should Union County be included in the report distribution? Mr Greco stated he will have an answer at the PDT meeting. Preliminary discussions concluded they will wait until the final LRR or GRR is available to give to Union County.

### **QUESTIONS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

None.

### **QUESTIONS FROM MIDDLESEX COUNTY**

None.

### **NJ DEP**

No report.

### **GBFCC ENGINEER**

No report.

### **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Tony Pranzatelli (Bound Brook) . What is stop log structure? Chairman Murray noted that due to a limited amount of real estate at the railroad tracks, a levee is built up along the tracks. With the levee having nothing to tie into, it leaves an area for water to come into. Basically, it is a metal plate log system that goes across the track and slides in to provide a buffer that tie into the levee on either side. Mr Greco used the location of the stop log structure in Bound Brook (east of the Brook industry site) and the Conrail spur line ties into the NJ Transit Raritan Valley line as an example. These structures prevent water from flanking the project at its maximum heights (i.e. 150 year design level).

Mr Greco noted that Rencor (contractor) will have to schedule an exercise to show Somerset County the installation process of a stop log structure. USACE anticipates the test run to be done in late March/early April.

Question . Would a stop log kick in at approximately 36-37 foot river rise? Mr Greco noted that it would have to be an event similar to Hurricane Irene (approx. 42 feet).

Question . When will the LOMR/CLOMR be completed and signed off by FEMA? Mr Greco indicated the CLOMR becomes available 3 months after the project is completed. The CLOMR

which includes all as-builts and O&M manual is under review by FEMA now. LOMR\$ anticipated availability is September or October.

John Vidal (Middlesex Boro) - Is it feasible to continue living in Middlesex Boro despite the required flood insurance and will there be any relief that properties will be removed from the flood map? Chairman Murray explained the magnitude of the necessary flood control elements necessary to revise the flood mapping and the funding restrictions for the Middlesex Boro area and the projected schedule. It was further noted that each element constructed may afford property owners an enhanced level of protection but that until all work in the area was completed the flood mapping cannot be revised and insurance rates adjusted. Mr McArdle noted that it could be a 15 year plus window before any relief to flood insurance rates might be available.

Richard Jacobus (Green Brook) . He suggested that GBFCC have maps available for viewing at the meetings. Chairman Murray indicated there are full size maps that can be viewed in town hall that depicts each segment from Bound Brook to Berkley Heights.

Mr Jacobus - questioned the low side of Rock Ave in North Plainfield. Chairman Murray noted there are some areas that have individual buyouts and some that are not. He stated that where there is enough real estate a levee would be built. Where there is not enough real estate, a floodwall is built; where there is a low spot, a pump station is installed to pump the water into the stream.

Mr Jacobus . Will there will be any berms being built on the Green Brook side (Rock Ave to Jefferson and down to Washington)? Chairman Murray stated yes and it would continue past Jefferson Ave onto the Water Company property to Washington Ave.

Mr Jacobus . Will the bridge be eliminated? Chairman Murray stated yes.

Mr Jacobus . He believes there isn't enough property to build a floodwall in that area (Dunellen/Plainfield). Chairman Murray indicated there is one (1) buyout. The other backyards are deeper off of the Jefferson Ave side. On the Dunellen side, there will be a floodwall because there is not enough property. On the west side, it will become a levee.

Commissioner Mark Hardenburg . Is it possible to have a larger map to view at the meetings? Chairman Murray said yes. Due to the various areas involved, he will provide maps of the segments that are currently under review/construction.

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

Chairman Murray also thanked Mrs Sweeney for providing the delicious cookies at the meeting.

Listed are the GBFCC meeting dates:

**2015**

**May 6 – North Plainfield**

**July 1 – Scotch Plains**

**August 1 – American Legion Gazebo (behind Middlesex Library) 9:30 am**

**September 2 – Middlesex County Planning**

**November 4 - Plainfield**

A motion was made and approved to adjourn.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:05 PM