

**GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: North Plainfield

DATE: June 6, 2018

MEETING CONVENED: 7:30PM

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard O'Connor - Engineer, GBFCC
Theodore Bassman . Scotch Plains
Raymond S. Murray . GBFCC Chairman
Mark Hardenburg . Piscataway
Rob Zucker . Winning Strategies
Alice Tempel . South Plainfield

Robert Greco . USACE
George Ververides -Middlesex Cty Planning
John J. Sweeney - Middlesex
Paul Woska . Middlesex
Pedro Estevez . Plainfield

MINUTES

The minutes from the April 2018 meeting were approved. A copy of the approved minutes is available on the GBFCC website.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Out-going bills to our consulting engineer Grotto Engineering, our secretary Tina Totten and our public relations firm Winning Strategies were examined by finance committee and found to be proper. Motion was made for bills to be paid. Motion carried.

Most municipalities, and Somerset county, have paid their bills. The only two outstanding invoices are for Middlesex County & Union County. Have received vouchers for both, so money should soon follow.

CORRESPONDENCE

None to be reported. Some internal emails & correspondence amongst team.

The GBFCC maintains a correspondence file that is available for inspection as may be necessary and upon request.

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS - Robert Greco, Project Manager.

Cost Change Control Board (CCCB): Still awaiting a reschedule date for the meeting which was originally scheduled for March 15th.

Operations and Maintenance: Friday morning will be meeting over by Segment R2 pump station in Borough of Bound Brook, with Somerset County and representatives from Engineering in the NY District. They will be inspecting the pump station and ring wall, which appears to have separated and shifted, to make determination of how to correct.

Construction status:

Segment B2 - Floodwall

- Levee notch, which was raised, is about 98% complete.
- Painted on top & seeding is done - just need the grass to grow.
- The ramp, at the request of Somerset County, was built down below. Also, a boat/equipment ramp was built to get out to the stream.
- Giving a modification to CMS to build a cat walk on the other side of segment B floodwall where it drops off drastically.
- Project will be substantially completed by June 29, 2018 which is ahead of the contract completion date.

Segment B3 - Floodwall, pump station, temp levee tie off

- Same progress as above.
- All grass seeding, and planting completed.
- Safety railing has been installed around pump station platform.
- Working on staining the floodwall. Had trouble matching color.
- Have to pave around American Legion; within next 2-3 weeks. Needed a modification to the contract to do that. We used the Legion side because the Borough did not allow us to use their side.
- Roadway entrances on both sides of Middlesex Borough Hall will be paved. Middlesex Borough also requested that their entire parking lot be paved. We are not doing that out of our project cost so cannot be part of same contract and we told them that. Difficulty working out payments from Borough to County to NJ DEP. We will pave up to the parking lot and stop.
- Playground. The Borough wants the playground replaced as a project cost. Contract was to remove the playground and reinstall; only to replace if there was damage by the contractor. The Borough says there are posts which are bent. Need to speak with County also. Federal inspection guidelines need to be followed for playgrounds.
- Hoping to have playground area fixed up so we can still have the annual Memorial Service there.

Segment B4 . Floodwall alignment

- In process of acquiring Mountainview Diner on Route 28. The business is to vacate by end of July 2018.
- Same property owner also owns house around corner at 6 Marshall Ave. Tenants are to vacate by July 31, 2018 then we can give contract to CMS to demolish and seed.
- 56 Dayton Ave has been demolished & seeded.
- 6 East Wilson Ave, Middlesex . we purchased that property. Closing was on March 16, 2018. Owners will not be moving out until September 2019. That is fine as we are not building there until about 2021.
- 52 Dayton Ave is under contract. Relocation date to be determined.
- There are also partial properties to be acquired; including some garages. Might be pushback.

Main concentration is the C2; Contract 1 floodwall. There is a property that has multiple liens so that will go into condemnation, so project will be starting on South Lincoln Ave instead. This floodwall (approximately 2,400 linear feet) will cause no induced flooding. The complete floodwall to cost about \$21 million. Will not have enough funds so there will be a base contract of about \$11 to \$12 million; with an option for the balance. Working with Division for get more funds. Only have received \$5.5 million in Fed funds to date.

Segment C1; Contract 1 . floodwall

Intend to award as early as FY19; depending on how much funding we get. Mr. Greco showed the area on a map.

- 60% complete with design
- All comments due from designers by June 8th
- Design to be completed by Sept 28, 2018.

Segment C1; Contract 2 . pump station/levee

- 100% designs
- Sept. 28 date also so this is contiguous with the floodwall

Segment H & a portion of C2

- Awaiting schedule for design
- Will be in early part of 2019

Possibly three other condemnations are being identified and investigated so we can start movement on them. May need to just work around these properties temporarily so we are not completely held up.

Segment C3 & C4

- Have an architect engineering firm working on designs for these sections.
- Intend to have design completed by September 2019.

Segment B5

- Will soon be issuing a design contract this fiscal year to start designing this portion of the levee that wraps around high school.

Geotechnical Surveys / Borings & Wetlands (Mr. Greco references area on map)

- Need the Rights of Entries for private properties to get the borings

Floodproofing in Piscataway Township . non-structural

- 2 houses are being razed & 3 are receiving wet-flood proofing (bringing utilities up to main level). Held a meeting with these five property owners on April 25, 2018. All five want to move forward.
- The rest of structures (about 10) are slated for buy-outs. All businesses / warehouses. We just offer to buy the property; do not give them money to relocate their businesses. The businesses may decide to drop out. If they do drop out, there is no harm to the project overall as they are not because of induced flooding.
- The way we are going to structure this contract is a design/build. We give the contractor a 35% set of plans. The contractor designs the rest of the plans bringing them up to 100%. The contractor will raze the property and make the modifications. We will perform the quality assurance work.
- E4Sciences is the architect/engineering firm that is working on the non-structurals. Executive summary is due July 23, 2018. Will create a mod to contract to bring design up to 35%. Shortly after July 23rd should have design.

Greenbrook Township

- There are also structures in Bridgewater & Greenbrook being worked on. Executive Summary expected January 23, 2019.

- Will evaluate designs from 2013 since hydraulic modeling has changed. Perhaps some houses that were to be razed and flood-proofed, may need to be bought out because they are too low.
- Greenbrook has more commercial structures; may be able to utilize ring walls.

Upper Basin

Mr. Greco uses a map to show areas discussed.

- April 24th had a meeting with the New England district, the dam safety experts. Took them to see the Oakway & Skytop detention sites.
- Just received, right before this meeting, a schedule and cost estimate to perform the Dam Safety Analysis for Oakway & Skytop detention sites. One of the efforts in validation study for Upper Basin is to determine if these dam sites are still viable, engineeringly feasible, economically justified and environmental acceptable.
- Will revised schedule to incorporate these costs and then a decision can be made as to whether Oakway & Skytop remain part of the project. General Revaluation Report (GRR) will still move forward. Also, need protection in the City of Plainfield.

Mr. Murray comments on funding. We are keeping not only the folks from the NY District busy, but also the Baltimore, Buffalo, Philadelphia and New England Districts busy as well. Everyone in the North East should be pulling for us to get money.

WINNING STRATEGIES - Rob Zucker

Congress is moving forward on two main fronts: 1) the Appropriations Process & 2) Water Resources Development Act. We are keeping tabs on that. Should we learn more about the process needing more funding, better to fix now and get ahead of and we are happy to do so if it may be problematic down the road.

Water Resource Development Act is on the floor of the House right now. It is a more expansive Bill. A bill has already come through the Senate Environment Public Works Committee but is not yet on the Senate floor. Once every other year is the pattern for renewing the authorizations of construction, etc. Frankly, the big battle that is breaking out there is less on our kind of flood control across the country, more on the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and whether it is being drawn down in the quantities appropriate for all sorts of projects throughout the county.

I would just note that from speaking with Senator Booker's staff, who handles his responsibilities on the Environment and Public Works Committee, to the extent that we might in the future deal with cost containment questions, there is a desire from rank and file Senators, that the budget cost ratio analyses, that the Army Corp of Engineers uses, doesn't always fairly reflect the actual costs or the appropriate benefits that can be realized. Members claim the costs are emphasized and the benefits are suppressed; leading to fewer projects being done. That is just a general theme of critique among the members.

There is, at least in Senate version of the legislation, a GAO study that is called for, that would have others take a look at ways the VCR formulas and calculations done by the Corp can be modernized and improved. Not sure if it will have benefits for our project.

Mr. Murray interjects that he believes it could have great benefit to our project. Right now, they are using a discount rate of 7%, and that is certainly not what money costs these days. When you take that and extrapolate it out to 2047 .. if you roll that number back to something more realistic in current times, then we might not be in front of the Cost Change Control Board at all.

On the Energy & Water Appropriations front for FY19, both the Senate & House bills were released since we last met and include \$5 million. Staff asked for no less than \$20 million but due to the budget release and the constraints which Congress has set upon itself as part of the earmark process, to allocate more than the \$5 million, and to delineate those funds just for this project, would run afoul to the earmark rules.

That being said, if there becomes excess funds made available, Ray, Bill & I have worked together on report language to characterize the kinds of projects that Congress would like to see the Corp spend some of that overage on. We have an active & ongoing dialogue, particularly with Congressman Frelinghuysen's office, on what language might be possible. Preventing induced flooding is an example which we felt characterized us, but the feedback from the Corp was that language was not specific to us and would not result in money being spent here.

Only mentioning because one of our missions is to maximize how much funding we can get towards this project and to accelerate it to the greatest extent possible. We continue to explore different avenues to be as creative as we can be by working with the staff. There may be additional resources and additional information as this moves down the road later in year. Effort is there to move packages of spending bills, and the Energy & Water Bill is in that first group moving through the floor now.

Mr. Murrays explains how he has been reaching out to the NY District and others within the Corp to focus on language which may help characterize our project in a way that helps to get more funding. It is being investigated from all angles.

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS FROM THE COUNTIES

Union County

None.

Somerset County

None.

Middlesex County

None.

GBFCC ENGINEER

None.

QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC

None.

Mr. Murray thanked North Plainfield for their hospitality. If the grass is growing, the Memorial Service will be Saturday, August 4th at 9:30 at the American Legion, behind Middlesex Library. Should be back on track for October 3rd in Scotch Plains . Ted is investigating that. If the American Legion is not ready, we can use park in Greenbrook Township. A motion was made and approved to adjourn.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:25 PM

Upcoming 2018 GBFCC meeting dates:

August 4 – 9:30 am Memorial Service – American Legion, Middlesex

October 3 – Scotch Plains

December 5 – Plainfield Library