

Minutes

MVC Climate Action Task Force

Friday, July 16th, 2021

Zoom

CATF members present: Ben Robinson (BR), Kate Warner (KW), Tristan Israel (TI), Rob Hannemann (RH), Cheryl Doble (CD), Kathy Newman (KN), Bob Johnston (BJ), Richard Toole (RT), Alan Strahler (AS), Liz Dukee (LD) Dan Doyle (DD), Chris Seidel (CS)

1. Storm Tide Pathways update

CS – Center for Coastal Studies (CCS) in Provincetown has been working for the past year to identify storm tide pathways on the island in low lying areas; there is great precision revealed in the findings; 700 different locations have been included where water will infiltrate under certain storm flood conditions; CCS staff have confirmed many locations and elevations in the field; their GPS instruments provide better elevation data than the 2014 LIDAR data; staff will try to return in Fall to try in hopes of securing access to some private properties.

With GIS data, CCS shows the degree of flooding intensity that in turn determines the extent of flooding in areas across the island; an app will be integrated with National Weather Service meteorological data to show anticipated flooding;

BR: once pathways are identified, potential solutions will be included; an App will be developed for the towns, as will middle school curriculum.

Once the project is complete, CS will try to set up an interactive, online map;

KN: a synopsis of project stages would be helpful, or perhaps one of the potential mitigation actions;

CS: A StoryMap will be a good framework to showcase the findings and recommendations.

BR: We should determine if the analyses' account for Sea Level Rise (SLR).

2. Army Corps of Engineers project report

BR: Given the proposal is regional in scope, it qualifies as a state project. In turn, there will be no need for matching funds; roughly 480K worth of research/study is reflected in the scope; biggest topic is projected impacts of development / carrying capacity, along with and supply chain issues; at the end of the study we'll have some data to help us manage growth and to underpin the conversation regarding degrowth; this study will have relevance for other wealthy areas, as well.

3. CATF role in DRI review?

BR: An MVC resolution was passed in 2018 to take climate change into account during projects reviews, but this hasn't happened to date.

RT: These concerns would likely be best suited during LUPC

BR: LD needs support of the Commissioners to give her climate change recommendations more standing.

TI: we need the facts from a staff member; LD's role is an important one.

KN: it's taken a long time for Commissioners to even discuss Energy; Commissioner Vercruysse is leading a c'tee to examine ways to improve the deliberation process

BR: It's not entirely clear where Commissioners even fall on this issue. Could the Army Corps study show degrowth is paramount to becoming a resilient island? It feels as if Commission reviews sometimes miss the bigger picture;

BJ: the USACE study will provide findings that will enable backward planning with irrefutable milestones included throughout.

DD: there are several models / tools that Commission staff will need to assess and then figure out how to best explain their utility to Commissioners.

RH: It would be valuable for this group to first define resilience. Full independence of the mainland would likely be a divisive/misguided approach.

BR: Climate Change Planner is backstop to Commissioners and perhaps CATF should serve as the backstop to the Planner.

RH: CATF should be on call to the MVC for illuminating data and its relevance to DRI projects, but that does not necessitate a formalized role for the Task Force within each DRI review.

KN: In recent years, MVC has formalized a matrix/scoresheet for demolition reviews? Is there something comparable for climate/energy that could be used?

LD: In the recent Katama House demolition review, the merits of a no-rebuild scenario never even surfaced in the discussion.

KW: there needs to be some sort of underlying, community-wide commitment to address Climate Change; if we complete a Climate Action Plan (CAP), the a great outcome would be a commitment to take on Climate Change; we must first unite in this thinking; let's think about what we can do to educate on this issue throughout the CAP work.

TI: Given a CC Planner has been hired, this demonstrates the community values this role and the issues under their purview; that staff member's findings/input should be provided at hearings and be part of

the public record. Once those issues are explained, the Commissioners then take on their own respective reckoning.

LD: would like to clarify her role on DRI projects.

BJ: Examples of private sector, existential issue parallels in the Fortune 500: Wang Computer; digital imaging for Kodak; 3 Mile Island; this quandary amounts can amount in Dislocation if not confronted; BJ can help with possible or probable/imminent dislocation analysis (ie. Life as we know it will never be the same); we need to organize and align our planning priorities according to this probable dislocation.

RT: perhaps the Field project will be a turning point despite the vote's outcome.

TI: Climate Week will be a possibility for further education.

4. MV Coastal Conference

LD: Registration allows for in person attendance or virtual attendance for the October 4th and 5th semi-annual conference at The Harborview. A Save the Date email will be emailed by Liz on July 20th.

5. Subcommittee reports

Political - BR: Dan's been away on vacation; group has not met in the past month and should reconvene soon

Education – LD: an update will be provided at an upcoming meeting

Fundraising - KN: we are trying to form a c'tee that will be the advisor to raised funds; an invitation to contribute will be circulated by KN; LD: this group will determine if the funding request meets certain eligibility criteria (criteria TBD).

BR: Should we produce a prospectus to hand out to folks? This could be similar to the Climate Change quarterly newsletter.

Will we become a 501C3? Climate Adaptation Fund is THE entity; KN will send a name who to make a check out to the CATF group.

6. Eversource

RH: A couple things have stalled on the Energy front. Eversource has stopped the solar installation at the OB Landfill; the withdrawn Battery Storage System (BSS) project impacts the stability of the grid on the island; should we be intervening in the DPU case against Eversource? CLC was a potential partner for intervenor status given we don't have the funds for an attorney.

BR: What's the best way to move the OB Solar project forward? Do we go to the full Commission? Should we send letters to Judy Chang and Secretary Theoharides? Who is best suited to present?

RT: Rob Hannemann would do a great job.

BR: yes, but we need someone from Oak Bluffs as well.

BR: Where there are other interconnection issues, please bring them forward so the group can compile a running list.

KW: Should we bring the issue/intervenor role inquiry up at the next Thursday's Cape & Islands Cape Light Compact (CLC) meeting?

AS: agreed to take on that task for the upcoming meeting, and will give their Administrator Maggie Downey a heads up in advance.

BR: Liz/Rob, a fact sheet on the issue would be helpful

RH: the OB Landfill is a specific example of a larger problem; communities across SE MA will face this issue; Eversource needs take a clearer position regarding solar expansion; the fact sheet with figures could supplement what Alan already knows.

BJ: Eversource is in a period of executive turbulence, there is opportunity; Eversource brought in a new CEO within the past few months; he has expressed a commitment for the company to a big player regarding solar; the new Senator Blumenthal has put heat on Eversource for them to be more responsive to consumers as opposed to its shareholders; the CEO could be open to a meeting to hear our concerns and energy goals, especially if coordinate an in-person visit with Nantucket and the Cape.

RH: It's doubtful that a new CEO will not change longstanding practices that prioritize shareholder value.

BJ will put together contact info / background info on this issue to share with the group.

BR: first Friday of August is next meeting (Agu 6th).