

## Climate Change Resiliency Committee meeting minutes 4/13/2022, 6:30 pm

### Town Offices

Present: Liz Callahan, Nancy Pau, Elisa Grammer, Chip Wallace, Rick Parker, Mike Dacey.

#### Select Board Meeting & Town Staff views

In reviewing the recent Select Board discussion concerning the Action Grant proposal, Ms. Pau noted the strong opposition from the Town Manager. Mr. Parker, the Select Board Chair, explained that the major concern is that Town staff resources are stretched thin almost to the breaking point. The scope of the proposed Action Grant was so broad that many Town departments, which often have part time personnel, are overallocated with urgent work such as meeting state mandates and dealing with real time crises. He noted that narrowing the proposal to River Road alone could help.

Ms. Grammer said that the Action Grant is far more difficult than the MVP Planning Grant, which she administered. The Planning Grant provided upfront money and the timekeeping (to meet matching fund requirements) and recordkeeping, while time consuming, was manageable. It was difficult, however, to manage a consultant who rarely met deadlines and almost never gave advance warning when deadlines or commitments would slip.

The Action Grant would reimburse the Town *after* work had been shown to be completed, making it critically important to carefully construct a budget in the grant application that breaks down work (and thus payment) over desired increments of time. Keeping track of many different volunteers and consultants would be difficult in terms of ensuring consultants' payment and with volunteers, in terms of recording and reporting matching fund requirements. She said it would be easier to deal with one competent and sophisticated consultant that could keep good records and do good billing.

The committee reviewed the prior GEI proposal concerning River Road, which, according to the MVP's RMAAT analysis, will be at the Merrimack's mean high tide levels in 2030. Tasks identified in that proposal included 1) Community Engagement, 2) Existing Conditions of Shoreline Survey, 3) Existing Conditions of Culverts Survey, 4) Vulnerability Study—with two options—a) Hydraulic Model Flood Vulnerability Study and b) Hydrologic & Hydraulic Analysis Flood Vulnerability Study, 5) Conceptual Plans for Shoreline Stabilization, 6) Conceptual Plans for Infrastructure Adaptation to Flooding.

*It was generally agreed that focusing on River Road with GEI would be a good starting point. After further consideration, the group decided to*

- Abandon plans for the 2022 Action Grant, inasmuch as it will not be possible to obtain Town approval given the available time, it will not be possible to obtain matching funding due to the problematic timing of Action Grant application information in March vs. Town Meeting budgeting*
- Meet with Town staff and ideally GEI on May 11 at 4 pm—Mr. Parker will set this up*

- *Inform state MVP officials of our plans not to submit a 2022 RFR and to try for next year, if we have assurances that the MVP RFR forms will not substantially change before 2023—Ms. Grammer will do this*
- *Work on the grant application over the summer, with a target completion date of August*
- *Seek to obtain matching grant funding at Fall Town Meeting*

### **Other items**

Annual Progress Report: Ms. Grammer said that she had drafted an Annual Progress Report due by June 30 and had circulated the draft. She asked the group to read it and provide any comments.

Other grants: Ms. Pau said she has identified additional grant opportunities. CZM has a grant to promote coastal water quality and habitat. *Towns and non-profits can be applicants. The culvert mapping and storm water management would fit that grant; as well as work at the Pentucket campus relating to the stream running to Merrimack River. If Town is interested in pursuing this (next year, due to May/June) MVPC or MRWC may be the applicants and grant administrator, reducing workload on Town staff.*

*Mr. Parker suggested and the group agreed that we should keep a listing of other grants, their subject matter, and their timeframes.*

### **Approve Minutes**

*The Committee unanimously accepted the minutes of March 10, 2022, as revised.*

### **Next Meeting**

May 11, 2022

### Adjournment

8:39 pm

### Meeting materials

Notes of conversation with state MVP re West Newbury proposal

Slides & notes from MVP webinar

Information about trial experiment with RMAT tool

