

8/26/2020 WN MVP Meeting Notes

Present: Liz Callahan, Elisa Grammer, Rick Parker, Nancy Pau, Wendy Reed, Patricia Reeser

Presentation to BOS--deferred

Rick Parker, a Selectman, noted that the Selectmen will be devoting upcoming meetings to Fall Town Meeting, so any presentation would likely be after that meeting. *Accordingly, the Core Team decided to defer consideration of a presentation to the BOS and reconvene on September 30 at 7 pm* See last item below for GoToMeeting Directions

For a presentation to BOS, Rick Parker suggested 1) presenting a summary of the conclusions from the Final Report, 2) describing the Action Grant process generally (see attached—no due date yet for grant applications other than Spring 2021) and 3) identifying perhaps 2-3 top items. He warned that the Town has little capacity to undertake projects that require administrative support—the most successful ideas in the near term would be doable by consultants and volunteers.

It was also generally agreed that this would be an opportunity to 1) solicit the Selectmen's ideas about projects to pursue and 2) let Town departments know that the MVP process may be available to help and support their efforts in various areas.

Identifying projects—action grant & otherwise

Process: Liz Callahan suggested going through the Final Report's list of vulnerabilities & priorities again to assess potential projects. Here is the list (headings only):

1. Emergency communications and communication infrastructure
2. Open Space Preservation (Open Space, Agriculture, and Forests)
3. Water Supply Development and Water Supply Protection Planning
4. Municipal microgrid with back-up storage (green energy) for emergency shelter and senior housing
5. Improved educational communications around climate change impacts and preparedness
6. Vulnerable populations (elder, disabled, etc.)
7. Stormwater and flood management, operation and maintenance (includes roads)
8. Promote Town-owned electric vehicles and equipment, reduce waste, and increase compost

Rick Parker identified potential issues as including 1) invasive species; 2) River Road falling into the Merrimack; 3) microgrid for the municipal campus

Elisa Grammer mentioned that she made a matrix of neighboring town's vulnerabilities and action items. Potential regional issues include invasive species and water supply, which are concerns shared with West Newbury. She also mentioned that she has joined the Capital Improvement Committee with an eye toward applying climate change considerations to the Town's capital investments. She expressed concern that the Middle Street bridge slowly was falling into the Artichoke Reservoir but was not on the capital improvements schedule—will this be repeated with River Road falling into the Merrimack?

Invasive Plants

Nancy Pau discussed invasive plants, noting that she has heard from someone in Groveland hoping to collaborate on this issue. She said it is important to do mapping and to focus on location and/or species. Liz Callahan mentioned that her husband Jack Duggan, an Endicott professor, worked with a student to

map Japanese knotweed in West Newbury and that he has had positive discussions with DPW Director Wayne Amaral about working on this problem.

*After further discussion, the Core Team decided that **invasive plants are a #1 item** that can be addressed without serious burdens on Town personnel and that represent an area where we already have some resources and information. A subgroup on the invasives issue consisting of Nancy Pau, Liz Callahan, Rick Parker, and Chip Wallace will work on 1) identification of invasives to tackle and potential actions, 2) education for the townspeople on invasives, including potentially a webinar, contacts with the Garden Club, etc., and a socially distanced educational walk*

Stormwater Management

Nancy Pau also raised issues of stormwater management and the amount of land in West Newbury that is being covered with impermeable surfaces, which directly correlates with degraded environmental health. Patricia Reeser noted that additional Open Space acquisition is part of this. This is also a topic that may potentially interest students as the new school is under construction and will add significant impermeable surfaces. Better stormwater management, particularly in new developments, could be the subject of a new Town bylaw. Many municipalities addressed this question as part of Action Grants. Some examples:

- Deerfield got an Action Grant to, inter alia, “Improve zoning and development controls in the Deerfield River floodplain to protect flood storage areas and protect public safety and reduce future flood losses” See Deerfield Ch, 179 Zoning Sec 3720 [Erosion Control](#), General Legislation Ch. 155 [Stormwater](#).
- Mendon got an Action Grant to for “Integration of Low Impact Development Standards into Local Bylaws and Subdivision [Regulations](#)”
- Natick got an Action Grant for “Low Impact Development Regulation Development and [Zoning Bylaw](#) Inclusion”
- Somerville got an Action Grant for a green stormwater study, benefits analysis, modeling, and a Green Stormwater Infrastructure [Planning & Guidance Document](#)

Roads & evacuation

The group agreed that part(s) of River Road is in danger of being lost to the Merrimack River. Also, the Town lacks clear evacuation routes and many roads are susceptible to flooding and/or landslides. This is a concern for capital improvements planning as well as coping with emergencies.

- [Montague’s Action Grant](#) (MVP Grant \$33,750 + Match Amt \$11,250=\$45K total project costs) was 1) an analysis of nature-based storm damage protection to adapt to seasonal flooding that routinely closes a main thoroughfare and 2) create designs & obtain permits to construct a vegetated swale solution
- Belchertown’s Action Grant was a consultant’s “[Road-Stream Crossing Assessment and Climate Change Adaption Plan](#),” which in good measure focused on culverts

It was agreed that Elisa Grammer will talk with her computer science/anthropology major son about a possible cellphone application that would 1) in real time crowd source downed trees and other road blockages in West Newbury and 2) collect data from reported blockages, etc. to identify problem spots requiring Town action. She will also have a general discussion with DPW Director Wayne Amaral about these issues.

Communications in emergencies/emergency preparedness

The group agreed that bad cell service is a real problem that can compound other issues but is not something that can be readily addressed. This issue was identified by some neighboring towns and could be a topic for a regional approach. Patricia Reeser described problems her family experienced with cable-based phone service at an assisted living complex, and Connecticut's rule that non-electricity-dependent hard wire phone service may be ordered if needed for emergency situations.

- [New Bedford's](#) Action Grant was a study of further steps to identify & address climate change impacts. On p. 51 it identified the following steps for improving communications

This action would establish communications protocols for emergency events and conduct outreach with the public on their use.

Emergency Management

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	KEY PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME	COST*
1 Create a promotional plan to increase the number of people signed up for the new CodeRed emergency alert system	Neighborhood Associations Health Department	3-6 months	\$
2 Identify alternative methods to distribute emergency information and updates to those without access to smartphones, including through the faith community, local radio stations, schools, nursing homes, and public housing facilities	Council on Aging Neighborhood Associations	3-6 months	\$
3 Create a "Neighborhood Liaisons" program to identify leaders from each neighborhood to set up alert systems and share resources	Health Department Neighborhood Associations	1 year	\$\$
4 Create an online emergency preparedness and response shared resource center	Management Information Systems Department	1-2 years	\$\$
5 Create a plan to increase emergency management coordination among City departments, community groups, institutional facilities, and residents	Health Department Neighborhood Associations	1-2 years	\$\$

*Cost: \$ = <\$20,000; \$\$ = \$20,001 - \$100,000; \$\$\$ = \$100,001 - \$250,000; \$\$\$\$ = > \$250,001

After some discussion it was agreed that Elisa Grammer will 1) contact Lee Ann Delp (emergency preparedness) and Theresa Woodbury (Council on Aging) to see if they have any ideas or interest in the points New Bedford identified; 2) reach out to Hannah Grinnell to see if WN could have a virtual climate café about emergency preparedness

Municipal microgrid

Rick Parker and Chip Wallace said that we do have a feasibility study for a microgrid at the municipal campus, which was more aimed at using existing fossil fuel resources. They are thinking of an incremental, step-by-step approach of finding additional municipal solar opportunities potentially with energy storage that could over time be integrated into a municipal microgrid.

MVP Working Group FY 2021

Generally, the Core Team agreed to 1) continue as currently structured, ideally with Erin Rich and Hannah Grinnell joining the group, 2) have meetings on at least a quarterly basis, 3) reach out to other pertinent committees via shared membership of Core Team members and personal relationships, 4) maintain a running list of priority items addressed (such as installation of EV chargers) to be used in the

Annual Report on MVP, 5) hold another meeting on Sept.30, 2020 to further consider issues to pursue and a presentation to the BOS

MVP Meeting 9/30/2020 7 pm

MVP Core Team

Wed, Sep 30, 2020 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM (EDT)

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/242444373>

You can also dial in using your phone.

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