

FLOOD CONTROL BOARD
AUGUST 12, 2019
CORTE MADERA TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
FINAL MINUTES

Boardmembers Robert Bundy, Chair
Present: David Bell
Stephanie Bennett
Nathan Blomgren
Philip Carolan
Brian Schnarr

Boardmembers Ramon Garcia
Absent:

Staff Present: Public Works Director Peter Brown
Senior Engineer R.J. Suokko
Senior Engineer Jared Barrilleaux

1. Call to Order

Chair Bundy opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

2. Open Forum for Non-Agenda Items

There were no comments from the public.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (April 8, 2019)

Chair Bundy asked for clarification on the Ebb Tide catch basin/check valve issue discussed in the minutes. Senior Engineer Suokko presented some slides from the prior PowerPoint presentation and explained the situation.

M/s, Bell/Blomgren, and carried unanimously (Garcia absent) to approve the minutes of April 8, 2019 as submitted.

4. Discussion Items

A. Introduction of New Flood Control Board members

Chair Bundy welcomed newly appointed Flood Control Board members Carolan and Schnarr and asked them to discuss their backgrounds and interest in serving on the Flood Board.

B. Review of Flood Control Board Statement of Purpose

Chair Bundy stated he thought the Board has stayed on track in terms of the Mission Statement.

Senior Engineer Suokko noted the ordinance that created the Flood Control Board has been updated to reflect a maximum of seven (and not eleven) members.

Public Works Director Brown stated much of what is contained in the Statement of Purpose was still appropriate given the fact that it was written 30 years ago. He recited a section and stated he thought the Board looks at more than just “flood protection”- it also deals with sea level rise issues, the Climate Adaptation Plan, marsh restoration, etc. He stated the Board might want to think about updating the statement.

Boardmember Blomgren referred to Task #2 and stated the Board could work with staff in obtaining local, State, and Federal funding for flood protection. Senior Engineer Suokko states some of the large ticket items that might come up as a result of the Climate Adaptation Plan would be funded by grants and other opportunities.

Boardmember Bell referred to Task #1 and asked if the Board initiates the Capital Improvement Project list. He would like to accomplish the last part of the task (field inspect). Boardmember Bennett stated there was a prioritized list of these projects that the Board reviews from time to time. Senior Engineer Suokko stated the Board discussed the list in April. The Board does initiate projects that are placed on the list.

Boardmember Schnarr stated he reviewed the list and the reference to tsunamis and stated he needs to learn more about disaster response issues such as community action plans and volunteer programs. Chair Bundy stated neighborhood response groups (NRG's) have taken on the role of disaster preparedness. Recent studies show that the risk of tsunamis from the bay is minimal.

C. Selection of Flood Control Board Chair and Vice-Chair

M/s, Bell/Bennett, and carried unanimously (Garcia absent) to select Chair Bundy to remain as Chair.

M/s, Bennett/Bell, and carried unanimously (Garcia absent) to select Vice Chair Bell to remain as Vice Chair.

5. Engineering Staff Update

A. Overview of Flood Control System

Chair Bundy reported he gave the new Boardmembers a tour of the flood control facilities.

Public Works Director Brown reported the Board had a community forum on May 2, 2018 that is available for viewing on YouTube. He noted he gave a copy of the Climate Adaptation Survey to all the Boardmembers and he would give a presentation at the next meeting.

Senior Engineer Suokko gave a staff report and a PowerPoint presentation that included: 1) Corte Madera's Flood Control System; 2) Corte Madera's flood risk; 3) Flood Hazard Map (FEMA); 4) Flood Map (Our Coast Our Future); 5) Flood Hazard- Mariner Cove & Madera Gardens (1950s-60s); 6) Table 3, Current and Future Settlement, Watersheds 5, 6, & 7; 7) 1970: 10 watersheds identified; 8) Corte Madera's storm drainage system; 9) How retention basins work; 10) 1982 flood devastates town; 11) Corte Madera's Flood Control Statistics; 12) 1980's-present; extensive flood control infrastructure was developed; 13) Corte Madera's Capital Improvement Program.

Chair Bundy had a question about Table 3 and noted there was very little soil on top of that bay mud.

Boardmember Bell asked if there was a proposed pump station for Mariner Cove. Senior Engineer Suokko stated there is one that is 100% designed for Golden Hind and Ebb Tide. Staff is waiting for the results of the Climate Adaptation Plan prior to moving forward on that investment.

Chair Bundy asked if Lagoon One acts as a watershed for Chapman. Senior Engineer Suokko stated "yes". Chair Bundy asked if it could be controlled by the High Canal Pump Station thus reducing the watershed area for the Marquart Lagoon. Public Works Director stated the Marquart Lagoon and Lagoon One are lowered in anticipation of a big rain event. They use the pump at High Canal and draw down the lagoons so they have capacity. The current system gives them the greatest capacity in preparation of inundation.

Commissioner Bell asked about the two pump stations to the south of Marina Village (above Meadowcreek Station). Senior Engineer Suokko stated those were the San Clemente and Big G Pump Stations that feed into the San Clemente Creek on the other side of Paradise Drive. Chair Bundy asked about the size of the watershed for the Big G Pump Station. Senior Engineer Suokko stated it was very small. Chair Bundy stated there should be a way to incorporate it into the other pump station. Public Works Director stated the San Clemente Pump Station has a much great capacity than Big G. Staff plans to do a system wide assessment of the facilities.

Chair Bundy asked if they should separate out Marina Village and Mariner Cove since Marina Village is protected by a levee and Mariner Cove is not. Senior Engineer Suokko stated staff felt there were benefits in going through the planning and environmental process as one effort but this could be revisited. Public Works Director Brown stated there have been discussions about a tidal barrier that could cross over to the

Larkspur side. He would like to keep them together. Senior Engineer Suokko stated the list of projects was created prior to many of the staff members coming on board and they would like to do a comprehensive assessment. Chair Bundy stated that was a great idea since a lot of these projects were piecemealed in the past. Senior Engineer Suokko talked about economy of scale and trying to do as much as possible at once. Boardmember Bennett asked if staff had a “game plan” for adding projects to the list. Public Works Director Brown stated this is a Two-Year Capital Improvement Plan and staff will check back with the Board at the one year point. Staff will reassess the numbers and cost estimates at the two-year mark, move completed projects off the list, and add projects as appropriate. They are holding off on any large investments since the Climate Adaptation Plan will make recommendations. This plan should be completed next year prior to the two-year update.

Chair Bundy referred to Project #7, El Camino Storm Drain Replacement, and stated it looked like a simple clogged drain that might have collapsed. Senior Engineer Suokko stated they recently hired two new Public Works Department employees and he would get them out there to take a look.

Boardmember Bell referred to Project #2, “As Needed”, and he noted water coming through these outfalls has been a persistent problem and should be taken care of sooner than later. Chair Bundy stated check valves installed at Sea Wolf and Spindrift and several other locations have been very effective

Boardmember Blomgren stated the Public Works Department has done a lot of work on storm drains in low lying neighborhoods and he asked if they were getting towards the end of that type of work. Senior Engineer Suokko stated this issue is constantly coming up, usually unannounced. He noted they have funds set aside for this (“As needed” projects).

Senior Engineer Suokko reported the bids for the High Canal Slide Repair were opened last week and came in under bid at \$240,000. The work will start in September or October.

B. Review and Discussion of Flood Prevention Newsletter

Senior Engineer Barrilleaux presented a staff report. He discussed the annual flyer that is prepared in two versions- one is sent to residents in the flood plain and one is sent to those outside of the flood plain. Most of the information is consistent between the two and includes information about how to prevent flooding in neighborhoods, services provided by the Public Works Department, how the community is at risk, and how to obtain more information. He briefly discussed several of the minor revisions staff made in response to the recent Community Rating System (CRS) audit.

Board member Bell stated he appreciated the efforts made to get to CRS Class 7 and he asked how close they were to Class 6. Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated he would discuss that during the next agenda item. Boardmember Bell stated he liked the inclusion of the street sweeper schedule in the publication and he asked if it could be highlighted. Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated “yes”. Boardmember Bell noted the newsletter states that the Board meets every month- this should be corrected.

Boardmember Bennett referred to page 7 and asked when the Board was established (1998 or 1986). Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated he would find out.

Chair Bundy asked staff to list the Flood Board members names and email addresses in the newsletter.

Boardmember Blomgren asked staff if they get much feedback from residents about the newsletter. Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated “yes”- it elicits questions, requests to meet in the field, etc.

Boardmember Carolan stated he found the newsletter on the Town Website while looking for places to live in Marin County. It was very informative. Boardmember Blomgren agreed that it was a good resource for spreading the word about Corte Madera.

Chair Bundy referred to page 1, “Flood Risks in Corte Madera”, and stated “dealing with projected sea level rise” should be added. They might want to highlight the fact that the Storm Drainage Tax, which expired in 2018, was replaced with a Three-Quarter Cent Sales Tax, 70% of which is paid for by residents outside of Corte Madera. These funds are used for storm drainage and flood protection.

Chair Bundy referred to page 3, “How Can I Prevent Flood Damage to the Property?”, and stated it should talk about when a residence should be elevated above the Base Flood Elevation of 10 or 11. Residents need to understand how this works. Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated he would expand the information contained in the first bullet.

Chair Bundy stated staff did a good job talking about prior accomplishments. He would like to see more emphasis on the Climate Adaption Plan and the grant that staff was able to secure. Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated that was addressed on page 7, “Coordination with State and Local Communities” but staff could certainly augment this section.

Chair Bundy referred to “Options on Appeal” and asked staff to perhaps reach out to residents who might need assistance in terms of disputing findings of determination, etc. Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated he could elaborate on the process and procedures section and let homeowners know staff is willing to help.

Commissioner Bell asked staff to add an explanation on how to obtain an Elevation of Certificate, when a homeowner might need one, etc.

C. Update on CRS Recertification

Senior Engineer Barrilleaux presented a staff report. The CRS is run through FEMA and establishes a point system that ends up providing a reduction in flood taxes for communities that satisfy various criteria. He stated August 1st was the deadline for the annual recertification. The Town is required to submit a checklist along with backup data to the auditors. The Town was set up to receive 1,756 points/credits in 2017 and 2,000 points/credits are the threshold for the next step. There is a good opportunity to accomplish some “low hanging fruit” projects and he thinks there are some things they are doing but not getting credit for including some Flood Plain Management Planning and Acquisition and Relocation items. Staff has been meeting with the CRS user groups in the County about sharing resources and taking a unified approach. Senior Engineer Suokko stated this is similar to the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPP program). Senior Engineer Barrilleaux stated working together will create a powerful tool that would apply to the entire County.

Boardmember Carolan had a question about the point system. Senior Engineer Barrilleaux discussed how the auditors view what the Town is doing, levels of effort, etc. He discussed the FEMA B573 document that describes the items, total maximum points, average points awarded, etc. Senior Engineer Suokko stated he would send the Board a link to this document.

Boardmember Bennett referred to the Capital Improvement Program and asked if there were plans to do more slotted drains in Mariner Cove. Senior Engineer Suokko stated staff will continue to look at ponding and flooding as they do the road re-surfacing projects but might move to a more conventional system of storm drains and re-profiling curb and gutters.

Boardmember Bell asked about discussions with CalTrans about flooding along Highway 101 on-ramps and off-ramps. Senior Engineer Suokko stated he will continue his discussions with representatives of CalTrans.

Boardmember Blomgren asked about scheduling a meeting with the Larkspur Flood Control Board since long-term plans will certainly involve both communities. Chair Bundy stated Larkspur does not have a Flood Control Board but they can have discussions with the Larkspur Public Works Department and the Larkspur Flood Zone 9 representative. Senior Engineer Suokko stated staff is waiting for the results of the Climate Adaptation Plan.

Chair Bundy thanked staff for the good work!

6. Future Agenda Items

Chair Bundy stated the following items would be on a future agenda: 1) Update on CRS Re-certification; 2) Report on discussions with CalTrans about flooding along Highway 101 on-ramps.

7. Adjournment- The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.