

Policy Option	Public Acceptance	Effectiveness	Cost	Geography
Increase the freeboard requirement in the 100-year floodplain				
Apply VE Zone regulations to the Coastal A Zone				
Require freeboard on filled sites				
Improve landscape standards				
Establish/increase wetland buffer width				
Establish a stormwater utility for the town				
Create a resiliency fund				
Prepare and adopt a storm reconstruction ordinance				
Require a sea level rise disclosure for real estate transactions				
Public education campaign				

Dewey Beach Climate Change Committee Meeting Minutes for Sept. 8, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 4 pm.

Members in Attendance: Stacy Hannah, Drew Martin, Debra Goldenberg, Rich Soper, Dave Davis

Others in Attendance: Gary Persinger, Bill Zolper, Daune Hinks, Kate Banaszak (moderator)

Administrative Items:

- The agenda was adopted as written.
- No public comment was offered.
- Meeting minutes from May 6th meeting were approved as written.

Discussion of Business:

1. We reviewed and discussed the list of recommendations that have been documented and discussed in the prior couple of meetings. The following are the issues that we as a group agreed should be forwarded to the Town Council for their consideration and further discussion and dissemination to other committees for input and feedback.
 - a. **Increase the freeboard in the 100-year floodplain** – Daune cited the code that Dewey has a one foot addition over FEMA minimum elevation (of A02) that Sussex County also adopted. Both the State and FEMA websites can be used to determine base flood elevation of every parcel based on the tax map parcel ID. Rich clarified that a building permit can only be issued to the minimum requirement and that the town's extra one foot of freeboard could be varied based on a board of adjustment ruling. Drew asked about lot fill for raising level, and Daune explained there are limits but fill is allowed based on code and engineering input of H&H (Hydraulic & Hydrology) studies. Stacy asked how often the levels are evaluated and Daune indicated that she believes FEMA re-evaluates the levels about every five years. Gary added that there's a recommendation in our Comp Plan to increase the freeboard.
 - b. **Create a resiliency fund** – Budget & Finance has discussed and made recommendations over the last several years as possible ways to implement this but will require a great deal more discussion and plan for what and how to move this forward. Will resurrect the recommendations and we'll review and discuss and plot a course. Could be labeled an impact fee and will help keep property values high. Could be a component to help the homeowners impacted by flooding which would help with gaining support.
 - c. **Storm reconstruction ordinance** – review further to identify what this would entail and how it relates to current code. Property value before & after must be calculated to see if the 50% increase rule is triggered for requiring elevation. Cumulative values factor into calculation but we have no requirement in code now for how the cumulative value change over time would be tracked. Gary suggested have someone look further at this and the group agreed it warrants further attention and consideration.
 - d. **Sea level rise disclosure for real estate transactions** – relatively easy to address and work with Marketing Committee to facilitate this. Goes hand in hand with the next topic. It is not likely well understood that the maximum amount under FEMA is \$250k and that only the assessed value of the structure is included.

- e. **Public education campaign** – it's important to begin preparing a series of tools to further the general public's understanding of the problems and what the town is doing to address them. Will combine with the disclosure above and further characterize and map out a plan for moving forward with help from the Commissioners and (at least) the Marketing Committee.

At the conclusion of the discussion, a motion was made by Debra Goldberg and seconded by Rich Soper to recommend these issues to the Council and the vote was passed unanimously.

2. The Committee briefly discussed the need for partnering with other nearby coastal communities in concert with the organizations that will support and assist in our joint efforts in order to properly address the broad and complex issues facing us. We agreed that in the next year, significant progress on this is likely, with at minimum the efforts now being undertaken by ACT to inventory what each of the towns has done and plans to do so that the information can be compared and an overall strategy of how to come together can be determined.

This completes the Climate Change Committee's work for this committee year, and thanks to each of the members for their efforts and we will resume once the next committee chair and members are designated later this fall.

With no further business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 5:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Davis, Chair