



**TOWN OF WESTPORT**  
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## **PLANNING BOARD**

April 21, 2021

### **MVP EAST BEACH CORRIDOR STUDY MINUTES**

Chairman John Bullard called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. with members, Jim Whitin, R. Michael Sullivan, Philip Weinberg, Robert Daylor, Jeff Bolton, Tony Vivenzio, Sean Leach, and Chris Capone and Town Planner Jim Hartnett, Joseph Famely, and Nasser Brahim from the Woods Hole Group were in attendance.

This was a virtual meeting of the committee.

#### **1. Review draft report (East Beach Corridor Vulnerability Study)**

Bullard described the format of the meeting and introduced Joe Famely and Nassif Brahim from the Woods Hole Group. He stated that Michael Sullivan had consolidated some comments from some of the committee members and he would like to see them appended to the report. He stated that Daylor also had some comments and both will be given the opportunity to respond.

Sullivan stated that the report is very well done but would like to bring up three issues noted in his email. He also noted that Horseneck Beach has cobble and DCR has had to clear paths to the water for beachgoers.

- 1.) The use of MC-FRM, which presumably has RCP8.5 built into it, as a basis for any recommendations is flawed because its SLR predictions are indisputably inaccurate.

Sullivan showed a slide showing a projected sea-level rise from the report and the actual rise and indicated that the rise in sea level is happening at a slower rate than the state projections. He would like to see a strong statement showing that sea-level rise in the short term is not meeting the projections.

- 2.) The report contains flawed or unsupported historical erosion rates and representations.

Sullivan stated that there are parts of the Aubry report that are not correct and presented information showing the erosion rates on East Beach. He believes there are three periods of erosion before the causeway being constructed with minimal erosion after the causeway was constructed there is significant erosion and in the third period, it appears that there is a new equilibrium.

- 3.) Inclusion of the “End of Season Cleanup” directed at East Beach residents is inappropriate and beyond the scope of our committee.

Sullivan suggested that the East Beach trailer permitting requirements are not in line with the scope of this project. Bullard and Famely agreed that this would not be part of the final report. Nassif stated that it was originally noted in the report because it was mentioned in some of the public comments.

Daylor stated that the shoreline changes and projections are based on the state data. Even if the causeway was included as an action step, it would be a long-term project needing further study. The work that the

Woods Hole Group put in looking at sea level rise and modeling are from the state and we should not change that. The goal is to provide reliable power and keep East Beach open.

Brahim noted that he has reviewed the memo and will make some changes to try and address the points noted in the memo. Sprogis and Sullivan would like to see the actual to date sea level rise on the graph. Brahim will limit the discussion in the report to short-term erosion rates and will have its own section where they can identify the issues with the long-term rates and use that for justification for further study. Sullivan did note that they are not recommending the removal of the causeway.

Courtney Rocha, Director of the State MVP program, mentioned this study was funded through the MVP program and the purpose is to provide education and identify action items. Then the committee can determine what the next steps will be.

Leach stated that he would like to see the easterly end of the road moved back and provide culverts under to reduce storm damage.

Brahim stated that he would work on updating the survey and get something back to the committee.

Sullivan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Daylor. The vote was unanimous and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

James Hartnett, Town Planner