

## MONMOUTH COUNTY CRS USERS GROUP

### Meeting Notes

July 15, 2016 @ 10 a.m., FEMA Region 2, One World Trade

#### Attendees:

Margaret Murnane Brooks-Monmouth County- [mmurnane@mcsonj.org](mailto:mmurnane@mcsonj.org) , 732-431-7400  
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Helen Cheng - NY Sea Grant - [helen.cheng@cornell.edu](mailto:helen.cheng@cornell.edu) , 718-951-5415  
Charlie Ehret – Middletown CERT Coordinator  
Andrew Martin- FEMA, Region 2

#### Notes:

Meeting begins at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Andrew Martin (FEMA) talks a bit about the mitigation efforts taking place in New Jersey and New York.

Margaret asks Andrew if the County can use any left-over funds from the initial HWM grant for other towns interested in joining the program once the County gets through “signing” the original 14 communities. **Andrew will look into this matter. Michael O. says that the County must also confirm that Monmouth University will continue to provide surveying support after the 14 towns are finished.**

Helen Chen, New York Sea Grant, was introduced to the User Group. Helen is very interested and wants to know more about Monmouth County mitigation efforts. Andrew stated that Monmouth County is the only New Jersey HWM community, though Lambertville is getting close, and it is the largest HWM initiative in the country. Mike expands discussion on the program.

Charlie R. reports that Middletown completed installation of their HWM signs. The town focused on county parks and the state marina.

Andrew asks the group if they would like provide him feedback on recovery efforts. How can FEMA help?

Vito G. reported on the status of raising single- family homes in Neptune Township. Many houses were restored but now have to be elevated. This is difficult for families that have to once again leave their homes for an extended period of time. Lots of progress has been made in both public and private funded improvements. The marina is up and running again. Utility issues have included a delay between the municipal issuance of permits and the utility company response (cut-offs and

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reconnections) because utilities will not schedule service calls until permits are pulled. Vito has been able to rely on his government affairs personnel to assist residents with these issues. **There are some funded mitigation projects that are awaiting sign-off from FEMA to get started. Andrew will look into signing.**

Bonnie says that Stafford Township in Ocean County has 1260 lifts and new permits. She can foresee problems with homes that are being fixed now and being raised later.

Michael O. brings up HMGP money, 4086 disaster. There are 52 projects under the program. Most are twofold. First are the generators for mitigation at water/wastewater pump stations. 5 of these are totally complete. 3-4 are lingering due to changes/design/engineering. State and FEMA are looking to modify some of the applications. He would like them to look into ways to streamline the process for initial design work. Second, there are very preliminary discussions with the state about a much larger mitigation approach that includes an acquisition/elevation plan. We are going to work with state to come up with a plan for raising houses not eligible under REM or riverine. We are thinking about a 2017/18 grant and working with FEMA on a 10 year grant program. Margaret describes the program in more detail.

Vito discusses a specific project in Neptune regarding property acquisition for a proposed subdivision along the Shark River. There are not available funding sources to acquire this type of land as it isn't built upon yet. Joe recommends speaking to Amanda Brockwell at the Monmouth Conservation Foundation.

Andrew asks if there has been concern among residents about checkerboarding effect in areas being elevated (raised-not raised houses in proximity to one another).

Bonnie responds that a big problem is that homeowners are still paying low flood insurance rates. That's going to change, but they have no idea how rates will be going up, so many are choosing not to raise their houses. There is discussion about how this will be problematic at the time of sale.

Mike asks Andrew about 2017 insurance reform. Andrew gives a brief update but he is not sure what the outcome will look like. Andrew is concerned about equity issues a private market approach might create. Brendon believes that the private market will not entertain insuring any property that might flood. One of his major concerns as an insurance agent is that most insurance agency partners do not have enough training in NFIP and flood insurance matters to assist customers fairly. FRE insurance app is offered through smart vent. Helen asks about opportunities for FEMA to work with universities and academic institutions to help agents better understand NFIP.

There is discussion about how there are many mistakes on elevation certificates that could be detrimental to homeowners. Andrew mentions NC looking to establish certified floodplain surveyors.

Margaret asks about the NYC FIRM map appeal status. Andrew provides an updates. A report from third party private consultant hired by FEMA is independently reviewing the appeal and technical data. The

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findings of the report due out in October will dictate FEMA's response and program outcome. FEMA is still looking at the end of 2017 as a target date for adopting new maps. There were at least 100 appeals in New Jersey, of which 90 percent have been resolved.

Joe provides an update on the County Master Plan which will go to public hearing in September and will be considered for adoption by the Planning Board in October 2016. There is a standalone Community Resiliency element in this plan.

Margaret provides a CRS update. Avon will enter the program in October at a 6. Ocean Township and Long Branch have submitted their letters of intent. Sue from Long Branch has met with Pat Griggs/FEMA and Jim Watt/NJDEP; Rumson will be working on entering the program using grant funding from DCA for a consultant; several other towns are considering the CRS program.

Mike mentions the 2016 NaCo Achievement Award. Monmouth County Community Rating System Assistance Program is being recognized by the National Association of Counties as Best of Category for County Resiliency: Infrastructure, Energy & Sustainability.

Meeting adjourns at approximately 11:20 a.m.

*Next CRS meeting: October 13, 2016*

*Location TBD*