

**MACHIAS REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE**  
**FRIDAY, July 13, 2018 - 7:00 AM**  
**BLUEBIRD RESTAURANT**  
**AGENDA**

**Public Comments:**

**Review and approval of minutes – June 8, 2018**

**Old Business:**

**1. Grants:**

- a. Water Front Resilience & Renewal Project Christina
  - i. June 27, 2018 Community Meeting minutes attached
  - ii. River Walk: Westside Trials
    - 1. Incredible Edible Gardens: on hold ON HOLD until sewer project Is finished. Signage pending.
    - 2. Cleaning and Clearing of the Trail – Lindsay McMahon
    - 3. Draft Easement Language: legal wording- Ongoing

**2. Committee Reports:**

- a. Community Engagement For Main Street Transformation
- b. History Tour: Process-
  - 1. Script-Done,
  - 2. recording of first step done,
  - 3. recording second step underway
  - 4. developing app, QR code, & map-ongoing.
- c. Banners & Decorations: Dan Gardner
- d. Paintings - Main Street: On-going
- e. Greenspace/Canopy – Eric Jones
  - i. Grant: Sandi/Gail/Christina
- f. Airport: Informational-Up dates

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**  
***(Second Friday of each month 7am @ Bluebird)***

**NO MEETING in August**  
**September 14, 2018**  
**October 12, 2018**  
**November 9, 2018**

**WATERFRONT RESILIENCE & RENEWAL STUDY TOWN OF MACHIAS -  
COMMUNITY MEETING - MINUTES SCIENCE 102 UMM, JUNE 27, 2018 7- 9PM**

**Agenda**

- Introduction to study and participants
- Map and marker session
- Presentation on background data, flood risk, flood protection concepts
- Questions and Discussion

Powerpoint slide deck available for download at: <http://www.wccog.net/machias-resilience.htm> 20 participants including presenters; 7 requested to be added to email list to receive updates

Who is here? List from Powerpoint - # of hands raised:

- Elected Officials - 5
- Historical Society - 2
- Those interested in Machias history - 7
- Downtown Committee - 7
- First Responders - 7
- Press - 0
- Planning Board/Code Enforcement - 2
- Businesses - 6
- Resilience Planning Committee - 8

Who did we miss on our list?

- Voters from Machias - 8
- 350 Committee - 2
- Total present - 20

Map and Marker session: What do you treasure? – describe and place a sticky note Where have you seen floodwaters? – place a sticky and give us a few details Using a pen: Where do you walk? O \_\_\_\_\_ X

Treasures:

County Court House and Jail  
Riverview of Bad Little Falls from both sides below falls  
Retail downtown  
History along Sunrise Trail  
Helen's,  
Machias River Inn,  
Sunrise Trail

Why protect downtown?

Economics!

Bad Little Falls Park

Center Street Church – historical and community hub

Without downtown we would need to go to Ellsworth (or Calais/Eastport but they will also be flooded) Care about the community: economics, long term growth, natural beauty and tremendous history

This is an area of great history and must be protected. It's also an area of great beauty which should not be squandered or neglected. I treasure Bad Little Falls, the river by the dike, and the amazing cemeteries.

Participants were asked to Think about During Dan's Presentation1:

- What should the consulting team (history, economic impacts, flood control options) include?
- What should the consulting team not preclude, not rule out, not hinder?

Additional Discussion questions after Presentation:

- What are the opportunities you see for downtown Machias in the future?
- Based on what you have heard this evening related to people's memories and/or places they value in the downtown – what should the downtown look like in the future?

Discussion Notes based on above questions:

- There are indirect benefits to the entire community from protecting the downtown; UMM, banks and major employers to the town and region rely on a safe, functioning downtown in Machias
- Agreed – all major employers require quality of life to attract good employees – downtown is part of that attraction
- Focus on use of the water and river, boat traffic potential, can't bring large ships into Machias anymore (Machiasport bridge), think about impact of dredging
- Improve pedestrian access and walkability
- Protect the downtown economy from flooding
- Orient toward the water; capitalize on the beauty of the river
- Historical memory of downtown is important and unique to Machias; it is intact; elders have extreme specificity in their knowledge of our history
- Building and infill (new construction) needs to be coordinated aesthetically with the existing downtown and its history
- Consider design, materials, scale to match that history
- Consider the infrastructure that passes through Machias that is critical to the entire town and /or to the entire County's economy:
  - o 3-Ring Binder
  - o Copper cables
  - o Waste water treatment plant
- MDOT is taking a short-sighted view in their plans for the dike by not considering sea level rise (SLR)
- MDOT is considering SLR through future adaptation; appear to be significantly constrained (from building a bridge that might better address SLR) by historical features on Middle River shoreline, potential for catastrophic failure at single point (clappers) in dike, strong sentiment against loss of land

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1 Presentation Outline:

- Project Purpose and Need
- Objectives
- Progress to Date
- Existing Conditions and Background Data
- Flood Risk
  - Existing FEMA Predictions

- Observations from Survey Data
  - Sea Level Rise Scenarios
  - Flood Protection Concepts
    - Layout
    - Elevation Requirements
    - Design Types
    - Design Example
    - Preliminary Concept Identification
  - Next Steps
- above the dike, potential need to renovate bridge further up watershed in Marshfield, and extreme budget limitations
- We are coordinating with MDOT; they have no formal plans yet; no matter how high they go on the dike there will still be the same flooding risk downtown
  - Q – we are discussing the highest elevation on the dike – why not lower elevations on the dike?
  - A – the highest elevation (12.4 feet BFE) on the dike is very close to the downtown area in this study and, as above, the flooding risk downtown derives from the downtown shoreline that will not be protected by a higher dike
  - Q - Are any other communities considering bringing in fill?
  - A – Yes, on a parcel by parcel basis.
  - We can examine the historical shoreline using old aerial photos and maps; Tora and her students have assembled old photos, aerials, and maps to do this (difficult and not possible to be fully accurate)
  - Many buildings are now very close to the shoreline; can fill be added to address erosion and flooding risk following old shoreline? When the drawbridge functioned in Machiasport the channel in Machias was maintained at 13 feet of depth; now very shallow in many places – cased by sediments from eroding shoreline.

NOTE from Dan post meeting: I reviewed the information published by ACOE for the Machias River Navigation Project. It looks like the authorized navigation project was based on a 6-ft channel depth. The most recent ACOE survey (done in 2005) noted depths in the range of 3-ft, with shoaling in many areas reducing depths even further. (see also map Dan provided appended at end)

- Q - Could Machias re-establish the old shoreline to provide additional land for a bermed structure? What are the permitting issues?
- A – Complex. If there is a pre-existing structure (eg rip-rap) permits can be obtained to reconstruct them but needs to be for structures from recent history; generally, if you are building in coastal wetlands you must demonstrate that there is no other feasible option that will have less impact.
- Q – When is the last time Machias saw flooding as depicted in the FEMA maps?
- A – Water levels during the January 4, 2018 storm approached the Base Flood Elevation published by FEMA. However, not all of the areas depicted within the flood zone on the FEMA maps experienced flooding during this event. As the survey completed for this project has revealed, many areas within the flood zone are already elevated above the Base Flood Elevation. Some of these may be eligible for removal from the Special Flood Hazard Area through a Letter of Map Change process. This information should be used cautiously however, because removal of a building from the mapped flood zone does mean that the risk of flooding has been removed.
- For buildings mapped in a Special Flood Hazard Area, the owner must have flood insurance in order to receive a federally backed loan. This can create a financial burden for property owners due to the cost of flood insurance, and the high cost of private loans when federally backed loans

are not available. That is a very practical implication of this flood risk that businesses are facing and defines the need to do something

- Town of Gardiner is doing similar kinds of flood protection work to then enable businesses to apply for map adjustments and improve borrowing capacity and lower flood insurance rates.
- When the FEMA maps came out the town worked with a consultant to review the maps and identify opportunities for map changes. This work found that the published elevations were generally reasonable for Machias, so an appeal was not warranted. However, the more accurate survey information collected during this study better defines building and property elevations in relation to predicted flood levels, and in some cases could help individual businesses apply to be removed from the Special Flood Hazard Area.
- Over the long term and if flood protection is addressed for the entire downtown that meets FEMA's requirements for protection against the Base Flood and minimum freeboard, then the FEMA maps could be changed for the entire downtown area Final question – What will downtown look like in the future?
- Prosperous
- The river walk is a no-brainer; other communities with the kind of asset the Machias River provides have constructed river walks and it is transformational to the downtown and to the local economy • The river is unique – you can see seals in the water; the falls are extraordinary • Our history is linked to the river