



SOMERSET COUNTY

# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

## SOMERSET COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

FINAL PLAN UPDATE  
JULY 2019

[www.co.somerset.nj.us/hmp](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/hmp)

### APPENDIX I

*Prepared by the Somerset County  
Mitigation Planning Committee*



This appendix contains meeting documentation (agendas and sign-in sheets) for meetings conducted during the update process for the 2019 HMP<sup>1</sup>.

- September 28, 2017 Kickoff Meeting of the PC and SC
- October 16, 2017 Municipal Working Sessions of the PC
- October 19, 2017 Municipal HMP Update Workshop – SRL and RL Properties<sup>2</sup>
- October 23, 2017 Municipal Working Sessions of the PC
- November 28, 2017 Public Health Focus Group Meeting
- November 30, 2017 Infrastructure Assets Focus Group Meeting
- November 30, 2017 Environmental and Historic Resources Focus Group Meeting
- January 10, 2018 Disability Services Focus Group Meeting
- January 13, 2018 Progress Meeting of the PC
- February 21, 2018 SC Meeting
- April 10, 2018 Municipal Working Sessions of the PC
- April 12, 2018 Municipal Working Sessions of the PC
- April 26, 2018 Mitigation Strategy Roundtable of the PC and SC
- November 20, 2018 Public Meeting on the Draft Plan
- December 6, 2018 Public Meeting on the Draft Plan

The PMT<sup>3</sup> also conducted planning-level coordination meetings on the following dates: PMT meeting materials are internal documents not included in this appendix.

<sup>1</sup> PC = Planning Committee, SC = Steering Committee

<sup>2</sup> SRL = Severe Repetitive Loss; RL = Repetitive

<sup>3</sup> PMT = Project Management Team



SOMERSET COUNTY

# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

UPDATE

## JOINT PLANNING/ STEERING COMMITTEE

### KICK-OFF

### MEETING

**THURSDAY**

**SEPTEMBER 28, 2017**

**6:00—7:30 PM**

**SOMERSET COUNTY  
EMERGENCY SERVICES**

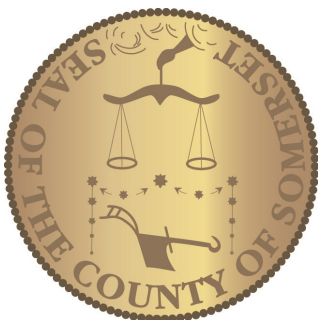
**TRAINING ACADEMY**

**Classrooms D & E**

**402 Roycefield Road,**

**Hillsborough, NJ**

The Somerset County Planning Division, in collaboration with the Somerset County Emergency Management Office, are holding the first joint-meeting of the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Steering and Planning Committees. This event kicks-off a year-long initiative to update the Somerset County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, the success of which depends upon pro-active municipal involvement. Tools and resources will be provided that committee members can use to update their municipal-specific HMP annexes.



Route 27 Bridge , 1999

**ADVANCE  
REGISTRATION IS  
REQUESTED.**  
PLEASE CALL (908)  
231-7021 OR E-MAIL:  
PLANNING  
BD@CO.SOMERSET.  
NJ.US



**Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional  
Hazard Mitigation Plan Update  
Kickoff Meeting**

(Joint Meeting of Steering Committee & Planning Committee)  
September 28, 2017 at 6:00 pm  
Somerset County Emergency Services Training Academy Classrooms D & E  
402 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ

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**Welcome and Opening Remarks:** *Douglas Vornlocker, Director, Somerset County Office of Emergency Management*

**Why is Hazard Mitigation Important?** *Lisa Werner, Emergency Support Specialist, Planner, Somerset County Office of Emergency Management*

**Mitigation Planning and Plan Updates:** *Anna Foley, Project Manager, AECOM*

**Overview of the Current Plan:** *Anna Foley*

**Why is Municipal Involvement Important?** (Benefits of continued participation and how the plan can be used to benefit your municipality): *Christopher Testa, Hazard Mitigation Unit Manager, NJ State Police, Office of Emergency Management – Recovery Bureau*

**Strategies for Achieving Mitigation and Resiliency Goals:** *Christopher Testa*

**Participation Requirements and Timeline:** *Anna Foley*

**General Discussion/Q & A:** *Walter Lane, PP, AICP, Director of Planning, Somerset County Planning Division*

**Wrap-up:** *Walter Lane*

Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update  
**Kickoff Meeting – September 28, 2017 (6:00pm to 7:30pm)**  
 Somerset County Office of Emergency Management, 402 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
ASCH	JANE	WARREN OEM	jane.k.asch@gmail.com	908 295 5531
DRAKE	PAUL	SC EC	PAUL.DRAKE@PSEF.com	908 412-2455
UWEP	SHERWIN	SEVSA	SHERWIN-UWEP@SEVSA.OCG	908-201-4140
WIGGAN	MARCIA	NJ American Water	marcia.wiggan@amwater.com	908 413-1513
Forsythe	Thomas	Bridgewater Township	TForsythe@bridgewaternj.gov	908-725-6300
Ferrari	Jack	MONMOUTH TWP	JFerrari@Police.MONMOUTH.NJ.GOV	609-947-2442
DeSimone	JULIE	Somerset County	desimone@co.somerset.nj.us	908-704-6335
SHERIDAN	JOHN	HILLSBOROUGH OEM	JSHERIDAN@HILLSBOROUGH.OEM.ORG	908-369-4313
KASTRUD	CHRISTIAN	WARREN TWP. OEM	ckastrud@warrenj.org	908 753-3000 x245
ENDERKO	RICH	MANVILLE	MAYORONDERKO@MANVILLE.NJ.ORG	908-581-1379
BONIN	CRAIG	MILLSTONE	MILLSTONECRAIG@LANCAST.NET	908 581 2336
Boccino	TOM	SOMERSET COUNTY	Boccino@CO.SOMERSET.NJ.US	908-291-7809
Novette	Bernard	Somerset County	bnovette@optimum.net	908-581-5900
Weinman	Steve	Somerville OEM	sweinman@Somerville.NJ.ORG	908 672 8365
FOLEY	ANNA	AECOM	ANNA.FOLEY@AECOM.COM	973-883-8562

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Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update  
**Kickoff Meeting – September 28, 2017 (6:00pm to 7:30pm)**  
 Somerset County Office of Emergency Management, 402 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
Utter	Ken	Somerville OEM	UTterguy@OPTONLINE.NET	908-255-3555
BELANGER	THOMAS	Hillsborough	tbelanger@hillsborough-nj.or	908-369-4460
Rossi	Michael	FRANKLIN TWP	Michael.Rossi@twp.FRANKLIN.NJ.US	732-873-2500
Herrera	Hector	Bound Brook	hherrera@boundbrook-nj.org	732-893-8520
CASE	Hans	GREEN BROOK	hcase@greenbrookpd.org	732-968-1188
Mickelsen	ERIK	Rocky Hill	FIREOFFICIAL53@GMAIL.COM	908-910-7137
SHENSKY	MIKE	BERNARDS TWP.	mshimsky@bernardspd.org	908-204-3043
Grandys	David	Bedminster TWP OEM	OEM@Bedminster.US	908-672-3009
Milton	Matthew	North Plainfield BOE	miltonmatt@nplnplnfield	908-769-0658

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Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update  
**Kickoff Meeting – September 28, 2017 (6:00pm to 7:30pm)**  
 Somerset County Office of Emergency Management, 402 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
Skinner	Gra	Peapack & Gladstone	gskinner@peapackgladstonepd.org	908 234 0635
Stager	Melissa	Somerset County NJDOE	melissa.stager@doestate.nj.us	(908) 231-5700
VALENTINE	KELVIN	BERNARDSVILLE	KVALENTINE@BERNARDSVILLEPD.ORG	908 766-5058
Marrin	Brian	North Plainfield	OEM@npmail.org	908-612-0635

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## **Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**

MUNICIPAL ONE-ON-ONE WORKING MEETINGS

October 16, 2017 and October 23, 2017 (Sessions from 2 pm to 6:45 pm)  
Somerset County Planning, 20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ

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### **Welcome and Overview**

#### **Assistance with Worksheets**

- **Hours Log Sheet**
- **Worksheet 1 – Municipal HMP Members**
- **Worksheet 2 – Capabilities**
- **Worksheet 3 – NFIP**
- **Guidance Memo 1 – Outreach**
- **Outreach Log**
- **Comments Log**

### **Adjourn**



**HMP Update Municipal Assistance Meetings**



**Location:** Somerset County Administration Building, Engineering Conference Room, 2nd floor  
20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ

**Topics:** Hours Log Sheet  
Worksheet 1 - Municipal HMP Members  
Worksheet 2 - Capabilities  
Worksheet 3 - NFIP  
Guidance Memo 1 - Outreach  
Outreach Log  
Comments Log

**Date 1**    **October 16, 2017**            (AECOM: Anna Foley, PM)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Name(s)</u>
2:00-3:00	Peapack Bernards Franklin	Kingsley Hill, OEM Coordinator Mike Shimsky, Hazard Mitigation Officer Carl Hauck, Public Works Manager
3:15-4:15	Warren Hillsborough	Jane Asch, OED Director and Chris Kasturd, Municipal Engineer Thomas Belanger, Assistant Engineer
4:30-5:30	Montgomery	Jack Ferrara, OEM (Police)
5:45-6:45	Branchburg	James Kennedy, OEM Coordinator

**Date 2**    **October 23, 2017**            (AECOM: Anna Foley, PM)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Name(s)</u>
2:00-3:00	North Plainfield Manville	Brian Martin, OEM Coordinator Richard Onderko, Mayor and Hazard Mitigation Officer and Vince LoMedico, Dir. of Public Works
3:15-4:15	Bridgewater <i>Greenbrook</i>	Thomas Forsythe, Hazard Mitigation Officer <i>signed up but did not attend</i>
4:30-5:30	Millstone	Raymond Heck, Mayor
5:45-6:45	<i>Bound Brook</i> North Plainfield BOE	<i>signed up but did not attend</i> Milton Mathis, Dir. of Operations and Auxiliary Services



**Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional  
Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**  
Municipal HMP Update Workshop – SRL and RL Properties  
Somerset County OEM Coordinators Meeting  
Thursday, October 19, 2017 at 5:00 pm

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**Welcome and Overview**

**Repetitive Loss Properties and Severe Repetitive Loss Properties – FEMA HMA vs NFIP**

**Identifying Repetitive Loss Areas**

**Other Considerations**

- **Preserved Land**
- **Priority Investment Framework**

**Potential Next Steps**

**Questions and Closing Comments**



Municipal HMP Update Workshop – SRL and RL Properties  
 Thursday, October 19, 2017 5PM



Name	Municipality	Title	Email	Phone
John Sheridan	Hillsborough	OEM Director	JSHERIDAN@HILLSBOROUGH.NJ.OEM.ORG	908-369-4313
Jacq Ferraro	Montgomery	Dep OEM	JFerraro@police.mont	609-947-2442
Sean Devlin	Montgomery	OEM Coordinator	Sdevlin@police.mont	732-236-5403
Raymond Murray	Green Brook	Asst Administrator	rmurray@greenbrooknj.org	732-424-2772
Brian Martin	North Plainfield	OEM Coordinator	OEM@NPMASL.org	908-612-0635
James Kennedy	Branchburg	OEM Coordinator	james.kennedy@branchburg.nj.us	(908) 526-3830
David Groendyk	Bedminster Twp	OEM Coordinator	OEM@Bedminster.us	(908) 672-3009
Hector Herrera	Barns Brook	Branch Administrator	hherrera@barnsbrook-nj	732 873 8520
She Weimm	Somerville	OEM Coordinator	Sweimm@Somerville.nj.us	908 672 8366
Laurie Katin	SCPB			
Walter Lina	SCPB			
Kevin Sluka	Somerville	Administrator	KSluka@somervillenj.org	908 725 2300

# Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

## Public Health Focus Group Meeting

November 28, 2017 (4:30-6:00pm)  
Somerset County Freeholder Conference Room, Third Floor  
Somerset County Administration Building  
20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ

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**Attendees:** See attached list of participants

**PowerPoint:** See slides of presentation attached (with speaker notes)

**Facilitator:** Laurette Kratina, Somerset County Planning

**Note-taker:** Anna Foley, AECOM (via phone)

### Meeting Summary:

- Welcome and introductions.
- Group concurrence on recording the meeting to facilitate meeting minutes and capture of all items discussed.
- General overview of the plan and outreach requirements for County and municipalities.
- General overview of mitigation and mitigation planning.
- This is the County's first use of a Focus Group approach for the mitigation plan update, and the County is excited to get the Public Health Focus Group's input in this tangible way.
- Question 1 – Changes Since Sandy
  - Question:
    - What are some of the major physical improvements/capital investments and planning/policy/regulatory changes that have taken place recently by both the public and private sectors to mitigate natural hazards, harden infrastructure and make communities more resilient?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Many things are not being done because they are costly, and responsible parties lack the funding necessary to implement.
    - Some of the most severely impacted people reside in public housing or low-rent apartments in hazard areas. With limited funds available, recovery is slow from

even one disaster. It is much more difficult with multiple events, and/or in households with children or special needs individuals.

- Power outages have a significant impact on the population with oxygen needs. People were calling EOCs asking for generators.
  - During Sandy, OEMs didn't realize the true scope of the need. A lower than anticipated number of calls coming in for help wasn't due to lower number of people in need, but rather that people had no power to call in, and/or were finding flooded roadways blocking their paths as they tried to make their way to shelters. Sandy highlighted a need for OEMs to go out to targeted special needs groups and areas. County OEM noted that special needs registration at the County is in place, and municipalities are supposed to pull this information each year to use as a tool for this purpose during response phase.
  - Sandy highlighted a need for MRC / CERT volunteers to practice mobilizing resources, coordination of structure and processes of response. Ways to mitigate could include County taking a more proactive role in oversight of municipal planning activities.
  - Special needs individuals living on their own have unique needs post-disaster in terms of response and recovery, particularly limited economic resources.
  - Overall need in county for individual preparedness planning.
  - Top-down planning. Municipal preparedness plans need to be vigorous. Should include and engage residents, employers, in addition to responders and municipal representatives. Actively prepare so it's in the forefront of people's minds.
- Question 2 – Universal Accessibility and Mitigation
    - Question:
      - What are the major difficulties faced by vulnerable population groups during natural disasters, and what can be done to reduce their risks as well as improve their access to community public health infrastructure, healthcare, and other essentials for daily living?
    - Group Discussion:
      - Need for bottom-up, neighborhood level planning.
      - Need for redundant planning – backup ways to get the message out to the general populations and special needs populations.
      - Individual preparedness as a key to overall resiliency.
      - Municipalities and County – look at population to identify needs, such as language barriers. Also, in communities with high numbers of undocumented persons, there is an observed reluctance to get involved or to ask for help during an emergency situation. Reluctance to come forward in any way. Language barriers. Local municipal police, fire, and rescue agencies know where these populations are and can use that knowledge to make improvements in outreach and in the response phase by going to check on impacted persons.

Fear of deportation was noted as a major issue- oftentimes, impacted persons who are undocumented refrain from going to a shelter for fear of being deported.

- Solutions include more of a municipal focus – ways to communicate more effectively, and more regularly, to a broader audience.
- Ongoing partnership since Sandy, partnering with Spanish speaking churches to offer support and shelter staff who co-run programs, offering a familiar face to the community members.

- Question 3 – Floodplain Management and Riparian Protection

- Question:

- What are some high-priority area-wide and site-specific actions that Somerset County and its municipalities can take to leverage resources and maximize opportunities to improve floodplain management, reduce flood risks and strengthen flood resiliency?

- Group Discussion:

- Problem = development, urbanization
      - Green Infrastructure will help mitigate more nuisance flooding
      - Reduce impervious surface coverage would also help to mitigate nuisance flooding
      - Acquisition of repetitive loss properties
    - Discussion surrounding the general population falling in line with what local elected officials articulate and support. What the community leaders advocate tends to generally guide the direction of activities in the community, at the municipal level and also down to the general population.
      - Can be good or bad from a resilience perspective, depending on what the local elected official is advocating.
    - Discussion surrounding limited resources of municipal governments to pursue resiliency initiatives (i.e., CRS activities).
    - Opportunities as responsibilities
    - Solutions involving businesses – employees need to get to work; businesses as a key component of the community and having a responsibility to be on board with resiliency initiatives, so look at private partnerships involving businesses to support implementation of resiliency initiatives.
    - Problem: resiliency projects have a cost; reluctance to incur costs where municipal funds are limited. Solution: use demonstrated successes as selling points when trying to drum up support for resiliency measures. Solution: municipalities can seek to link variance approvals to something the municipality wants as far as higher standards, for example, which would be a no-cost way to foster community resiliency.

- Attracting new businesses – resilient, proactive communities in the forefront of green infrastructure, hazard mitigation, etc. will be better locations for new businesses to open their doors (as opposed to a hazard-prone community that isn't advocating or moving forward with these types of initiatives as a guiding theme).
    - County project – neighborhood design concepts for green infrastructure and sustainable design
    - Bonuses could be given to developers in exchange for integrating green design measures.
    - Municipal tools that can foster resiliency initiatives: local ordinances, rezoning.
- Question 4 – Energy Reliability
  - Question:
    - What are the top ten critical facilities for which power reliability is essential, and what are some high-priority strategies for ensuring they can continue to operate in the event of prolonged and/or widespread power outages?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Very significant consequences when critical facilities lose power – impacts can be severe.
    - Need to identify backup power sources
    - Carrier Clinic
    - Shelters – local issue. Many already have backup generators. Sixty percent of all shelters are schools, and most schools don't have generators, Even though it's local, because it's systemic issue, may be inherently a County issue as well due to roll-up of individual issues to the County level. Red Cross estimates of about 250 persons per shelter. Currently not enough shelters if major disaster.
    - Issues of County/State/Federal push down of responsibilities on various levels to the municipalities, where resources (staff, financial) are often too limited to implement effectively/efficiently/properly. Top-down of requirements as linked to municipal consequences.
    - Link of impacts – power loss → water treatment plant down without power → now municipality has a population with no power, no water. Example Manville, air drop of water.
      - Elevated floodwalls at water treatment facility as a result of Sandy
      - Need to think of abilities for backup power if regional grid goes down – need to create micro-grids to bring power back up for more than a couple of days
    - This plan – we're looking for the biggest (/most important) critical facilities on a regional basis. The next update would focus on more locally-significant critical facilities.

- Project idea – solar panels for County facilities, and then look into possibilities perhaps for local shelters at the time of the next plan update.
    - Instillation of solar panels, would require a few components in order to serve shelters – switches, battery storage and only run critical components of shelters
- Question 5 – Protecting Community, Environmental and Historic Assets
  - Question:
    - What can we do to better protect historic and cultural assets, natural/ecological resources and the built environment from natural hazards in the future?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Public Health Focus Group members in attendance didn't feel they were the right audience for answering this question.
    - County suggested that if anything comes to mind after the meeting, please let us know.
- Question 6 – Community Resiliency
  - Question:
    - What are some key adaptation strategies and best practices that Somerset County, its municipalities, residents, businesses and others can implement to become more resilient when faced with the impacts of climate change such as more frequent and severe storms; longer, hotter summers; wet and dry spells; etc.?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Moving elderly people immediately before/during/after a hazard event often causes long-term health impacts. There is a need to find solutions that will limit or eliminate the need for movement of elderly persons.
    - Using various computer system tools to identify breakpoints in power supply fosters response in that the need for boots on the ground driving from spot to spot to identify problem areas is being eliminated/reduced.
    - Opportunities – municipalities, counties need to have direct dialogue with major utilities to come up with plan
    - Resiliency – lack of public understanding, what is going on with climate change? Cloudy language at various levels of government. Need for more clear and consistent messaging.
    - Local municipalities – resiliency begins and ends at the local level. Municipalities and their residents generally have been observed to align with County messaging and advocacy. County can use this knowledge to set a high bar.
    - Municipal resources limited – higher levels of government trickle down requirements, asking a lot of local officials who don't have expert knowledge or experience to move forward in the best way.



- Possible solution would be for County to consider investing in a regional planner who can support a lot of these functions before a disaster. Invest in a resource that will serve a support function to foster community resiliency in the face of a changing climate. Invest in a resource to assist, or planning initiatives become less effective/meaningful. Give the municipalities a resource they can tap into so they can be successful. Invest in a human resource with the expertise. Shared services.
  - If top-down discussions about risk are clear, in telling municipalities where to focus their efforts, more will get done. Current abstract messaging isn't fostering engagement or municipal buy-in on the great need for these types of initiatives. Need to create culture of preparedness; alignment of local, county, state, federal messaging about the most significant problems and the "government" approach solving the biggest issues.
    - The "government" message (county/state/federal/local) needs to align.
    - Misunderstanding of sustainability – i.e., moving to LED lightbulbs is great, but people sometimes focus on a small piece and confuse the main message.
    - Businesses, small and large, have a key role. Bad disaster → no customers; no employees. They have a vested interest in participating in resiliency initiatives.
    - Mitigate what's being built now, to decrease recovery time in the future.
    - Need to get engagement beyond focus groups and planning committees – difficult, limited resources, staff wears many hats, public disengagement; businesses not interested in participating. Possible solution: get the message to the freeholders. Success will start at the top with what the freeholders are articulating and advocating. Freeholders and mayors supporting cutting-edge resiliency efforts in local communities shows they care to plan ahead. Will foster implementation and engagement and real momentum from the top down.
- Next Steps and Contact Information
  - General overview of remainder of plan update timeline
  - Contact information at the County
  - Attendees were encouraged to please email or call if anything comes to mind after the meeting.

# PLACEHOLDER

PUBLIC HEALTH FOCUS GROUP MEETING

SIGN IN SHEET

11/28/17

# Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

## Infrastructure Assets Focus Group Meeting

November 30, 2017 (2:30-4:00pm)  
Somerset County Engineering Conference Room, Second Floor  
Somerset County Administration Building  
20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ

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**Attendees:** See attached list of participants

**PowerPoint:** See slides of presentation attached (with speaker notes)

**Facilitator:** Anna Foley, AECOM

**Note-taker:** Laurette Kratina, Somerset County Planning

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- Question 1 – Changes Since Sandy
  - Question:
    - What are some of the major physical improvements/capital investments and planning/policy/regulatory changes that have taken place recently by both the public and private sectors to mitigate natural hazards harden infrastructure and make communities more resilient?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Group is aware of:
    - PSEG backup command and control center on Rte. , Bridgewater (regional electric)

- SRVSA WWTP pump station improvements at juncture of two trunk lines in the floodplain on the bank of the Raritan in Bridgewater near the Somerville border. During Floyd, trunk line capacity constraints coupled with power outage resulted in raw sewage being discharged into the Raritan. Therefore, they are now relocating electric components out of the floodplain so the pump can still function.
- BPU, after Sandy, required major utilities to have plans for hardening infrastructure and improving maintenance and oversight. PSEG has an improvement plan that may be part of Jersey Strong projects. Somerville substation upgrade down by South Ridge may have been part of this.
- JCP&L is working on smart grid improvements that will enable it to identify breaks so that no boots on the ground will be needed to isolate the location of the cause of the outage.
- Smart grids include IT and circuitry that break grids into smaller sections to minimize the impacts of outages
- Grid improvements in Warren were mentioned.
- It was suggested that the Jersey Strong list should be obtained, and used to see what projects on list have been completed.
- On the local level, the “old Sandy report”, documents may include some creative strategies for using program funds for recovery. After Sandy, recovery funds weren’t administered by USEDA. Rather, by HUD, via CDGBs, so state controlled funds (not USEDA). Therefore, the state plan was very specific regarding how the funding would be invested. It was recommended that we should go back to the state strategies in the post Sandy report and use that as a tool for identifying still-relevant projects for potential inclusion in the hazard mitigation plan update (i.e., gas station back-up power initiative may have been in it; may or may not have been funded).
- Idea discussed regarding whether the County could work with the power company to have a microgrid set up in Somerville, given the County complex, the redevelopment of the Landmark Shopping Center and the Somerville landfill, to keep the residential and emergency services portion of Somerville downtown powered up.
- BPU authorized pilot microgrid feasibility studies funded through the State Energy Resiliency Bank, which is funded entirely with FEMA funds. However, Somerset County is not eligible (because Somerset did not incur proportionally high enough damages during Sandy, as compared to the nine much harder hit coastal Counties that are eligible). The ERB does not include Societal Benefits Funds as originally planned, constraining access to funding to just the 9 Sandy counties.
- ERB dollars were generally distributed evenly amongst the five power providers statewide. Microgrid projects can only move forward if the power company is a willing partner.

- Regardless of what has been completed, the State strategies set forth in that plan/report can be incorporated into the mitigation plan update. Suggestion to Google 'HUD Sandy Recovery Plan'. The group's understanding is that there is an initial report and one update (or second phase).
- County is trying to incorporate into the plan update the exacerbation of flooding caused by climate change. The County is looking for standards to apply. NJTPA indicated that there aren't a lot of good standards out there. NJTPA noted that use of 500-year floodplain as a potential future 100-year floodplain for planning purposes regarding future impacts from climate change is currently being considered by various academics and planners. The County is reaching out to Professor Jeanne Herb at Rutgers on this and related matters.
- Blue Acres – state investments since Sandy. The County does buyouts, as part of its County Open Space - Blue Acres Preservation initiative, which is administered by the County Engineering Dept., Par Commission and County Open Space Advisory Council. Towns can apply for open space trust fund – blue acres monies to use for the 10% local match when FEMA mitigation funds are being used, or to just buyout properties outright. The County's flood mitigation priorities are to buyout repetitive loss properties, as opposed to funding elevations (i.e., Sandy money through County that was allocated for buyouts in Manville).
- US Army Corps of Engineers- Green Brook Flood Control Project was online pre-Sandy; everything in Somerset County is now done. New flood maps were approved February 2017. The new maps take a lot of Bound Brook out of the flood hazard area so now the homeowners don't need to buy flood insurance anymore on those properties that are now protected.
- Resiliency of SRVSA system is being improved. The design elevation of trunk lines from Bridgewater into Somerville resulted in the discharge of sewage into the river during severe storms. A new treatment plant is being built to address this problem, which will have a capacity of about 10 million gallons per day. In addition to preventing overflows from happening, this strengthens the resiliency of the system.
- Another solution involves reducing the amount of stormwater that is getting into the conveyance system. But this is an ongoing maintenance issue which is sometimes easier to address by expanding treatment plant capacity. Problem is hard to fix – by the time I & I repairs are implemented on one end of town, the system is in need of repair at the other end of town, and so-on. It is difficult to keep up, and very costly. Root cause is flooding of the facility and stormwater during periods of wet weather. AECOM will research whether a project that minimizes environmental impacts from sewage overflow (not flood damage to the plant itself) would be an eligible project type under HMGP.
- Policy recommendation – the plan should promote resiliency projects.

- County will be developing a GIS data set of roadway flooding incidents in the future with assistance from local departments of public works. The County DPW crew has general data concerning county roads, and implements an email incident notification system. NJTPA has GIS of state highway incidents. Utilization of this information in the HMP update will be considered if it can be obtained.
    - Drainage should be an element of the flood resiliency framework, road flooding mitigation concepts should get into the plan, and the framework should identify needs and approaches to take (DPW can offer generalized information).
    - The HMP can promote leveraging of FEMA and transportation funding, and support prioritization of limited funds to address roadway flooding improvements.
- Question 2 – Universal Accessibility and Mitigation
  - Question:
    - What are the major difficulties faced by vulnerable population groups during natural disasters, and what can be done to reduce their risks as well as improve their access to community public health infrastructure, healthcare, and other essentials for daily living?
  - Group Discussion:
    - NJTPA is working on a GIS analysis that evaluates transit assets for special needs populations, senior facility locations, fixed route transit service, shuttle bus service, then overlays FRMA’s flood map to see potential disruptions. This planning initiative has no climate component but looks at gaps. “Access Link” routes, if flooded.
    - It is hard to get to the VA facility in Lyons, even when the roads aren’t flooded.
    - Concentration of senior care, extended care facilities, nursing homes – need to move employees, move food, maintain power, move pharmaceuticals. These facilities have their own emergency response plans. The Public Health Focus Group felt that despite these needs, individuals in a group care setting were less at-risk than special needs persons living alone. Group discussion regarding whether local emergency response plans are approved by any entity and, if so, by whom. Regency in Franklin was mentioned. The question, “ who is trained to look and know if the ERP is sufficient?” arose.
    - Is there a policy on routine testing and maintenance of generators at critical care facilities so they don’t fail?
    - A potential back-up power solution for hospital and critical care facilities is islanding / microgrids.
- Question 3 – Floodplain Management and Riparian Protection
  - Question:

- What are some high-priority area-wide and site-specific actions that Somerset County and its municipalities can take to leverage resources and maximize opportunities to improve floodplain management, reduce flood risks and strengthen flood resiliency?
    - Group Discussion:
      - The group agreed that they responded along these lines already in the discussions of Q1 and Q2, particularly Q1.
- Question 4 – Energy Reliability
  - Question:
    - What are the top ten critical facilities for which power reliability is essential, and what are some high-priority strategies for ensuring they can continue to operate in the event of prolonged and/or widespread power outages?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Atlantic Health and Hunterdon Health have new facilities that should be added
    - Raritan Valley Community College is not on the list but is used as a shelter
    - Carrier
    - LK recounted PH Focus Group mentioned schools used as shelters without backup power, and that OEM had indicated that backup power is required for the shelter designation, so perhaps it is an issue of how long the shelter can operate on backup power.
    - Group felt that power companies or NJ Chapter of Energy Engineers could provide the frequency of outages of various durations, and that could be turned into a map then GIS intern could put the critical facilities over that map to prioritize those in greatest need of secure back-up power systems. Sandy was the longest outage duration that the group collectively could recall.
    - Post-Sandy highlighted differences between DOD diesel fuel and regular diesel; DOD diesel couldn't be used where needed. Same with some other fuel (i.e., jet fuel deliveries).
- Question 5 – Protecting Community, Environmental and Historic Assets
  - Question:
    - What can we do to better protect historic and cultural assets, natural/ecological resources and the built environment from natural hazards in the future?
  - Group Discussion:
    - The County Preservation Plan will highlight some measures.
    - Primary focus
      - historic homes along the D&R Canal and the Raritan
      - meadows along Easton Ave in Franklin
    - Historic sites and historic districts are economic assets
    - Brooke Theater – now protected by a levee

- Washington Rock Park
  - Natural and environmental resources – environmental corridors
  - Wetlands mitigation site in Finderne for USACE project – restoration
  - Species change in plant communities is occurring with climate change and as a result of invasives (i.e., ash trees which comprise about 1/5 of the forest canopy are dying due to ash tree borer; what species will take its place, and will it be adaptable to changing climate? Also the red maple is moving north.) Question is: should projects move forward involving purposeful introduction of species that can survive in a changing climate. Forested parcels slow down stormwater runoff and in turn slow down the movement of sediment. Loss of all the trees on a slope on Kittatinny Ridge in Sussex County due to severe winds during Sandy was mentioned which has still has not recovered, no new growth observed.
  
- Question 6 – Community Resiliency
  - Question:
    - What are some key adaptation strategies and best practices that Somerset County, its municipalities, residents, businesses and others can implement to become more resilient when faced with the impacts of climate change such as more frequent and severe storms; longer, hotter summers; wet and dry spells; etc.?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Climate memo will include a summary of Rutgers’ reports – data from the Climate Adaptation Alliance can be used in the HMP Update (i.e., number of days per year with temps over 90F or below 20F to see the extremes in NJ and how those extremes are changing over time.
    - More frequent and severe weather events
    - Changing rainfall patterns
    - Rutgers Professor Anthony Broccoli’s data was mentioned, which was presented at a recent Climate Change symposium held at Duke Farms, Hillsborough.
    - Mitigation Plan Update will present state and county-level data (won’t be able to drill down to the municipal level yet; that could be done as part of the next update). NJTPA can help, though, with some data they may have ready in time for Somerset’s Passaic River Basin communities.
    - The group felt that a higher level government policy and/or regulatory guidelines are needed to really start identifying some comprehensive and meaningful climate change adaptation measures.
  
- Next Steps and Contact Information
  - General overview of remainder of plan update timeline
  - Contact information at the County
  - Attendees were encouraged to please email or call if anything comes to mind after the meeting.





Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Focus Group Meeting – November 30, 2017 (2:30-4:00)

Somerset County Freeholder Conference Room, Third Floor, Somerset County Administration Building, 20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ

Infrastructure Assets

Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
Lane	Walter	SC Planning		
Rohrbach	Tanya	SC Planning		
Kratina	Lamelle	SC Planning		
MADDOCKS	JOHN	Somerset County Econ Dev/SCBP		
<del>JOE</del> Perlman	Jeff	NJTPA		
FOLEY	ANNA	AECOM		

# Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

## Environmental & Historic Resources Focus Group Meeting

November 30, 2017 (4:30-6:00pm)  
Somerset County Engineering Conference Room, Second Floor  
Somerset County Administration Building  
20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ

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- Attendees:** See attached list of participants
- PowerPoint:** See slides of presentation attached (with speaker notes)
- Facilitator:** Anna Foley, AECOM
- Note-taker:** Laurette Kratina, Somerset County Planning

### Meeting Summary:

- Welcome and introductions.
- Group concurrence on recording the meeting to facilitate meeting minutes and capture of all items discussed.
- General overview of the plan and outreach requirements for County and municipalities.
- General overview of mitigation and mitigation planning.
- This is the County's first use of a Focus Group approach for the mitigation plan update, and the County is excited to get the Public Health Focus Group's input in this tangible way.
- Question 1 – Changes Since Sandy
  - Question:
    - What are some of the major physical improvements/capital investments and planning/policy/regulatory changes that have taken place recently by both the public and private sectors to mitigate natural hazards, harden infrastructure and make communities more resilient?
  - Group Discussion:
    - They are generally not aware of any changes
    - General observation that water surface elevations of named storms are creeping closer and closer to historic buildings

- Observation- during Sandy, a Bergen County museum lost its entire collection when the facility was flooded. Most Somerset County historic sites lack any time of response plan that would result in movement of and/or protection of museum collections, antique furniture, records, etc. from floodwaters.
- Observation – the Park Commission lost most of its records when its North Branch Park Headquarters facility was flooded during Doria.
- The County has allocated \$16 million in grants for historic preservation. One way to protect this public investment is through the hazard mitigation planning process.
- Recent elevation of historic buildings in the Millstone Historic District – flood mitigation
- Overall, lots of elevations lately
- North Branch elevations after Sandy
- Millstone structure elevations (of both private structures, and those owned by government entities or nonprofits)
- The old D’Altrui Farm house in Hillsborough was moved up to higher ground on the parcel outside of the floodplain.
- There is talk in Millstone about the potential future movement of buildings up and out of the floodplain
- A Blue Acres program is being implemented through the County’s Open Space Preservation Program. This involves the use of County open space funds for local buyouts of flood-impacted properties that also implement the County’s Greenway Plan. These funds can be used for the 10% local match requirements for repetitive loss property acquisition using FEMA grants or, if a FEMA grant is not involved, they can be the primary funding source.
  - Money has been allocated
  - Primary focus was Manville though funding is open to any municipality
  - Manville is preparing to apply for the funding
  - The County felt it was important to establish the process so that when the next disaster strikes, they’re ready to move forward using a system that is already in place.
  - County doesn’t anticipate that the program will be active every year but it gets the program in place for the next big disaster
  - Was originally started around 2011 when the Freeholders authorized the program; revisions a couple of years ago to make more money accessible. More specific details can be provided on request.
- Raritan Riparian Greenway, Open Space Preservation and buyouts in the flood hazard area. Benefits for flood storage and getting people out of harm’s way. County stresses river corridors as primary areas for preservation; this integrates well with river corridors as primary areas for flood mitigation (via buyouts to turn the land into open space).

- Green Acres versus Blue Acres
  - Green Acres - preserves existing open space so no development can occur in the future
  - Blue Acres – moves existing development so the parcel can be turned into open space in the future
- Attendees reported seeing a lot more elevated homes recently.
  - Elevated homes concerns
    - ✓ encourages some residents to shelter in place when they should be evacuating
    - ✓ wells can still be contaminated by floodwaters
    - ✓ septic systems can still be damaged by floodwaters
- Sandy has not brought about any known changes in policy regarding well water and/or septic
- JCP&L tree trimming programs helps the County a little bit
- FEMA grants for generators in public buildings – good for shelters. During Sandy, many generators ran out of fuel after a couple of days and fuel supply stations were without fuel and/or power so generators became inoperable. Since Sandy, the group noted that FEMA will not fund generators unless they are hooked up to natural gas (no movement of liquid fuel – benefits from an operability standpoint, as they can run indefinitely – but also benefits from fuel not being spilled when refueling)
- Recent dam removal projects (3 along Raritan, and 1 along the Millstone)
  - Attendees expressed a desire to see more dam removals in the future
    - ✓ Removes the downstream hazard
    - ✓ Makes municipality much less likely to flood
    - ✓ Irene – big issue with dam failure
- Generators at County facilities – the Parks Department has recently put a generator at the Ranger’s office (park rangers coordinate with local police and perform response activities / rescue operations for all county parks property). There is also an issue with a county-owned stable, where generators have been installed for livestock protection (livestock as an investment of significant funds, and it makes sense to protect that investment, though it was acknowledged that protection of human life is of greater importance). In both instances they are hooked up to natural gas so they can provide backup power indefinitely.
- Lesson learned from Sandy – County government buildings were without power for so long that generators ran out of fuel; liquid fuel was unobtainable; and the facilities lost power anyway. Benefits = environmental (spills avoided) + continuity of operations

- Question 2 – Universal Accessibility and Mitigation

- Question:

- What are the major difficulties faced by vulnerable population groups during natural disasters, and what can be done to reduce their risks as well as improve their access to community public health infrastructure, healthcare, and other essentials for daily living?

- Group Discussion:

- Some arguments exist against buyouts; county parks department has heard some feelings expressed by municipalities they are working with in the open space preservation program. Sale at market rate, for lower income persons, doesn't allow them to reinvest in a home in the same community, and many people may want to participate in the buyout but end up refraining if they'd have to move out of town to be able to afford to buy a new home (rental housing may be available but if their interest is to purchase another home in the community, they may find themselves priced out, they may not be interested in purchasing a condominium but would rather remain in a single family home). Lost Valley was cited as a perfect example. The people at risk can't afford to take the offer for a buyout, so they risk it until the next flood. If the person is going to leave town, then the municipality has a vested interest in helping them find a way to stay within the municipal border. Perhaps they can rezone a certain area outside of the floodplain for affordable housing to accommodate people being displaced? Resident wins, because they cannot relocate to a safer place, and municipality wins because they maintain population, ratables, etc.
- Attendees felt it might be worthwhile to explore the possibility of whether the municipalities, to meet a portion of their Fair Share Housing Act/ COAH obligations, could dedicate certain lots for future affordable housing specifically for people moving out of the floodplain as part of Blue Acres, HMGP, etc. This would work for vacant lots to be zoned for flood-displaced affordable housing, as well as existing developed lots being rezoned for redevelopment targeted at residents who participated in a buyout (redevelopment opportunities would be most beneficial in communities that are already nearly built out, such as Manville, South Bound Brook, and Raritan). Obviously, would need to still meet income limits. Keeps affordable housing with people who are already in town. This would also help the town in not losing ratables. Would help the homeowner in that they could move to a safe location and not have to move out of the community. A project to be included in the mitigation strategy could be to obligate certain parcels for this purpose.

- Question 3 – Floodplain Management and Riparian Protection
  - Question:
    - What are some high-priority area-wide and site-specific actions that Somerset County and its municipalities can take to leverage resources and maximize opportunities to improve floodplain management, reduce flood risks and strengthen flood resiliency?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Continue dam removals
    - Continue stream restoration work
    - Protect and restore wetlands
    - Reestablish connection between rivers and stream and their floodplains
    - Reestablish riparian corridors
      - Buyouts – little to no requirement as to what is done once the house is gone. In Manville Lost Valley, they want to do something with the sites that have been bought out. They mow the lots – not advantageous. Perhaps they could team with the County to do restoration projects.
        - ✓ Lost Valley issue – spotty buyouts, not many connected parcels at this time. Need to mow the lone parcels, but some tracts are bigger and would be conducive to some kind of restoration.
        - ✓ Next step might be for the County to encourage restoration where buyouts are done. Restoration projects are not typically very costly (i.e., overseeding with proper species) and can offer flood storage, habitat creation, elimination of maintenance costs associated with mowing.
        - ✓ Suggestion is that some form of top-down guidance should be developed and provided to the municipalities to foster restoration alternatives.
    - Sustainable Jersey – new actions regarding impervious cover reduction, and Green Infrastructure (GI) plans – see ways to integrate these with regional GI initiatives
    - A regional GI Plan would be good for municipalities.
    - If the municipality doesn't have an ordinance regarding GI, they need one. Need something to obligate developers to integrate GI when they develop a site. Or redevelop one. Local ordinances are key.
    - Flooding in Somerset County is impacted by activities upstream in Hunterdon County; the need was stressed to move forward with coordinated, basin-wide, watershed-wide approaches to the issues of hazard mitigation and flooding.
    - Some farm bill money that allows for a lot of stream restoration on private property
    - Interest in forestry management plans? Ecological benefits and water storage provided by forests and could this land use be best in terms of storage and filtering.
      - Goals for reforestation?

- Green streets?
  - Integration of more trees into the built environment
  - Riparian corridor restoration with reforestation
  - Increase the number of trees in the riparian corridor, right along the stream.
  - Mitigation opportunity – look into things that can be done at a county/municipal level to incentivize private people to keep the trees that they already have; keep forested land forested. Also, turning unused farmland into forest.
  - Attendees discussed that, over the last 50 years, there isn't a large observed net change in percent of forest cover. A lot of farmland has been converted to developed parcels but, at the same time, a lot of farmland reverted to forest (mainly, abandoned farm parcels naturally converting to forest). A mitigation opportunity was noted to targeted unused farm parcels, and plant trees to hasten the speed of natural conversion to forest.
  - Opportunity: advocate a more planned approach to discourage planting where the vegetation can impact powerlines. Focus more intense reforestation along the rear of a parcel, and where possible, nearest to streams. Or, advocate for low-growing species near the front of the parcels where roads and powerlines are located.
  - Coordination needed with JCPL and PSEG – big line easements are less than ideal. The power companies typically cut to within an inch or two of bare soil. There is an opportunity to improve the ability to slow water, through coordination with JCPL and PSEG regarding restoration work and planting of low-growing species.
- Question 4 – Energy Reliability
    - Question:
      - What are the top ten critical facilities for which power reliability is essential, and what are some high-priority strategies for ensuring they can continue to operate in the event of prolonged and/or widespread power outages?
    - Group Discussion:
      - County EOC in Hillsborough and 911 Call Center in Somerville are two facilities that are not presently on the top12 list and should be considered for addition. Both may already have backup power / redundant systems so perhaps that is why there weren't on the 2014 list. Coordination needed with SCOEM to determine whether either/both of these facilities should be added to the list.
      - DPW Facilities - consider adding the 2 county garages
      - Next plan update can focus on the next tier down of local, police fire, rescue. This version to focus on first tier countywide resources.
      - Elderly housing / assisted living – next tier down.

- Question 5 – Protecting Community, Environmental and Historic Assets
  - Question:
    - What can we do to better protect historic and cultural assets, natural/ecological resources and the built environment from natural hazards in the future?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Mitigation opportunity exists for requiring publically-owned historic sites to have hazard mitigation plans to protect both the buildings and the collections housed within them.
    - Buildings (i.e., Van Wickle house) – built 1720.
    - Blackwells Mills Canal House has walls resistant to mold. It floods, the water recedes, rooms rinsed, cleaned, repainted, and done. No need to re-plaster walls, etc. County could consider revising criteria for allocating historic preservation funds, to include a preference for projects that use these strategies such as this.
    - Historic structure reports on flood prone buildings? County is not aware.
    - National Park Service guidelines for historic structures are followed by the County for restoration, but separate from flood hazard mitigation. No issues yet in the floodplain.
    - County Parks Department addressed high water table at a grist mill historic site where a ventilation system was installed at the bottom floor to reduce moisture content in the air and reduce mold, etc.
    - Lane-Borkaw House – While the parcel has historic flooding, the house to date has not yet flooded. Though floodwaters have been observed to be getting nearer to the house over time with each event so this may be a good mitigation site.
    - Mitigation opportunity – eliminate the basements and move the utilities up.
    - Historic Preservation Award Program – sustainability category and energy sustainability category. Recognizing resilience is in there. Can prioritize sites that are open to the public. County needs:
      - Models
      - Examples to hold up for municipality as a whole
    - Mitigation opportunity: Use of roofing system “hold-downs”/hurricane clips to minimize wind damage.
    - Abraham Staats house in South Bound Brook – water level seems to be creeping up closer to the house with each flood event. Last flood, the water was within 6-10 feet of the house. Mitigation opportunity to protect this resource.



- Question 6 – Community Resiliency

- Question:

- What are some key adaptation strategies and best practices that Somerset County, its municipalities, residents, businesses and others can implement to become more resilient when faced with the impacts of climate change such as more frequent and severe storms; longer, hotter summers; wet and dry spells; etc.?

- Group Discussion:

- Discourage people from putting solar arrays on undeveloped land, and encourage the installation of solar arrays on space that is presently paved, or where possible, consider putting it on rooftops, windows, over parking lots, etc. Group discussion that it's not beneficial to be cutting down trees to install solar arrays. It doesn't make sense to take a pervious surface undeveloped land and transition it to a solar field. A policy change could be one mitigation opportunity.
      - Right now, lawns are designated as impervious surfaces because of the dense root structure – slow infiltration rate. The policy should clarify that its intent is to encourage solar arrays over paved impervious; not green impervious...
    - How to make impervious lawns pervious again? Golf courses, residences, businesses? Would it help to change the type of grass? Outreach needed to solicit mitigation ideas for improving infiltration.
    - Corporate campuses – how to make more environmentally friendly. Find a way to advocate for mitigation by focusing on reduced workload; that tends to garner support quickly. For example, at a J&J site, they were mowing right down to the ponds. They also had a goose problem. The solution was to stop mowing to the waterline. Instead, they changed to a 3 meter buffer. The geese went away (they were in the water, but weren't inclined to venture into the tall grasses for fear of encountering predators). Also, less maintenance resulted in both a cost savings, and a benefit to the grounds grew as they were now able to use that time saved to accommodate other activities. Less lawn mowed meant that over time more trees and shrubs grew along the waterline. This approach was a value to the corporate campus, and to the County in terms of environmental benefits realized.
    - County's Open Space, Farmland, and Historic Preservation Plan is targeted for completion after the HMP (February 2019 versus October 2018) but there are opportunities to integrate both as they develop. One example of how this is being done already is using existing preserved land to prioritize flood mitigation sites – placing a preference on properties that help to create continuous linkages of green space.

- Next Steps and Contact Information

- General overview of remainder of plan update timeline
  - Contact information at the County
  - Attendees were encouraged to please email or call if anything comes to mind after the meeting.



Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Environmental and Historic Resources Focus Group Meeting – November 30, 2017 (4:30-6:00)

Somerset County Engineering Conference Room, Second Floor, Somerset County Administration Building, 20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ

Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
Boccino	Tom	SOMERSET COUNTY PARS	Boccino@Co.SOMERSET.NJ.US	908-231-7589
Kibler	Bill	Raritan Headwaters	bkibler@raritanheadwaters.org	908-234-1852
D'Amico	Thomas	Somerset County C+HC	damicic@co.somerset.nj.us	908-231-7106
KRISTINA	LAURETTE	SOMERSET CO. PLANNING		
Foley	ANNA	AECOM	ANNA.FOLEY@AECOM.COM	973-883-8562

# Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

## Disability Services Focus Group Meeting

January 10, 2018 (2:30-3:30pm)  
Somerset County Senior Wellness Center, Bridgewater, NJ

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- Attendees:** See sign in sheet attached
- PowerPoint:** See slides of presentation attached (with speaker notes)
- Facilitator:** Laurette Kratina, Somerset County Planning
- Note-taker:** Anna Foley, AECOM

### Meeting Summary:

- Welcome and introductions provided by Paulann Pierson, Somerset County Disability Services Coordinator.
- Approval of the last meeting's minutes and distribution.
- Introduction of two new members, who were sworn in at the Freeholder meeting on Friday, January 5, 2018.
- Listing of new appointments in Somerset County: VHS commissioner, Carol Johnson; TCF Commissioner, Kristine Norbert Byer; new appointment in health; new Freeholder, Brian Gallagher; and a new County Clerk, Steven Peter.
- Speakers: Joint project between two county divisions; Lisa Werner, Office of Emergency Management and Laurette Kratina, Somerset County Planning, together they are performing the update to the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Feedback is appreciated; it is an integral part of the process.
  - Overview information regarding the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Process:
    - Somerset County is the first county within the state of NJ to create a hazard mitigation plan as a joint effort between OEM and Planning.
    - It is comprised of a Countywide plan (multi-jurisdictional), with each municipality as an equal participant in the project. Each municipality has an annex that is specific to their community.
    - The Hazard mitigation plan identifies ways in which we can mitigate/reduce the impacts of future disasters. For Somerset County the major hazard of concern is flooding.

- The current plan was written before Hurricane Sandy, so now we have to encompass everything that has happened since Sandy.
    - Every five years the hazard mitigation plan has to be updated. The current update is due at the end of 2018.
    - Part of the process involves obtaining feedback from a range of stakeholders
    - Mitigation involves breaking the damage cycle, and things you can do today to be more protected and more resilient in the future.
    - Projects identified in the plan can potentially receive FEMA funding for implementation.
  - Confirmation regarding the group's concurrence that the conversation be recorded for the purpose of preparing minutes was obtained.
  - Six questions have been developed, to gather information that will inform different components of the plan. A target time frame of 10 minutes per question was provided. Background about the tasks associated with updating the plan was provided including:
    - Updating municipality Annexes and the risk assessment.
    - Adding two new pieces; energy and flood resiliency frameworks.
    - Implementing public outreach countywide and at the municipal-level.
    - Looking at the status of all projects that were in the 2014 plan; are they still relevant? Should we change them? Did we implement them? If not why?
    - Defining a way to keep the plan alive
    - Finalizing the plan to submit to FEMA and NJOEM for approval
    - If you have additional ideas please email us at: [hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us) and we will address all the comments.
- Question 1 – Changes Since Sandy
  - Question:
    - What are some of the major physical improvements/capital investments and planning/policy/regulatory changes that have taken place recently by both the public and private sectors (since Sandy) to mitigate natural hazards harden infrastructure and make communities more resilient?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Group is aware of:
      - PSEG emergency backup command and control center on Route 22 in Bridgewater (regional electric)
      - NJ American Water Company elevated their flood protection wall.
      - Licensed facilities such as group homes are now required to have disaster plans, as part of their contracts (state requirement). Strengthening of the set of requirements and standards regarding licensing having to do with disaster planning is improved since what it used to be pre-Sandy.

- Question 2 – Universal Accessibility and Mitigation
  - Question:
    - What are the major difficulties faced by vulnerable population groups during natural disasters, and what can be done to reduce their risks as well as improve their access to community public health infrastructure, healthcare, and other essentials for daily living?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Franklin Township just discussed this at a meeting; they do not have a system to notify people regarding shelter locations, etc.
    - NJ Register Ready, a special needs registry for disasters, was discussed. For more information, please see the State website online at: <https://www13.state.nj.us/SpecialNeeds/Signin?ReturnUrl=%2fSpecialNeeds%2f>
    - There is confusion at the local level regarding where the data goes, how well it works, how often it is updated and how effective it has been in past events. There is no universal county-wide communication system (particularly for notifying those with disabilities). A recent simulation exercise was found to be helpful for people to see how things work when people go into a shelter, and to emphasize the point that all shelters should be able to serve people with disabilities, unless they have very serious medical needs. Education has been helpful. Concern was raised about individuals with disabilities and evacuations.
    - Red Cross puts out the regulations for sheltering. NJ is a home-rule state, meaning that the County/State can support or guide the municipalities. However, local communities are responsible for setting up their shelters and being in compliance with Red Cross requirements. A new focus since Sandy is that all shelters need to be capable of housing people with access and functional needs (minus significant medical needs; these types of sheltering needs are often met by hospitals).
    - Take advantage of today's communication systems, automated communication using Register Ready. Register Ready – Lisa Werner is the coordinator for the County, and she does get notified each time someone registers, at which point she notifies the local municipal emergency management coordinators. But, many of those individuals are volunteers and how the information passed down to them is utilized can vary by community.
    - Would be beneficial in many ways for state to mandate what must be done at the local level via legislation, to ensure consistency across the state's municipalities in light of NJ being a Home Rule State.

- Question 3 – Floodplain Management and Riparian Protection
  - Question part A:
    - To your knowledge are any essential facilities and services upon which you or your clients depend on located in flood hazard areas?
  - Question part B:
    - What are some high-priority area-wide and site-specific actions that Somerset County and its municipalities can take to leverage resources and maximize opportunities to improve floodplain management, reduce flood risks and strengthen flood resiliency?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Group homes/assisted living homes and individual homes need to be appropriately prepared for dealing with hazard events.
    - Use the hazard mitigation process to increase awareness for people who are operating, owning, or depending on these potential facilities can take appropriate action.
    - Some group homes and assisted living facilities are not in flood zones themselves but could have access issues due to flooded roads. This would cause medical access issues.
    - Documenting areas where transportation systems and utility systems are impacted by flood waters is something that the County would be interested in working on in the future, in collection and compilation of data.
    - When talking about the Franklin Township area and you are coming down South Middlebush Road and you need to get to River Road, the Griggstown Causeway is flooded, Blackwell Mills is flooded, Canal Road is flooded then you hope that the Brook is not flooded.
    - Priority should be given to making folks aware of where these areas are and then you can address these issues.
    - As a general rule people with disabilities, special needs, particularly mature adults just starting out on their own are usually located in affordable areas which are sometimes located in more flood-vulnerable areas.
    - For the first time, we are able to integrate into the Hazard Mitigation Plan changes in weather. The frequency and severity of storms is increasing and the frequency of nuisance flooding and more severe flooding events are occurring. The Rutgers University's Climate Adaptation Alliance and the Climate Change Institute and other organizations are beginning to suggest that the 500 year flood hazard area should really be treated more as the 100 year flood hazard area in the foreseeable future due to these changes. The modeling that is going on nationwide is pointing in that direction. We really need to start thinking about realigning and redefining the 100 year flood hazard area to reflect this projected change going forward. Although a facility is not in the 100 year flood hazard area and need flood insurance, it may be appropriate to recommend applying guidelines for flood-proofing of facilities within

the 500 year flood hazard area (expanding 100 year flood resiliency measures into the 500 year zone).

- Question 4 – Energy Reliability

- Question part A:
  - To your knowledge, is continuation of operations at any of the essential facilities and services that you and your clients attend at risk in the event of prolonged and/or widespread power outages?
- Question part B:
  - What types of facilities are most important in terms of protecting their power supplies to ensure that they can continue to operate in the event of prolonged power outages?
- Group Discussion:
  - In Franklin township gas stations ran out of gas quickly. Having functioning gas stations located near hospitals is important. Larger population areas are at risk during gasoline shortages.
  - County began to provide generators to gas stations, but it is a smattering of gas stations, but maybe it should be all gas stations? That might be the goal, to have backup power and critical transportation lines that will allow fuel deliveries to happen. Maybe those are how you prioritize which transportation system need to be restored the quickest.
  - The concept of microgrids as a way to provide back-up power during prolonged power outages was discussed. Microgrids enable the islanding of essential facilities, and involve onsite generation using a combination of solar, combined heat and power and/or fuel cell technology. They also require special circuitry and switch gear; and partnerships with the regulatory agencies, power company and host municipality. For example, a microgrid could potentially be established so if the regional power grid goes out for a prolonged time the hospital would not lose power. The County is trying to find out from attendees whether there are facilities or areas that are in need of reliable back-up power during prolonged outages. Current hazard plan does not cover microgrids to protect essential facilities, such as hospitals. Adding this as a mitigation measure in the plan may open up potential funding opportunities.
  - Facilities that are responsible for communications and senior citizen complexes would benefit.
  - Concerns about hacking into computer systems that would affect our power grid were raised. It was noted that the Hazard Mitigation Plan addresses natural hazards, although some solutions in the plan could improve cybersecurity.
  - Homeland Security is concerned that microgrids are linked to internet-based communication systems. Other utility systems are also dependent on technological systems in order to run and therefore they are a huge concern from a cyber-

terrorism perspective, but there are ways around it and the technology is getting better at preventing hacking.

- The planning level involves identifying needs and ideas; additional information would be needed to be taken into consideration in the future at the project level.
- Hoboken has a system in place where there is a separate server not connected to the WWW – it's Hoboken only. A sort of shadow internet system. People can get information about shelters and evacuations, etc. It is another level of communications technology currently being tested, that may be applicable for other situations and other locations, potentially for essential facilities and cybersecurity. Is there a need to include this sort of a backup system in our list of projects?
- One problem identified by an attendee was that during Sandy, electric companies had no idea what street locations were affected by outages. So people in that area would be without power, because the power companies could not find where the damage was. Since Sandy, PSE&G and JCPL have been developing and implementing a few systems to rectify this issue. They have started to install smart grid technology so that they can find and send out repair trucks faster. The hazard mitigation plan at county level can try to identify what's in the power company's plans, and then talk about other improvements that may be needed to improve energy resilience. The plan can be used to inform the power companies on what our communities need. But it is the state mitigation plan that can determine what the projects and initiatives are that the power companies need to do. What the County can do in the mitigation plan is to really inform and bring issues to the attention of the power companies and the state.
- Feature of Register Ready: if you have a cluster of people registered as special needs, the program could go and zero in on a particular area, down to street level. It was mentioned that the program could also be used for identifying vulnerable populations during electrical outages, gas main breaks, etc. An attendee inquired as to whether the County is aware of this feature. Do they use this feature? Lisa responded that one project that is currently being worked on is the "Damage Assessment Tool", which is for post-disaster recovery but can be used for pre disaster mitigation. It is a mapping system, specifically meant for post- disaster scenarios, that supplies real time information as technicians are out in the field updating the areas. The County is encouraging the municipalities to utilize the tool, by pre-populating the software, with the information from Register Ready, info regarding bridges and streets, parks and recreation. If something happens, response time is faster. Vulnerable population information is already populated in the Register Ready program and if used correctly, this information will help in a disaster to prepare the types of accommodations that need to be available.
- Is it still necessary for the municipalities to encourage the residents to sign up for register ready? Yes, the information contained in the program is necessary.
- Is there any communications to push the use of this program? The local municipal emergency coordinator is supposed to be pushing out this information.



- Question 5 – Protecting Community, Environmental and Historic Assets
  - Question:
    - What can we do to better protect historic and cultural assets, natural/ecological resources and the built environment from natural hazards in the future?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Tree trimming needs to be done to help in natural disasters.
    - Urban/suburban forestry plans can be utilized. Use trees as a way to buffer against flooding.
  
- Question 6 – Community Resiliency
  - Question:
    - What are some key adaptation strategies and best practices that Somerset County, its municipalities, residents, businesses and others can implement to become more resilient when faced with the impacts of climate change such as more frequent and severe storms; longer, hotter summers; wet and dry spells; etc.?
  - Group Discussion:
    - Educate people about climate change and its effects
    - Need more communication venues such as webinars to educate residents with special needs about what they can do to limit the effects.
    - Power companies have a voluntary option to have company lower the residents consumption to avoid black outs. It is being used out of state and possibly South Jersey. This will reduce strain on the regional grid, allowing the grid to have a larger capacity and more resources to pull power from.
    - Sometimes water is an issue, drinking water. In previous disasters water was a major issue. There was a business that was water savvy and allowed people to fill up water bottles. The plan can and should talk about ways that we can ensure water availability during disasters. Making the grid more resilient will assist with this in areas served by private wells that require power to operate.
    - In Somerville, as part of the land development process, when a large facility (six units or more) gets proposed they are required now to provide water and power for up to six days. They are required to have an emergency operations plan submitted before the site plan can be approved, and also must have a shared facilities room where residents are provided electricity, water and food.

Focus Group/Presentation Title: HAZARD MITIGATION

Center:	BRIDGEWATER
Instructor:	
Time:	
Month:	

SOMERSET COUNTY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
ON DISABILITY ISSUES (ACODI)  
MEETING: JANUARY 10, 2018

NAME

1	Kristen Lokatos								
2	Tracy Frost								
3	ALLEN WATERS								
4	AMY CAMERON								
5	ANDREW REES								
6	BONNIE BRIEN								
7	CHRISTINE CLAUSE								
8	CYNTHIA VOORHEES								
9	DAVE REILEY								
10	JAN GOODMAN								
11	JULIE DE SIMONE								
12	MICHAEL FROST								
13	PAULANN PIERSON								
14	SARAH MURCHISON								
15	SHELLEY KAYS								
16	TONY SACINO								
17									
18									
19									
20									



SOMERSET COUNTY

# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

UPDATE

Wednesday, January 31, 2018

6:00—8:00 pm

SOMERSET COUNTY EMERGENCY  
SERVICES TRAINING ACADEMY  
(ESTA)

## AGENDA

- ◆ **UPDATED RISK ASSESSMENT**
- ◆ **UPDATED MITIGATION STRATEGY  
MISSION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES**
- ◆ **EMERGING MITIGATION STRATEGY  
UPDATE TOOLS:**
  - ◆ **ENERGY RESILIENCY FRAMEWORK**
  - ◆ **FLOOD RESILIENCY FRAMEWORK**
- ◆ **TRANCHE 3—MUNICIPAL WORKSHEETS**
- ◆ **NEXT STEPS**

# PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

The Somerset County Planning Division, in collaboration with the Somerset County Emergency Management Office, are hosting the second Planning Committee Meeting for Municipal Hazard Mitigation Coordinators and their representatives. The Committee's feedback on several draft components of the updated Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Somerset County is now being sought. The information presented at this meeting is intended to assist in the development of the updated municipal-specific annexes. Members of the Project Management Team including AECOM will be present to answer any questions you may have.

### ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUESTED.

Please e-mail us at: [hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us) regarding your participation. You can also call County Planning at (908) 231-7021 or County Emergency Management at (908) 526-2500 to register.

For more information about the project, please visit our website at: [www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation)



## Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

*Planning/Municipal HMP Coordinators Committee Meeting*

January 31, 2018 - 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Somerset County Emergency Services Training Academy Classrooms D & E  
402 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ

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### Agenda

#### **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

*Lisa Werner, Emergency Support Specialist, Planner, Somerset County Office of  
Emergency Management*

#### **Updated Risk Assessment**

*Anna Foley, Project Manager, AECOM*

#### **Updated Mitigation Strategy Mission, Goals & Objectives**

*Walter Lane, PP/AICP, Director, Somerset County Planning Division (SCPD)*

#### **Emerging Mitigation Strategy Update Tools**

- **Flood Resiliency Framework**
- **Energy Resiliency Framework**

*Laurette Kratina, PP/AICP, Chief of Strategic Planning (SCPD)*

#### **Worksheets – Tranche 1, 2 & 3 and Participation Logs**

*Lisa Werner*

#### **Focus Group Meeting Summaries**

*Anna Foley*

#### **Next Steps**

*Anna Foley*

#### **General Discussion/Q & A**

*Anna Foley*

#### **Wrap-up**

*Walter Lane*



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
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Foley	Anna	AECOM	anna.foley@aecom.com	973-883-8562

Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update  
**Planning Committee Progress Meeting – January 31, 2018 (6:00pm to 8:00pm)**  
 Somerset County Office of Emergency Management, 402 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844



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Werner	Lisa	Somerset County OEM	werner@co.somerset.nj.us	908-541-5051
Testa	Christopher	NJOEM	lpptestc@gw.njsp.org	609-508-6557

P. 2 of 2



SOMERSET COUNTY

# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

UPDATE

Wednesday, February 21, 2018

4:30—6:30 pm

Engineering Conference Room  
2nd Floor, Somerset County

**Administration Building**

20 Grove St. Somerville, NJ

## AGENDA

- ◆ UPDATED RISK ASSESSMENT
- ◆ UPDATED MITIGATION STRATEGY MISSION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES
- ◆ MITIGATION STRATEGY UPDATE TOOLS
- ◆ COUNTYWIDE MITIGATION INITIATIVES

# STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The Somerset County Planning Division, in collaboration with the Somerset County Emergency Management Office, are hosting a meeting of the HMP Steering Committee to obtain feedback on several draft components of the updated Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Somerset County. The Committee will also be asked to engage in a discussion regarding prior mitigation initiatives and potential new actions.

### ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUESTED.

Please e-mail us at: [hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us) regarding your participation. You can also call County Planning at (908) 231-7021 or County Emergency Management at (908) 526-2500 to register.

For more information about the project, please visit our website at: [www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation)



## Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, February 21, 2018, 4:30 – 6:30 PM

Engineering Conference Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, County Administration Building  
20 Grove Street, Somerville, N.J.

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### **Welcome and Overview**

*Walter Lane, PP, AICP, Director, Somerset County Planning Division*

### **Updated Risk Assessment**

*Anna Foley, Project Manager, AECOM*

### **Updated Mitigation Strategy Mission, Goals & Objectives**

*Walter Lane*

### **Mitigation Strategy Update Tools**

- **Flood Resiliency Framework**
- **Energy Resiliency Framework**

*Laurette Kratina, PP, AICP, Chief of Strategic Planning SCPD*

### **Focus Group Meeting Results**

*Anna Foley*

### **County Capabilities (WS2)**

*Lisa Werner, Emergency Support Specialist, Planner, SCOEM*

### **County Mitigation Initiatives (WS 4 & 6)**

*Lisa Werner*

### **General Discussion/Q & A**

*Anna Foley*

### **Next Steps & Wrap-up**

*Douglas Vornlocker, Director, Somerset County Office of Emergency Management*



Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update  
 Steering Committee Meeting – February 21, 2018 (4:30 pm to 6:30 pm)  
 Engineering Conference Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Somerset County Administration Building, 20 Grove Street, Somerville, NJ



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
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Kratina	Laurette	SC Planning	kratina@co.somerset.nj.us	908-231-7157
Foley	Annd	AECOM	annefoley@aecom.com	973-883-8562



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone	Time Slot
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Greves	Gary	Watchung OEM	ggreves@live.com	(908) 448-9834	2 - 3:30
HERITS	THOMAS	WATCHUNG	therits@maserconsulting.com	732-261-7934	2 - 3:30
Mothis	Jasmine	Bound Brook	jmathis@bandbrook-nj.org	732-356-0883	2-3
Herrer	Hector	nherrer@bandbrook-nj.org ← Band Brook		908-296-2420	2-3
Valentin	Kevin	Bernardsville	KVALENTINE@BERNARDSVILLENJ.ORG	908 766 5058	2 - 3 <sup>30</sup>
MALINA	DAVID	RARITAN	MALINA@RARITANPA.RL	908 725 6700	3 <sup>45</sup>
LISA	ROBERT	RARITAN OEM	RLISA24@aol.com	908-507-4664	3:45
Vince	LoMedico	Manville Borngt.	VLoMedico@ManvilleNJ.org	908 725-5512	3:45.
ONDERKO	RICHARD	MANVILLE	MAHONDERKO@MANVILLENJ.ORG	908-800-1231	3:45
Devlin	Sean	Montgomery Twp	sdevlin@Police.montgomery.nj.us	908-295-8697	5:00 p
Laurette Kratina	Laurette	Somerset County	K.kratina@co-somerset.nj.us	908 231-7157	5:00



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone	Time Slot
Foley	ANNA	AECOM	ANNA.FOLEY@AECOM.COM	973-634-7019	ALL
Hauck	Carl	Franklin Twp	carl.hauck@twp.franklin.nj.us	732 249 7800	2-3:30
Weinman	Steve	Somerville	SWEINMAN@Somerville.org	908 672 8368	2-3:30
Martin	Brian	North Plainfield	GEM@NPMAIL.ORG	908-612-0635	2-3:30
HURST	CHRISTOPHER	BERNARDS TWP OEM	CHURST@BERNARDSPP.ORG	201-540-9390	3:45-4:45
ANASTASIO	RONALD	SRVSA	RONALD.ANASTASIO@SRVSA.ORG	(32)462-0593 x234	3:45-4:45
ULEP	SHERWIN	SRVSA	SHERWIN.ULEP@SRVSA	(732)469-0593 x247	3:45-4:45
Mathis	Milton	North Plainfield BOE	milton.mathis@nplainfield.org	908-769-6058	3:45-4:45
SHEMSKY	MILE	BERNARDS TWP OEM	mshimsky@bernardspd.org	908-204-3043	3:45-
Kennedy	JAMES	Branchburg Twp OEM	James.Kennedy@Branchburg.nj.us	(908)337-0364	17:00-18:30
Cupit	Kelly	Green Brook Twp	kcupit@greenbrooktwp.org	732-968-1023 x6601	18:45-
Murray	Raymond	Green Brook Twp	rmurray@greenbrooktwp.org	732-968-1023 x6604	18:45-
Kratina	Laurette	Somerset County	Kratina@co-somerset.nj.us	908 806-6737	3-4, 6-7:30



SOMERSET COUNTY

# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

UPDATE

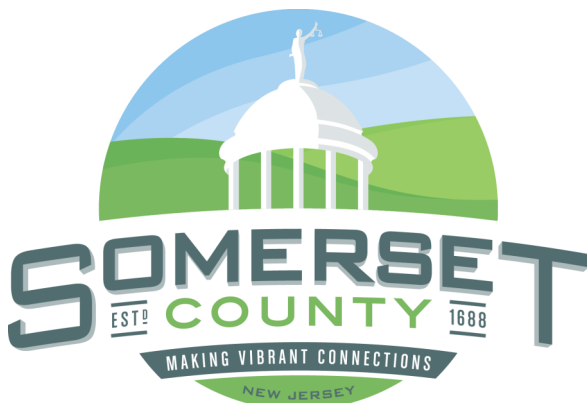
THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018

6:00 PM —8:00 PM

SOMERSET COUNTY  
EMERGENCY SERVICES  
TRAINING ACADEMY

402 Roycefield Road

Hillsborough, NJ



## MITIGATION STRATEGY ROUNDTABLE

The Somerset County Planning Division, in collaboration with the Somerset County Emergency Management Office are pleased to invite all HM Planning and Steering Committee members to this interactive program aimed at showing how the updated risk assessment, new climate information, and draft Flood and Energy Resiliency Toolkits can be used for identifying projects and initiatives appropriate for inclusion in updated municipal mitigation strategies.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO RESERVE A SEAT, PLEASE, CALL (908) 231-7021 OR E-MAIL: [HAZARDMITIGATION@CO.SOMERSET.NJ.US](mailto:HAZARDMITIGATION@CO.SOMERSET.NJ.US)



**Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional  
Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**  
MITIGATION PLANNING ROUNDTABLE  
April 26, 2018 (6:00 pm to 8:00 pm)  
Somerset County Office of Emergency Management  
402 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844

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**Welcome and Introductions**

*Walter Lane, Director of Planning, Somerset County Planning Division  
Douglas Vornlocker, Director, Somerset County Office of Emergency Management*

**Purpose and Intent of Today's Roundtable Discussions**

*Laurette Kratina, Chief of Strategic Planning, Somerset County Planning Division*

**Overview of Targeted Roundtable Activities**

*Anna Foley, Project Manager, AECOM*

**Roundtable Discussion of Questions**

*All*

**Roundtable Mitigation Strategy Development Discussions**

*All*

**Closing Remarks and Reminders**

*Lisa Werner, Emergency Support Specialist, Somerset County Office of Emergency Management*

**Adjourn**



Last Name	First Name	Representing	Email Address	Phone
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Mathis	Milton	North Plainfield BOC	milton_mathis@northplainfield.org	908-769-6058



SOMERSET COUNTY

# PUBLIC MEETINGS

## HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE

Mitigation Planning Partners, community leaders, members of the public and all interested stakeholders are invited to attend public meetings on the draft updated

### ***SOMERSET COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN***

hosted by the Somerset County Planning Division and the Somerset County Emergency Management Office

Tuesday, November 20, 2018, 4:45—6:00 pm as part of  
the regularly scheduled County Planning Board Meeting

Freeholder Meeting Room

3rd Floor, Somerset County Administration Building

20 Grove St. Somerville, NJ

&

Thursday, December 6, 2018, 7:00—8:30 pm

Somerset County Emergency Services Training Academy

402 Roycefield Rd., Hillsborough, NJ

Advance registration is recommended

Please e-mail us at: [hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us) regarding your participation. You can also call County Planning at (908) 231-7021 or Emergency Management at (908) 725-5070. For more information and to review the draft updated plan, please visit our website at:

[www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation)

A sign in sheet was not prepared for the November 20, 2018 Planning Board Meeting. However, a list of all persons present at the meeting was maintained as part of the meeting's formal minutes, as provided on the following pages.



**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 20, 2018  
MEETING OF THE SOMERSET COUNTY PLANNING BOARD  
HELD AT 4:45PM  
FREEHOLDERS MEETING ROOM  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the November 20, 2018 meeting of the Somerset County Planning Board convened at 4:45pm in the Freeholders Meeting Room. The meeting was held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Open Public Meetings Statement**

**The Roll was called and the following were in Attendance:**

Bernard V. Navatto, Jr., Chairman  
Christopher Kelly, Vice Chairman  
Marian Fenwick, Member  
Al Ellis, Member  
John Schneider, Member  
John Lindner, Member  
Matthew Loper, Secretary/County Engineer  
Brian Gallagher, Freeholder Liaison

John Lore, Esq., Deputy County Counsel

**Absent**

William Ziegler, 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate Member  
Dennis Quinlan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate  
Patrick Scaglione, Freeholder Director

**Also Present:**

Walter Lane, Director of Planning  
Anthony McCracken, Assistant Director  
Thomas D'Amico, Supervising Planner  
Laurette Kratina, Chief of Strategic Planning  
Ken Wedeen, Supervising Transportation Planner  
James Ruggieri, Principal Community Planner  
Kate Katzer, Principal Planner  
Andras Holzmann, Senior Planner  
Cynthia Mellusi, Office Manager

**Approval of October 16, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Navatto, Jr. asked for the motion to approve the minutes of October 16, 2018 Planning Board Meeting. The motion was made by Chris Kelly and seconded by Freeholder Gallagher. A Voice Vote was called and the motion moved unanimously.

## **Discussion/Presentation Items:**

### **Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Director of Planning Walter Lane stated the following presentation is the first of two public meetings for the review of the draft Hazard Mitigation Plan. He stated this is the culmination of a lot of work and thanked Laurette Kratina for all of her efforts as the project manager for this plan.

Laurette Kratina, Chief of Strategic Planning, provided a PowerPoint Presentation that included an overview of the Draft Updated Hazard Mitigation Plan for the County, and included background information about the process; who was involved; and the new planning tools and resources that were made available. She noted that this project is a joint initiative involving both the County Planning Division and the Office of Emergency Management. A consultant specializing in Hazard Mitigation – AECOM was hired to help us accomplish this work using funding provided through a Pre-Mitigation Planning Grant that was made available by FEMA for this purpose.

Ms. Kratina noted that the purpose of the Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan is to: Understand the County's hazard risks and vulnerabilities; Evaluate the impacts these hazards have had on the County thus far; and Identify things we can do to reduce future impacts and improve community resiliency. She indicated that the National Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 sets the stage for Hazard Mitigation Planning at the State and Local levels. This legislation links eligibility for FEMA mitigation grants to the development hazard mitigation plans at the local level.

She noted that the Hazard Mitigation Plan must be updated every 5 years in order for the County and our municipalities to remain eligible for FEMA funding. The County's first Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by FEMA in 2009. The First Update of this plan was completed in 2013 and approved by FEMA in 2014. Approval of the current update by the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management and is anticipated in 2019. With the fifth slide, Ms. Kratina highlighted some of the key steps in the update process as follows: Determine which hazards are most prevalent, and their probability of occurring again in the future; Identify hazard-prone areas; Characterize vulnerable assets (human, economic, infrastructure, environmental) located within hazard-prone areas; Estimate potential damages and losses; and Identify mitigation goals and actions to reduce long-term vulnerabilities.

The focus of the plan update effort is to determine what has changed, and to respond to those changes. She listed the key questions we asked ourselves at the outset such as: What areas of the County have experienced growth?; What areas have been preserved; How have hazard risks changed?; Is Hazard Mitigation being integrated into land use and functional plans and day-to-day operations?; Have mitigation projects been implemented?; What should we be doing differently based on current realities?; Have requirements and priorities changed?

Ms. Kratina summarized the major activities that took place in developing the draft updated plan. Ms. Kratina noted that the update process began during the summer of 2017. The first step was to establish Project Management Team, Mitigation Planning Committee and Steering Committee by inviting members and communicating to them their roles and responsibilities.

Municipal Hazard Mitigation Officers who served as the County's points-of-contact as well as Municipal Hazard Mitigation Committees were designated for each of our towns by resolution. All 21 of the County's Municipalities became active participants, as well as the North Plainfield Board of Education and the Somerset Raritan Sewerage Authority.

Ms. Kratina noted that several types of meetings were held during the fall of 2017. Updated data on severe repetitive loss properties in the County and draft repetitive loss areas mapping was obtained from FEMA and FEMA grant programs available for implementing buy-outs were provided at a meeting in October. In November 2017, four focus group meetings with diverse subject matter experts were held in order to obtain broad input. A detailed review of the draft updated risk assessment was provided in January 2018 to the Plan Mitigation Committee, and a meeting was held in February involving the Steering Committee regarding development of the updated County-level mitigation projects.

The Process for gathering the information needed to update each municipality's annex began in earnest in early spring 2018. The consultant incrementally released a series of 8 municipal worksheets that were used to obtain the information needed to update of the annexes. One-on-one meetings between the AECOM and municipal hazard mitigation committees were held during this time to help complete the worksheets and provide guidance on how public outreach can be accomplished at the local level. All of the Major components of the draft plan were completed during this period, which were then provided to the Steering Committee for review, a few at a time. All of the draft updated annexes were completed by September, as well as the final touches on the Updated County Profile Section.

Ms. Kratina noted that the public review period commenced in mid-October, when all components of the draft plan were posted on the County Website; and a press release and information about the draft plan were distributed through various media outlets by the County Public Information Officer. This meeting is one of two public meetings being held on the draft plan. The second one will be held on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm at the County Emergency Services Training Academy in Hillsborough.

Ms. Kratina proceeded to the tenth slide that highlights the next steps in the process of completing the updated plan. The upcoming public comment period deadline is January 7th. Comment can be submitted directly to the e-mail address provided in the slide, or through the County's online comment submission portal. She noted that the Project Management Team, together with the Steering Committee will be reviewing public comments on the plan as they are received. A public response log is being maintained, and any agreed-upon refinements will be made to the draft plan by the consultant. The final draft will be submitted to NJOEM and FEMA in mid-January 2019.

Ms. Kratina noted that the development of two major new planning tools was integrated into the planning process during this update round: an Energy Resiliency Framework and a Flood Resiliency Framework. The primary value of these tools is that they provide strategies for integrating hazard mitigation into other County and municipal Land use and infrastructure plans, policies and investment decisions; and point out opportunities to strengthen the connections between hazard mitigation and emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities. They are also a one-stop source for information and resources. The Flood Resiliency Framework provides data and information on changing flood vulnerabilities and risks. A Climate Memo that describes how changing weather patterns are affecting this area, which includes both

adaptation and mitigation strategies that can be implemented at the regional and local levels is part of the appendix. It also includes a host of actions that can be taken at the local level to minimize flood impacts and presents information about national, state and local plans, programs and resources that municipalities can tap into.

The Energy Resiliency Framework, which is the second new hazard mitigation tool being provided to our municipalities. Developing this tool was very much a response to the widespread, prolonged power outages and liquid fuel supply chain disruptions caused here by Hurricane Sandy, the polar vortex that struck during the winter of 2014-15 and the March 2018 snowstorms. These hazard events were a wake-up call regarding the need to take actions that minimize the cascading impacts to critical and essential services, infrastructure and operations that can be caused by major energy system disruptions. This document serves as a primer for building awareness about the importance of energy continuity before, during and after hazard events in terms of protecting life, property, the economy and the environment. It describes many strategies that can be implemented at the regional and local levels to improve energy resiliency. Although state and federal regulatory and oversight entities and utility companies play a primary role in making our energy system resilient and reliable, there are still things that municipalities, residents and businesses can contribute toward make our energy system stronger and better, which are outlined in this document.

Ms. Kratina noted that the next few slides comprises an overview of what the updated Hazard Mitigation Plan contains, presenting slide 14 which shows the plan's Table of Contents. She noted that the updated plan follows the same structure and format as the 2014 Plan; however all of the content has been updated.

The Updated Risk Assessment was described as the basic platform upon which the updated plan is based. FEMA's latest HAZMUS model –which was updated to reflect new scientific data and local information - was used to update the Risk Assessment. It takes into consideration recent studies that document and measure how weather conditions are changing in this area. Storms are becoming more frequent and more severe. Episodes of high precipitation are increasing – generating more frequent nuisance flooding and serious flooding events. It also takes into consideration mitigation projects such as the Green Brook Flood Control Project and recent successful buy-outs of severe repetitive loss properties in the County, and updated flood insurance claims data. It also takes into account updated data on critical facilities, the built environment, vulnerable population groups and other factors. It uses FEMA's updated flood insurance rate maps that were released in 2017 for portions of Somerset County. The top three hazards that pose the greatest threat in Somerset County are Severe Storms including winter storms and flooding.

Another key component of the plan is the Updated County Profile. Although Somerset County ranks among the fastest-growing counties in the State, implementation of County and municipal land use planning and preservation efforts along the Raritan and other major stream corridors has prevented new development from taking place in harm's way since our last plan was updated. The County Investment Framework identifies Greenway Corridors where protection and restoration of floodplain areas that serve as natural flood buffers is encouraged. An updated capability assessment has been included as part of each municipal annex, which describes each community's current regulatory, administrative, technical and fiscal capabilities for carrying out hazard mitigation initiatives and projects. The mitigation strategy portion of the plan is another central component. The mission and goals included in the 2014 plan were updated slightly by

adding a few words, which are highlighted in yellow. Most notably, “Create Resilient Communities” was added to the list of goals.

The plan contains 13 objectives that align with the 6 mitigation goals. As an example three of the 13 objectives were presented: Objective 1: Make the County and its municipalities more resilient and reduce hazard risks by identifying and monitoring changing systems and implementing sustainable adaptation strategies.; Objective 6: Eliminate or minimize disruption of local government operations caused by natural hazards by enhancing the resilience of identified critical infrastructure, facilities, institutions and services.; Objective 8: Utilize the best available information and data on hazard exposure, vulnerability and climate to support appropriate land use decisions; prevent policies and investments that will increase vulnerabilities and risks; and support implementation strategies that yield multiple benefits and will have the largest positive impact in terms of strengthening community resilience.

Ms. Kratina noted that the implementation projects and actions that the County and its municipalities want to undertake during the next 5 years are another key component of the plan. Some common projects at the local level include the buy-out of severe repetitive loss properties, the provision of back-up power at all critical facilities, and enhanced communication systems for informing residents and businesses before, during and after emergencies. She noted that there are 28 County-level mitigation initiatives in the updated plan (as compared to 46 in the 2014 Plan). 13 initiatives are either new or modified versions of initiatives that were included in the 2014 Plan. An additional 15 initiatives were carried forward without changes. Initiatives that have already been implemented or that are no longer relevant were not carried forward. Some of the new County-level initiatives include the provision of a microgrid to supply power to the county complex in the event of prolonged energy system disruptions; modernization of the County’s Flood Information System, establishment of a backup 9-1-1 Center and update and enhancement of the Countywide GIS Building dataset.

The Plan Maintenance is another important section of the updated plan. This section defines the process for monitoring, evaluating and updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The new the Plan Maintenance Section also describes how hazard mitigation can be integrating it into day-to-day operations as well as into the plans, programs, policies and regulations of each municipality and the county over time. Information about the plan adoption process is included in the updated plan document as well. Once the County receives an “Approval Pending Adoption” from NJOEM and FEMA, all participating jurisdictions are required to formally adopt the plan. The date of the first local adoption resolution becomes the official adoption date of the plan. Adoption gives legal status to the plan.

Ms. Kratina concluded her presentation by asking if there are any questions and thanking the Board.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Approval of November 2018 Land Development Report**

Tom D’Amico, Supervising Planner, stated that there was no meeting of the Land Development Committee in November. Therefore the full Planning Board must act on the First Time Submissions for the month of October which are in your packet.

During the month of October, the County Planning Board reviewed a total of 32 submissions. There were two new lots proposed and no new lots created. Of the site plans proposed during the month there was 23,798 square feet of non-residential building space and 200 multi-family units proposed. There was a total of \$20,121 in improvement value and \$7,370 in development review fees paid to the County Planning Board.

Chairman Navatto asked for a motion to approve the First Time Submission for November 2018. The motion was made by Matt Loper and seconded by Al Ellis. A Roll was called and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Preservation Plan Updates**

Tom D'Amico, Supervising Planner, mentioned that the County is undertaking an Update of the County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan and the development of a new Historic Preservation Plan.

The County has contracted with Preservation Strategies to coordinate the report along with New Jersey Conservation Foundation to develop the Open Space plan, Land Stewardship Solutions to develop the Farmland Preservation Plan and Barton Ross and Partners to develop the Historic Preservation Plan. The GIS mapping is being handled by Washington College with assistance from the Planning Division's GIS section.

Mr. D'Amico stated that the consultants have made considerable progress from our last meeting. We have received an additional five chapters of the Open Space Plan, four chapters of the Agricultural Master Plan and four additional chapters of the Historic Preservation Plan. We have also received the 32 page Tourism chapter. All of these chapters are currently under review. Part two of the Landscape Context and the History chapter have been reviewed and our comments sent to the consultants. We are still waiting for the revised maps and remaining maps to be submitted. We have had three conference calls with the consultant. Our next conference call is next Wednesday, November 28th. Our Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for December 13 at 1:30 p.m.

Staff is continuing to coordinate this project with the County Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Walk, Bike, Hike Somerset County Connecting Vibrant Communities Plan.

### **Walk, Bike, Hike Somerset County Study Update**

Ken Wedeen, Supervising Transportation Planner, mentioned since the last Planning Board meeting staff has been preparing for the 1<sup>st</sup> Walk Bike Hike Public Meeting on November 29<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 p.m.

The Public meeting will be held in the Somerset County Administration Building. There will be an interactive part of the meeting where the public can review exhibits from 6-6:30. A formal PowerPoint presentation will take place from 6:30 -7 p.m. and then the public will have another opportunity to review the exhibits provide written, verbal comments including marking a large map.

County staff has worked with PIO and graphics to develop a press release along with meeting flyer and meeting agenda. The consultant has developed a PowerPoint presentation along with a set of meeting display boards for the meeting.

Staff has been working to email invitations to the study SAC committee, focus group members, planning partner organizations and persons who filled out the online survey and or map.

County staff has also been reviewing Tech memo 1 & 2 highlighting the outreach activities.

Mr. Wedeen encourages all Planning Board members to stop by and participate in some part of the meeting.

### **NJ Economic Development Authority 21<sup>st</sup> Century Redevelopment Program**

Director Lane provided a brief overview of the NJ Economic Development Authority's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Redevelopment Program. This program provided grant funding to municipalities and counties to undertake planning studies to promote the reuse or repurposing of vacant or under-utilized retail and office properties. This program is very similar to the recommendations in our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as well as Supporting Priority Investment in Somerset County Initiative and demonstrates how the County has been a leader in this area. Office properties over 75,000 square feet and retail properties over 750,000 that have been vacant for several years are eligible for funding. Director Lane sent letters to every municipality in the County and he has been working with John Maddocks from the Somerset County Business Partnership to develop a list of properties that meet the grant program's criteria. He also reported that several towns have reached out to the County to discuss submitting a grant application.

A brief discussion ensued. Director Lane will brief the Board on this effort as it progresses.

### **Wastewater Management Plan Update**

Director Lane reported the County is still awaiting feedback from NJDEP in regards to the changes the Department would like to see in the draft Montgomery/Rocky Hill Wastewater Management Plan (WMP) Chapter. He reported that a scope of work for the remaining tasks that need to be completed was submitted to the NJDEP. Staff would like to retain a consultant to assist in finishing the WMP. Staff is working to finalize a draft of the Septic Management Plan for an unofficial review by NJDEP. Director Lane reported staff is making progress, albeit slow progress, in completing various components of the WMP. He also stated that the County is still awaiting feedback regarding the County's request to extend the deadline for submission of a draft WMP to NJDEP.

### **Public Comments**

Chairman Navatto opened the meeting to the public. There being no comments, the meeting was closed to the public.

### **Committee Reports**

The Committee Reports were included in the meeting packet.

Director Lane encouraged the Board to attend the Planning Partners Forum on November 28<sup>th</sup> and the public meetings for the Walk, Bike, Hike Plan and the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Next Meeting Date:** December 18, 2018

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Navatto asked for a motion to Adjourn. The motion was made by Chris Kelly and seconded by Freeholder Gallagher. A Voice Vote was called and the motion moved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



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Matthew D. Loper, Secretary





SOMERSET COUNTY

# PUBLIC MEETINGS

## HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE

Mitigation Planning Partners, community leaders, members of the public and all interested stakeholders are invited to attend public meetings on the draft updated

### ***SOMERSET COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN***

hosted by the Somerset County Planning Division and the Somerset County Emergency Management Office

Tuesday, November 20, 2018, 4:45—6:00 pm as part of  
the regularly scheduled County Planning Board Meeting

Freeholder Meeting Room

3rd Floor, Somerset County Administration Building

20 Grove St. Somerville, NJ

&

Thursday, December 6, 2018, 7:00—8:30 pm

Somerset County Emergency Services Training Academy

402 Roycefield Rd., Hillsborough, NJ

Advance registration is recommended

Please e-mail us at: [hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:hazardmitigation@co.somerset.nj.us) regarding your participation. You can also call County Planning at (908) 231-7021 or Emergency Management at (908) 725-5070 For more information and to review the draft updated plan, please visit our website at:

[www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation](http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation)



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