

HMPU 2020

Kickoff Steering Committee

October 29, 2019

Kickoff Notes (Adopted 11/5/2019)

The meeting began with introductions from Chris Pulaski, Director of Planning and Zoning, and Jennifer Gerbasi, Recovery Planner and presenter.

The presentation covers the reasons for planning, setting definitions, the legal requirements, financial benefits, the steering committee itself, and then the review of the plan. Refer to the powerpoint for the discussion on those slides.

Steering Committee Plan

Ronnie Shaw provided the first comments on the Steering Committee suggestion for subcommittees. He suggested that riverine threats from the Atchafalaya were such that we should have a specific subcommittee on that issue. Morgan City and the old river Control structure need to be better understood, in his opinion, and the risks planned for with resources brought to bear to reduce those risks.

Later in the meeting, other subcommittees seemed to be called for. A discussion regarding both subsidence, sea level rise, and the combination of the two, begged for more discussion of these topics. Oneil Marlborough and Katie Tabor were invited to consider a subcommittee to seek and review data on the sea level rise issue with assistance from the recovery office to find data. Mr. Shaw was invited to meet with other on the Steering Committee to review data and risks and make suggestions on subsidence. The two subcommittees could discuss their findings, and an understanding seemed to be reached that the committee and subcommittees would seek an acceptable message, set of authorities, and pathway forward through this planning process.

Lanor Curol also suggested during the Hazards discussion that extreme heat and cold may be a hazard as yet included in the plan. The presenter suggested that this might be an idea for another subcommittee to identify the populations at risk, and policies that might be available under the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant program that will be covered later in the meeting.

Goals

The presenter read out the four (4) goals that are in the current plan, which are the same as the 2009 plan and invited discussion about adding to or amending those goals.

O'Neil Marlborough suggested that we set a level of protection for the Parish and strive to make it the standard rather than building various components of the community at all different standards. As the flood goal is the 100 year floodplain, that may be a target. The committee agreed to define a Goal 5 which would be to define and end goal for the plan of a certain level of protection for surge and drainage.

Anne Parr suggested that we add "participation" to goal three regarding public education.

Hazards

O'Neil Marlborough suggested that we focus on all aspects of subsidence, and capture the inevitable result of having more land under pump in a forced drainage system. Our design target should reflect this, such as incorporating subsidence into the design of a levee system over the life of the project.

Jack Moore suggested protection from backwater flooding from the Atchafalaya, which was raised in the subcommittee discussion. Garret Graves was identified as a Board member for the Atchafalaya and a possible resource.

Reggie Dupre suggested that we should in our discussions of flood be ore discrete and look at surge, rainfall, and high river threats each independently, and then different combinations to assess the composite risks. The presenter explained that the HAZUS software would be able to run various scenarios regarding each threat, and we would look into threats that are combined.

The presenter suggested that the Steering Committee could keep in mind these different flood risks, and determine if they wanted to make each an individual hazard, or rather, develop risk profiles for each for use in drafting risk reduction strategies and prioritized projects.

Mr. Carl Harding suggested that the parish needed to draw a line in the sand and identify what can be protected, and what should not. We are affected by manmade decisions regarding the threat from the Atchafalaya, and should work with those decision makers to reduce risk from those decisions, or at least prepare for them. The Corps of Engineers should be in the discussion as well. His opinion is that we should draw back from the high risk areas, and relinquish that beyond it. No discussion ensued at that time as to where that line may be.

Oneil offered that the Bayou Chenes flood structure strategy was developed to deal with that problem, but, the conditions have changes requiring a higher structure. We need to revisit projects with the current conditions.

Sinkholes was added in the last plan in part due to the sinkhole in Assumption Parish. The committee members thought that the likelihood of risk from a natural collapse would be the creation of a small lake. We will review the available material and discuss whether this is a realistic hazard worth tracking.

The team reviewed the critical facilities maps that were in the 2015 plan, and Public Works was invited to provide via email the new 18 pump stations there have been reported as added since that time. Latitude and longitude will be provided to add to the maps.

After discussing potential meeting dates November 5th and November 15th, the meeting was adjourned.