

ResilientWoodsHole Neighborhood Working Group Meeting Summary



Spencer Baird: March 30th

We started by going through adaptation strategies for the Spencer Baird area that address major adaptation themes of maintaining character, nature-based solutions, protect/connect, and adaptive realignment. We extensively discussed Stoney Beach, as this is a major flood pathway that impacts the low-lying residential area behind the beach. Regarding Stoney Beach, we discussed the jurisdiction of Stoney Beach (ie. who will pay to restore it), what function will it retain after its restoration, and importance of preserving access to the public. We also discussed the feasibility of raising the seawall so that it would align in height with the Stoney Beach dunes to reduce the impact of coastal storms. Overall, a consensus was reached about the best adaptation solution that would reduce climate impact in the Spencer Baird area, which includes Stoney Beach restoration and raising of the sea wall. To do

this, we discussed the possibility of creating a community association where the costs of raising the seawall can be dispersed through the community.

Eel Pond/School St: March 30th

We started by going through adaptation strategies for the Eel Pond/School St area that address major adaptation themes of maintaining character, nature-based solutions, protect/connect, and adaptive realignment. We discussed who takes on the cost of adaptation solutions, such as raising bulkheads or sea wall repairs. For example, who has the jurisdiction of school street and how does its jurisdiction dictate the timeline of climate resilience and who bears the costs for resilience. Some concerns were raised about the retention of residents in the long term due to increased costs of repair after storms and usability of their land. This was brought up in the context of legacy homeownership and if future generations will decide to stay in Woods Hole. A consensus was reached in that there needs to be more cohesive community action, specifically on climate resilience actions such as raising bulk heads to protect from flooding from Eel Pond. More resources were requested for homeowners about climate resilient strategies.

Fay Rd/Gansett: March 31st

We started by going through adaptation strategies for each area that address major adaptation themes of maintaining character, nature-based solutions, protect/connect, and adaptive realignment. We extensively discussed the regulatory framework, especially as it relates with the conservation regulations. In this regard, we discussed what actions were permissible with the current conservation regulations, such as building further up away from critical areas or building berms. We also discussed some adaptation actions in the Fay Rd area, such as dune and road restoration (from sand accumulation). For the Fay Rd area, a consensus was reached that there needs to be a homeowners association formed to discuss the climate vulnerabilities with more community members in the area. Additionally, this potential homeowners associations can fund the dune and road restoration to prevent further climate impacts. With the Gansett neighborhood, we discussed Gansett Rd as an entry point for climate impacts, which acts as a funnel during storms. Additionally, we discussed potential regulatory barriers due to a vernal pool in the area, and wetlands that surround the road. We also discussed the possibility of an elevated road in this area to prevent against climate impacts, however this was not favored as it would be a very project. For the Gansett neighborhood, a consensus was reached in the need to floodproof homes and create a community association to help fund any other climate resilient adaptation solutions. Finally, some members volunteered to facilitate discussions within their neighborhoods.

Mill Pond/Woods Hole Park: March 31st

We started by going through adaptation strategies for each area that address major adaptation themes of maintaining character, nature-based solutions, protect/connect, and adaptive realignment. We started by talking about the sewer system in Woods Hole, especially the Park St sewer pump station. We discussed the vulnerability assessments done on the sewer systems and what the town does to protect the sewer systems during storms (line pipes and backup generators for power). Next, we discussed the

different adaptation solutions regarding the seawall, such as creating a dune along the sea wall or restoring the seawall. The dune along the seawall was viewed unfavorably as it can have a downstream effect on neighbors and will have some impact on the marsh system. We also discussed adaptation solutions as they relate to the marshes, such as increasing the channel size to allow for increased flow to the wetlands or marsh migration. Both of these were noted to have some preventative impact for small storms, but not larger ones so they will be less effective in the long term. Furthermore, we discussed some residential solutions, such as backyard berms, elevating buildings, elevating roads, and wet floodproofing. A barrier to floodproofing was understanding local building code, fire code, and building heights requirements. Finally, a question was asked about what the institutions are doing to prepare for the future, which include elevating mechanical equipment, floodproofing important rooms, and coordinating with town and community. Overall, a consensus was reached that there are many solutions that need to be undertaken in this area to be climate resilient, however this will require funding (possibly through a community association or through grant support).

Waterfront: April 3rd

We started by going through adaptation strategies for Waterfront that address major adaptation themes of maintaining character, nature-based solutions, protect/connect, and adaptive realignment. We first talked about how cost for a climate resilience project is distributed. We discussed water street as an example, in that any projects related to the sewer pump station was the town responsibility, while any other areas on water street were institutional responsibility. A question was posed to the institutional representatives (Paul Speer from MBL, Rob Munier from WHOI, and Nathan Keith from NOAA) about what the institutions were thinking in terms of climate resilience on the waterfront. For MBL, Paul pointed out that MBL doesn't have an alternative to go upland so they must plan for staying in Woods Hole for the long term. This includes protecting as much as possible and moving unessential activities or equipment elsewhere. Lillie Laboratory was discussed as an example, where the basement is highly vulnerable due to electrical equipment. Overall, MBL is looking into the possibility of renovating buildings, elevating where necessary, and utilizing other floodproofing measures such as dry/wet floodproofing and deployable barriers. Another question was asked about the role of the town in these preparations for the future. The town is on the ResilientWoodsHole steering committee and has participated in several workshops to present on sewer vulnerabilities in Woods Hole. A gap was identified in that the town needs to participate more in climate resilience actions in Woods Hole and must 'come to the table' in the discussion with the community and the institutions. Finally, we discussed different outreach and engagement opportunities of RWH. In the last year, we held several public workshops, met with journalists to get published about our work, and have been working on our [website](#). In our current phase, we are conducting these neighborhood working group meeting, establishing a presence on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, creating a climate resilience podcast, and creating a self-guided walking tour. A suggestion was made that RWH could join in on Woods Hole Business Association to spread the word about the next Waterfront neighborhood working group meeting.

Penzance/Nobska/Juniper Point: April 11th

We started by going through adaptation strategies that address major adaptation themes of maintaining character, nature-based solutions, protect/connect, and adaptive realignment for Penzance Point and Nobska Point. We extensively discussed the regulations/legal issues that come with climate resilience actions. This was brought up in regards to land use problems that arise when houses have to move back due to flooding or high water. Additionally, some attendees noted that Penzance Point has a lot of regulatory impediments that can stop any action. A consensus was reached that there needs to be changes in current town regulations so that we can have proactive resilient changes rather than reactive changes.

We also extensively discussed the importance of keeping the same character of Woods Hole. It was noted that there have been recent changes, including several climate resilient actions around the village that has caused character changes in Woods Hole. On this point, another community member noted that some changes can be done and still somewhat maintain character (ie. a home on Penzance Point that elevated home and sewer components). We also discussed some actions that the Nobska community has taken to be resilient, specifically beach nourishment along Nobska Beach funded by the Nobska Beach Association. There are some other actions that need to take place in Nobska to protect the beach, including dune and road restoration .The dune and road restorations were brought up as the dune is higher than the road, causing the road to flush out the sand at a faster rate. A consensus was reached that there needs to be a restoration of the road and dune system. This was viewed favorable, but concern was brought up that climate resilient changes are expensive. Joe Famely noted that some communities are able to fund climate resilient projects through community associations or improvement districts. Overall, a consensus was reached that there needs to be discussion between the community, town, institutions that outline long term town planning and can result in constructive regulatory changes.