

ResilientWoodsHole Neighborhood Working Group Meeting #3 Summary



Neighborhood Working Group Workshop

August 29th, 2023 5PM Community Hall

Workshop Stations:

- Welcome**
- Whole Village Vulnerabilities**
Learn about Woods Hole's flood risk and envision a resilient Village.
- Flood Pathways**
Visualize Woods Hole's flood risk in 3D and comment on designs that mitigate a flood pathway at Stoney Beach.
- Property Owners**
Get technical assistance on protecting your property from sea level rise and storm surge.
- Neighborhood Adaptation Solutions**
Share your input on ways to reduce your neighborhood's vulnerability to sea level rise and storm surge.
- Community**
Talk to your neighbors and leave us with your parting thoughts.

Resources:

- RWH Resources Page

<https://resilientwoodshole.org/resources/>
- MA Homeowner Handbook

<https://shorturl.at/dhKW4>
- RWH StoryMap

<https://arcg.is/oefo1.G>

www.resilientwoodshole.org

The ResilientWoodsHole Neighborhood Working Group meeting on August 29th at Community Hall included five different stations for participants to rotate around. This meeting was in an open-house format and ran from 5PM-7PM.

The first station, the **Whole Village Vulnerabilities station** staffed by Irina Polunina-Proulx, included mean high-water maps, coastal storm flooding charts, and maps of the vulnerability assessment of buildings and roads in Woods Hole that were conducted in Phase 2 of the initiative. All of these can be found in the [RWH StoryMap](#). This station also had several poster boards with questions for community members to fill out, such as: "What do you worry most about in regard to climate impacts", "What is your vision for the future of Woods Hole", and "What can ResilientWoodsHole do to help". The goal of this station was to discuss the climate impact projections for Woods Hole and identify areas of concern for the community. The community identified three main areas of concern, specifically Mill Pond and the ballfield flooding from sea level rise and flooding in the near term, the flooding of Millfield Street from coastal storms from Mill Pond and Eel Pond, and the flood pathway at Stoney Beach. All three were identified as next steps that the community and the town should take to ensure Woods Hole is resilient to future storms. For the "What do you worry most about in regard to climate impacts", most

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common responses were utilities (ie. internet, electricity, sewer). For the "What can RWH do to help", the most common response was advocate for community! Finally, for the "What is your vision for the future of Woods Hole", some great visions were shared on the poster board, including affordable housing, ebikes, and more science outreach. You can check out the poster boards [here](#).

The second station, ***the Flood Pathways Station***, was staffed by Linnea Laux from the Woods Hole Group. At this station, Linnea showed a video of Woods Hole in 3D with the flood projections. This video was used to further discuss flood pathways with the community. This station also had some information on the Stoney Beach Feasibility Study and was staffed by Paul Speer, the Chief Operating Officer of the MBL. This included dune performance modeling results and the configuration of amenities (ie. parking, bike racks, picnic tables) and invited participants to provide feedback on the different options. You can view some responses [here](#). Overall, the feedback for this station and the Stoney Beach feasibility study, was largely positive. Most community members agreed that the Stoney Beach parking situation needs to be improved and that the proposed larger dune height was necessary to restore. Additionally, most community members requested the community be kept in the loop of any decisions in the future regarding Stoney Beach. Other feedback was geared toward how to get young people involved in this discussion, especially since many of those young people will inherit the homes of current meeting participants.

The third station, ***the Property Owner Station*** staffed by Shannon Hulst, the Barnstable County Floodplain Coordinator and Annie O'Connell from the Woods Hole Group, was focused on providing property owners with resources and advice on options for their homes as it relates to climate impacts such as flooding. Shannon Hulst also brought the SeaGrant Homeowners Handbook to Coastal Hazards, which can be found [here](#). While Annie helped community members understand the flood risk to their specific homes, Shannon provided assistance to what they can do about their risk. Many community members wanted to hear about the specific conditions that would impact their homes and were either relieved or validated in seeing how future scenarios could impact their property. Additionally, many community members that were in attendance of the meeting were directly in the floodplain and recognized that their flood risk was high. There seemed to be a lean towards smaller, interim measures that community members could do themselves, and less interest in big changes, despite high risk. Some community members noted that they understand their flood risk on paper but could not visualize what that would mean for their properties. Furthermore, there were some frustrations about the town's height restriction and cited this as a reason for hesitating in elevating their homes. When discussing flood insurance, many community members were across the board in insurance for their homes. Finally, only one person expressed interest in selling home. For any more questions for Shannon, please email her at shannon.hulst@capecod.gov.

The fourth station, ***the Adaptation Station*** staffed by Brittany Hoffnagle from the Woods Hole Group, had adaptation charts for each neighborhood in Woods Hole. The goal of this station was to hear which adaptation solutions were most and least favorable from the perspective of the community members. For example, deployable barriers were deemed less favorable than other options like raising homes on stilts, especially since deployable barriers take coordination in deployment and storage. On the note of raising homes, some community members seemed partial to this idea, as this would mean

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they could stay in place and maintain the culture of Woods Hole. An important point was brought up about the decision makers for these adaptation strategies – who makes the decision, is it the town, homeowners, state, businesses? Some community members also inquired whether the town of Falmouth would prioritize any of these actions over more publicly used pieces of infrastructure. Additionally, some community members noted the high cost of some adaptations and inquired who will pay for some of the more complex solutions. Overall, community members expressed appreciation for the diversity of reasonable and flexible options in reducing impacts from sea level rise and coastal storm surge, but also noted that there needs to be clarity on the decision makers and who pays for these actions.

The fifth and final station, *the Community Station*, had some chairs and waters for the community to enjoy and mingle. RWH also placed a stack of index cards for participants to leave anonymous messages for us as parting thoughts. This was done so that community members could provide honest feedback that they may not feel comfortable sharing. Overall, the anonymous messages requested that RWH further advocates for this community and works alongside all the stakeholders to continue the effort in making Woods Hole more resilient to climate impacts.

Overall, the event was a success in getting community members from all the representative neighborhood working groups to come together and provide feedback and guidance about climate resilience in Woods Hole.