

**Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness
Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2018
APPROVED: October 9, 2018**

Eric Broadbent opened the meeting at 10:15am in the Volunteer Government Room in Town Hall, 13 Ayer Road, Harvard

Members Present: Eric Broadbent (HEAC), Kerri Green (AAC), Sharon McCarthy (BOH) and Kara McGuire Minar (SB)

Staff Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin)

Others Present: Dan Cooley (UMass), Emily Keys Innes (Harriman), Lily Perkins-High (Harriman), Katie Moore (Harriman), Peter Flinker (Dodson & Flinker) and Nate Burgess (Dodson & Flinker)

MVP Interview#1 – Harriman

Emily Keys Innes, Senior Urban Planner and Project Manager at Harriman, presented the background on the company and herself. Lily Perkins-High, Urban Planner and Assistant Project Manager at Harriman, discussed her background in sustainability. Katie Moore, an Urban Planner with Harriman, detailed her background in environmental policy. Dan Cooley is a Professor at the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at UMass Amherst, with a focus on plant disease management with an applied focus on fruit diseases and impacts that might be due to climate change.

Ms. Innes explained the process Harriman is proposing for Harvard, which includes:

- Project kick-off meeting;
- Climate change and Agriculture;
- Community Resilience Building Workshop;
- Draft and Final Summary of Findings

Kara McGuire Minar asked how Harriman would engage the community in the process. Ms. Innes stated initially they would attend local events to get the word out about the program and its goals. Additionally, workshops can be tailored to the particular audience to keep the community engaged. Harriman also uses a tool known as “survey in a box” to assist in getting the information needed out there.

Lily Perkins-High detailed the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness process for Community Resilience Building (CRB) Workshops, which will include one workshop focused on agriculture.

Sharon McCarthy asked how Harriman would deal with climate naysayers. Ms. Innes stated she would ask what concerns the individual specifically and/or have a one on one conversation as to not distract from the rest of the workshop. Ms. Perkins-High stated focusing on climate related events that have occurred, such as the ice storm, and how Harvard could have been better prepared is helpful in capturing the attention of the naysayers.

Ms. Perkins-High further expanded on the workshop preparation through mapping, the use of existing plans, such as the Master Plan, Open Space & Recreation Plan and the Housing Production Plan

Workshops typically start with a presentation to the stakeholders in attendance, followed by an identification of the hazards, breakout groups, who identify specific hazards within the group,

identification of community vulnerability and strengths, and the determination of the overall priority actions.

Sharon McCarthy asked how to weigh immediate hazards in compared to those that could be years out. Ms. Innes stated by considering the short term accomplishments can assist in getting to the end goal. In addition, funding should be considered later down the road and not during the workshop process. For planning purposes you should consider the short, mid and longer term considerations.

Dan Cooley discussed the effects of climate change on agriculture, such as erratic weather, which can cause destruction of entire crops; providing resources to farmers such as better weather data allows for growers to make short-term calls on protecting crops.

After the CRB workshops Harriman will complete a final report and conduct listening sessions.

Kerri Green is concerned with the massive investments farmers would have to undertake to mitigate the recommendations to remain sustainable. Ms. Innes stated creating a business succession strategy could be useful to farmers. Harriman is willing to bring in other experts the Committee may want to have during the workshop as well. Ms. Green stated providing guidance on how to implement recommendations will go a long way with the farming community.

The committee recessed at 12:08pm and reconvened at 1:00pm.

MVP Interview#1 – Dodson & Flinker

Peter Flinker, Landscape Architect and Certified Planners for Dodson & Flinker (D&F), gave an overview of the company, who primarily work with clients on developments that the protect land. Mr. Flinker is the author of *Dealing with Change in the Connecticut River Valley and Rural by Design*. Dodson & Flinker help Towns develop without losing their character. Most of their current projects are based in costal communities. Dodson & Flinker have experience with agricultural communities and developing plans to assist towards sustainability.

Nate Burgess, Land Architect for D&F, has focused on resilience planning and design techniques.

Mr. Flinker reviewed the process in which D&F would take to get to the final plan, which includes:

- Workshop Preparation;
- Survey of Orchard and Farm Owners;
- Agriculturally Focused Workshops;
- Community Resilience Building (CRB) Workshop; and
- Final Workshops Products and Report

D&F will conduct two agricultural workshops, the first to determine the hazards concerning residents and the second to determine the strategies for those concerns. In addition, D&F is proposing a separate CRB workshop.

Sharon McCarthy asked how D&F would engage the community in the process. Mr. Burgess stated typically those in the community that want to defend something that is happening to them personally, such as flooded basements due to larger storms events. Reward based engagement is also tool used by D&F.

Kara McGuire Minar asked about the economic forecasting toward the what-if farms fail and how it will impact the Town. Mr. Flinker stated D&F could look at the effects on the Town of a local farm was to fail, however it would be with a lot of assumptions.

Ms. McGuire Minar asked about the proposed timeline, which seems aggressive. Mr. Flinker felt D&F would be able to accomplish the task in the given amount of time.

In closing, Mr. Flinker stated D&F works toward gaining trust of those they are working for to bring them along in the process. D&F will also review zoning regulations to determine if there are revisions that can be made to them to allow for things to happen on agricultural land that can not take place now. Recommendations and next steps will also be provided by D&F in the Summary of Findings.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard
Land Use Administrator/
Conservation Agent

DOCUMENTS & EXHIBITS

- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Sub-Committee Agenda, September 17, 2018
- Harriman Town of Harvard Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program PowerPoint © presentation, dated September 2018
- Town of Harvard MVP Program, Interview, Harriman | Dan Cooley PH.D., dated September 17, 2018
- Dodson & Flinker proposal for consulting services, prepared by Peter Flinker, dated August 24, 2018
- Community Resilience Building Workshop, West Tisbury and Chilmark, MA, Summary of Findings, prepared by Dodson & Flinker, Landscape Architects and Planners, dated 6/30/2018