



AD HOC NEIGHBORHOOD RESILIENCE PROJECTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Miami Beach
Elizabeth Wheaton, Chair
Amy Knowles, Liaison

TO: Members of The Ad Hoc Neighborhood Resilience Projects Committee

- Elizabeth Wheaton, Chair
- Clare McCord, Vice-Chair
- Spencer Hennings
- Barbara Herskowitz
- Calvin Kohli
- Jason Koslowe
- Galen Treuer
- Amy Knowles, City Liaison

DATE: May 24, 2022

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Ad Hoc Neighborhood Resilience Projects Committee on May 24, 2022, Virtual Meeting

Present: Elizabeth Wheaton, Clare McCord, Amy Knowles, Spencer Hennings, Jason Koslowe, Galen Treuer, Barbara Herskowitz

City staff: Joe Gomez, David Martinez, Kevin Pulido, Lauren Firtel, Melissa Berthier, Lester Sola, Juanita Ballesteros, Gabriella Gonzalez, Lindsey Precht, Cristina Ortega

Absent: Calvin Kohli

1. WELCOME AND ATTENDANCE

The Committee meeting was opened with a round of introductions from all participants.

2. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Minutes Approval

C. McCord made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by J. Koslowe.

Finalize Meeting Dates

E. Wheaton put forth a meeting date of Tuesday, July 12 at 4 PM. C. McCord, S. Hennings, and J. Koslowe verbally agreed on the date; all agreed there was no conflict with the proposed meeting date and time. The meetings could be in-person or virtual, to be decided closer to that date.

3. Public Works Director Joe Gomez presented “Flood Mitigation & Sea Level Rise Adaptation - City Response to Flooding” with City Engineer Cristina Ortega and Joe Gomez

C. Ortega began to explain the presentation, divided into the following topics respectively:

- Types of Flooding

- These include Tidal, Rainfall, and Storm Surge.
- How to Report Flooding
 - Officials and the community can use platforms such as EGov & Crisis Track.
- Basic Strategy of Flood Risk Reduction
 - Elevate roads and seawalls to mitigate tidal flooding.
 - Implement improved stormwater treatment systems to better catch and filter debris.
- Road Elevation
 - We have a road elevation strategy with different thresholds set depending on sea level rise projections. C. Ortega showed MB's Sunset Harbor as a successful example of effective road elevation in 2011 flooding vs. 2017 post-elevation.
- Comprehensive Neighborhood Improvement Projects (NIPs): stormwater, water, sewer, road elevation, and the aboveground upgrades
 - A map was presented of MB neighborhoods that need to be improved, recommended priority NIPs and neighborhoods with projects in progress
 - J. Gomez added that NIPs include a *complete* replacement of old water and sewer infrastructure. Thus, all is new, in addition to road elevation.
- Blue/Green Stormwater Infrastructure
 - These types of infrastructure should be implemented whenever possible.
- Interim Flood Solution and Prioritization of Work
 - Adding injection wells would help some levels of flooding and would improve water quality.
 - These interim projects are meant to be salvageable and usable in later NIPs.

4. Questions/Comments in Response to Public Works Presentation

Concerns over internal and external communications over NIP timelines

- The Committee agreed that there needs to be better, multimedia communications shared with the community regarding planning and constructing NIPs. This is also important for those who wish to complete home improvement projects and want to make timely improvements without needing to retrofit them in the future. J. Koslowe brought up the importance of communicating community needs and questions to project designers before improvements are made.

Concerns regarding funding/budget

- J. Gomez responded to budget concerns, explaining that it comes from (limited) stormwater enterprise funding, water and sewer bonds, along with a GO Bond component. He also expressed a concern that funding exists to design these projects; however, it is unclear how to obtain necessary construction funding—this could be done via state and federal grants.
- Taxes and how funding from taxing must be used in that specific neighborhood/area being taxed were discussed. Higher taxation may be needed to obtain funding.
- The Committee discussed the need for and complexity of understanding the timeline for NIPs and the approximate costs.

Questions were raised over the efficacy of short-term, gray infrastructure projects versus NIPs

- J. Gomez said interim projects are for specific “hotspots” (referencing a map and list), not whole neighborhoods like NIPs. He explained that new infrastructure should be incorporated into the greater project later, not demolished and rebuilt. It could take many years to do an entire NIP. Interim projects are especially beneficial in vulnerable areas to improve quality of life. NIPs are meant to be green/blue and comprehensive.
- The approximate cost for the first 2 out of 10 hotspot improvements is \$5.2 million. The total plan for the top 10 is about \$26 million over a 6-year period.
- The Committee discussed the limitations (and high costs) of injection wells and gray projects – this will continue to be developed, reworked, and reimplemented based on community feedback.

5. Private Property Adaptation Launch

A. Knowles spoke about the launch of the Private Property Adaptation (PPA) Program. The program is funded by the City’s Resilience Fund of \$1.3 million. The development and implementation of the first phase of the program will be working with Brizaga, the consultants. The PPA is a 50-50 reimbursement-based grant where eligible applicants can receive up to \$20,000 per property. Low-to-moderate-income properties are 100% covered up to \$20,000. There are two phases: assessment in 2022 and improvement in 2023. The modifications are green infrastructure and building flood mitigation.

6. Motion Approval

Due to the threats that our community is facing from flooding and water quality issues, which are exacerbated by climate change, the Committee recommends that the City provide a timeline to accompany the prioritization of neighborhood improvement projects (NIP) for the next 10 years in addition to an estimated budget. The timeline with accompanying graphic should show how it would intersect with existing CIP and GOB improvements, in order to clarify and articulate the elements that the project will include. – introduced by E. Wheaton

C. McCord approved, seconded by G. Treuer. The motion was approved and passed unanimously.

7. Closing Remarks & Motion to Adjourn

The next meeting will include 15-20 minutes of proposed Committee topics, more information on the PPA Program, a review of project FAQs and how they can be readjusted towards NIPs and website/community communications, a presentation from J. Gomez regarding undergrounding FPL lines, and a deeper discussion on “interim solutions” and injection wells. A motion to adjourn was brought to the Committee which was unanimously approved. Committee adjourned.