

CONSERVATION COMMISSION CLIMATE RESILIENCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Attendees: Sandy Broyard (chair), Stephen Kass, Gary Mottau, Candy Shweder; Carolyn Stoeber (staff)

Sent before the meeting: <https://climateresilient.wixsite.com/nashuariver>

Sandy Broyard called the meeting to order at 1:02pm.

Defining the subcommittee:

- do not need to deal with bylaws and regulations as we already have a bylaw subcommittee.
- define how we can best cooperate with the Board of Health, and what is the overlap between their interests and our interests, i.e. protecting the ground water and the ponds
- though already created the language in other towns, each town has its specific challenges:
 - Chilmark Pond
 - Menemsha
- good idea to begin conversations with the BOH to deal with the MVC recommendations jointly and with our own bylaw amendments jointly as we develop them to have the support of BOH
- suggested more of an overlap of this committee with the bylaw subcommittee
- Include ZBA in these discussions as they have some power in granting special permits
- it may help to align our interests and policies across several boards and continue increased coordination between departments

Other work happening already that is related to this committee:

- the Climate Committee addressed some of the issues in Menemsha with the rising tide rising sea level. Grants have been received for millions of dollars being spent on the docks being able to ride up and down with the rising level of the water
- The erosion from the big storms, the multiple storms. That's an issue that we were talking about in terms of bylaws: requirements for climate resilience, managed retreat plans (Bylaw subcommittee)
- The MVC has a Climate Action Task Force already hosting a climate fair every spring and they're talking about having an event during the summer to highlight for Vineyarders, visitors, and seasonal residents the threats we've discussed
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Immediate Tasks:

- Attend MVC presentation at the BOH meeting on December 20 (NOTE: THE MVC PRESENTATION WILL BE RECORDED FOR THOSE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND IN PERSON)
- Deliverable - joint recommendation with the BOH to the Select Board
- looking through the material from the climate change webinar, and getting a sense of how other communities have responded to what their particular challenges are. Even though there is language there, we need to be very specific about what our particular challenges are specifically related to being an island surrounded by water:
 - the great ponds kind of being filled with so making them unusable.

- Tisbury Great Pond - What happens when you buffer the shore too much
 - rising sea levels – what is happening in Menemsha.
- Talk about common goals:
- delineating our goals are
- How do they correspond with Board of Health, ZBA, and others
- Where can we connect with them?
- The BOH, the ZBA, the Select Board, the Planning Board has to
 - agree upon the threat
 - agree on the nature of the responses that we should be planning.
 - Assign different tasks to the different committees and commissions
- Look at applications that are before more than one board in a more coordinated effort, perhaps holding the public hearing portion in a joint meeting and then vote at the commissions. Have more of an understanding of where each group is coming from. Inform each other through the questions, and you get same answers from the applicant.

Other tasks:

- Host a general discussion that is Chilmark-focused about the kinds of proposed policies that the town should be considering, without reference to the technicalities of bylaws. Once the town adopts a series of climate oriented policies, then the implementation of those policies gets parceled out to the commissions and committees. It's not enough for CONCOM to outline its proposed bylaw and regulation amendments, but rather done with a foundation of common goals
- This group could also deal with outreach and education with a multi-pronged approach:
 - Workshops at the library
 - articles in the paper
- Climate change webinar review –
- come up with some sort of language that speaks to uniqueness. The uniqueness of the up island community. The fact that we have upland wetlands and what it is that we're trying to protect using science-based language
- Host a public hearing to get feedback on what is especially important to people living in Chilmark with regard to climate resilience and the environment
- Host an event/talk by someone that would catch people's attention and be eloquent and are deeply entrenched in the science and they've written some very popular books.

NOTED:

- important that the Menemsha estuary and the salt marsh beyond be maintained scrupulously for its buffering of flooding.
- most of the inhabitants of Chilmark live above where the flooding, but flooding would affect wells with salt water intrusion and the septic systems that won't be able function
- the municipal vulnerability planning in Clinton and Bolton didn't exclusively talk about wetlands. They talked about protecting forests and fields and referred to nature-based bylaws. (PASS ON TO BYLAW COMMITTEE)

- interesting part of the Nashua river website about land acknowledgment that recognizes that at one point all the people owned all the land
- invasive manipulations of the environment that we misunderstand in a lot of ways. what we don't see may be more important than what we can conceptualize in the scale of what's happening in our soils. What is happening in the soil supports all life on earth. That tree has a very important role in the local ecology
- Mitigation requirements for applications before CONCOM for a minimum of 2:1 mitigation either on-site, or if not feasible, off-site. (BRING TO FULL COMMISSION; NOTE FOR BYLAW SUBCOMMITTEE)
- not only looking at the impacts on a given property, but the local regional impacts. there is runoff, for example. Develop recommendations, for example, for pools. We need to speak about the regional impacts of them cumulatively. And then you get down to individual applications and standards because it's not sufficient to do it on a pool by pool basis. (BRING TO FULL COMMISSION; NOTE FOR BYLAW SUBCOMMITTEE)

Recommended further reading/research:

- Liz Durkee and Stephen Kass drafted articles based on MVC Climate action
- Michelle Gazona was contacted for access to the recording of an MSMCP webinar, and also other resource materials related to it. It's a huge amount of information, but it's helpful. Towns on the mainland have developed policies for resilience in their communities. For example, if you cut down one tree, you have to plant 3 more.
- Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds & Shape Our Futures by Merlin Sheldrake
- Entangled Life: 2 related articles in NY Times recently
- The Blue Machine: How the Ocean Works by Czerski, Helen
- Wilding: The Return of Nature to a British Farm by Isabella Tree
- meet with Nancy Weaver sometime
- [Clean Water Act: Final 2023 CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification Improvement Rule](#)
- [Oceana.org](https://www.oceana.org)

Next meeting: January 2, 2024 after the site visit

- reconvening after the MVC presentation at BOH, and then figure out what it is we're going to be focusing on in particular
- In the meantime, sharing discoveries as we find them
- Future meetings: ZBA included? Planning Board informed/invited

Respectfully submitted by Carolyn Stoeber