



**All Hazards Mitigation Plan
2021 Update Meeting #1
Thursday February 25, 2021 – 9:30am
Meeting Minutes**

(1) Plan Update Process

- Previous plans approved by 2007 and 2012. Plan update required every 5-years. Current plan expires in May 2021.
- Winchester Fire Department is updating the Town's Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) plan. The All Hazards Mitigation Plan (AHMP) will be an appendix to the CEM plan.
- Opportunity to update AHMP to acknowledge areas in Winchester that have multi-jurisdictional responsibilities.
 - i. Example: South Border Road is owned by DCR, but there is not clear responsibility between DCR and MassDOT for winter maintenance, and the MA State Police are often slow to respond to accidents. As a result, Winchester DPW and Police end up responding to accidents and winter maintenance issues.
- Next step will be conduct Risk Assessment:
 - i. Review previous assessments – will likely use same list of hazards from previous plan.
 - ii. Amount of risk is the overlap between the nature of the hazard (strength, frequency, future probability) and assets (# of people impacted, value of property loss)
 - iii. Staff questioned whether train derailments are a hazard to address.

- iv. Identify critical infrastructure
- Final step will be to identify Mitigation Goals and Actions
 - i. While identifying goals and actions there might be items which can be removed due to completion since last AHMP update.

(2) Planning Team membership

- Staff reviewed the list of Planning Team members from the previous plan, and identified the following staff participation. Planning Team membership will be limited to Town staff only for this plan update.
 - i. Beth Rudolph, PE – Town Engineer
 - ii. Chief Rick Tustin – Fire Department
 - iii. James Gill – DPW Director
 - iv. Sgt Frank Batchelor – Safety Officer
 - v. Bryan Manter, PE – Assistant Town Engineer
 - vi. Brian Szekely – Town Planner
 - vii. Elaine Vreeland – Conservation Agent
 - viii. Jennifer Murphy – Health Director
 - ix. Al Wile – Building Commissioner

(3) Stakeholder Identification

- The Planning Team identified the following stakeholders:
 - i. Neighboring communities – Arlington, Medford, and Woburn
 - ii. Climate Action Committee – Ruth Trimarchi is current point of contact.
 - iii. Winchester Boards/Committees – Elaine will check with Conservation Commission members to see if any are interested in participating.
 - iv. Winchester Hospital – Ron Knight (Captain Tustin will reach out to confirm)
 - v. Eversource – Tracey McDivitt
 - vi. MyRWA – Patrick Herron and Julie Wormser
- Engineering Department to reach out to stakeholders via email and invite them to the next meeting.

(4) Public Outreach Strategy

- Create an online survey – Engineering & Planning Departments to develop
- Press release – Put on Town website on the carousel
- Put the next meeting on Town calendar with a Zoom Link
 - i. Use Town Manager's account to create online meeting with webinar function.

(5) Schedule

- Update due to FEMA/MEMA by May 2021
- Next meeting schedule for March 25th at 9:30am

Meeting attendees:

Beth Rudolph, Town Engineer
Bryan Manter, Assistant Town Engineer
Cpt Rick Tustin, Fire Chief
Jay Gill, DPW Director
Brian Szekely, Town Planner
Elaine Vreeland, Conservation Agent
Sgt Frank Batchelor, Safety Officer

Review Stakeholder Information:

Stakeholder is Requirement A2 in the All Hazard Mitigation Plan

Topics for discussion:

Stakeholders are not specifically identified who were (a) invited to become involved in plan development, and (b) those who actually participated.

The stakeholders solicited did not include regulatory agencies, nearby communities, and local and regional agencies involved in mitigation.

Tip: Don't forget to invite the participation of adjacent communities (municipal or tribal) in bordering counties or states.

Tip: Make sure to solicit input from local, state, county, and federal agencies regulating activity within the community or surrounding areas. Such regulation could be related to mitigation through environment protection, land use controls, housing, economic development, redevelopment, infrastructure, public transportation or other public services. Agencies managing land holdings may have especially valuable insights and concerns.

Tip: Solicit the involvement of local and regional agencies even those with strictly administrative, contractual, or advisory roles. Their staff may recognize issues and offer solutions.

Tip: Private and non-profit entities may have a unique understanding of social and economic vulnerabilities while also being affected by plan implementation. Request the participation of private business (especially major employers, those holding real estate, or business organizations), academic institutions, non-profits, and community groups.

Tip: Invite the input of individuals potentially impacted or possibly affecting vulnerability to hazards - for example, managers of a sewage treatment plant in the floodplain or the owner of a deteriorating dam.

The plan description of one or more participating stakeholders lacks both their agency/organization name and the titles of their involved representatives.

The planning process as explained does not show a method by which stakeholders were *informed how to participate*. Press releases, public notices, website postings, email, and notification letters used to contact stakeholders did not describe how they could provide comments or otherwise take part in the planning process. **Note:** Issuing a notice that a plan is available for viewing is not the same as soliciting input.

Tip: Ensure that publicity during plan development includes instructions to stakeholders and the public on how to submit input. Provide copies of newspaper

coverage, press releases, public notices, website postings, emails, and notification letters to document that stakeholders were informed how to take part.

Tip: Remember to document the kind of input received, if any, and note if none was contributed during plan development. This adds to the plan's explanation of how the stakeholders were given a chance to contribute. More importantly, it is a good reminder to demonstrate to stakeholders that their contributions made a difference.

Tip: Engage stakeholders early within the *current* planning cycle, and do not rely upon previous involvement in prior plans and updates. Collecting input early can make a difference in shaping the mitigation strategy.

A2 Regulatory Guidance

Abstracts from *Code of Federal Regulations and Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide, October 1, 2011*

Element A2 Regulation [§201.6(b) (2)] (page 14)

An open public involvement process is essential to the development of an effective plan. In order to develop a more comprehensive approach to reducing the effects of natural disasters, the planning process shall include (2) an opportunity for neighboring communities, local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities, and agencies that have the authority to regulate development, as well as businesses, academia and other private and non-profit interests to be involved in the planning process.

Element Intent (page 16)

To demonstrate a deliberative planning process that involves stakeholders with the data and expertise needed to develop the plan, with responsibility or authority to implement hazard mitigation activities, and who will be most affected by the plan's outcomes.

Element Requirements (page 15-16)

- a. The plan **must** identify all stakeholders involved or given an opportunity to be involved in the planning process. At a minimum, stakeholders **must** include:
1. Local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities;
 2. Agencies that have the authority to regulate development; and
 3. Neighboring communities.

An opportunity to be involved in the planning process means that the stakeholders are engaged or invited as participants and given the chance to provide input to affect the plan's content.

- b. The plan **must** provide the agency or organization represented and the person's position or title within the agency;
- c. The plan **must** identify how the stakeholders were invited to participate in the process.

Examples of stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation include public works, zoning, emergency management, local floodplain administrators, special districts, and GIS departments.
- Agencies that have the authority to regulate development include planning and community development departments, building officials, planning commissions, or other elected officials.

- Neighboring communities include adjacent counties and municipalities, such as those that are affected by similar hazard events or may be partners in hazard mitigation and response activities.
- Other interests may be defined by each jurisdiction and will vary with each one. These include, but are not limited to, business, academia, and other private and non-profit interests depending on the unique characteristics of the community.

Review Public Outreach Strategy

Public Outreach falls under Requirement A3 “Public Involvement” and A5 “Continued Public Involvement”

Topics for discussion (section A3)

Outreach activities are inadequately documented, leaving out crucial information such as the opportunity(s) provided to the public to offer or submit comments and suggestions. For instance, public workshops or meetings held during the process, how these were advertised, and if attended and by whom. A plan may be unclear about whether written comments were requested, a contact person was identified, or a comment deadline clearly established.

Tip: FEMA encourages communities to go beyond the minimum legal requirements for public meeting notices. For example, directly invite specific parties, such as local boards and committees, neighborhood organizations, citizens who are or may be impacted by natural hazards, or other interested groups/individuals.

Tip: Explain how citizens were informed that information is available online, such as when comments are solicited on a municipal website.

Note: All citizens do not have internet access, so additional methods are typically considered necessary. In addition, each state has specific requirements for legal public notices which may not include online posting of notices.

The plan does not state whether any input was received.

Tip: Acknowledge a lack of public attendance at meetings or if no one offered comments

Tip: Examine the effectiveness of efforts in soliciting the public and use this information in meeting Requirement A5 by proposing improvements for future efforts.

3. A description is missing about how public input was incorporated or changed the plan. An explanation may be lacking for alterations made to risk and vulnerability assessments, plan priorities, mitigation strategies, etc.

Tip: Compile a summary of public comments and their sources. Explain which aspects of the plan, if any, changed as a result and why.

A3 Regulatory Guidance

Abstracts from *Code of Federal Regulations and Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide, October 1, 2011*

Element A3 Regulation [§201.6(b) (1) and §201.6(c) (1)] (page 14)

An open public involvement process is essential to the development of an effective plan. In order to develop a more comprehensive approach to reducing the effects of natural disasters, the planning process shall include:

(1) an opportunity for the public to comment on the plan during the drafting stage and prior to plan approval.

[The plan shall document] the planning process used to develop the plan, including how it was prepared, who was involved in the process, and how the public was involved.

Element Intent (page 16)

To ensure citizens understand what the community is doing on their behalf, and to provide a chance for input on community vulnerabilities and mitigation activities that will inform the plan's content. Public involvement is also an opportunity to educate the public about hazards and risks in the community, types of activities to mitigate those risks, and how these impact them.

Element Requirements (page 16)

a. The plan **must** document how the public was given the opportunity to be involved in the planning process and how their feedback was incorporated into the plan. Examples include, but are not limited to, sign-in sheets from open meetings, interactive websites with drafts for public review and comment, questionnaires or surveys, or booths at popular community events.

b. The opportunity for participation **must** occur during the plan development, which is prior to the comment period on the final plan and prior to the plan approval / adoption.

Topics for discussion (Section A5)

1. Future events and activities for public involvement are not described as part of plan implementation, such as while monitoring and evaluating progress. It is insufficient to explain only past participation opportunities, or to just generally refer to the upcoming process as similar to the past.

Tip: Describe *specific* planned activities and when during the planning cycle each will occur. Invite involvement of the general public and individual stakeholders, such as community organizations, non-profits, businesses, academic institutions, and other government entities.

Tip: Indicate who will be involved in organizing these activities.

2. Public notification of upcoming participation activities is not clearly described.

Tip: Be specific about the promotion planned for monitoring and evaluation activities-whether local media (press, cable/TV, radio), websites, email, social media, legal notices, flyers, posters, personal solicitation, or other outlets. State where the public will be able to read the plan, related monitoring and evaluation materials, and obtain other information related to its implementation.

3. A method for the public to submit input is not described, and/or it is not explained how the public would be informed where to provide comments.

Tip: The jurisdiction's described public process could include publicizing an official email address and contact person by title to receive comments.

Tip: If meetings and events will be held, explain how public input will be noted and reviewed. For instance, will comments(ies) be summarized, posted, and considered by an official or planning committee?

A5 Regulatory Guidance

Abstracts from *Code of Federal Regulations and Local Mitigation Plan Review Guidance, October 1, 2011*

Element A5 Regulation [§201.6(c) (4) (iii)] (page 14)

[The plan maintenance process shall include a] discussion on how the community will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process.

Element Intent (page 17)

To identify how the public will continue to have an opportunity to participate in the plan's maintenance and implementation over time.

Element Requirements (page 17)

a. The plan **must** describe how the jurisdiction(s) will continue to seek public participation after the plan has been approved and during the plan's implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Participation means engaged and given the chance to provide feedback. Examples include, but are not limited to, periodic presentations on the plan's progress to elected officials, schools or other community groups, annual questionnaires or surveys, meetings, postings on social media and interactive websites.

[Following information is taken from AHMP Handbook.](#)

[Page 3-10](#)

Plan updates must include documentation of the current planning process undertaken to update the plan.

A simple narrative of the planning process can meet these requirements. It is also helpful to provide other forms of documentation, such as copies of meeting minutes, agendas, sign-in sheets, and newspaper articles, to help inform the reader. This type of documentation could be included as an appendix to the plan.

The mitigation plan should include a description of the planning process that answers the questions "who, what, when, where, and how" of the plan's development. A good description could easily be developed by integrating the outreach strategy into the scope of work and schedule confirmed by the planning team and incorporating this information into the plan. Overall, the plan document should provide enough information to tell the story of how the community developed the plan.