

## Municipal Resilience Action Plan for Ida-Impacted Communities

City of Lambertville

**Meeting Subject:** Kickoff Meeting

**Meeting Date:** 03/04/2024 3:00 PM

**Location:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Participants:**

Mayor Andrew Nowick (Lambertville)

Cindy Ege (Lambertville)

Julia Taylor (Lambertville)

Liz Pier (Lambertville)

Matthew Baumgardner (DEP)

James Killen (Kleinfelder)

Ariel Patterson (Kleinfelder)

Julia Maron (Kleinfelder)

Simon Kates (Ramboll)

Emory Lee (Ramboll)

Anna Hochhalter (Ramboll)

### Meeting Notes

#### 1. Introductions

- DEP and the consultant teams introduced themselves. Participants from the City of Lambertville included Mayor Andrew Nowick, City Clerk Cindy Edge, Environmental Commission Chair and Resilience Team member Liz Pier, and Former Councilmember and current Resilience Team member Julia Taylor.

#### 2. City of Lambertville Discussion

- Climate hazards: flooding, sea level rise, increased temperatures, drought, and hurricanes
  1. The Mayor Nowick and team identified several climate hazards currently impacting the city, including:
    - a. Hurricanes: Hurricane Ida caused significant damage: millions of dollars of damage. 130 residents outside the floodplain incurred flood damage from Ida.
    - b. Flooding: The city has a long history of flooding due to flash floods, and now see nuisance flooding. Three types of flooding were identified:
      - i. Overtopping of the Delaware River
      - ii. Upland runoff concentrations from larger watershed areas
      - iii. Undercapacity stormwater infrastructure.Increasing precipitation is causing problems as well. They noted challenges with coordinating between multiple jurisdictions of

their roadways. Lambertville is at the bottom of a large watershed covering over 20 square miles. It is challenging for uphill neighbors in other jurisdictions to see their impacts to Lambertville.

- c. Heat: Heat has not been a major issue, however, they do lose power often because of the nearby substation.
  - d. Wind: Wind is now an issue in tandem with the prevalence of standing dead Ash trees due to Emerald Ash Borer damage. The trees fall from high winds and create gullies on the hillsides which increases erosion. Trees in the neighborhoods fall and debris impacts stormwater infrastructure and is hazardous. The downed trees due to wind contribute to the power outages.
  - e. Wildfires: have not been an issue.
  - f. Drought: Residents on the hillside with well water are concerned about drought and losing access to water.
- Objectives for this study
    1. The City described interest in the following:
      - a. “To bounce back and bounce forward”. They are interested in improving their current conditions to become even more resilient.
      - b. To improve creeks for stormwater conveyance and ecological improvement.
      - c. Assistance in regional watershed planning and coordination.
      - d. To generate a climate action plan and vulnerability study.
      - e. To develop an actionable plan.
      - f. Highlighting the existing grants received.
      - g. Doing more green infrastructure and stormwater infiltration.
      - h. Being proactive rather than reactive.
      - i. Identify additional grant funding sources for resilience related projects.
  - On-going/recent City efforts in stormwater management or planning
    1. The City has many efforts underway related to resilience, including:
      - a. Governance: Lambertville has an active Environmental Commission and Resilience Team; NJ adopted one of the strongest plastic bag bans and Lambertville Environmental Commission (LEC) did extensive educational outreach with their “Ditching Disposables” campaign to support the effort.
      - b. Condition Assessments: GHG Inventory; Stormwater management system and costs as part of the Stormwater Utility effort; FEMA 406 mitigation grant underway for Pittore Justice Center.
      - c. Plans: Prior USACE study for local creek that was not executed due to lack of support; In 2020 they created an outline and approach for Climate Action Planning.
      - d. Policies: Lambertville is now an MS4 Tier A city.

- e. Programs: Currently developing a Stormwater Utility Feasibility Study with WSP and Princeton Hydro. In 2020 received the Accelerator Pilot Program; in 2022 DEP and FEMA to develop actionable items; Currently have 2 sites acquired through the NJ Blue Acres program with 2 more pending.
- f. Grant funding (received or applied to): Several with DEP; FWS grant for local park redesign to increase ecological uplift and provide stormwater management; Received a grant to create a city-wide Tree Inventory; Tree planting.
- g. Projects: \$2M Swan creek restoration project.

### 3. Review Project Scope and Timeline

- The team discussed the overall project scope and time beginning in March 2024 for a 12-month period.
- The City noted that the Stormwater Utility Feasibility efforts will overlap this timeline:
  1. WSP and Princeton Hydro Presentation to Council – May
  2. Council will vote in June to introduce an Ordinance to add Stormwater Utility as a Referendum
  3. If Ordinance is introduced, Council will vote in July to adopt the Ordinance to add Stormwater Utility as a Referendum
  4. If the Ordinance is adopted, the Referendum will be on the November general election ballot.
- March-May will be busy for City staff.

### 4. Advisory Committee

- Discussion on the approximate size and composition. Virtual meeting likely to occur monthly.
- The City to provide additional guidance to Consultant Team on composition of the Advisory Committee.

### 5. Community Engagement

- Planned Engagement includes:
  1. Meetings with City staff
  2. Community Meetings
- Additional Engagement - What works in Lambertville?
  1. Discussion of prior successful outreach methods included the existing City Resilience website; Community surveys; Natural Disaster Newsletter; door-to-door of 1,800 houses; community newsletter reaches 2500 residences; HOA coordination; Facebook is ok for information on events but not for policies; YouTube videos on stormwater culverts were successful.
  2. Engagement that is interactive will be most successful, such as an interactive activity or walking tours.

### 6. Next Steps

- Schedule site visit
  1. The consultant team to follow up with potential dates. Mayor to join the team.
- Coordination with NJ Future

1. Lambertville has a good relationship with NJ Future. They are assisting in the stormwater utility outreach and would likely support or partnership on any of this project work.
- Public Engagement Plan
    1. Consultant team to develop draft PEP.
  - Data sharing
    1. City of Lambertville to provide Google Drive with prior and ongoing studies (completed).