

# MANAGER'S REPORT

## Town Projects/Initiatives Update

May 23, 2022

Submitted By: Paula Webb, Town Manager

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This report is an on-going list of Town projects/Initiatives. New information received since the previous report is provided in **green**. Items will be removed after noting their completion.

- **Swansboro Causeway Living Shoreline Project:**

NCDOT and NC Coastal Federation have partnered on a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant to install a proposed living shoreline at strategic locations on NC Hwy 24 that are exposed to the White Oak River.

The following information is from their project narrative:

*Project Site 2: Swansboro Yacht Club*

“Project Site 2 is located northeast of the Swansboro Yacht Club, a local community dining establishment, located within Onslow County, at the border of Carteret County. Living shoreline work will be completed on an island that is located between the two N.C. 24 bridges. The causeway along the northeast side of N.C. 24 has experienced past erosion due to storm events (in 2005 and 2011), including erosional undercutting as a result of Hurricane Florence (2018). The abutment along the northwest end of the island and the abutment at the southeast end of the island are also showing continued signs of erosion...”

Design and permitting of the proposed project is in the works with an intended construction to take place over the winter of 2022/2023. Proposed project designs will be forthcoming when available.

Project Engineer, Brian Lipscomb confirmed a project construction timeline of late Fall/Winter of 2022/2023. A notice to proceed has been issued for a traffic impact analysis for the project. RK&K has completed the traffic counts. In short, the report acknowledges am restrictions from 6-9am and afternoon restrictions from 3-6pm.

Design work should be completed in the next couple months and expect to have permits in hand the end of Spring. Advertise and award (LET) the project in the summer 2022. Actual construction availability will be in mid-September 2022, assuming no moratorium that delays into October or November to start. Construction will continue through the Fall 2022, into Winter 2023, and conclude with the marsh planting between April 15, 2023 – May 15, 2023.

## Town of Swansboro, NC Manager's Report

- **Public Safety Building Restoration/Relocation Planning Project/ Swansboro Alternate Emergency Operations Center (Swansboro United Methodist Church-SUMC)**

Details from previous reports have been removed as I believe it's the Board's desire to further investigate options for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) based on conversation from the September 27, 2021 meeting. Specifically, whether a regional facility or partnership with other neighboring jurisdictions that may have a structure that would provide a higher level of protection was possible. It has also been noted that conversation could be had with other local facilities in Swansboro that have buildings with a higher level of protection for space utilization.

The Town has an agreement in place with the SUMC should it be needed on preparatory measures. Public Safety staff and former Manger Seaberg visited the location at SUMC to verify the areas for town use, if needed, and to ensure communications would be available. The structure provides the structural integrity needed but communications during a storm while in the interior rooms would be difficult. Deputy EOC Coordinator/ Chief Degnan shared with me that arrangements for an antenna through Verizon or ATT would be needed. Board members met on December 9 to tour the SUMC site.

More in depth discussion with Chief Degnan, Chief Jackson, and Sonia Johnson regarding Public Safety Building Restorations will be had in the near future.

During the Board's Planning Retreat March 2, the Board agreed that the Manager would identify a committee and share that with the Board.

Ten people have been identified as the committee:

Chief Degnan	Chief Jackson	Paula Webb	Jennifer Ansell
Alex Wood, PE	Dusty Rhodes	Larry Philpott	Russ Davis
Alissa Fender	Laurent Meilleur, PLB Rep		

I hope to arrange our first meeting the last week of March.

Committee established 4/11 with the addition of Commissioner Conaway, Jr Freeman, and Roy Herrick. The Board of Commissioners held special joint meeting with the committee on 4/14 to give purpose and expectations.

The Committee has met twice with a unanimous consensus gained immediately to proceed with building our own EOC in town, to create a safe place for employees to stand up during emergency operations. Onslow County is no longer interested in a partnership to build a substation since they purchased and are operating the Freedom Way station. Committee members will be making site visits on May 25<sup>th</sup> and then proceeding to develop an RFP for architect/engineer.

## Town of Swansboro, NC Manager's Report

- **NC DCM Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP) Grant** – On March 17, 2021, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Coastal Management award their first round of RCCP Grant funding. The Town of Swansboro was competitive enough to receive one of the grants. The intent of the grant is to fund efforts in four key phases in their Coastal Communities Resiliency Program:
  1. Community Engagement and Risk & Vulnerability Assessment
  2. Planning, Project Selection and Prioritization
  3. Project Engineering and Design
  4. Project Implementation

Through our efforts in the 2019 CAMA Land Use Plan update, Swansboro has effectively covered most of the parameters for phases 1 and 2. This grant will assist in finishing the remaining requirements under phases 1 & 2 so we may move forward with the final 2 phases. Applications for Phases 3 & 4 is expected to be due by the end of this calendar year.

Dewberry, Beth Smyre hosted the first RCCP Committee meeting November 17, 2021 at Town Hall. The committee identified several areas that better planning (resilience) was needed but narrowed the list to the top priorities being stormwater mapping and generator power for schools/nursing homes. The complete list included:  
Disaster Recovery (generators for nursing homes, and schools)  
Stormwater Management/Mapping  
Climate Change  
Hurricane Response/Evacuation  
King Tide Levels

A community engagement meeting was held on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 from 4-6pm at Town Hall. A community input survey is available from the Town website, at Town Hall and the Swansboro Branch Library through March 9, 2022. The Committee met again on Monday 3/21. Beth shared that 89-online surveys were received and 6 hard copies. Flooding was the number one concern. The committee revisited the original spreadsheet and still identified stormwater mapping as the top priority for the portfolio. Other items still identified but categorized with stormwater mapping were, Halls Creek and Hawkins Creek Restoration, development of a wetland restoration plan, and a public education campaign. Development of the portfolio readies the Town for phase 3 – applying for engineer funding, and phase 4 implementation.

On April 4, NCDCEM released the Request for Applications for Phase 3 of the Resilient Coastal Communities Program - applications are due June 3.

Our consultant Beth Smyre shares that NCDCEM clarified that the focus of the Phase 3 program is on projects with a natural or nature-based component; this can include projects such as green infrastructure improvements, wetland or stream restoration, or living shorelines. Infrastructure mapping, such as Project #1 of our project portfolio, would not be eligible for funding under

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Phase 3. Therefore, she recommended that we focus your Phase 3 application on either the Halls Creek or Hawkins Creek stream restoration efforts. As Mayor Pro Tem Tursi graciously explained to her, a stream restoration project would be far more complicated scientifically and more expensive. It is doubtful, with all the other projects we have in the works on top of budget preparation, staff would have time to put together a viable application. I did share with her that we do have the Water Street Project (with engineered drawings in hand). She reviewed the plans and is checking with NCDCM to see if this project would qualify.

Beth Smyrna/Dewberry is scheduled to provide an update to the Board May 23, 2022 for Phase 2. We had originally hoped that stormwater mapping would qualify for the next phase, but we are told it does not. Phase 3 includes engineering/design – application deadline early June. Planner Jennifer Ansell and Public Works Director Tank Bates participated in a teleconference this week to seek other opportunities for stormwater mapping. The Town does have engineered plans for the Water Street Rehabilitation and could submit this project for Phase 4 funding. It is noted that the Water Street Rehabilitation project was estimated to cost \$215,000 in 2018. Phase 4 anticipated average funding level: \$45,000 per project, so contribution on the Town's part would be required.

### RCCP Project Portfolio

Project No.	Title	NNBS?
1	Stormwater Mapping	
2	Halls Creek Stream Restoration	Yes
3	Hawkins Creek Stream Restoration	Yes
4	Water Street Rehabilitation	Yes
5	<u>Townwide</u> Wetland Restoration Plan	Yes
6	Public Engagement and Education Campaign	
7	Resize NC 24 Culvert	

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- **August 2020 - NC State Historic Preservation Office Florence and Michael ESHPF Hurricane Disaster Relief Grant – Emmerton School:** The Town submitted an Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPF) Hurricane Disaster Relief application for Emmerton School (AKA Old Town Hall) located at 502 Church Street for remaining Hurricane Florence damage repairs and resiliency measures for future events. The grant request is in the amount of **\$424,000** and is established as a 100% reimbursable grant.

We will use the funds for the following projects:

1. Tuck Pointing of the interior and exterior bricks to help stop the water penetration that occurs. This would also include the application of a sealant to the exterior brick.
2. Repair the extensive damage of the crumbling brick work above the south front door and other interior walls.
3. Historic Ceiling repair and repainting – Even though there is a new roof on the facility, some moisture did seep in sometime after the temporary fixes were installed.
4. The installation of a Centralized Dehumidification System
5. Window and Door repairs/replacing/storm proofing – there are a total of 81 windows and doors that are included in this request.
6. Electrical wiring repairs
7. Soffit repairs from Hurricane Florence damages
8. Sealing the crawl space
9. Attic Insulation

We were notified on January 14, 2021 that our application for Emmerton School was awarded for 100% funding (\$424,000). Please note that grant activities may not take place until the Grant Contract has been signed. We expect to receive the proposed grant contract in November 2021 and hope to have a quick turnaround on it. Once executed, we can move forward on the 9 action items listed above. **The listed deadline for completion for this project is September 30, 2023**, but are hoping, due to granting agency delays, that extensions may be available if needed.

On 12/1/21, received notification that NCDCCR is drafting a subgrant agreement. The National Park Service has given clearance to begin the project. A budget amendment accepting the \$424K was approved on January 10, 2022. The final agreement has now been executed. The project startup meeting has occurred, and the Manager and Planner will begin working with NCDCCR to identify contractors qualified for the work.

Staff is preparing a draft RFP, which will then have to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation office before being sent out.

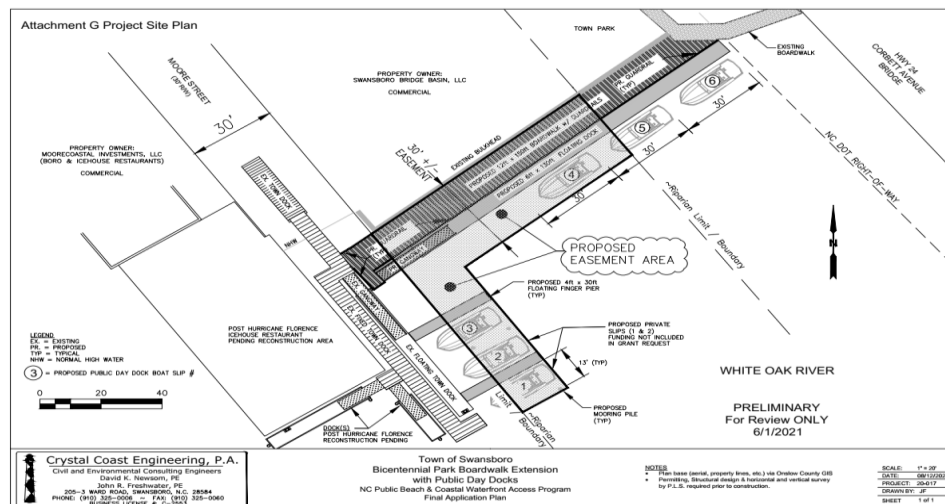
- **CLG Grant/Historic District Architectural Survey** - the CLG Grant/Historic District Architectural Survey Contract with Grubbs & Associates was also executed this week. The survey is due to be completed by September 2, 2022. Representatives from Grubbs & Associates began survey work last week.

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A draft survey is due to the Historic Preservation Commissioner in June. The final work must be completed by September 2, 2022. It's my understanding that local residents, Amelia Dees-Gillette and Kim Kingrey have been working with the consultant to provide local knowledge to be included in update.

- 2020 NC Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Grant Project** – The Town received notification on November 3, 2020 that the Bicentennial Park Boardwalk Extension with Public Day Docks Grant Project has been approved and granted the full amount requested of \$142,350. The Total project cost is \$158,350 with the grant. \$7,000 of the required \$16,000 town match will be non-cash/in-kind. The project will include the following:

1. A 150 feet by 12 feet wide wooden boardwalk to be located waterward of an existing concrete bulkhead along the shoreline of the southern section of the park and the Mattocks House property. The boardwalk will connect on the western end of the existing Town Dock located in the Moore Street right-of-way.
2. A floating dock measuring 6 feet by 130 feet will be located immediately waterward of the Boardwalk and will connect to the existing Moore Street Dock by means of 4 feet by 30 feet aluminum gangway on the western end.
3. There will be four boat slips to accommodate day visitors in small boats



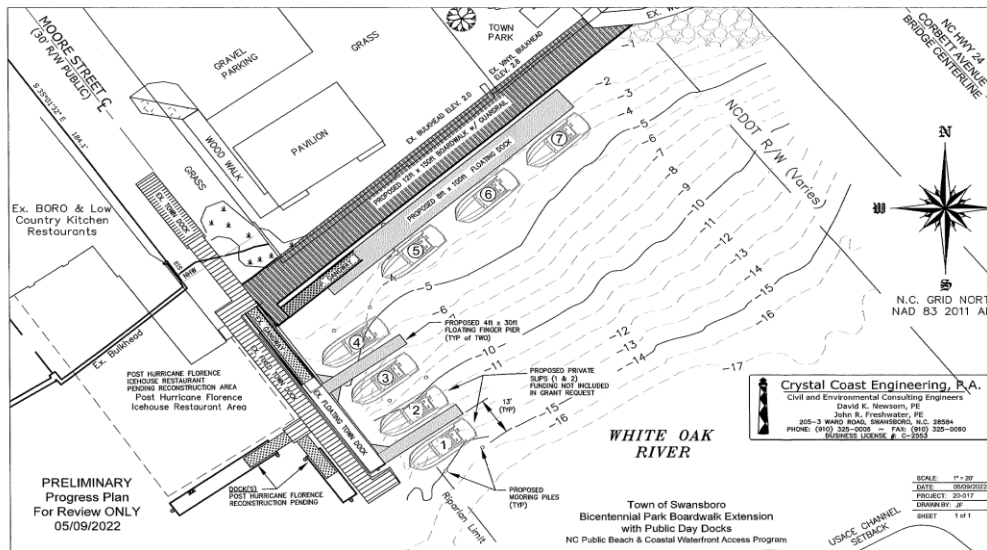
The Lease and Dock Rental Agreements have been executed with Randy Swanson. Kathy Vinson and Crystal Coast Engineering have been re-engaged to continue work on the project.

The lease and boat slip agreements have been signed. Kathy Vinson and John Freshwater were re-engaged on the project. A redesign of the dock was necessary

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to remove the kayak launch which once existed when Pogies was located on site. Removal of the kayak launch offered space for one additional boat slip. John Freshwater and Kathy Vinson are preparing the final notes on the plan, which will be submitted to CAMA for permit modification. Once the permit modification is in hand, we can send out an RFP on construction.

Revised design ↓



- **FY 2020 Stormwater Outfall Retrofit Project – Walnut Street** – Through our continued partnership with the NC Coastal Federation, we were able to secure a stormwater retrofit project funded through the Section 319 NPS Pollution Control Grant administered through the NC Department of Environmental Quality. The grant amount is \$69,155 and will fund the retrofit the direct stormwater discharge pipe at the end of Walnut Street. The following slides show the location of the approximately 9.3 acres of area this facility will treat along with a project description and anticipated results. Design of this project is currently in the works with anticipated construction during FY 2021-2022. Deadline for project completion is December 31, 2022. The Engineer reported on 1.20.21, that the design was under final review.

The Final Design has been received. The Project Budget of \$35K was adopted on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022. RFP's have been sent to qualified contractors.



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Staff changes at CAMA have resulted in a delay in starting the project. M&W Land Improvements Inc has been engaged and is on standby to begin work once we receive notice from CAMA.

- **Sidewalk Projects** - At their December 5, 2019 meeting, the NC Board of Transportation approved a funding request from NCDOT Division 3 in the amount of \$366,668.00. Per amended Swansboro Resolution 2019-R9, the Town contributed \$116,634 for a total project funding of \$483,302. The project was split into 3 phases/priorities to focus the limited funding to the portions that ranked higher in need.

Construction of this project commenced Thursday, April 8, 2021. NCDOT has estimated project funding shortfall in the amount of \$97,000 due to limitations caused by ditching and utilities. The cost breakdown for each phase/priority is as follows (estimates as of April 16, 2021).

- Priority 1 - Sidewalk installation along NC-24 (Corbett Ave) from SR 1511 (Hammocks Beach Rd) to SR 1514 (Phillips Loop Rd); \$120,000 - **Completed**
- Priority 2 - Old Hammocks Beach Rd from SR 1513 (Deer Island Rd) to existing sidewalk near Fredericks Ln; \$335,000 – Expected to begin in late October 2021 – Groundwork/drainage underway. Project delayed due to two additional easements needed just beyond Deer Island Road. Water line depth too shallow in right-of-way. Easements requests were mailed out November 23, 2021.

Senate Bill 105 approved November 18, 2021 included the \$100K for sidewalk extensions in Swansboro. An email notifying the Town of the \$100,000 award was received from the Office of State Budget and Management to

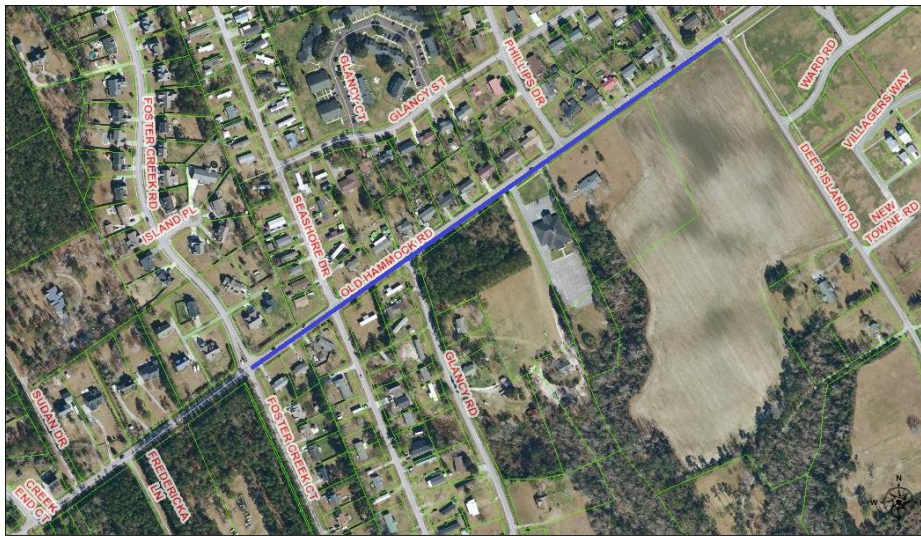


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acknowledge the appropriations of \$100,000 for sidewalk improvements from the State Capital and Infrastructure Fund Directed Grant. Once received, these funds could be appropriated for the second section of Priority 2.

Some stormwater drain work has been completed by NCDOT on Priority 2 along Old Hammocks Road. This priority area includes two sections. The first section from Deer Island Road to Fredricka Lane and the second section from Fredricka Lane to the Catholic Church connection. All easements are secured for section one. One easement is still pending for this section (involves heirs and deed preparation on their part). NCDOT does have some additional drainage work to do along the flag lots at Buena Vista Del Mar (adjacent to Williams Road).

## Section 1 of Priority 2



## Section 2 of Priority 2



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One easement still pending, but communication suggests we should have the easement in the near future. NCDOT still has some site work to complete prior to constructing the sidewalks.

### All easements secured and Phase 2 is now nearly complete.

- Priority 3 - SR 1511 (Hammocks Beach Rd) from Moore's BBQ sidewalk to Park Place Dr \$125,000 - *NOTE: we have not prepared survey/design on this section yet, so costs may vary more related to this priority*

Priority 3 will connect the sidewalks at Park Place to Moore BBQ. This area has not been surveyed/designed and could likely (according to notes in 2019) cost more than \$200,000 due to right-of-way and stream crossing, utility issues. Five easements required for this section.

### Priority 3



Staff is working with NCDOT on an updated maintenance agreement which also includes the breakdown of expenditures of the \$100K SCIF Funding (Town contribution). This information is necessary for reports we are required to provide back to the Office of State Budget and Management.

Although requests for Priority 3 easements were sent out back in October 2021, none were received. We will resubmit those requests.

During the April 4 Budget Workshop a future Priority 4 was identified. We are waiting to hear back from NCDOT on funding estimates.



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- **Traffic Light Synchronization Project** - Town Staff has been working with Nisarg Shah of NCDOT to get a better synchronization of the stoplights on NC Hwy 24/W. Corbett Avenue. He made some adjustments on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 but I imagine it may take a couple of adjustments to correct the issues.

NCDOT reports that the synchronizations seem to be working properly. The timing on the Queens Creek Road intersection may be adjusted to allow more time on the side road entries. What they did discover was that motorists are not adhering to the 35-mph speed limit. Most were still traveling 40-45mph. Unless the Town is interested in reverting the speed limit back to 45 mph, better enforcement of the 35-mph speed limit is recommended.

- **Swansboro ADA Plan** – Assessments of Town facilities have been completed. We anticipate a Public Hearing early in 2021 in hopes to officially adopt this plan once complete. Stewart has had some turnover in staff and asked that I submit notes from our last meeting. A final draft was received 1/18/2022 –additional changes to be made yet, mainly name of coordinator to Alissa Fender and implementation to Paula Webb.
- **Visitor's Center Improvement Update** – Andrew Wilson of Crystal Coast Engineering has prepared a draft building layout for the Visitor's Center based on several suggestions he received. You may recall that the Town had reached out to John Wood, Restoration Specialist with the NC State Historic Preservation Office to determine if the structure had retained its contributing historic status when moved to its present location, which would have allowed an exemption under the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. On January 6, 2022 Mr. Wood provided that due to the structure being moved from its original location, handicap ramp addition, and elevation; the structure was no longer a contributing historic structure. It should be noted that the elevation was required because the structure was in the flood zone, and the handicap ramp had to be added for ADA compliance. What this ultimately means is that we will have to follow a phased plan for improvements because the building is valued at \$57,000. If the renovation cost exceeds 50% of that value, a Substantial Improvement, the entire structure must be brought into compliance with the current ordinance and Building

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Code requirements. A second phase could not be started until one year after the final inspection on phase one.

Another alternative would be to raise the building to the current flood elevation (approximately 5 more feet) to bring it into compliance with the current regulations, including breakaway wall construction for the foundation due to the Coastal A flood zone designation. This would require HPC approval. This item will be added to the Planning Retreat for discussion/guidance. As a reminder the Town was awarded \$20,000 through the Onslow County TDA and must be used by June 30 or requested again in the next grant cycle.

Staff met with John Wood on Tuesday, March 1. As reported at the March 2 Planning Retreat, John Wood indicated that if we moved the side entrance steps back to the front of the building as they originally were when the building sat further down Water Street and clearly identify those as new construction using certain materials and raised flower beds to camouflage, the buildings historic status could be returned. Planner Ansell has sought engineered drawings and elevation certificate. Additional reviews by the Historic Preservation Commission and Flood Appeals Board will still be required. Once the contributing status is re-instated, the building would qualify for an exemption under the definition of Substantial Improvement and allow the Town to apply for a variance from the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance requirements through the Flood Appeals Board.

Tidewater has been engaged to provide the elevation certification and existing conditions survey. Larion Engineering has been engaged to provide engineered re-design to remove the side entry and re-instate the entry to the front of the building and flood analysis. All will aid in the return of the contributing status to the building which will in turn relieve the Town from the flood requirement to raise the structure. The design will be scheduled for review by the Historic Preservation Commission for the demolition of the steps/deck and construction of the new steps as soon as the plans are received from Larion thereafter, a variance will be sought from the Flood Appeals Board from the elevation requirement. Public Works will demolish the side entry however, based on workload we will most likely utilize a contractor to install the front entry.

On May 17, the HPC reviewed the side entrance demo and re-location of the front entrance as recommended by Restoration Specialist John Wood. HPC member Kim Kingrey volunteered to search for photos from years back to see if the hand railings were wooden or if any were ever present. Once final minor work approval is granted, the work performed and contributing status re-instated, we would then qualify for an exemption under the definition of Substantial Improvement which would allow the Town to apply for a variance from the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance requirements through the Flood Appeals Board.