

MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Projects/Initiatives Update

February 28, 2022

Submitted By: Paula Webb, Town Manager

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 tentatively plan to be out collecting traffic counts prior to Thanksgiving.

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.

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- **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.

- **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 funds 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

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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.

- **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 and we are waiting on a grant management meeting to occur.

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The Engineer reported on 1.20.21, that the design was under final review.



- **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.

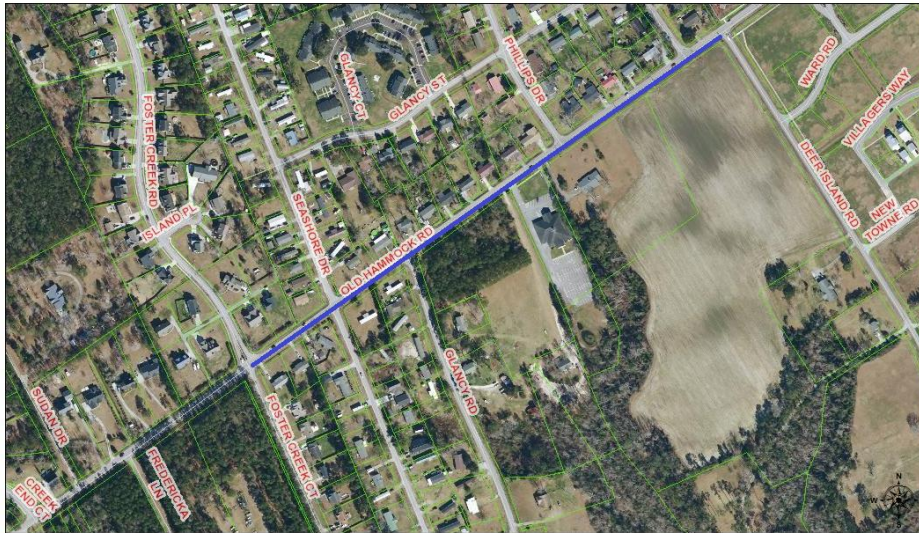
Senate Bill 105 approved November 18, 2021 included the \$100K for sidewalk extensions in Swansboro. An email notifying the Town of the \$100,000 award was received from the Office of State Budget and Management to acknowledge the appropriations of \$100,000 for sidewalk improvements from the

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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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- 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



- **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 image 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 motorist 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

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received. You may recall that the Town had reached out to John Wood, NCDENR Restoration Specialist to see if there was an exemption for historic structures on the Substantial Damage/Improvement Rule. 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 and therefore no exemptions were available. 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. We have asked Mr. Wood if there is anything we can do to improve the structure and bring it back to a contributing status. What this ultimately means is that we will have to follow a phased plan for improvements. The building is valued at \$57,000. FEMA rules are interpreted as we would only be able to accomplish one phase per year. 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), then the phased approach would not be required from a FEMA standpoint. 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. *A meeting with John Wood is scheduled for Tuesday, March 1. We hope time will allow for some discussion at the Planning Retreat the next day.*