

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON RESILIENCY**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONTINUED OPERATIONS**

**Virtual meeting via Zoom – no physical location**

**October 22, 2020**

**8:30 a.m.**

**Location:** Virtual meeting via Zoom – no physical location

**In attendance:** Subcommittee members Garrett Dennis and Randy DeFoor; Subject matter experts Angela DeMonbreun, Bruce Fouraker, Sandra Fradd, Mark Green, Lisa King, Joe Loretta, Amanda Polematidis, Jim Seaton

**Also**: Special Committee member Michael Boylan; Citizen subject matter experts Shannon Blankinship, John Sapora; Jeff Clements, Yvonne Mitchell – Council Research Division; Steve Cassada, Eric Grantham and Melanie Wilkes – Council Support Services; Ellen Cavin, Kristen Reed and Susan Kelly – Planning and Development Department; Kelsey Cox – Public Works Department; Kealey West, Susan Grandin and Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; Tommy Carter – Council Auditor’s Office; Sean Lahav – Northeast Florida Regional Council; Nick Primrose – Jaxport

**Meeting Convened**: 8:31 a.m.

Chairman Dennis convened the meeting and a roll call of the attendees was taken.

Kristen Reed of the Planning Department led a continued discussion, started at the last meeting, of the Adaptation Action Area Working Group’s proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Conservation and Coastal Management Element. Ms. Reed reviewed the changes made to the recommendations made as a result of the discussion at the previous meeting and also reviewed two additional comments received since the last meeting. She showed the map the AAA Working Group had recommended for the modified flood boundary which includes both the Category 3 hurricane zone (including Categories 1 and 2) and the adjacent 500 year flood zone, which represents NOAA’s projections of a 6 foot rise in sea level by the year 2100. With regard to a suggestion by Sandra Fradd regarding encouragement of the removal of privately owned bulkheads, Ms. Fradd suggested that the Planning Department review a recently released study by the Army Corps of Engineers about options for protecting the coast of the Southeast U.S. addressing that subject for future consideration.

Ms. Reed addressed a set of questions posed by Jim Seaton on Policy 14.5.4 regarding the percentage of the City that has been mapped for flood impacts, how often the maps are updated, how areas not yet mapped are prioritized for mapping, etc. She said the City’s Master Stormwater Management Plan (MSMP) is updated periodically as development conditions change stream hydrology in drainage basins and as local area flooding conditions are identified. Mr. Seaton suggested that the policy needs some more specificity regarding the balance between the need to map previously unmapped areas versus re-studying previously mapped areas that have undergone substantial development and changed conditions. Kelsey Cox of the Public Works Department discussed the status of the effort underway currently by a consultant to update the MSMP. Chairman Dennis said he wanted to have a presentation from the department about the progress of that update at a future meeting.

Policy 14.5.5 – alternative and natural stormwater management solutions: Council Member DeFoor said that public safety has to be the top priority regardless of what method is chosen. The decision was made to add the words “encouraging innovation” to the policy.

14.5.6 – impact of City-funded projects on stormwater effects on adjacent properties: Ms. Reed described how the City’s current development regulations and design requirements have already been revised to reflect the intent of the existing policy. Joe Loretta noted that private developers are currently required by the St. Johns River Water Management District to design their projects to accommodate a 25-year storm, so he hopes this policy will be the beginning of encouraging better private development practices with a broader vision. Chairman Dennis said that lack of space for retention ponds in densely developed areas poses a problem for expansion or redevelopment. Bruce Fouraker recommended the addition of language regarding the value of trees for absorbing stormwater runoff.

14.7 – implementing development and redevelopment principles and solutions to reduce or eliminate flood risk: Ms. Reed asked for clarification of Amanda Polematidis’ question regarding provision of adequate sites for future housing, including affordable housing, in future land use maps. Ms. Polematidis said that affordable housing is a tremendous problem and the Comp Plan should address promotion of the production of a greater supply. Ms. Reed will consult with her department about how that might be better incorporated into the Comp Plan. Chairman Dennis asked if any analysis has been performed on how much these new policies might increase the cost of development. Ms. Reed said the AAA Working Group had to determine if recommendations were “appropriate and financially feasible”. There is a policy regarding lenience on making repairs and renovations to homes for resiliency purposes that doesn’t discourage property owners from undertaking that work because it would trigger a requirement for full compliance with all current codes. Mr. Dennis felt that some estimate of cost impact of new or revised policies needs to be done before these recommendations are adopted to evaluate potential unintended consequences. Joe Loretta said that when these policies get translated into Zoning Code changes, then it will be easier to assess costs.

14.7.13 – FEMA flood insurance study and flood insurance rate maps will be adopted by reference into the floodplain management ordinance and depicted on maps: Ms. Reed explained the purpose of the policy and the need for the City to comply with the requirements of the federal flood insurance program and mapping requirements.

14.7.17 – the City shall continue to implement Florida Building Code and development regulations to enhance flood mitigation: Jim Seaton question whether the Florida Building Code and local land development regulations are sufficient and appropriate for all parts of Jacksonville. Ms. Reed described the several changes already made by the City in response to the AAA recommendations. The next edition of the Florida Building Code (FBC) will come out next year which she hears will include new flood resistance standards. Any City deviations from the FBC require state approval and need to be renewed each time the FBC is revised.

Council Member Boylan said he would like to be on the agenda for the next subcommittee meeting to discuss his Resiliency Council idea and perhaps suggest a policy for inclusion in the Comp Plan. He thinks having an entity beyond the Public Works Department to advocate for and seek funding for projects would be helpful, much like the St. Johns Riverkeeper advocates for the river. He has heard that the Public Works Department is reluctant to work on private stormwater facilities because that might entail future City responsibility for maintaining that facility. Having a Resiliency Council through which to funnel City funding to private parties to properly maintain their facilities could address that problem.

Council Member DeFoor said the Special Committee on Resiliency is closing in on the end of its process and she hopes to be done by the end of the year. Tomorrow’s Special Committee meeting will feature presentations by Roderick Scott (Flood Mitigation Industry Association) on flood mitigation best practices and Julie Shiyu (Smart Home America) on best practices for residential and commercial building.

In response to a question from Mr. Dennis about who will draft the Comp Plan amendment bill, Assistant General Counsel Susan Grandin said she would do it, with the revised amendments serving as an attachment to the bill. Ms. Reed said she will revise the text for the attachment to come back to the Infrastructure Subcommittee for one last look before filing.

Mr. Dennis asked where the Business Case for Resiliency would best be discussed, in a subcommittee or the full Special Committee. Ms. DeFoor said this subcommittee can do it because the agendas for the next couple of Special Committee meetings are already full. Sean Lahav of the Northeast Florida Regional Council said he will do the presentation on the Urban Land Institute’s recently released Southeastern US report and a representative from ULI will participate as well.

Next meeting – November 5th, 8:30 a.m.

**Meeting adjourned:** 9:51 a.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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