

BPW MITIGATION COMMITTEE
Wednesday April 19, 2023, 9:30 am
Lewes BPW Conference Room
107 Franklin Ave, Lewes, DE
Minutes

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

The Mitigation Committee Meeting was called to order by Pres Lee on Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at 9:30 AM at the Lewes BPW Conference Room.

2. ROLL CALL

Present:

D. Preston Lee, P.E. (Chairperson)
Austin Calaman (BPW General Manager, arrived late)
Bob Heffernan
Sumner Crosby
Barbara Curtis
Mark Prouty
Tom Panetta

Absent:

Candace Vessella, City Council ex officio

Others Present:

Sharon Sexton
Josh Gritton

3. REVISIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

No revisions or deletions to the agenda were noted.

4. APPROVAL OF November 30, 2022, MITIGATION MINUTES

The minutes of the November 30, 2022, Mitigation Committee meeting were presented for approval and forwarding to the Board.

Motion to approve the November 30, 2022, Mitigation Minutes was made by Barbara Curtis and seconded by Bob Heffernan. The motion carried.

5. REVIEW OF UPDATED UTILITIES MAPPING AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

Josh (GIS staff) presented updates to the utility's asset spreadsheet, focusing on updated elevation data, latitude/longitude coordinates, and proposed compliance timelines correlated to flood zone classifications. Assets highlighted in red typeface were identified as critical infrastructure — specifically pump stations 3, 4, and 8, along with the treatment plants and water towers. The electric substation was noted as particularly challenging to survey accurately due to electrical interference, with elevation estimates derived from LiDAR and physical measurements.

The proposed compliance timeline is now tied to the GIS system (currently Esri), enabling query-based reporting. A future goal, projected within approximately five years, is to integrate GIS asset data with the NIC accounting software to support financial forecasting for infrastructure improvements. It was noted that pad-mounted transformers should be added to the asset list, particularly those located in AE-7 flood zones.

Sumner Crosby raised a question regarding the basis of the design flood elevations, confirming that the varying target elevations (e.g., 10.64, 11.64, 12.64 feet) reflect the underlying FEMA AE flood zone classifications (AE-6, AE-7, AE-8, etc.) rather than a single uniform value. It was further clarified that the current flood zone designations reflect existing FEMA maps without sea-level rise adjustments, and that the GIS data will be updated as federal and state flood maps are revised.

6. DISCUSSION OF THE FUTURE PATH FORWARD

Austin Calaman reported that BPW is actively working with the University of Delaware (UD) on a grant application to fund flood mitigation improvements for pump stations located within the floodplain. The UD program assists municipalities lacking in-house grant writers. The application, developed in collaboration with GMB Engineering, was expected to be submitted by the end of that week. Key details included:

- Grant amount sought: approximately \$250,000 for a planning study covering all pump stations in the flood zone.
- Funding source: Hurricane relief funds allocated to Delaware (approximately \$1,000,000 available statewide, with no prior applicants at the time of the meeting).
- Cost share: 90% federal / 10% BPW for the planning phase.
- Planned scope includes flood-proof doors, relocation of electrical junction boxes from wet wells to above-grade electrical cabinets, bypass valving, and backup generation.
- A follow-up construction grant submission was anticipated within five to six months, with an expected funding split of at least 75% federal / 25% BPW, with the possibility of 90/10 through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

The committee discussed the significance of this opportunity, noting that it would allow mitigation improvements to proceed substantially earlier than previously anticipated on the project schedule.

Barbara Curtis raised the topic of electrical vulnerability and energy resilience, including the potential role of rooftop solar, battery storage, and AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure). Sumner Crosby explained that BPW had previously evaluated battery storage proposals, concluding that a hybrid approach is not financially viable — either the battery bank must be oversized to achieve meaningful reliability, or it is too small to provide adequate backup

capacity. Battery storage remains on hold pending market stabilization. The broader discussion touched on time-of-use rate structures, the regulatory push toward zero-emission vehicles by 2035, and the impact of the Indian River power plant going offline.

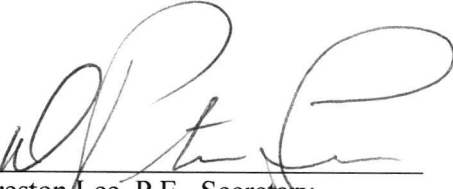
The committee noted that the MS4 stormwater designation and its associated infrastructure requirements remain uncertain and are not yet actionable, as BPW has not been formally designated, and no specific requirements have been established.

Chair Preston Lee noted that committee meetings would be called as needed, rather than on a fixed schedule, as forward progress is partly contingent on the City completing updates to its building codes.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Bob Heffernan, and Mark Prouty seconded. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:42am

Respectfully submitted,
Kristina Keller
Office Manager



D. Preston Lee, P.E., Secretary



Date