

MINUTES OF THE COLLIER COUNTY  
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Naples, Florida, November 7, 2023

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Collier County Floodplain Management Planning Committee (FMPC) in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 10 A.M. in REGULAR SESSION at the Collier County Growth Management Community Development Department, Conference Room #609/610, 2800 N. Horseshoe Drive, Naples, Florida, with the following members present:

Chairman: Eric Johnson, County LDC Planning Mgr. (excused)  
Co-Chairman: William Lang, Community Planning & Resiliency  
Robert Dorta, City of Naples  
Kelli DeFedericis, City of Marco Island  
Terry Smallwood, Everglades City (excused)  
Stan Chrzanowski, public  
Duke Vasey, public  
Amy Ernst, public (excused)  
Ned Miller, public (excused)  
Jennifer Schmidt, Community Planning & Resiliency (excused)  
Linda Orlich, public  
Paul Shea, public  
Kenneth Bills, public  
Deborah Curry, county staff

ALSO PRESENT:

Chris Mason, Director, Community Planning & Resiliency  
Howard Critchfield, Resiliency Engineering Manager, Community Planning & Resiliency

*Any persons in need of the verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the audio recording from the Collier County Growth Management Department.*

**Call to Order - Chairman**

**Co-Chairman Lang** called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and conducted roll call. A quorum consisting of eight members was present.

**1. Approval of Minutes**

**August 8, 2023**

*Mr. Vasey made a motion to approve the August 8, 2023, meeting minutes. Second by Mr. Chrzanowski. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0.*

**2. Q4 Mitigations Actions Update**

*Mr. Lang detailed a PowerPoint on Action Items 1.2, 2.4, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3:*

- Action Item 1.2. We're working with the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FEDEM) and a consultant, Rebecca Quinn, the county hired to work with us throughout our flow remit adoption. Ms. Quinn has worked with the state for a long time and we're working with our Land Development Code manager, Eric Johnson, to remove duplicative language in our Land Development Code that's already in Chapter 62, our Florida Ordinance.
- The state and feds are cracking down, specifically FEMA, on communities that have duplicative language that may cause further confusion between the ordinance and Land Development Code.
- We have a meeting with Rebecca Quinn, me, Eric Johnson and Howard Critchfield. It should be our last meeting before we take our final edits to the County Attorney's Office and then the Board of County Commissioners. There's nothing that's really changing, but we had to remove language that didn't need to be in the LDC. There are many strike throughs.
- Action Item 2.4. This information came from our Stormwater Division and includes the Golden Gate City Stormwater Management Improvement area, the Naples Park area, west Goodlette Road area, and Immokalee area.
- The 2023 Mitigation Action Items were reviewed and 137 outfalls throughout Golden Gate City that have reached the end of their useful life, and their replacement is critical. A water quality and bottom sediment pollutant evaluation is underway within the roughly five miles of the existing canals, which are discharged to the Gordon River in Naples Bay. They are beginning work on the replacement of some of the stormwater outfalls.
- We met with the Stormwater Division yesterday. Their primary project manager is Mark Zordan. We went over the FMPC's role and the Action Items they provide us for the Floodplain Management Plan and the CRS (Community Rating System) program.
- The Naples Park area is still under construction at 106<sup>th</sup> and 105<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Still under design are 108, 109, 98 and 99<sup>th</sup> avenues, which will begin construction in fall 2023.
- For west Goodlette Road, areas four and five of Phase 1 were completed in 2022. Phase 2 is in 60% construction. They previously addressed an area between Goodlette and U.S. 41 and through Mr. Mason's efforts, we were able to get several repetitive-loss properties in that area off the list just before Hurricane Ian, but Ian may add back many others.
- The Immokalee Area Stormwater Improvement Carson Road Treatment Area is under construction and is expected to take one year.
- The design for Lake Trafford and sidewalks has been completed.
- Action Item 3.1. Continue to implement policies for best-management practices for erosion and sediment control to comply with NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit requirements. There were 118 construction sites inspected for this period and 36 construction-related pollution complaints investigated.

- Action Item 4.1. At our last meeting, Mr. Mason reported that he attended an in-person outreach event with Gulf Shore Insurance and was a presenter along with some of the same people I presented with at an August 22 virtual meeting shortly after our last meeting; Mr. Shea also attended.
- We went over various flood insurance factors. There were many good contacts that we work with regularly there, specifically Ashley Clark with Wright Flood, a consultant who has been providing technical assistance to the Florida Floodplain Management Association.
- [He showed a list of the other presenters at the virtual meeting.]
- Action item 4.2. Maintain active participation and communication with the federal, state, local organizations and agencies to identify flood-hazard information, enhanced flood hazard awareness, including building construction requirements.
- Two days after our August 8, 2023, meeting, we received our Letter of Final Determination for our Coastal Map product, which was big for us. The cities also received one. It included our summary of map action that told us which Letters of Map Change will continue and which potentially will be rescinded. The letter said the preliminary map we've been using as a planning tool to get ready for the final map is finalized.
- We've been working with FEMA's contractor, AECOM, to provide us with different data sets and we plan on adopting this at the six-month mark. We're different from the cities. We'll be adopting it on February 8, 2024, and already have received many calls, including an hour-long call from a potential homeowner about the developer removing land from the flood-hazard area and base-flood elevation increases. I told them the BFE would increase, and that letter would be rescinded.
- We're going to be getting many calls from homeowners and are getting ready for that.
- He asked Ms. DeFedericis about the Marco Island adoption date.

**Ms. DeFedericis** said it would be adopted, in conjunction with the Florida Building Code, on December 31, and then we'll start enforcing it. Marco Island also is working with Rebecca Quinn to update its ordinance, so there will be some happy contractors because we're removing the five-year cumulative. We're still discussing what we're going to do and whether it will be like Collier.

**Mr. Dorta** said Naples will be the same as the county.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said we'll be working on a website. He asked the FEMA consultant for the finalized map and GIS data so the county can load it internally and also asked for links for the public. We have a preliminary map page but need to update and finalize it. We're reaching out proactively to the survey community to see if they'll submit Letters of Map Change (LOMC) applications to us and letting them know whether their elevation requirements will change.

**Mr. Bills** asked what the new Base-Flood Elevation was.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said it's property specific. Depending on the area, there were decreases and increases. The biggest issue is not that, but when people have moved here since the 2020 preliminary map and built under the premise that their property was removed from the Special Flood Hazard Area through the Letter of Map Change process. Ultimately, now this map change will increase their Base-Flood Elevation and now they'll have to get flood insurance. Those will be the biggest issues we'll have to explain and guide them through their options.

**Ms. DeFedericis** said that often, in a newly mapped area, technically in the FIS (Flood-Insurance Study) they're in the flood zone and it's just a Letter of Map Revision. I wonder if it would be considered newly mapped in (for the policy)?

**Co-Chairman Lang** said yes, but the problem is the newly mapped area is usually based on an existing policy. He believes it will be a straight risk-rating quote. They won't allow the grace period, as they did historically with the two-year PRP (Preferred Risk Policy), which became newly mapped, so some homeowners will get hit hard with the premium.

**Ms. DeFedericis** noted that if they have current flood insurance, they may go "newly mapped" and not go straight to the risk rating.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said that was correct. If they have an existing policy, they'll be on an 18% glidepath so it won't be as much of an issue.

***A discussion ensued and the following points were made:***

- For anybody who purchased a home, a silver lining is that the land was removed, in some capacity, before the house was built, so often when we get an elevation certificate for the home after-the-fact, it qualifies for a structure removal. That's usually the immediate option. Unfortunately, the homeowner must pursue the application again. Before, that cost was built in when they purchased the property.
- Most of the changes to the existing flood zones are based on storm-surge and coastal and most are based on pre-Hurricane Ian data.
- Co-Chairman Lang will ask if FEMA considered post-Hurricane Ian analysis but doubts it because that would have delayed the process.
- Insurance is required for any mortgage in a Special Flood-Hazard Area, but a developer often comes in and builds the land up enough, then removes it with a Letter of Map Change and then technically, it's not in the Special Flood-Hazard Area. But the county still recommends flood insurance because it's important for the continuation of a legacy policy.
- For a new development, that's often a selling feature for the developer.
- If the map changes are significant enough, you potentially must go through the Letter of Map Change (LOMC) process again. The structure often won't be removed because it wasn't built yet, so the qualifying elevation is lower because it was at the land level. The county is finding, especially with the requirements of the Florida Building Code for residential under BFE plus 1 foot, the lowest spot around the entirety of the structure generally qualifies.
- For example, Co-Chairman Lang spoke yesterday with someone with a BFE from 6 to 7 feet NAVD (North American Vertical Datum 1988) and the qualifying elevation for a literal map change to the north of them was 6.1 feet, the lowest lot elevation. When I looked at the home's elevation certificate, which was done during the permitting process, the lowest spot/lowest adjacent grade around the home, was 7.3 feet, so the BFE is going to change the 7 feet. But if they go back through the process with the structure removal, they'll qualify by three-tenths of a foot. It won't be much but will qualify.
- The county will have to go through those on a case-by-case basis.

***Co-Chairman Lang continued his presentation:***

- Action Item 4.3. Annually replace and update flood information for the following libraries: North Collier Headquarters, Marco Island, Naples Regional and South Regional.
- He already sent everyone the 2022 and 2023 progress reports and the 2024 proposed report.
- We'll be taking this to the Board of County Commissioners for consent agenda approval but need a vote from the FMPC.

**3. DRAFT FMP Progress Report(s) to the BCC**

***Mr. Vasey made a motion to recommend approval of the 2022-23 and proposed 2024 FMP progress reports. Second by Mr. Chrzanowski. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0.***

#### 4. Repetitive Loss Area Analysis (RLAA) and Vulnerability Assessment (VA) Updates

*Co-Chairman Lang detailed a PowerPoint presentation and reported that:*

- The repetitive-loss area analysis is our evaluation of properties and the proximity of repetitive-loss properties. We're required to conduct this analysis as a part of our overall Floodplain Management Plan and must have it updated within the next two years. The last update was in 2015.
- One of the important things we were waiting on is the final map, a coastal map product that we've been working on for a long time. The county also has two physical map provisions for the inland portions of Collier County and is communicating with AECOM coastal staff, but we have the availability to continue to communicate with the riverine study portion, which is the PMRs (Physical Map Revisions).
- We'd like to have that finalized before we get into the Floodplain Management Plan. We want to complete this RLAA first and incorporate it into the Floodplain Management Plan.
- We're working with a potential vendor that we've worked with in the past. They worked on our Floodplain Management Plan and our LMS (Local Mitigation Strategy) update in 2020 with Emergency Management. That firm used to be Wood Group and is now WSP Environmental, so we're getting a quote from them.
- This is in accordance with CRS Activity 512.b, under CRS Activity 510, Floodplain Management Plan.
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Vulnerability Assessment update. We're finalizing the contract with WSP Environmental and once it's finalized, we can get a Notice to Proceed and start work.
- We're required to have a steering committee. He'd like to discuss that after looking at the scope of work. We don't have to have a set number of people on the subcommittee.
- He noted that the cities are working on their own Vulnerability Assessments and the City of Naples has completed theirs.

**Ms. DeFedericis** said Marco Island hasn't really started, partly because the consulting firm we chose hasn't gotten back to us. We'll also need a steering committee. Maybe we could work together? We need to start that, so she'll speak to him after the meeting.

**Mr. Mason** said the FMPC would potentially be used as a vehicle for a steering committee and that input will be used to move forward.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said he'd also reach out to the LMS Working Group and invite additional stakeholders. We want to bring ACUNE (Adaptation of Coastal, Urban and Natural Ecosystems, an ArcGIS program) into that, so this may be a good place to do that.

*A discussion ensued and the following points were made:*

- The FMPC includes public members.
- There are tasks that are relevant, so why exclude pieces of the FMPC and come back and get another decision from this committee?
- Co-Chairman Lang noted that some required stakeholders are missing but are among the LMS Working Group, which he chairs.
- The acronyms used in this committee should be explained and spelled out. The LMS (Local Mitigation Strategy) Working Group is responsible for updating the LMS Plan every five years. If it's not updated, we're not in compliance with FEMA and other agencies.
- It's important because it includes a threat assessment on different hazards. Kelli was just elected as the co-chair. The LMS Working Group vets any local project that wants to move forward with FEMA grant dollars.



- Is there a way to take this additional mitigation action task and use it to give the county credit in the CRS? We've discussed this internally. Sometimes the county wants viable things and if we're already doing them similarly to the CRS, why not move them into the Vulnerability Assessment? We're able to show that we've checked the box and can report it on a recurring basis. Co-Chairman Lang agrees.
- The cities don't have to be totally separate.
- Kelli plans to speak to William after the meeting because she plans to some of Marco Island's local committees involved, such as the Coastal Committee and Water-Quality Committee. Marco may have the needed stakeholders.
- The cities are working on their own studies. The county has no objection, but there will probably be a lot of local stakeholders that will fill up those city groups. We have to be careful with steering committees because if there are too many members, we never come to a true consensus.
- The steering committee is very important and there are requirements. There are a lot of players that aren't on the FMPC.
- The Public Utilities Division hasn't been part of the group for a while and Co-Chairman Lang will reach out to them.
- The FMPC prefers not to use the term "stakeholders." A public-private partnership is better.
- This is a County Manager-driven resolution and doesn't come from the BCC.
- For the Vulnerability Assessment, we've got to identify as much critical infrastructure as we can, separate from anything in the state and federal inventory.
- We also want input from the players who are absent from the committee today.
- Co-Chairman Lang asked if anyone in the committee is interested.

**Mr. Shea** said he's interested.

*[Ms. Orlich left the meeting at 10:39 a.m.]*

**Co-Chairman Lang** asked if there was any future interest from FMPC members.

**Ms. DeFedericis** noted that because of this state-required Vulnerability Assessment, this allows us to get future grants. If we don't have this vulnerability, we're not getting grants, so if you don't agree, that means you don't want to help with grants.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said that's a broad interpretation, but that's the gist of it. We need to complete the Vulnerability Assessment and a steering committee is required to open up the availability for monies through FDEP and the Florida Resilient Program. The state is reimbursing us for that, so it's a good opportunity. It sets the stage for other studies and works in tandem with other studies, including our Floodplain Management Plan update, etc.

**Mr. Vasey** confirmed they no longer have a quorum (since Ms. Orlich left), but under Parliamentary Procedures, they're OK if we don't make any fiscal decisions. We can't vote.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said the only other vote would be the 2024 calendar.

**Mr. Vasey** said he doesn't like the Naples Airport discussion about a move.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said he spoke with the airport about that. He thanked Mr. Shea for his interest in being on the committee.

*[Mr. Vasey and Mr. Bills said they also were interested.]*

**Mr. Vasey** asked if there's any follow-up or plan to mitigate that loss, buy the property or remediate the situation.

**Co-Chairman Lang** told the FMPC:

- Being in compliance with the Local Mitigation Strategy Plan, the immediate discussion that we have with anyone who is interested is understanding the grant programs. There are options within grant programs, such as a FEMA Disaster Grant or a Non-Disaster Grant.
- For property owners with repetitive-loss properties, that involves a non-disaster grant called Flood Mitigation Assistance, FMA, which offers several mitigation options.
- Floodplain managers, such as himself, Kelli, Mr. Mason, Mr. Critchfield and Mr. Dorta, must understand that program in detail and be able to convey that to a property owner, regardless of the type of property, and ensure they understand the process and how long it takes.
- It's a benefit cost-analysis program and the property owner gets to a point where they can show it's beneficial to the federal government to award a grant. FEMA often will not say no, but they can say the only option in the benefit-cost analysis is this, usually the worst one, property acquisition.
- Property acquisition is usually the last resort a property owner wants to take, especially in southwest Florida, where they can put their property on the private market and not have to go through the hurdles of selling their property with a cost share to FEMA.
- Depending on the category of repetitive loss, it also determines the cost share that they must share with the federal government. Unlike other grant programs with FEMA, the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program is advantageous for those property holders because if they're a repetitive-loss property, they have a 90%-10% cost split. Traditional FEMA grants are a 75% federal, 25% local cost match. If you're repetitive loss, you're truly a repetitive loss, then it's a 90% federal, 10% local cost share.
- If you're in the worst-case scenario, a severe repetitive loss, it's a 100% federal, 0% local cost share, so it's more advantageous.

**Mr. Bills** thanked him for the explanation.

## **5. DRAFT 2024 FMPC Calendar**

**Co-Chairman Lang** provided the 2024 calendar and told the FMPC:

- We worked on scheduling a meeting for the previous Tuesday in the applicable quarterly month but found that at some point during the year, it conflicted with the Board of County Commissioners' meeting, so we want to avoid that.
- He asked scheduling staff to provide options for Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
- He doesn't need an answer today but would like some feedback. He'd like an answer before February.

*A discussion ensued over dates, conflicts and preferences and a motion and second were made and then amended.*

*Mr. Vasey moved to set the FMPC meetings at 9 a.m. on the first Friday of the month on a quarterly schedule. Second by Mr. Chrzanowski. The motion passed unanimously 4-1; Ms. DeFedericis voted against; Co-Chairman Lang abstained.*

6. **Other Items/Committee Correspondence**

***Co-Chairman Lang provided an update on the Local Mitigation Strategy 12-month lock-in:***

- The state originally allocated slightly over \$36 million for the Hurricane Ian Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), a FEMA disaster grant.
- The 12-month lock-in was at a 30-day estimate.
- The Notice of Funding Availability was published in February 2023.
- We've had numerous LMS meetings on projects to move forward to use that money.
- The 12-month lock-in gave us roughly an additional \$10 million.
- *[He detailed a PowerPoint presentation showing the various projects.]*
- The South Florida Water Management District adopted the county LMS, which they hadn't done before. That was required before they could present their project to us.
- Port of the Isles Community Improvement District adopted our LMS and has projects on the list.
- Cost changes are listed in green.
- Some interesting projects came forward. The City of Naples had one for beach-end parking. That was difficult and we're not sure if it meets mitigation requirements, but we're hoping it will.
- The last project is the Lee County Electric Cooperative, which wants to do 19 miles of looping transmission from Carnestown to Marco Island. The cost is \$38 million, which would have been more than our original allocation under the HMGP, so LCEC agreed to put their project at the bottom of the list.
- With the additional monies, we have \$17 million in surplus until LCEC takes the remaining amount, if they do.
- As these projects get new cost estimates or initial cost estimates, they have cost increases and must present the project again to the LMS Working Group, usually through quarterly meetings. This gives us a little more breathing room for cost increases.
- Naples Airport was working with a FEMA consultant who didn't tell them they had to go through the Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group. The city went all the way through the public assistance process for an electrical building and were then told to use mitigation money after public assistance money. They submitted their project to the state and were told they must speak to Mr. Lang and present it to the LMS Working Group.
- Naples was told they had to adopt the LMS. This came after the grant deadline, so he's now jumping through hoops to try to get their project approved.
- The state is going through their planning process now. They just divulged that they will still take an application after the deadline.
- The good thing is that the Naples Airport Authority has adopted the county LMS. They have a representative on the LMS Working Group and must take extra steps to get their resolution adopted by FEMA.
- If we can get all this done before the state planning cycle, we can get that project on the list. If not, he's encouraged the NAA to move forward next year with an annual non-disaster grant, BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities).

**Mr. Bills** asked if the airport got mitigation money to improve the drainage there.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said he didn't know but can ask because he's now working very closely with them.

**Mr. Bills** said the project must be close to completion. He's been watching it for six or seven months and is curious how they paid for it.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said it wasn't with FEMA HMA (Hazard Mitigation Assistance) monies because that's what we're going through now, so it may have been another revenue source. Justin



Lobb, who used to be with the county airport, is the new operations manager (deputy director of aviation) there and has been there for a while, so he also can ask him.

**Mr. Chrzanowski** asked about Lely Barefoot Beach restoration, the beaches and parks, and if anything is going on.

**Co-Chairman Lang** said that work wasn't going through the LMS. He'd have to check with Coastal Zone Management.

**Mr. Chrzanowski** said the beach seems usable, but they're stopping people from using it until next year.

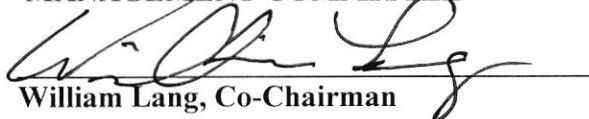
**Co-Chairman Lang** said he'll check with Coastal Zone Management.

7. **Adjourn – Future Meeting Dates**  
**February 2, 2024**

*Mr. Chrzanowski moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Mr. Bills. The motion passed unanimously 8-0.*

There being no further business for the good of the county, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chair at 10:59 a.m.

**COLLIER COUNTY FLOODPLAIN  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

  
William Lang, Co-Chairman

These minutes were approved by the board/co-chairman on 02/02/24, (select one) as presented ✓, or as amended \_\_\_\_\_.