



City of Barre, Vermont

“Granite Center of the World”

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Gunners Brook Flood Mitigation Initiative

Update #2

(02-28-16)

In an effort to keep all interested parties informed of continuing flood mitigation efforts, I have prepared this **Update #2** to all those on the **Gunners Brook Flood Recovery Group Distribution List**.

Following is a summary of actions and/or initiatives undertaken since Update #1 (10-18-15)

1. We have completed both the **Draft and Final Phase I Flood Mitigation Studies**. (A copy of the Final Report is attached) There was no substantive change between the two versions of the report.
2. Held a **Public Information Meeting** on **October 29, 2015** for public presentation of the Draft study and to obtain public feedback on the recommended course of action. The general feedback at that meeting was the report was timely and attendees were supportive of the direction and flood mitigation recommendations made in the report.
3. The Mayor, City Manager and Director of Planning met with representatives of funding agency partners to identify additional sources of funding to support future flood mitigation projects.
4. With outreach to and the cooperation of the property owners of 17 and 19 Harrington Avenue and 14 Reid Street, and with the Assistance of the Stage Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS), we have prepared and submitted 3 applications for **FEMA Buy-out Grants** for the acquisition and razing of these structures. We were notified on November 25, 2015 that **all three (3)** Applications were selected by the State to submit to FEMA for funding consideration. This is a significant accomplishment as only 4 Applications were selected from the entire State of Vermont.

We are now awaiting FEMA review and approval of the 3 buy-outs. We were advised upon initial submittal to the State that response from FEMA is not likely until May or June of this year. Should that occur, it is anticipated that completion of the grant award, buy-out and demolition process will take a minimum of three (3) months and will not be completed before fall (September), at the earliest.

5. We are working with the Property Owners of 61, 63, 85 and 87 Brook Street to obtain funding from either the Vermont Disaster Relief Fund or the Agency of Transportation Emergency Town Highway Flood Recovery Grant Program **make interim repairs to sections of failed retaining walls** abutting each of these properties. We are working to finalize funding as soon as possible, with repairs anticipated to be accomplished this spring, possibly before the spring run-off if funding can be finalized in time and the mild winter continues. We have already obtained a State Agency of Natural Resources Stream Alteration Permit to support this work.
6. On Monday, February 29th, the City Council will be acting on the Approval and Authorization of the **Design Phase Agreement with DuBois& King, Inc., for the preparation of the Construction Drawings for the Gunners Brook Phase 1 Flood Mitigation Plan**. Assuming approval is given on the 29th, it is anticipated that the Construction Plans will be completed on/about July 1st. The timing of the Bid and Construction Phases will be contingent upon the buy-outs status.
7. While we are managing the parallel projects (Buyouts, Mitigation Design/Construction) to the extent they are within our control, the actual timing of the Buy-out projects will determine the implementation of the Flood Mitigation Project construction. If the Grant Award, Acquisitions and Demolition of the Buy-out properties can't be accomplished early enough in the fall, the construction project will not be started if it cannot be substantially completed in 2015. Accordingly, mitigation construction may not start until late spring of 2016. We will keep you advised over the summer contingent upon the buy-outs progress and as we can make more accurate scheduling projections.
8. Pursuant to an initiative and commitment made by the Mayor last fall, the City Council has approved the following **Ballot Item on Town Meeting Day** this week (**Tuesday, March 1st**):

“Shall bonds or notes of the City of Barre in an amount not to exceed Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000), subject to reduction from available state and federal grants-in-aid, be issued for the purpose of financing flood mitigation projects, the estimated cost of which is One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000)”

I anticipate preparing future Flood Mitigation Updates on an approximately quarterly basis, and more frequently if substantive developments have occurred in the interim. **Please note:** City staff have created a **Flood Information & Update link on the City web-site (barrecity.org)**

Please feel free to contact me at manager@barrecity.org (or 476-0241) if you have questions/comments /input reading this Update or flood mitigation activities in general. Also, please feel free to encourage any of your neighbors to contact me to add their name to this distribution list. I will also add names to a smaller US mail list for those who do not have computer access as long as I am supplied with names and mailing addresses.

Respectfully,
Steven E. Mackenzie, P.E.
Barre City Manager