

Flood Management & Drainage Task Force



-  **Location:** Mill Valley City Hall, Council Chambers
-  **Date:** November 5, 2019
-  **Time:** 1pm – 2:30pm

Meeting #1 Summary

Attendees: Robin Lee, Emily Straley, Andrew Poster, Stephanie Moulton-Peters, John McCauley, Garry Lion, Jim Revoir, Nona Dennis, Matt Cramer, Hugh Kuhn, Jim McCann

1) TASK FORCE GOAL

- a) The goal of the Task Force is to assist the City in bringing choices to the community with regard to drainage improvements and flood management strategies, estimated costs and funding options in conjunction with the development of a Master Plan.

2) WHAT WILL THE MASTER PLAN REPORT INCLUDE

- a) Analysis looks at pipes draining into the creeks and the creek system flowing through Mill Valley City limits. Areas outside the City limits that drain to City systems is analyzed although improvements outside City limits will not be considered.
- b) Modeling of the Creek results using Stetson Engineers models. While they are no longer involved in the project, their models and reports were used as the starting point for the master plan.
- c) The creek has not been surveyed and it's understood that the creek bed is dynamic and the invert elevation and capacity changes over time due to sedimentation and scour. The model represents a snapshot of the creek and is used to develop conceptual projects. Detailed design is not part of the Master Plan but will be required as projects are developed and the model can be refined at that time.
- d) Discussion on climate change impacts due to sea level rise and due to precipitation changes.
- e) Range of projects to achieve a determined level of service and the associated costs of the projects. The list of projects will also be prioritized based on urgency, costs, environmental impacts, and number of properties protected by each project.
- f) The Master Plan will identify projects and associated costs that the City could use to develop a fee. This process needs to be timed correctly to not interfere with Zone 3 fee measures.

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3) TYPES OF PROJECTS TO CONSIDER

- a) Retention/detention will be considered as improvements. Retention means storing water with no outlet, it drains through infiltration and evaporation. Detention is storing water with a metered outlet to the drainage system to reduce peak flow rates. The hydrologic and hydraulic model is an unsteady 2D model capable of analyzing the impact of storage.
- b) Storing water and infiltrating water will be considered when developing CIPs.
- c) Mill Valley has 61 miles of street and 15.7 miles of storm drain pipe. The streets can be used to convey stormwater if there is curb and gutter. Many streets do not currently have curb and gutter so stormwater runs off into private property.

4) TECHNICAL BACKGROUND

- a) Flood Zone 3, which Mill Valley is a part of, is funded by a parcel tax. The City has a funding opportunity but needs this master plan to determine what projects should be built.
- b) The “Southern Marin Watershed Guide: Planning for Floods” can be found here:
<https://www.marinwatersheds.org/resources/publications-reports/southern-marin-watershed-guide-planning-floods-0>
- c) Mill Valley does not currently have explicit standards for level of service. Pipes in the Bay Area are typically sized to convey the 10-year storm event with the 100-yr conveyed in the creeks. Next meeting S&W will bring some results to further this discussion and determine a level of service.
- d) A series of solutions that have been vetted to make sure they are acceptable aesthetically, environmentally, and financially could be developed before presenting to community.
- e) Mill Valley currently has a 30’ creek setback for new development, but there is not a way to remove private structures that encroach on the creek. Perhaps this gets back to the recommendations for what residents can do to protect themselves from flooding when the City does not have jurisdiction.

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5) OPEN DISCUSSION

- a) What is the main problem we're trying to fix? It's possible that water is coming down from the hills too fast? Once the problem is understood then projects can be developed.
- b) A discussion of what property owners can do to help address flooding? Such as building walls along the creek with a pump station to drain backyards or other suggestions.
- c) Perhaps the level of service can be set by figuring out how much money can be acceptably requested from residents which can be determined through a survey. It's possible that a tax or fee for flood preventions can be combined with a fire tax or fee.
- d) Focus areas should include Sycamore Park Neighborhood, Upper Miller Avenue, Lower Miller Avenue, Bayfront, Alto Sutton Manor Neighborhood, and Tam Park.
- e) Perhaps residential flooding can be addressed through policies such as providing sandbags or giving homeowners information on flood proofing/dry proofing. Subsidies could be used to encourage implementation.
- f) Master plan should include a section on what maintenance activities help prevent flooding, such as sediment removal.
- g) Green infrastructure, such as underground detention in parks, should be considered. May be possible to partner with other entities such as schools. It's a touchy subject so will need to be fully vetted before presenting to the community.
- h) Can fire and floods be considered together? Or model the floods like FireSafe Marin.

6) NEXT STEPS

- a) Schaaf & Wheeler (S&W) will review the Coyote Creek study that the flood control district is currently completing to make sure we're using similar climate change forecasts.
- b) Flood Zone 3 requested that any funding or ballot measures be coordinated so there aren't duplicated efforts and competing funding requests.
- c) The Committee requested S&W to model 2-year, 10-year, 25-year, and 100-year storm events and send out results prior to the next meeting. However, following the meeting, S&W and staff reviewed the request and as S&W are scoped to model a single level of service and develop a

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capital improvement program with associated costs based on those results. In order to keep this project moving forward without requiring Council action and a budget adjustment for added scope, S&W will develop thematic maps to show flood impacts from different storm events. The group will then discuss options and how to select level of service.

- d) S&W will prepare discussion points and analysis results to get a better understanding of private property impacts.
- e) The frequency of recent storms, such as 2005 and 2017, will be determined and presented with photos so that an understanding of level or service can be gained.
- f) A list of projects previously developed and considered will be made.
- g) S&W will tour the Sycamore and surrounding areas, during a rain event or high tide/low tides. S&W has visited the area with City maintenance staff during dry weather and low tide.
- h) Next task force meeting to be held in February prior to a community meeting.