

# Beaufort Comprehensive Plan Update

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## Focus Group Meeting - Group 4 – Environmental/Resiliency Professionals

### Meeting Information

Date: » December 8, 2020  
Time: » 4:15 PM  
Location: » Zoom Meeting: Video / Conference Call  
Attendees: » Rachel Love-Adrick, Samantha Burdick, Dr. Liz DeMattia, Paula Gillikin, Dr. Rachel Noble, Dr. Jessica Whitehead, Kyle Garner (Beaufort), Kate Allen (Beaufort), John Day (Beaufort); Jay McLeod (Stewart), Jaquasha Colon (Stewart)

### Agenda Items

- Project Purpose and Schedule
- Introductions
- Input

### Summary of Input

#### Opportunities/Assets

- Capitalize on current, outside planning efforts, like the Resilient Coastal Communities Program, with an eye toward partnering with this program to enhance the informational background of the Town's Comprehensive Plan update
- Partner the Town's Comprehensive Plan update with the Rachel Carson Reserve resiliency planning effort to find potential projects that can complement each other's goals
- Widening of Beaufort inlet to reduce wave height and erosional impacts from storms
- Partner with other restoration groups (like Duke Restore) to enhance coastal habitat and living shorelines

#### Concerns/Challenges

- Capacity for infrastructure to grow
- Rising groundwater and potential for infrastructure submersion.
- Lack of ability to transport water because of lack of elevational gradients
- Removal of natural vegetation (and evapotranspiration capacity) has

impacted the ability to absorb rainfall

- Lack of buffer vegetation and increased expediency of stormwater transport to the ocean, has increased the transport of stormwater carried pollution
- How will the costs (flooding, water quality degradation, upgrading the WWTP) of new development be borne? Will they be borne by the developer (who reaps the profits)? Or by the community?
- Is there an opportunity to reframe the planning to a watershed-scale instead of a parcel-based scale, to reduce water quality degradation?
- Need to not just look at places that are vulnerable to sea level rise, but also to places that are opportunities for development or for investing in the protection of.
- To what extent is Beaufort considering that it will become more attractive because other places are more vulnerable than Beaufort itself.
- The town (and most communities in NC) does not very deeply understand the recharge areas that feed their groundwater resources.

#### Context/Suggestions

- Policies that exceed the CAMA regulations can be an opportunity to have DCM reject permits that are not appropriate, especially in a town that controls so much of the water around it.
- Explore the impact of existing septic systems on the watershed, in conjunction with the potential expansion of the WWTP.
- Natural resources are a very important part of the Beaufort community and quality of life.
- Recent Issues:
  - Loss of mature maritime forests (esp. north of Lennoxville Road).
  - Current freeboard (Flood Damage Prevention) does not reflect probably future conditions (relative to sea level rise).
  - Necessity to have pump out stations distributed in more places and more available.