

BOWNESS FLOOD BARRIER COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

Meeting 12 – May 11, 2020 – 7 to 9:45 p.m. Online via Microsoft Teams

Working Group Attendees

David Burton
Cherie Deur
Sydney Empson
Jane Kahler
Jolene Moran
Patti Peck
Josie Stiles
Hank Vrielink
Jean Woeller

Working Group Resources

Mariel Higuerey
Judy Hoad
Amy Stansky
Frances Welsh

Guests

Sandra Davis
Kyle White

Apologies

Anne Campbell
Sheila Clayden
Jacqui Esler
Rae McKenzie
Jeff Riedl
Ralph Smith

Meeting Notes

1. Review of Meeting 11 notes

Summary of discussion:

- A Bowness Responsible Flood Mitigation Society (BRFM) member noted Cllr. Farrell stopped one BRFM presenter suggesting the presentation was off-topic. Later, the Committee Chair cut off the same presenter indicating his time was up – Cllr. Farrell’s intervention reduced the total speaking time.
- A BRFM member noted the Social criteria Triple Bottom Line (TBL) mentions 1 hour and 15 minutes. Still, the invitation information shared with guests says approx. 5 hours.

Project team responses:

- The five hours included in the TBL invitation added some additional time for guests to get up to speed.
- The facilitator will allow one more day for other concerns and will then post notes to the working group website.

Meeting 11 notes confirmed

2. Confirmation of Meeting 10 notes

Summary of the discussion:

- The group mentioned that the meeting notes do not accurately reflect the relevance of concerns, and someone unfamiliar with the project reading the notes will only see one side.
- Some members of the group are feeling uncomfortable continuing or having conversations outside of the meetings through email. The City needs to ensure we are capturing any questions raised during the Working Group presentation and the work completed.
- There is a perspective among some members that the Working Group does not have an adequate opportunity to discuss. BRFM representatives indicated they are frustrated by not being brought to the table to discuss the project's technical aspects.

Project team responses:

- The only way to track the meetings, word for word, is to record and transcribe them. The meeting notes are intended to be a summary of the discussion only.
- The purpose of the Working Group was not to be a technical review group. It was for The City to better communicate and engage by learning from community members.
- The facilitator will incorporate some of the stormwater issues in the meeting notes and circulate them to the working group for acceptance.

3. Discussion: tracking system for questions

Summary of the discussion:

- Members stated that questions and suggestions brought up during the meetings should be answered and acknowledged.
- BRFM started the process of submitting questions with the technical inquiry process. It is still unclear if the questions will be answered.
- Other group members commented they were getting useful information out of the Working Group meetings. They joined to learn, and now they feel they can at least make a decision based on information from all the sides.
- A working group member mentioned the meeting notes reflect the gist of the meetings. Still, the technical questions seem to be getting lost.
- BRFM offered to speak with any working group members outside of the meeting setting to explain their views, concerns and research further.
- The group agreed there is value in having a separate tracking sheet that clearly shows the questions being brought up.
- A comment brought up suggested that perhaps the group needs more time for presentation, discussion, read and digest, and maybe come back in the next meeting with any follow-ups.
- BRFM says they have questions that are not being heard/answered.

- A member suggested that if the Working Group feels there is an outstanding question or not enough information, the group should identify the gaps in the reports and presentations.
- If some of the questions asked do not have an answer, it is important to understand why and when The City can provide them. The group can still choose not to agree with the responses.
- It was requested that the tracking list should only be for Working Group questions. It should not include the BRFM technical inquiries submitted to date.

Project team responses:

- The project team will review the format developed and populated by Jean to track unanswered questions and concerns.
- Unanswered questions raised at Working Group meetings will be added to the spreadsheet by member agreement at the end of each meeting, and the Project Team will provide answers or explanations when they are known.

4. Flood Preparedness presentation

Summary of the discussion:

- Working group members asked about the rainfall prediction tools available to The City. Specifically, if the 12-24 hours prediction was the only tool available.
- A member brought up concerns about groundwater pumping during a flood event and its impact on the neighbours. The member wanted to know if there is some kind of coordinated effort to reduce impacts down the street.
- The group asked about what can Bowness expect in case of flooding this year.
- A group member highlighted the difference in evacuation this year given the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions. A suggestion was to send a mail-out specific to flood preparedness and COVID.
- A BRFM member asked about the possibility to employ temporary measures (like tiger dams) now that the Province's funding is not available for the permanent flood barrier project.
- There were questions about the emergency response plan and if specific stakeholders or services like TELUS received information before the broader community.
- A member mentioned they had just renewed their insurance and got a substantial reduction because they installed a power gas generator.
- The group raised many concerns regarding the Community Association (CA) role during a flood event. In 2013, the CA got activated to help the community before

anyone thought of flood response. This year they would not be able to respond as they are closed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

- A member highlighted that one of the most important things The City can do right now is to make sure that the TransAlta agreement is extended to contain water and give the city time to evacuate. The City should not take this lightly and go and get it again.
- Members raised questions about CEMA's role and authority to release water from the reservoirs in case of a flood.

Project team responses:

- The 12-24 hours prediction is The City's "ground truth". The City does have better forecasting tools, like the new monitoring platform that pulls different weather models in real-time to track in a more effective matter. The tools help Administration see five days out events, but often the events shift or dissipate. When The City sees a big event coming, Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) is contacted, and they decide what measures need to be put in place.
- Once The City gets into a response situation, CEMA steps in and coordinates. CEMA has a decision tree of dynamic inputs to make decisions. It is important to remember many decisions are happening at the same time for multiple communities.
- Generally, the responses are based on forecast and flood rates coming down. Based on that, CEMA can see what areas need to shut down power and be evacuated. This year CEMA has prepared and would use door knocking, loud speakers, helicopters, social media, and apps to communicate in case of a flood.
- The City uses different types of temporary technology (like tiger dams). Temporary measures warrant further discussion for Bowness once we see the feasibility results. The City also needs to consider how emergency response resources are deployed. Maybe as other communities get permanent protection solutions, temporary resources get freed.
- Water Resources provides technical information, and CEMA handles notification and communications. Presenters were unsure if services like TELUS are informed in advance of the community.
- The City is targeting flood-prone communities to make them aware of tools. Typically, information comes out at the beginning of May with a lot being shared in the community newsletter. Calgary.ca/floodinfo has a lot of frequent questions and answers and this year it includes COVID specific information.
- The presenter will follow up with CEMA to raise the concern of the role of the CA.

- CEMA has no authority over the release of water from the reservoirs. CEMA's authority is to coordinate only within Calgary. However, TransAlta is aware of how the flows affect the city.
- The presentation can be shared broadly with the community.

5. Social Criteria – Triple Bottom Line (TBL)

Summary of the discussion:

- A group member expressed concerns with discussing the TBL social impacts without the technical design base of what the barrier is supposed to do.
- The group suggested giving enough notice to the guests that will participate in the TBL social impact discussion about when the virtual discussion will take place so they can plan accordingly.
- There were questions about the technology that would be used for the virtual discussion, specifically if Teams was the best tool to use.
- A BRFM member reminded the group that the 2013 social impacts were over 85% related to groundwater, and that should be acknowledged in the TBL exercise and discussion.
- A member asked for clarification on the purpose and intent of the discussion. Specifically, if the focus should be on the impacts on 'you/us' as community members.
- Members expressed they are still uncertain as to how the social criteria will be evaluated. One of the members brought up concerns about the weighting of the criteria. There were questions about whether the working group will also have an opportunity to participate in the evaluation process and see how the barrier options are scored.
- The group raised more concerns about the intended use of the social criteria in the evaluation process and the influence the group could have on the process. Clarity about the financial, environmental and social criteria weighting was requested.
- A BRFM member noted that the problem is they do not know what the barrier options are. It felt like The City was moving too fast and recommended waiting for the studies to be complete and the options identified before creating the criteria.
- It was mentioned that guests need to know what is being asked of them and how the criteria will be used in the process. A member's understanding was that the criteria are objective, uniform across barrier options, unique to Bowness, and we get to use it down the road to evaluate the options that The City is going to be presenting.
- A Working Group member shared they tried to explain the process to a guest, and it is still not clear. We need to be sure that people understand what we are asking them to do, and probably need to provide a TBL 101 to everyone.

Project team responses:

- That is the suggested timeline, but it is open to change if we feel the group needs more time to develop the criteria.
- There will have opportunities for every comfort level to participate in the process. We are currently looking at tools and will evaluate which one works best.
- We will include TBL introductory information in the survey for the guests and members to better understand the purpose of the engagement and the opportunities available to provide further feedback.
- The project manager will confirm the criteria weighting process and opportunities to participate in the TBL evaluation.

6. Working Group

- Based on the discussion at the UCS meeting on April 15, it seems that the Committee Members may be unaware of the Working Group, and lack clarity on the purpose of BRFM.
- A BRFM member mentioned disappointment that the response of Administration did not help provide information and clarification on both the Working Group and BRFM.
- Working Group members agreed that the facilitator will prepare a letter to Council to introduce the Working Group and its role.
- There was an additional suggestion that for future Committee presentation, the appropriate Administration project team member should speak for Bowness.

7. Engagement Update

The revised engagement timeline was discussed. The Working Group meetings are scheduled to align with the completion of technical studies and to allow more time for study review. The proposed meetings for June and July were noted.

8. Next Meeting

June 1 at 7 p.m.