

RESILIENT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

SLAUGHTER BEACH • DELAWARE COASTAL PROGRAMS

The Delaware Coastal Programs and the Resilient Community Partnership

Many communities throughout Delaware are threatened by inland flooding, coastal storms, sea level rise, and changing climate conditions. To help address these challenges, the Delaware Coastal Programs (DCP) initiated the Resilient Community Partnership, an annual program that leverages federal funding provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to help Delaware communities improve their planning and preparation capabilities for responding to coastal hazards.

The first iteration of this partnership will be with the Town of Slaughter Beach. The DCP will provide direct staffing, technical support, public outreach and training necessary to support the community's efforts through the stages of vulnerability assessment, prioritization, planning, and adaptation and mitigation practices.

Delaware Coastal Programs improves local capacity to conserve and wisely manage coastal resources and supports the integration of coastal management principles through local planning and implementation activities.

For more information about this project, contact Danielle Swallow, DCP at: danielle.swallow@state.de.us

<http://de.gov/coastal>

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WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY IN THE TOWN OF SLAUGHTER BEACH

Starting in the spring of 2016, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Delaware Coastal Programs (DCP) office will partner with the Town of Slaughter Beach to carry out a comprehensive assessment of risks to the community from coastal storms, sea level rise and extreme tides. In addition risks from wildfires and higher temperatures due to climate change will also be examined. This assessment will be the basis of the Town's development of adaptation and mitigation measures to enhance the Town's resiliency, or ability to withstand and bounce back from natural hazards. Public participation is extremely important to this effort. Through public workshops and surveys, full and part time residents and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to contribute ideas and brainstorm strategies for addressing these risks. Through information sharing and training, this program will also promote best practices for resiliency planning so that other Delaware Bayshore towns may benefit.



PREPARING FOR HAZARDS TODAY - PLANNING FOR RISKS TOMORROW

Slaughter Beach, like other low-lying Delaware Bayfront communities, is vulnerable to natural hazards from multiple sources. The Town currently experiences frequent flooding of streets and property during high tide. The Town is also at risk for less frequent, but more extreme flooding events from storm surges during nor'easters and tropical storms. In addition, with rising sea levels a larger area of the community may be inundated by high tides and there may be more frequent and intense flood events in the future. Climate change may also influence the temperatures and precipitation rates throughout the year, increasing the risks to the community.



MOVING TOWARDS RESILIENCE

Flooding along Bay Avenue in the Town of Slaughter Beach during an October 2015 storm

Photo credit: Bill McSpadden

FIRST STEPS

The process of developing a more resilient community in Slaughter Beach will begin with a survey of community values followed by an assessment of vulnerability to natural hazards.

PUBLIC SURVEY

Community residents, both full time and part time, will be mailed (and if applicable, emailed) a survey in mid-April 2016. This will allow the community's leaders and DCP to better understand what aspects of the Town are most valued by residents and what makes the community a special place to live in—such as its public spaces, natural features, residents, and cultural aspects. The Town's values will form part of the baseline information needed to assess risks and impacts from natural hazards. More importantly this information will help guide the development of adaptation and mitigation strategies which protect those values in the long term. All residents are strongly encouraged to fill out the survey and return them to DCP by May 2, 2016.

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT TO CHARACTERIZE CURRENT HAZARDS AND FUTURE RISKS

DCP will help the community conduct a comprehensive assessment of both current and future impacts from hazards to help identify the aspects of the community that are most at risk. DCP will collect FEMA data and resident feedback regarding impacts from past storms including Superstorm Sandy and Snowstorm Jonas. DCP will also work with the Town to identify and characterize future hazards and trends. Town infrastructure will be mapped and vulnerabilities will be noted based on different planning scenarios. After careful assessment and prioritization of impacts, DCP and the community will begin to identify specific measures that could be implemented to help safeguard Town assets and improve resiliency. These strategies will be documented in an Action Plan that will serve as a roadmap for implementation.

LOOK FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

Two important components of vulnerability assessment are:

ON THE GROUND DATA COLLECTION

Starting in May, DCP employees will conduct a walking survey of the Town to help identify and corroborate the elevations and locations of critical infrastructure including propane tanks, utility boxes, and Town structures. Obtaining the precise ground elevations and locations of these assets will be critical to understanding which assets may be inundated by floodwaters under different flood projections and sea level rise scenarios. **DCP personnel will be accompanied by a Town of Slaughter Beach Representative and will carry proper documentation.** It may be necessary to collect additional site specific elevation information for this assessment. **If data collection is required on private property for such elements as propane tanks or first floor elevations, please be assured that DCP personnel will first obtain explicit permission from the landowner prior to the survey.** All residents are asked to cooperate with this data gathering so that we may obtain complete information.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

On the evening of June 3, 2016 DCP and the Town of Slaughter Beach will sponsor the first public workshop for this project. Full and part time residents and stakeholders are invited to the Fire Hall to hear about the project and provide direct input into the process. Future details will be advertised in advance.