

Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC) City of Takoma Park

Thursday, May 26, 2022

7-8.30 pm via ZOOM and in-person Hydrangea Room

AGENDA

Issue/ item	Person	Est. Time/ minutes
Attendance and adoption of April minutes	Chris	05
--Takoma Park, Montgomery County & State updates	Ron Hardy and Patrick Fleming	15
Update CERT, Storm Camp, You are the Help	Ron	15
Feedback from group on Takoma Stormwater Solutions presentation. (If you missed it live, you can view the recording here: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbCKZ_ImPsc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbCKZ_ImPsc</a>	Chris	15
Open call for next key topics-Sunday Storm	Chris/all	10
Discussion of Committee Communications Channels (resident input // City Council)	Chris/Ron/all	10

**Next Meeting: June 23, 2022**

# Minutes

EPC meeting 05262022 at 7:00 pm (Held in a hybrid format in Hydrangea Room & Zoom)

**Present:** *Chair: Chris Beck*

*Attendees:* Buddy Daniels, Jim Della-Giacoma (Secretary), Ron Hardy, Tom Horne, and Claudine Schweber.

*Excused absences:* Ami Gadhia, Kathe Quinn, and Patrick Fleming.

A quorum was not present. The meeting went ahead with the chair acknowledging that it would be on an informational basis only and that no decisions would be made at this meeting.

**Next meeting:** Thursday, June 23, 2022, 7:00 pm

Hydrangea Room, Takoma Park Community Center, and online via Zoom.

## 1. March Minutes Approved

- The EPC approved the meeting minutes from April 21, 2022, with no corrections.

## 2. Reports on recent developments from the TKPK, County, and State

- Mr. Hardy reported the following items:
  - Covid cases are floating about 3,000 cases a day in MoCo, a ten-fold increase since March 16.
  - The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) is preparing general materials on preparedness, which will be available to TKPK, which can rebrand them.
  - You are the help until help arrives is a 3-hour course, which includes lifesaving, first aid, and information on what to do in certain situations. There are plans to restart these courses, but no classes are scheduled in the county because of COVID.
  - The MoCo Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is currently looking at catastrophic preparedness. Web OEC is coming up for renewal. Together with the MWCOG, the MoCo OEM is looking at fire threats and other hazards in the regions. This involves threats that could impact the entire national capital region, such as a hurricane that would knock out essential utilities such as water, electricity, and cell towers.
  - MoCo OEM is updating its emergency preparedness plan. All jurisdictions will be involved in this regular process on a 5-year cycle as recommended by FEMA. Participants include OEM working with representatives from all county departments, the 19 municipalities, and utilities. There will be open meetings at a future date, but like the MWCOG, MoCo OEM is currently looking for vendors to help with this process. Members of the TKPK EPC will be able to attend the open meetings or make contributions through Ron, who will keep us posted as this process gets going.

- MoCo has 34 high water sensors, of which 23 have been deployed. These are the size of a shoebox. They have one on Sligo Creek north of Takoma Park. The NWS has two at Hilltop and Geneva. Ms. Cherry suggested deploying one at the Maple Ave bridge over Sligo Creek. Mr. Della-Giacoma added that sensors might be helpful at the bridges over Sligo Creek at Piney Branch and New Hampshire Avenues.
- MoCo has 175 trauma kits for Stop the Bleed, with four allocated to TKPK. Mr. Hardy plans to retrain staff in this course in the coming weeks, and after that, he intends to offer the course again to residents.

### **3. Update CERT, Storm Camp, You are the Help**

- While Greg St. John, the CERT coordinator for the county, has suggested TKPK residents go out to the County Center in Darnestown Road for CERT training, he's not opposed to doing something in TKPK if there is sufficient interest. However, there are obstacles as this would all the CERT materials and equipment is up at the County center, and most instructors live to the north of the County center.
- Mr. Hardy circulated information on Storm Camp to the Committee members via email.

### **4. Feedback from group on Takoma Stormwater Solutions presentation.**

- The recent presentation from Takoma Stormwater Solutions is online here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbCKZ\\_lmPsc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbCKZ_lmPsc)
- While not specifically on emergency preparedness, Mr. Beck said it focused on several issues, including the property damage caused by stormwater. With rainfall expected to increase in amount and intensity, the increase in impervious surfaces exacerbates this problem. Stormwater Solutions is urging TKPK to be more flexible about public-private partnerships as the City can only do so much stormwater mitigation on City property. They argue that there might benefit from doing stormwater mitigation projects on private property to create public benefit.
- Mr. Horne raised the issue of the role that the MNCPPC can play in mitigating flooding. MNCPPC is opposed to removing brush from Sligo Creek as they don't want to disturb the natural environment. In a flash flood, the small trees get swept away and accumulate on trees and bridges, causing water to leave the creek. He proposed that TKPK explore with the DPW, MD MEMI, and FEMA options to assess the streams to create information that could be presented to MNCPPC.

### **5. Community Outreach Updates**

- There was no discussion under this agenda item.

### **6. After Event Reflection – Sunday's Storm (22 May)**

- Mr. Della-Giacoma suggested that when relevant, the EPC do a brief reflection after significant events in TKPK, such as Sunday's storm (22 May). He said such weather events were an opportunity for community organizing, outreach, and communication. He noted that his block of Garland Ave was closed after a large limb brought down old and no longer functioning cable wires. It was a close call and could have been much worse.
- There was a brief discussion about the benefits and costs of undergrounding. While strengthening poles is another option, it has costs as it is cheaper to replace wires than poles. Moving from pole to pad transformers is another change that builds resilience, but pad transformers are very unpopular with pad transformers being built on city easements.

- Mr. Horne recalled that after a significant ice storm some years ago, there was a public meeting that half-filled the city auditorium. However, he noted that many residents were angry and came with high expectations about what could be provided by FEMA after such a natural disaster.
- Ms. Schweber shared that the community needs to prepare before events. The EPC needs to share and communicate how to be ready before a natural disaster, including having alternative sources of power, an emergency kit, and flashlights. The best time to inform the community, she said, is just before the storm. This is the time we should be sending links and information. The EPC needs to understand how to communicate with those who do not have internet access and those in our community with disabilities.
- Mr. Beck noted that this underlines the need for the EPC to work on having a more formalized communications and outreach plan.

## **7. Discussion of Committee Communications Channels (resident input // City Council)**

- The EPC will discuss this issue at its next meeting. It has been the practice for Mr. Hardy and the EPC Chair to brief the Council during Emergency Preparedness Month, marked every September.

## **8. Other business**

- Mr. Horne followed up on the issue of storage of barriers. He noted that a couple of cities in the northeast store them in front of fire hydrants. Treatment with anti-freeze is required. DPW would have to be on board. Mr. Hardy is to follow up on the issue of barriers with DPW.
- Mr. Della-Giacoma had asked Mr. Hardy about the old TKPK “Who to call” handout and fridge magnet. This flyer needs to be updated. Mr. Hardy will circulate the list to the committee seeking suggestions about what numbers should be on the phone list. This issue was held over for discussion at a future meeting.

## **9. The meeting ended around 8:05 pm.**

*[Minutes drafted by EPC Secretary Jim Della-Giacoma at 11:00 am on May 29, 2022.]*