

Newtok Planning Group
Meeting Notes for
Monday, December 11, 2006

In attendance: Stanley Tom (via teleconference) – Newtok Traditional Council; Greg Magee, Jon Menough – Village Safe Water; Brenda Kerr, Greg Carpenter, Lizette Boyer, Margan Grover, Estrella Campellone, Marcia Heer – Corps of Engineers; Mark Cahrlie – AVCP Regional Housing Authority; Gary Brown, Scott Simmons – Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management; David Vought – HUD; Mitzi Barker – RurAL CAP; James Malanaphy (via teleconference) – American Institute of Architects; Bob Walsh – Office of Senator Murkowski; Sally Cox, Peter McKay (via teleconference), Mike Black, Ruth St. Amour – Alaska Division of community Advocacy; Mark Mayo, Don Fancher – Alaska Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities; Jacqueline Poston - EPA

Draft Community Layouts Developed by Village Safe Water for Water/Sewer Siting

Greg Magee and Jon Menough presented two proposed layouts for the new community site, based on considerations for an affordable and sustainable water & sewer system.

- The community was sited where the grade is 2-5%, rather than 10-12% closer to the water.
- The layout considers the location of the lagoon and landfill with respect to the airport. DOT is currently looking at a site more to the southwest, but that would not require changing the location of the lagoon and landfill.
- VSW staff will seek Alaska Energy Authority's input on the location of the power plant and tank farm, and on the opportunity to use wind power.
- VSW is waiting for the community to comment on the layouts and decide on the "footprint" of the new site. With that decision, planning can move forward under the Mini-grant for community planning.
- Geo-tech work is still needed at the new site, which is largely wetlands. COE staff also noted that permafrost had been found at a depth of 18" near the beach.

Strategic Management Plan Update

VSW staff has completed the RFP for the Strategic Management Plan, and provided a summary of key points.

- The cost for the SMP is estimated at \$75,000 - \$100,000.
- Bob Walsh offered to have staff search all federal funding sources.
- Mitzi Barker offered to have staff search all private funding sources.
- Funding requests could focus on the cultural preservation aspect of the project.
- Funding requests could also be expanded to include other communities also facing relocation, with Newtok to serve as a model.
- Stanley Tom is planning to submit an ICDBG application in March. The community has received ICDBG funding in the past.
- Homeland Security has a competitive Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) which could provide funding for relocating homes and public infrastructure. COE could assist by developing the application.

Newtok Planning Group
Notes from December 11, 2006 Meeting

- Further building structure assessment is needed before they can be moved, such as determining the best moving method and type of foundation needed.

American Institute of Architects 150 Program

James Malanaphy discussed the AIA 150 Program which supports visioning activities. Plans are underway for a 3 day symposium to coincide with the 2007 Alaska Federation of Natives convention, to exchange information on sustainable rural communities.

Agency Updates

- Homeland Security staff reported that ASCG is under contract to prepare local hazard mitigation plans for 10 communities, including Newtok. The draft plan for Newtok is expected in January, with tentative completion in March. Local Mitigation Plans will enable the communities to apply for competitive mitigation grant funds. Those communities which qualify as “Small and Impoverished” may also be eligible to receive mitigation grants with reduced cost match requirements, from 25% to 10%. If Newtok remains classified as a small and impoverished community, the village could qualify for a 90% federal/10% local or State matched grant.

- HUD staff encouraged taking a long-term view for ICDBG applications, looking ahead to the next steps that have not yet been funded, and noted that it provides very flexible funding.

- DOT/PF staff reported that construction of a pioneer airport has been proposed, and is awaiting the Governor’s approval. \$9 million has been requested. Support from Newtok’s legislators would be helpful. FAA funding for a more permanent facility would come later. Construction could take place in perhaps two years, following design and environmental work.

- EPA staff is working on plans for the Alaska Forum on the Environment (see www.akforum.com), addressing topics on climate change and coastal erosion. Jackie Poston is seeking speakers who can address lessons learned from past relocations, who are not in need of funding for travel to the conference. This conference may also provide an opportunity for the Newtok Planning Group to convene.