



RASCL Project Guidance Group & Community Planning Assistance Meeting
February 20, 2025 | 10:00-11:30 AM
Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Simone Reba, Mallard Lakes, David Morris, Mallard Lakes; Jennifer Pongratz, DNREC; Danielle Swallow, DESG; Meghan Noe Fellows, DE CIB; Kathy Potter, DNREC; Karen Igou, GBU; Phil Cane, DEMA; Kristen Thornton, DNREC; Jordana Cutajar, DNREC; Rachel Yocum, DNREC; Beth Krumrine, DNREC; Jim Sullivan, DNREC; Kayla Clauson, DNREC; Dorothy Morris, OSPC; Shangia Dong, UD; Kate Vogel, NWF; Cai Foster, UD; Jana Savini, PDE

10:30-11:25 am: Project Guidance Group - Mallard Lakes

Community Overview

- 477 townhouses were built between 1986 and 1990, situated on interconnected man-made lakes. At the time of construction, the lakes had no tidal connections.
- Tidal influences increased following the 2001 Route 54 improvement project.
- FEMA flood standards were updated in 1995, but the ML buildings were grandfathered in.
- Sussex County joined the NFIP in 1976. At the time of construction, Sussex County would have approved the plan, and the county may have conducted a study to demonstrate there would be no adverse impacts.
- Simone purchased her property in 2023.
- No real estate disclosures were made at the time of sale regarding previous flooding, only noting that it was a floodplain area, which they were aware of before purchasing.

Issues (see Point Paper provided by Mallard Lakes for additional details)

- Severe Flood Risk
- Health and Safety
- Financial and Property Value Impact

RASCL Recommendations

- Collaborate on funding for a feasibility study
 - Follow up with **Sharon Cruz, Senior Municipal Engineer, Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc.**
 - Contact [Grant Assistance Program](#), Biden School of Public Policy & Administration, University of Delaware
 - **Lori Spagnolo, Policy Scientist, Team Lead – lorispag@udel.edu**
 - **Chase Barnes, Associate Policy Scientist – cebarnes@udel.edu**
 - **Matt Harris, Associate Policy Scientist – mlharris@udel.edu**

- **Colin Willard, Grants Specialist – cwillard@udel.edu**
- Advocate more strongly with Sussex County Council to sponsor the grant
 - Disclose that 25% of residents are full-time when communicating with county commissioners and state-level legislators
- Reach out to DelDOT regarding the widening of the culvert and investigate if water is backing up behind it. Inquire about the work done on Route 54 in 2001: Was the elevation of the road and culvert modifications related to the exacerbation of the problem? Contact Stephanie Johnson and/or Tricia Arndt. If they don't know the answer, they will be able to direct you to someone who does.
 - **Stephanie Johnson, Director, Transportation Resiliency and Sustainability – Stephanie.Johnson@delaware.gov**
 - **Tricia Arndt, Deputy Director, Transportation Resiliency and Sustainability - Tricia.Arndt@delaware.gov**
- Submit a FOIA request. Sussex County should be able to provide information on whether a permit was ever issued for repairs or renovations at your property
- Explore smaller-scale green infrastructure improvements such as rain gardens or bioswales
- Look into dewatering options. A permit would be required, and the water would need to be cleaned before reinjecting it as potable water. While tidal influences might make dewatering less effective, having an engineer assess the situation could provide more clarity.
 - **Kathy Potter, Delaware State National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Coordinator, DNREC – katharyn.potter@delaware.gov**
 - **Patty Murray, Program Manager, DNREC Division of Water Supply, Allocations – patricia.murray@delaware.gov**
- HOA could self-finance a study to consider assessing how property values might change over time if mitigation actions aren't taken

11:30 am: Adjourn