

Saco Bay Implementation Team
October 25, 2010
4:30-6:00 PM
Saco City Hall

Meeting notes provided by the Maine Geological Survey

Project Manager Richard Heidebrecht and Chief of Planning, John Kennelly came from the Corps New England District (NED) office in Concord, Massachusetts to update the City of Saco and residents of progress on the Section 111 Shore Damage Mitigation Project for Camp Ellis.

Heidebrecht provided 10 slides as a handout, updated from a presentation he made last February at Wormwood's Restaurant.

Alternatives: Five alternatives were discussed. These are not in an order of preference and at this time the Corps has not selected a preferred plan:

- (1) Beach nourishment (365,000 cy fill) alone
- (2) Alt 6 – 750-foot spur with 365,000 cy beach fill
- (3) Alt 25A – spur, 2 segmented breakwaters, 345,000 cy fill
- (4) Alt 25 – spur, 3 segmented breakwaters, 300,000 cy fill
- (5) Buyout – no beach fill

Heidebrecht discussed modeling used to examine the lifetime of beach fill designs with each of the final alternatives based on a 10-year storm. However, no specific model results were presented at the meeting. At this point, the Corps is proposing a top beach fill design elevation of 12 feet NAVD88, consistent with the natural dune system north of the proposed project area. A 1:10 slope to the beach face is used. Heidebrecht noted that renourishment cycles were on the order of 6, 12, and 15 years for the various alternatives.

Sand Sources: At this point, all sand is to come from upland sources and not from dredging of the Saco or Scarborough Rivers. The reasoning for this is that there would be no need to count on Operations & Maintenance (O&M) funding or synchronous timing for Sec. 111 to move ahead. Around 30,000 truck loads might be needed, which would require significant road improvements in Camp Ellis. Alternatively sand could be barged to a nearshore disposal site and pumped ashore as was done very recently at Plum Island in Newburyport as part of O&M work on the Merrimack River (Sec. 204 beneficial use). The Environmental Assessment (EA) will address road and city infrastructure impacts.

Beach Fill: The beach fill numbers are lower than those given in a September 24, 2010 coordination letter sent to state resource agencies (SPO, DEP, MGS, etc.). Beach fill will extend about 3,200 feet north of the jetty, to around Island View Ave.

Archaeological Assessment: The State Historic Preservation Office has signed off under Section 106 on the project area.

Next Steps

Modeling: Modeling work continues to assess the potential impact of the various alternatives on the beach north of the project area. These results are expected by the end of the calendar year.

Environmental Assessment: The Corps hopes to have a draft document (a pre-NEPA EA) for internal Agency Technical Review (ATR) in January 2011. A coastal engineering appendix should show modeling results of beach fill longevity and impacts of the different engineering alternatives on shoreline changes. The ATR review should take about 6 weeks and be edited by the New England District. The subsequent step is Division review (NY) and Headquarters review (DC) this was called Alternative Formulation Briefing or AFB.

Draft Decision Document: After these steps the “draft decision document” and EA will be released for a 30-day public, state, and federal review and comment period (timing here is very tenuous but might be April or May 2011). Comments are received and a final decision document and EA are prepared by the NED. The decision document needs to (a) identify the least costly alternative, (b) describe the extent of the problem attributable to the project (jetty), and (c) address sea-level rise impacts.

Budget: With these Draft Decision Document and EA completed, the Corps can express the NED’s “capability” to do a “continuing authorities project” (which is where Sec 111 resides) and include in the next FY a budget that would cover all of contracting costs for that particular upcoming year. The budget request bundles multiple continuing authorities projects via an Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill so the Camp Ellis Section 111 would not appear budgeted as a line item, as it might if it were in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). The project construction costs plus expenditures for studies and work done so far need to be under the \$26.9M authorized by Congress. The Corps is currently working up the final “total project costs” for each of the alternatives, which will include subsequent nourishments required in the 50-year project window.

Timeline: The earliest a project with construction might commence would be late in the summer of 2012. Depending on the final project, funding and construction could take 2 or 3 requests and years. Stonework will be done first. The Corps will be providing the City of Saco with a generalized timetable by mid-November.

Project Partnership Agreement: The Project Partnership Agreement still needs to be drafted – first by the Corps and then edited by the City of Saco. This should be concurrent with the steps outlined above. There are no recent examples of a Section 111 PPA. The project manager and others in the NED may create the initial draft based on others the Corps has done. Corps headquarters will make decisions on changes to the PPA, and such changes will take time.

There were numerous questions and answers from members of the SBIT, city officials, staff from Senators Snowe and Collins and Representative Pingree, and many city residents.

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