Plan Now or Pay Later

Integrating Hazard Mitigation

American Planning Association Pennsylvania Conference

October 18, 2016
Purpose

Increase the understanding of the importance of integrating community and emergency management planning to help communities develop a better, nuanced, understanding of their risk and vulnerabilities, influence decisions to reduce risk, and improve coordination to ultimately reduce communities’ risks.
Agenda and Speakers

• Hazard Mitigation Planning Overview
  Mari Radford, Lead Community Planner, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Region III

• Plan Integration Case Study
  Rob Graff, Manager, Office of Energy and Climate Change Initiatives, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

• Community Rating System Overview
  Tony Subbio, Emergency Management Specialist, Tetra Tech, Inc.

• Panel Question & Answers
  Hope Winship, Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management Project Manager, Michael Baker International
Hazard Mitigation Plans and the Stafford Act

• While Hazard Mitigation Plans are required for Presidentialy Declared Disaster assistance....

• They are really a roadmap for the community to pursue resilience on their own and with other partners
Hazard Mitigation Plan Requirements

- Introduction
- Community Profile
- Planning Process
- Risk Assessment
- Capability Assessment
- Mitigation Strategy
- Plan Maintenance
- Adoption
Hazard Mitigation Planning Cycle

Year 5
Finalize risk assessment, develop mitigation strategies, and finish writing the plan

Plan Approval
Ensure all participants adopt the plan

Year 3
Start the process to secure funding for the plan update

Year 4
Begin planning process, determine the planning lead (or a consultant), and convene planning team

Year 2
Start conducting annual meetings and tracking actions and progress
Moving Beyond the Requirements: Plan Integration

• A two-way exchange of information between hazard mitigation plan and other community plans
  • Incorporation of risk reduction concepts in community plans
  • Consistent information and goals between all plans

• An understanding between agencies and organizations with a stake in the built environment of their role in hazard mitigation
Plan Integration Programmatic Benefits

- Capitalizes on and Coordinates Existing Efforts
- Avoids Conflicting Outcomes
- Common Data Collection Efforts
- Builds a Framework for Information Sharing

TIME, COST, & LIFE SAVINGS
Integration Opportunities

• Comprehensive Plans
• Stormwater Management Plans
• Historic Preservation Plans
• Capital Improvement Plans
• Zoning Ordinances
• Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances
• Building Permit Ordinances
• Stormwater Management Ordinances
Moving Beyond the Requirements: Community Rating System

- Flood insurance premium rates discounted to reward communities who:
  - Reduce flood losses
  - Facilitate accurate insurance ratings
  - Promote the awareness of flood insurance
- Recognizes good floodplain management above and beyond the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program
- Comprehensive approach to floodplain management
Integrating Hazard Mitigation and Comprehensive Planning

DVRPC Integration Project Case Study
About DVRPC

• Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the bi-state, 9-county Philadelphia region

• Home rule region
  • 351 municipalities
  • Land use power resides with local governments

• Issue areas
  • Transportation
  • Land Use
  • Economy
  • Environment
About the Project

• FEMA asked DVRPC to organize a one-day conference on integrating hazard mitigation and comprehensive planning

• Initially envisioned bringing in national experts, best practices, etc.
Gathering Information

• First wanted to understand what hazard mitigation planning (HMP) and comprehensive planning (CP) looked like in the DVRPC region
• Met with county planning and emergency management representatives from each of DVRPC’s nine counties
• Majority held in person, at the counties’ facilities
• Listened to perspectives from county representatives
Listening to the Counties

• For some counties, meetings were the first time that the planners had met with their emergency management counterparts
• Others already integrating their HMP and CP
• Lots of local knowledge and experience on this topic
• Flooding is the #1 hazard for every county
Facilitated Discussion

• Allow counties to learn from each other
• Allow FEMA, PEMA, NJ OEM the hear from counties
• Organized a one-day workshop with facilitated discussions:
  • What are barriers to and best practices for integrating HMP and CP at the county level in the DVRPC region?
  • How might the HMP process be improved?
  • What is needed to spur municipal activity beyond gates and buyouts?
Who Participated?
What We Heard: Varies by County and State

• Level of HMP and CP integration
• The author of the HMP and CP
• County authority & responsibility over CP and land use differs between NJ and PA
  • Counties still have ability to influence & support municipalities, e.g. writing model zoning language, providing data and mapping resources, and natural space protection through land acquisition & preservation
What We Heard: Municipal Capacity

• Most municipalities don’t have planners on staff
• Limited local capacity and/or knowledge of planning documents
• Suggestion to encourage municipalities to form working groups with representatives from a range of departments when updating the HMP
• County engagement with municipal staff is key
What We Heard: Challenges of HMP Format

• Standard Operating Guide (SOG)
  • Issued by Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to help counties with low capacity write an approvable plan
  • Structure can unintentionally restrict counties that want to “dig in”
  • One county pushed back against the SOG to be able to customize the HMP format and content so it worked better for their county

• The five-year planning cycle can feel like a treadmill
  • An extended planning cycle or a clear plan update protocol may allow for more community and stakeholder engagement
What We Heard: Challenges of HMP Format

• Suggested that HMPs could be scalable, depending on a community’s risk to a particular hazard

• Another suggestion to require HMPs to include municipal specific annexes
  • Chester, Gloucester, and Camden’s HMPs already do this
What We Heard: Municipal Buy-In

• Given county’s limited authority, municipal buy-in is very important

• One county found that meeting one-on-one with municipalities really helped to increase engagement in the HMP process

• “Baby steps and Small Wins”
What We Learned

• Everyone agreed that integrating HMPs and CPs made sense – many were already doing it

• Aligning the intention of HMP process with the HMP requirements can be difficult

• Challenge around implementing actions at a municipal level that will mitigate hazards
  • Engaging and supporting municipalities is important!
Community Rating System
Leveraging Planning to Reduce Insurance Rates in Southeastern Pennsylvania
Regional Efforts

• Activity 330 – Outreach Projects
• Activity 350 – Flood Protection Information
• Activity 360 – Flood Protection Assistance
• Activity 510 – Floodplain Management Planning
• Activity 610 – Flood Warning and Response
Activity 330 – Outreach Projects

- Annual dissemination
- Develop standardized messages
- Disseminate the messages
  - Jurisdiction
  - Stakeholder Groups (Pts + 30%!)
- Program for Public Information (PPI)
  - Mitigation Planning Committee as Lead
Activity 350 – Flood Protection Information

• Regional libraries
• 9 listed publications
• State publications
• Local publications
  • Link to municipalities’ websites
Activity 360 – Flood Protection Assistance

- Regional flood expert
  - Flood hazard
  - Flood protection measures
  - Possible financial assistance
  - Be aware of differences in requirements from one municipality to another

- Include advertising this person’s availability in the PPI
Activity 510 – Floodplain Management Planning

- HMP update in accordance with Community Rating System requirements for Floodplain Management Plan

- Repetitive Loss Area Analysis
  - Identify repetitive loss areas
  - Identify and assess the properties and buildings in those areas
  - Analyze the flood problem
  - Develop solutions to address those problems
  - Outreach
Questions

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