

TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO
STAFF REPORT
September 17, 2015

For the meeting of September 24, 2015

TO: Flood Committee

FROM: Gerhard Epke, Public Works Project Manager
Sean Condry, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: Community Rating System (CRS) Draft Program for Public Information (PPI)

BACKGROUND

San Anselmo has applied to the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) which is a voluntary program that encourages and rewards communities for going beyond the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program. By joining CRS, the Town earns flood insurance rate reductions for its residents.

At the Flood Committee meeting of June 18, staff presented a report on the status of our CRS application, including an activity called the Program for Public Information. A copy of the staff report and attachments are available on the Flood Committee web page at:

<http://www.townofsananselmo.org/index.aspx?NID=181>

Since that time, staff has uploaded the Town's CRS application material to its website: <http://www.townofsananselmo.org/index.aspx?NID=835>. Aside from confidential information, this should be a comprehensive inventory of the flood-related activities being undertaken by the Town and flood control district. The goal of hosting this information online is to simplify access for anyone interested, including San Anselmo staff, CRS auditors, adjacent municipalities, and members of the general public.

Of the creditable activities in CRS, a systematic approach to public outreach and information, is one of the most valuable, and having a document approved by the Town Council is the best. This activity is called the Program for Public Information, or PPI. It is activity 332 in the CRS coordinator's manual. Since the last Flood Committee meeting, staff has followed the steps required for formation of a PPI, including assessing public information needs, formulating key messages, identifying ongoing outreach projects, and compiling this information into a document (Attachment 1).

As discussed at the last meeting, staff are pursuing the maximum amount of creditable points without incurring more work, thus this PPI documents only ongoing outreach projects. One exception to that is an annual mailer sent to everyone in the 100-year flood plain, which satisfies a requirement of being in CRS.

DISCUSSION

Attachment 1 is a first draft of the PPI which the Town Council must ultimately approve for CRS credit. Staff is therefore looking for any ideas or feedback towards improving the document. Staff will bring a final copy back to the Flood Committee at a future meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Gerhard Epke
Project Manager



Sean Condry
Public Works Director

Attachment 1 – Draft PPI Document

**Program for Public Information
Town of San Anselmo Flood Committee
FEMA Community Rating System Activity 330**

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Introduction

1. Goals

- a. Organize & Track Ongoing Public Outreach
- b. Provide Relevant Information to the Public
- c. Support Regional Flood Control District and Improve the Process by Which We Reduce Flood Risk
- d. Maximize CRS Credit & Save Money
- e. Protect People, the Town, and the Creek

2. CRS- Background & Purpose

The Program for Public Information, or PPI, is a tool to organize and improve the flood-related public outreach that occurs here in San Anselmo.

San Anselmo is currently in the process of joining the FEMA Community Rating System (CRS). CRS is a voluntary program that encourages and rewards communities for organized annual proactive flood damage mitigation such as preparedness activities, building regulation, creek maintenance, and public outreach. By joining CRS, the Town earns flood insurance premium reductions for its residents.

CRS is organized into Series which are comprised of individual Activities, all of which are organized according to the 2013 CRS Coordinator's Manual.

San Anselmo's CRS Activity documentation is hosted online here:
<http://www.townofsananselmo.org/index.aspx?NID=835>

As part of its application, San Anselmo is already collecting and organizing all of the flood mitigation activities occurring in Town. This first version of the PPI document is envisioned as an assessment and collection of all the ongoing outreach that is done by the Town and its many partners. This document is not an actual form of public outreach, rather a plan, to be approved by Town Council of the outreach that will be conducted until San Anselmo either

- decides to not get credit for a PPI
- withdraws from CRS
- updates this document
- joins Ross Valley in a multi-jurisdictional PPI

3. San Anselmo Flood Committee – the CRS PPI Committee

San Anselmo's Flood Committee meets the criteria for a PPI Committee and therefore membership is not being changed in any way. The Flood Committee was established in 2006 and formalized in May 2010 by Town Council Resolution #3906. The committee is charged to serve as the town's expert representatives on flooding and stormwater management issues, to become informed on hydrologic conditions that affect flooding in San Anselmo and to evaluate possible solutions and make recommendations to the Town Council. Here is the link to the San Anselmo Flood Committee webpage, which contains links to meeting agendas, staff reports, and minutes:
<http://www.townofsananselmo.org/index.aspx?nid=181>

According to Resolution #3906, the Committee is composed of five members recruited from professionals in the fields of engineering, hydrology, flood control and other areas of expertise that relate to the control of storm water. The Committee includes two councilmembers and two designated Town staff liaison. The five members from the professional community serve staggered four year terms and are appointed by the Town Council. San Anselmo being a small Town, the Flood Committee members also tend to be representatives from other types of organizations and neighborhoods that these public information activities are trying to reach, such as floodplain residents.

In practice, the Flood Committee meets three or four times per year, and is attended by both the Public Works Director and the Town Manager/Public Information Officer. As long as the designated Town staff include the Public Works Director and the Public Information Officer, the existing Flood Committee meets the criteria for a PPI Committee. Therefore the Flood Committee is not being reconfigured in any way by approving this PPI document. The Flood Committee might, at some point elect to include representatives from a local insurance agency or local bank for credit under Activity 370.

4. Program for Public Information (PPI) preparation process

This document and associated outreach program must be developed by the Flood Committee through a public process. The Flood Committee first discussed and approved pursuing this CRS activity at its regular meeting on June 18, 2015. This current draft of the document was prepared by volunteers and staff, and is being reviewed and discussed at the Flood Committee meeting of September 24, 2015.

Staff expects to solicit input from the public at a booth at the Country Fair Day on September 27, 2015.

For credit the PPI must be approved by Town Council, thus the plan is to bring a final draft to the subsequent Flood Committee.

5. Public Information Assessment

Strengths- San Anselmo is a small town whose citizens are active and engaged in a wide variety of community activities. Many of the citizens are longtime residents that have lived through previous flood events. Most citizens have a strong network of friends that can be used to help convey the messages.

San Anselmo is part of a regional flood control district through the Marin County Public Works Department, which is implementing a Capital Improvement Plan aimed at achieving a 100-year level of flood protection.

Weaknesses- It has been 10 years since the last major flood and many home and business owners have moved away. The new owners, especially those that are outside of the floodplain do not fully appreciate the damage or the cost to those who were affected by flooding.

The Regional Flood Control District is the focus of the flood control efforts in the watershed, however as a Capital Improvement Project, it does not purvey all of the key outreach messages below, thus coordination between the Town and Flood Control District is imperative.

Opportunities- There is currently a divisive community discussion underway regarding the dual-use of a beloved park as a detention basin. This communication plan, by focusing on the broader floodplain management conversation may help to bring together the opposing groups.

This communication plan can help to inform the community of non-structural measures that may be helpful in looking at alternatives to the Memorial Park Issue.

Threats

In the short term, the Memorial Park Initiative will prevent Town staff from talking about some of the mitigation options. Care will need to be taken to ensure that this Public Information Plan is not viewed as supporting one side or another in the initiative process.

6. Delineation of Target Areas

San Anselmo's primary target area is its Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) which is also known as a 100-year or 'base' flood.

San Anselmo's SFHA can roughly be divided into two regions:

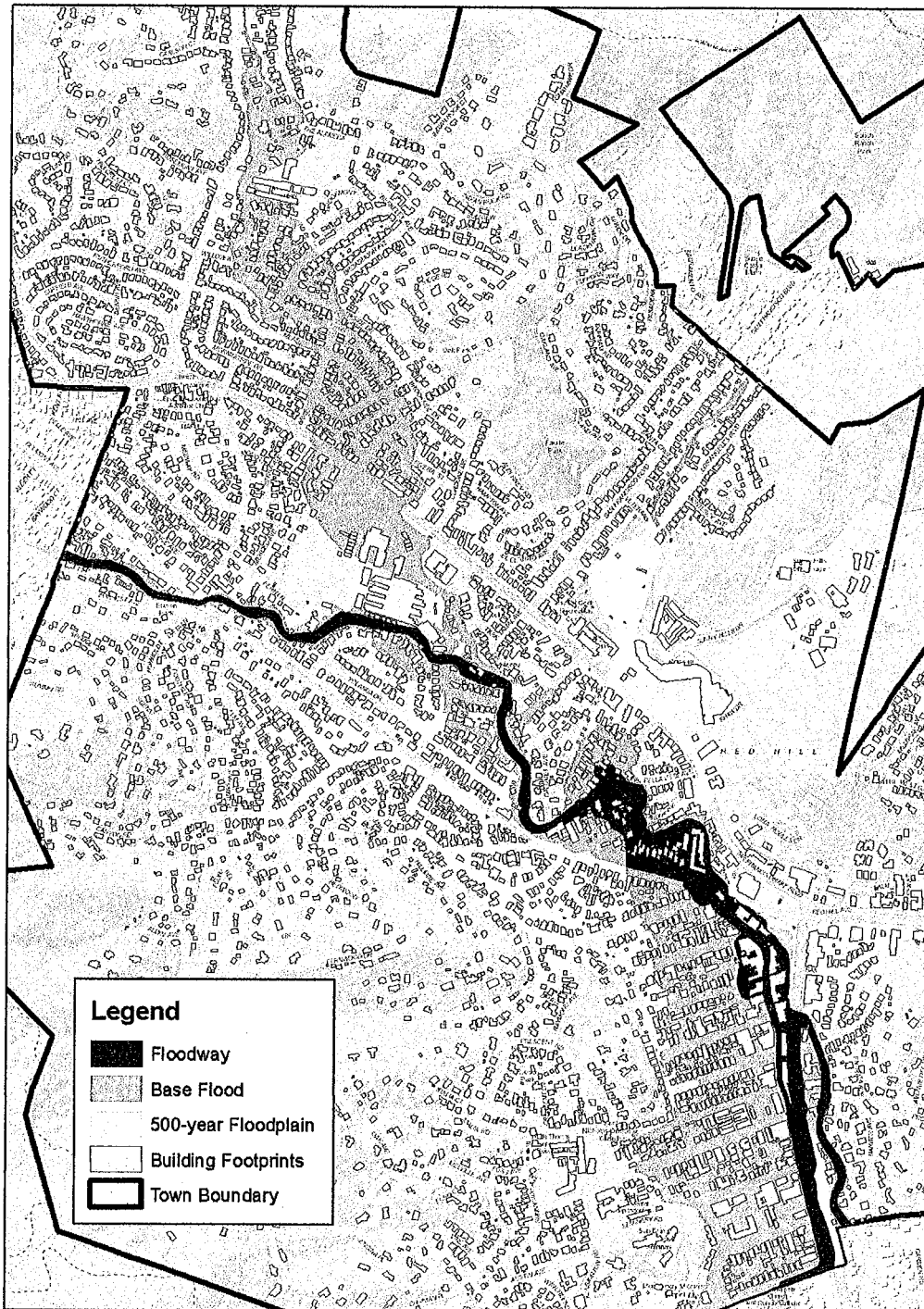
- Sleepy Hollow Creek (the Morningside neighborhood)
- San Anselmo Creek (downtown).

As of 2014 the SFHA encompasses 161 acres of San Anselmo and includes roughly 562 buildings. There are 526 active National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies in place in the Town of San Anselmo. The average premium is \$1,255 so the Town and constituents together pay about \$700,000 annually in flood insurance. Many of these premiums are being raised by FEMA, and are expected to continue rising.

San Anselmo ranks 7th in the State for flood insurance claims. According to FEMA flood insurance claims data, there have been 215 claims since the Town joined the NFIP program in 1978 totaling \$11.3 million. Approximately \$10.75 million dollars in flood claims were paid after the 2005/2006 San Anselmo flood. These claims ranged from \$380 to \$510,000. Several residences were elevated after the 2005/2006 flood. However, it is estimated that future floods would result in similar losses within the town until the planned flood control infrastructure is built.

The Floodway is another important target area in Town. This designation is where floodwaters move quickly, and therefore it is regulated to prevent it from being blocked.

Repetitive Loss Structures are ones that have several flood insurance claims within 10 years. San Anselmo has just one Repetitive Loss Structure, which is located in the upstream part of the Sleepy Hollow Creek SFHA.



7. Message Themes, Key Messages, and Information Links

1) Know your risk

- a. Narrative description of San Anselmo's Flood Risk
 - i. 2015 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Flood Risk Assessment
- b. Flood Maps and Insurance Information
- c. Public Works staff are available for assistance
 - i. Visit the San Anselmo Flooding and Storm Resources page
- d. Insure according to your risk

2) Build Responsibly

- a. Get an Elevation Certificate
 - i. Elevation Certificate Fact Sheet
- b. All construction projects must meet flood protection and water quality rules
 - i. FEMA Guide to Flood Repairs
 - ii. Flood Plain Development Permit
 - iii. Flood Gate Design
- c. Limit impervious surfaces

3) You live in a watershed

- a. Protect the Creek
 - i. Marin County Watershed Program
 - ii. MCSTOPPP
 - iii. Friends of Corte Madera Creek
- b. Flooding is Natural and Historical
 - i. Historical Museum Flooding Webpage
- c. Preserve and restore natural floodplain function

4) Stay Informed

- a. About Regional Flood Control Activities
 - i. Ross Valley Flood Protection and Watershed Program-Flood Zone 9
- b. About Local Flood Control
 - i. San Anselmo Flood Committee
 - ii. Town Community Rating System Activities
 - iii. Sand Bag Information
 - iv. Winter Preparedness Tips
- c. Of approaching storms
 - i. Real-Time Weather and Creek Depth

5) Stay Safe

- a. Be Prepared
 - i. Flood Protection Tips
- b. Don't Drive Through Floodwaters
 - i. Turn Around –Don't Drown
- c. Clean Up After Floods
 - i. After Flood Fact Sheet
 - ii. Prevent Mildew

8. Target Audiences

A- Commercial and residential tenants and building owners in San Anselmo

Aa – Throughout Town

Ab – Within the 500-year floodplain

Ac – Within the SFHA

Ad – Along the Creek

B – Building and Planning related professionals

Ba – Architects / designers / engineers

Bb – Builders / landscapers / trades and laborers

Bc – Realtors

Bd – Lenders

Be - Insurance Companies

C – SFHA Employees, visitors, nannies, motorists

D – Kids & Students

E - Stakeholders, staff, committees and boards

9. Existing Public Information Efforts

Organization	Target Audience	Project-	Subject Matter	Frequency
San Anselmo Public Information Officer (Town Manager)	Aa, Ab, Ac, Ad	Newsletter	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Weekly Newsletter- Each topic covered 1x per year
	A, C, D, E	Country Fair Day		Annually- Information & Activity Booth
	Ab	Mailer		1x per year
Town Administration	A, C, D, E	Facebook Website Nextdoor	1,2,3,4,5	Year round
Town Building and Zoning Department	A, B	Handouts Brochures	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Year round
	A,B, C, D	Signage	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	4x High Water Mark Signs 600+ No Dumping Signs
Ross Valley Fire Department	A	Get Ready Marin	4, 5	1x per month Training available in Marin
Central Marin Police/ Sheriff	A	Nixle	4, 5	As needed, year-round
Chamber of Commerce	A, C	Newsletter	5	2x per year
Flood Zone 9		Website Twitter Meetings Marin CRS outreach	1, 4, 5	Year Round
Town Flood Committee		Meetings	1,2,3,4,5	Quarterly
Friends of Corte Madera Creek	Ad	Creek Chronicles Newsletter	3, 4	sent 2x per year
Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP)			4,5,6	

Draft Program for Public Information Plan

Board of Realtors		Annual Meeting Website	1, 2, 3	Annually