

On Saturday, December 8, 2012, the City Council held a public workshop to review the options for reconstruction of the City Hall and Public Safety facilities, which were damaged due to flooding from super-storm Sandy.

Both facilities were flooded due to the fact that they were built below the minimum elevation standards established following their construction. The damages to each facility were such that, to restore them to pre-storm conditions would involve the expenditure of significant funds; and would still not address existing deficiencies, including insufficient space, non-compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, exterior building envelope issues, and mechanical and electrical system inadequacies.

At the December 8th workshop, a power-point presentation was given identifying the issues and options, including costs; and that presentation is provided here for review.

As background, prior to the storm, on October 23rd, the City Council held a public workshop to review the draft five year capital plan for 2013 through 2017. Also, following the storm, another capital plan workshop was held on November 27th. Capital planning is a vital part of the local government's responsibility, and typically each fall the council and administration review needs and priorities for the coming years, in order to ensure the ongoing improvement and maintenance of public assets and infrastructure. At the December 8th workshop, revised capital plan scenarios were presented that reflect post-storm conditions in Sea Isle.

At the presentation on December 8th, in addition to the issues and costs for the various options, several items of consideration were discussed that bear mentioning:

Neighborhood Impacts

- *Permanent location of municipal functions at the school site, if that option is chosen
- *Elimination of long term municipal functions at the former City Hall site, if that option is chosen.
- *Future use of municipal properties, if they are sold or utilized differently than the current uses.

The following are the properties in the City's inventory, including City Hall and the Public Safety building, which should be given consideration as the City moves forward with discussions on the construction of new facilities:

4416 Landis Ave	44.03 / 12	Former City Hall	100' x 110'	Zoned C-1
233 JFK Blvd.	40.04 / 1	Former Public Safety Bldg (Police portion)	240x110'	Zoned P-3
4208 Landis Ave	42.03 / 11.02	Former Museum	36' x 100'	Zoned C-1
122 W. Jersey Ave	41.03 / 7	Former Firehouse	50' x 110'	Zoned R-2
4501 Park Road	45.04 / 1	Former Public School	400' x 220'	Zoned P-3

Potential FEMA grants/reimbursements

The City should be eligible for reimbursement of some costs for reconstruction, which will require such construction to be built to FEMA guidelines. For some time, FEMA has been developing requirements for what they term "Advisory Base Flood Elevations." Generally, these are the minimum elevations that properties will be required to be built to in coastal areas such as Sea Isle. The requirements are expected to be provided to Cape May County this month, and in any event, will mandate construction at elevations significantly higher than any of the buildings existing on the above properties.

Benefits of Consolidation of municipal functions

There are inherent benefits to the consolidation of municipal functions within one facility that can be achieved with proper planning.

The presentation provides cost scenarios for the projected tax impact for each option. Understanding that there are many numbers to digest in this report, the following chart provides a translation of the tax rates for each scenario into the dollar impact on an average Sea Isle property assessed at \$730,000:

	CAPITAL PLAN (5-year)	ANNUAL COST (Projected) For Life of Bond	DIFFERENCE (Pre-Storm VS. Post-Storm)
PRE-STORM	\$25,829,000	\$368.18	-----
REBUILD IN PLACE	\$28,950,000	\$412.67	\$44.49
SCHOOL SITE	\$27,630,000	\$393.85	\$25.67
NEW @ JFK	\$29,220,000	\$416.52	\$48.34

The City Council will hold another public workshop on this matter on Saturday, December 15th, at 9:00 a.m.; and will continue public review of this issue at the regular council meeting of December 27th, at 10:00 a.m. If you wish to provide comments on this matter via email, please send them to cgriffith@seaislecitynj.us, and we will ensure that they are forwarded to all council members, the Mayor, and senior staff of the City administration. Responses will not be provided to emails sent to the above address, however, you are always welcome to call any City official with questions or concerns. We request that any comments to this matter be provided in advance of the aforementioned public meetings of December 15th and December 27th, if you wish such comments to be considered at either of those meetings.