

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Dear Neighbors & Property Owners:

I am providing you with a proposed time line from the NYSDEC for the Asharoken Storm Damage Reduction Project (ASDRP). The schedule provided below was given to the Village with the following proviso from Matt Chelbus at the NYSDEC "This is based on the current schedule, and is subject to change. This is especially true for the dates further out in 2017."

### **TIME LINE**

#### Milestone

#### Tentative Date

PUBLIC REVIEW ENDS	JANUARY 29, 2016
<b>COMMENTS FROM ASHAROKEN ON REPORT TO DEC*</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 10, 2016 (COMPLETED)</b>
<b>LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM ASHAROKEN TO STATE*</b>	<b>MAY 1, 2016</b>
AGENCY DECISION MILESTONE (ADM)	JUNE 1, 2016
SUBMIT FINAL REPORT TO HEADQUARTERS	AUGUST 3, 2016
CIVIL WORKS REPORT TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (ASA)	NOVEMBER 16, 2016
CHIEFS REPORT TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (ASA)	FEBRUARY 2017
REPORT SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS	JUNE 2017
<b>VILLAGE BOARD RESOLUTION COMMITTING TO THE PROJECT*</b>	<b>JULY 2017</b>
<b>EXECUTE PROJECT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (PPA)*</b>	<b>AUGUST 2017</b>

**\*The bold items are specific to the Village.**

I requested that Matt Chelbus provide us with some answers to the Village's obligations as we move forward. His answers below are copied directly from his email reply.

1. What do you need from the Village in the Letter of Support?

**"A letter of support, stating that the Village supports moving forward with the completion of the Feasibility Study Report, and agrees with the alternative selected therein. "**

2. What does the Letter of Support obligate the Village to?

**“This letter does not commit the Village to provide funding or sign a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA). It is a statement that you are in agreement with the findings of the draft study Report.”** (The Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) is essentially the construction contract for the project).

3. Can any changes be made to the project after signing the Letter of Support?

**“Yes. Optimizations can be made to the plan and report both after the Agency Decision Milestone (ADM), and during the Plans and Specs phase of the project (which takes place after the PPA is signed). This may include things like refining groin lengths and dune heights, etc. While the plan might be refined, the alternative will not change.”**

4. What would happen if the Village would opt not to sign the Letter of Support.

**“If the Village does not send the State a Letter of Support, than the State cannot send the Corps a Letter of Support, and the Report will not move to Agency Decision Milestone (ADM) until the Village, State, and Corps reach agreement on whatever issues prevent the Village from supporting the Report and selected alternative.”**

5. At what time will a final report come out stating which Alternative was chosen?

**“Prior to the Village providing a Letter of Support, the Corps will identify which alternative has been selected for the final draft report and will be presented at the Agency Decision Milestone (ADM). The Corps may need to optimize the plan and/or report based on the results of the ADM, following which the Report will be submitted to Headquarters. The State and the Village will have another opportunity to see the report during this window between the Agency Decision Milestone (ADM) and submittal to Corps Headquarters.”**

6. At what point in the process would the residents be given easement forms to sign.

**“This would not take place until sometime after Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) execution PPA execution is scheduled for August 2017.”**

There are a few things to keep in mind about the timeline, the Village’s obligations and how we as a community will move forward to reach a decision on the ASDRP project.

- All of the dates shown on the proposed timeline are subject to change.
- The next step for Asharoken will be to sign a Letter of Support. The Letter of Support acknowledges the Village’s desire to complete the Feasibility Study and that the Village agrees with the Alternative selected. The Village learned this week that the NYSDEC is supporting the Village’s decision to select Alternative 1, sand only restoration. **The Letter of Support does not commit the Village to provide funding or commit the Village to sign the Project Partnership Agreement.** The Village can walk away from the project at any time prior to signing the Project Partnership Agreement. Changes will still be possible subsequent to the Village signing the Letter of Support.

- Completing the Feasibility Study and keeping the Corps moving forward is very important for the Village. By allowing the USACE to move forward on the Feasibility Study the Village will have the peace of mind that should a major storm impact the Village prior to July of 2017; the possibility of USACE restoration is still there. If the Village were to say no, to signing the Letter of Support now, the Corps would cease working on the Feasibility Study. The Letter of Support can be considered, if nothing else, a short term insurance policy for the Village in case of a significant storm. Finally, regardless of what decision the Village makes on the beach restoration project, a completed Feasibility Study is beneficial for Asharoken. If we say no now, but in the future the circumstances merit opting for USACE help, the Village will not have to do another study and will be able to get reconstruction done in a much more timely fashion.
- When the Letter of Support is signed the project will be in the hands of the Corps for over a year as they go through their own internal steps to finalize the project plan.
- Not before July of 2017, at the earliest, would the Village be in a position to even consider adopting a resolution committing the Village to the project. During this period of time the Village will also be able to evaluate other alternatives such as dredging Duck Island Harbor as a source of sand.
- Once the Village has a final project plan the Board can solicit resident input via a survey and public hearings. The Village will have at least until July of 2017 to gather the residents and property owners input.
- The board and I feel, without any equivocation, that the decision to either move forward or chose to opt out of the ASDRP should be made by the residents and property owners. The Board will begin the process of soliciting input from the residents and property owners once the Village has a final project plan in house. The option of having a vote on the ASDRP is also under consideration. The Board of Trustees will not make a decision on the ASDRP until we hear and carefully consider the residents and property owner opinions on this project.
- The decision to either move forward or turn down the ASDRP project is probably the most important decision our Village will ever make. I urge everyone to learn as much as possible about the ASDRP so that when the appropriate time arrives you can make a decision based on a thorough understanding of all the facts.

As I have written before, the entire ASDRP process is long, complicated and will move at the pace that the USACE dictates. The Village needs patience as it works its way through this lengthy bureaucratic process to get to a final project plan. Once we reach that milestone, we as a community will decide how to proceed. If you have any questions, please email me at [mayorgregletica@gmail.com](mailto:mayorgregletica@gmail.com) and either myself, or Deputy Mayor Pierce, will be happy to answer them for you.

Wishing you a great day:

*Mayor Greg Letica*