

H & WAC Meeting of the Minds

Discussion Topic: Racoon Creek Harbor Bulkhead and Hodges St

Thursday December 1, 2022

Present: Don McGuire, Jim Blackerby, David Szerlag, Jim Kellenberger

Jim Kellenberger facilitated the discuss about this topic. These notes are not provided in the order the of discussion.

Jim Blackerby had several computer maps showing details of drainage area of the Racoon Creek upstream of the Hodges Street Bulkhead. It was shown that some of the original wetland areas had been filled in or bridged over to accommodate development of one sort or the other. Examples are the Bean Coffee Shop and Garland Fulcher's Seafood operation. Jim also provided an enlightening map show the various "fetch" distances that produce Oriental's "wind driven" water level rise and fall. The longest "fetch" is out of the Northeast from Rodanthe on the Outer Banks 71 miles across the Pamlico Sound to Oriental. These "wind driven" water level rises are one of the main contributors to the current problems at this location.

During this discussion, the group identified three main areas of concern to us:

- Drainage of water coming into and going out of the Racoon Creek system north of Hodges St. This system includes all street crossings of Racoon Creek up to Church St.
- The environmental effects of reduced water exchange between Racoon Creek south of the Hodges St Bulkhead (the Harbor) and Racoon Creek north of Hodges St Bulkhead.
- Personal, Commercial, and emergency vehicular traffic flow along Hodges St in the vicinity of the Racoon Creek Bulkhead.

Several desirable parameters for inclusion into any final design outcome were identified by the group. They are as follows and are not in any particular priority order.

- Construct the travel surface of Hodges St to accommodate a 4 ft water level rise.
- Construct the travel surfaces of the
- Provide access to all exiting businesses along Hodges St
- Provide traffic flow along Hodges for all types of transportation modes including pedestrians.
- Provide Boating provisions at least to the existing level, i.e., a dock perpendicular to the bulkhead and boat tie-ups along the bulkhead

- Provide maximum amount of water flow between the south side of the bulkhead and the north side of the bulkhead.
- Reestablish wetland vegetation where possible