



Town of Barnstable

Growth Management Department

www.town.barnstable.ma.us/growthmanagement

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Climate Change Adaptation Project in Barnstable Gets Underway

(Barnstable, Massachusetts)— The Town of Barnstable is one of four New England communities partnering with researchers from the Consensus Building Institute (CBI), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) in a two year project that will test role play simulations as an innovative tool to help coastal communities understand and prepare for the potential impacts of climate change.

Barnstable public officials will work with the project team, which includes the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR) based in Falmouth, Massachusetts, and community members to assess possible climate change-related risks to the town, including increased flooding. To engage the community role-play simulations, comprehensive stakeholder assessment and map products will be produced. The project will help the community develop a better understanding of climate change risks, barriers to preparing for climate change impacts and potential risk management strategies.

This project is important and timely because climate change has the potential to impact coastal communities such as Barnstable in a variety of ways, including increased flooding; shoreline erosion; salt-water intrusion into drinking water supplies; and possible damage to infrastructure and property. While it is not yet feasible to forecast exactly how and where these impacts will occur, coastal communities can make investments and policy changes that will reduce their vulnerability and increase their resilience to climate change, while protecting local environments and the communities that depend on them.

The project is funded by a grant from the NERRS Science Collaborative, the NERRS program administered by the University of New Hampshire that focuses on putting science to work for coastal communities. The other three New England communities participating in the project are Dover, NH; Cranston, RI; and Wells, ME. The other three NERRS involved in the effort include Great Bay NERR in New Hampshire, Narragansett Bay NERR in Rhode Island, and Wells NERR in Maine.

Over the course of the project, there will be numerous opportunities for interested citizens to get involved.

For more information about this project and how to participate, contact Tonna-Marie Surgeon-Rogers at tonna-marie.surgeon-rogers@state.ma.us or 508-457-0495 ext. 110.

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