

**Montgomery LHMP Meeting Minutes**  
**February 17, 2025 | 05:30 p.m.**  
**Public Safety Building- Conference Room / Hybrid**  
**86 Mountain Rd. / VT-242**  
**Montgomery Center, VT 05471**

Attendance: Charlie Hancock (Selectboard Chair), Greg Lucas (EMD), Doug Kopacz (Fire Chief), Shaun Coleman (NRPC)

The meeting began at 5:30 p.m. Shaun provided a power point presentation on hazard identification and risk assessment process, FEMA requirements, community outreach efforts, timeline, and a review of local hazards and state-wide hazards. There was a lot of work performed previously on the hazard history and risk assessment under different public safety planning efforts including the last mitigation plan update. There was some discussion on a community survey and outreach plan which was sent to the planning group. All agreed on the importance of engaging as much of the community as possible.

The goal of the meeting was to review the risks different hazards pose to the community and to rate them in terms of impacts and consequences of occurrence. Several members were unable to attend today's meeting due to the snowstorm cleanup.

Shaun reviewed the hazards that were profiled under the last mitigation plan update. The hazards that were ranked as the greatest risk to the community included flooding, fluvial erosion, severe winter storm (ice storm) and severe thunderstorms (high winds, hail, lightning). The group then reviewed the hazards identified in the state hazard mitigation plan and the risk ranking process used by the state. The process the town used previously and what the state uses is very similar. After some discussion, the group agreed to use the state risk estimation process and include the hazards the state identified that are relevant to the community.

The group then worked on the ranking criteria for each hazard which included the probability and impacts to infrastructure, life safety, the environment and the economic costs. Each category has a range of scores for ranking from low to high (i.e. 1 = negligible and 4 = high impact). There was agreement water/sewer service loss, power loss, telecommunications failure. These were considered domino effects of the primary hazards identified and would be discussed in the hazard profile. The group also agreed to remove hazardous materials and terrorism/WMD. The justification was that these were now outside of the scope of the mitigation plan update and that there is no history of any major incident in town.

There was discussion on the impacts of temperature fluctuations. Notably, warm spells in winter and spring cause degradation of road conditions and loss of ski tourism dollars on the local community. The Town spends a lot of time and funding on repairing roads during these warm spells. Warm spells will likely become more frequent due to climate change. Additionally, the area has been subject to freezing temperatures later in spring. In 2022, many orchards and crops were damaged due to a late May "killing" frost. Shaun agreed to follow up with the state to see if temperature fluctuations could be substituted for cold and hot temperature hazards.

The group discussed invasive species and impacts to ag production, maple producers, forest products and recreation. Charlie, as county forester, noted that the emerald ash borer is greatly impacting the ash

population. There is also concern regarding the flourishing of other invasive insect species due to warming temperatures.

There was consensus on earthquakes, tornados, and hail as being extremely rare. The group discussed infectious disease outbreak noting the response is primarily from state and federal agencies, however, the town would have to implement certain mitigation measures to protect staff and the community.

The hazards with highest score were temperature fluctuations, flood inundation and fluvial erosion. Snow was ranked fourth. Shaun noted that the scoring can be changed at any time until the draft is ready for public comment and then it may be changed again if there are significant public comments regarding the risk assessment. The survey will also be referenced to make sure the survey results are reflected. Shaun will draft the section and send out to the committee for review.

The next meeting was set for March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

**Action Items:**

NRPC will send out meeting minutes and schedule the next meeting.

NRPC will follow up with colleagues to determine how they assessed temperature fluctuations/extremes.

Montgomery committee members will review Communication/Outreach Plan and survey to determine additional outreach measures if any.

Montgomery committee members will track grant match.