



## Community Resilience Building (CRB) & HMP Stakeholder Workshop Day 1

**Location: Dunstable Town Hall (511 Main St, Dunstable, MA 01827)  
Friday October 20, 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM**

### **Notes:**

#### Natural Hazards

- Hurricanes/Tropical Storms
  - A big concern is trees coming down and power lines being destroyed.
  - Hurricane Carol in the 1950s had an impact on Dunstable. It took down a lot of trees.
  - Hurricane if 1938 also caused significant rain, wet conditions, and took down many trees.
  - Feasibility of putting all electrical underground is limited – very cost prohibitive, and requires coordination with other utilities. Chelmsford did put electric underground in downtown area for over \$20M. Note that new developments in Dunstable do have electrical underground.
- Flooding from Precipitation
  - Heavy rain has caused “gullies” alongside roadways. There is mostly country drainage so water channelizes along edges of roads and erodes material.
  - Note that Town has received newest Flood Insurance Rate Maps from FEMA and are in the 90 day review period. This will potentially change who requires insurance.
  - Note that most flood related claims that come to FEMA are in uninsured areas.
  - Dam overtopping and failure are concerns.
  - Town has been proactively replacing/repairing culverts as possible. Recently project on Route 113.
  - Beaver dams in and out of town have a large impact on potential flooding. In some cases, removal of beaver dams has caused concerning elevation of water.
  - Snowmelt + rain can be a concern, for example the fire department had to pump basement to Salmon Brook to stay dry during a recent year.
  - Basement flooding is an ongoing issue for residents.
  - There is a 60 foot setback from wetlands in local code.
  - There may be some building that happened in flood zones but the structures are elevated.
  - Septic systems are prohibited in flood zones.
- Extreme Temperatures
  - Farming community notices the “kill frost.” It used to be by mid-September and now it is late October or early November.
  - Discussion regarding tree species that thrive in higher temperatures and wet/dry environments.
  - Schools do not have AC in all rooms.
  - Worry about power failure during extreme heat days.
  - Increasing senior population is vulnerable to heat, in particular.
- Severe Winter Weather/Nor’easters
  - Ice storms are becoming a bigger concern – there are more freezing rains than there used to be.
  - National Grid and Tree Warden do proactively trim trees to avoid impacts to electrical system.
  - Sand and salt on roads should be noted as environmental concerns related to well contamination and impacts to vegetation. Dunstable does not pre-brine for winter road treatment.
  - Largest two storms in memory were the Storm in 2008 and the Halloween Storm in 2009. Power was out for almost a week for many.
  - The community relies on National Grid to restore power but due to density and lack of regional critical facilities, Dunstable is low on the list.



- Many homeowners have their own generators.
- Community supports neighbors including elderly and infirmed in snow removal.
- Landslides
  - Low risk to Dunstable.
- Changes in Groundwater
  - Drinking water is the biggest concern here.
- Drought
  - There are few dug wells remaining in Dunstable.
  - Drought is a concern for drinking water both public and private wells.
- Wildfire/Brushfire
  - There was a brushfire in 2022.
  - Not as many brushfires now as there may be been in the 1930s due to change in landscape.
  - Concerns about access roads to put out brushfire.
- Earthquakes
  - No collective memory of earthquake.
- Tornadoes
  - From a wind perspective, there was a microburst that skirted through Dunstable 1 to 2 years ago.
- Invasive Species
  - Japanese knotweed and bittersweet are both issues.
  - New jumping worm is destroying soil.
  - Seeing an impact to the woods in Dunstable due to non-native species.

#### Prioritization of Hazards

- Based on discussion, the attendees each prioritized natural hazards affecting Dunstable. Each attendee voted for three natural hazards. Results are as follows:
  - Severe Winter Weather/Nor'easters (10)
  - Invasive Species (8)
  - Flooding from Precipitation & Extreme Temperatures (6)
  - Changes in Groundwater (4)
  - Drought (3)
  - Hurricanes/Tropical Storms & Wildfire / Brush Fire (1)

No votes were received for Earthquakes, Tornadoes, or Landslides due to low risk to Dunstable.





## Summary of Report Out

- Attendees reported on their most important community assets, ownership, and strength/vulnerability status.
- Highlights include:
  - Emergency response services are a strength. Age of fire station makes it a slight vulnerability
  - Town Hall is a strength for the community as residents can come here to obtain information.
  - The school is a strength to act as a temporary shelter as it has public water, a kitchen, and space, but a vulnerability as it does not have a generator or AC.
  - The Water Tower and drinking water system, as well as protected drinking water land, is a strength for the community to provide water to public buildings and targeted residents on the system.
  - The dams are a significant vulnerability for the Town. Overtopping or failure would create a significant risk for the community.
  - The Highway Department has a dedicated facility but limitations on space make it a vulnerability.
  - Coordination with Tyngsborough and Groton for use of their emergency shelters is a strength.
  - The Churches are a strength in town as they are open to all community members and have a kitchen, but a vulnerability as there is no generator.
  - There are many public spaces that provide strengths for Dunstable and should be protected, from active to passive recreation. There is, however, no dedicated public swimming area that is a vulnerability to heat.
  - The senior population is as large part of the community and vulnerable to natural hazards.
  - Municipal leadership is a strength.
  - The school and library are strengths – the teachers and employees and volunteers are all important to connecting community and spreading information quickly.
  - The electric transmission line across town is a vulnerability to the community. Dunstable has no ownership of this infrastructure.
  - Communications systems the town uses between social media, website, cable, emails, and board at town hall are all strengths to disseminate information quickly.
  - Route 113 and Main Street are strengths – they do not flood and are key access through Town.
  - The electric grid is a vulnerability due to time it takes to restore power (many days, often).
  - Historic resources are an important part of town character and should be protected.
  - The festivals, summer concerts, committees, historic society, Rural Land Trust, and volunteers are all critical to Dunstable's character.
  - While there are few local businesses, they are critical to the local community and economy.
  - The agriculture community is an asset to the economy and community.



Structures

- Police - S
- Fire - S - Station = V
- Town Hall - S
- School - S - shelter - NO generator = V
- Water Tower
- Dams - Woodland Street Pond - V (think Cape Pond (Upper Mass) Brook in Town = V)
- Lake Macgarry - V private
- Highway Dept - V - size & condition
- Emergency Shelters - Tings & Green - S
- Church - S - open to community events  
bunkroom, kitchen  
No gen (V)

People

- Public services - Assn/Strength
- Senior population - Vulnerability
- School - people - students teachers
- Library - people - used
- Volunteer force - strength
- Leader fields - strength
- No Senior Center - Vulnerable form
- Municipal leadership - strength
- Neighbor to N - S
- Next Door Serial - SN

Systems

- Water System - S
- Transmission Line - V
- Gas lines
- Communication - S  
Cable & Verizon - ~~Water tower~~ S
- Wells - S
- Protected well supply area - S
- Road 113 & Main Street - S
- Erid & Car - V  
Vulnerable

Economy & Community Assets

- Town Common
- Lakes Fields
- Summer Concerts
- Little Red sth
- Festivals
- Committees
- Historic Sings
- River Law these
- Agricultural Tully Farm open house
- ~~St. Peter's~~ St. Peter's - S
- Businesses
- Working & W/L
- Race Shop
- Farmhouse

Cult / Nat / Historic

- Open Space - Strength  
- clean water  
- cleaner
- Town Common
- Tully W/L/R
- Blackstone
- Lakes Fields
- Little Red school house
- Rail Trails
- McLoon's Barn - ~~Apple~~ - S  
- Venue
- Union School - S
- Cemetery - - ~~Michigan~~ & ~~anti~~ - S  
- Pickout Com - ~~Field~~  
- No M/Venue com