



# THE CITY OF LEWES STORY: RAISING FREEBOARD TO PROTECT THE LEWES COMMUNITY



Presented by Councilwoman **Amy Marasco**

*With support from:*

Lewes Planning Commission, Environmental Subcommittee

Lewes City Planner

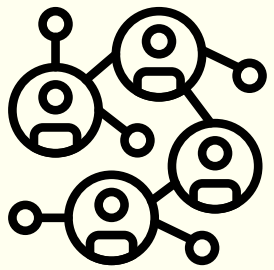
GMB







# OVERVIEW



THE PROCESS



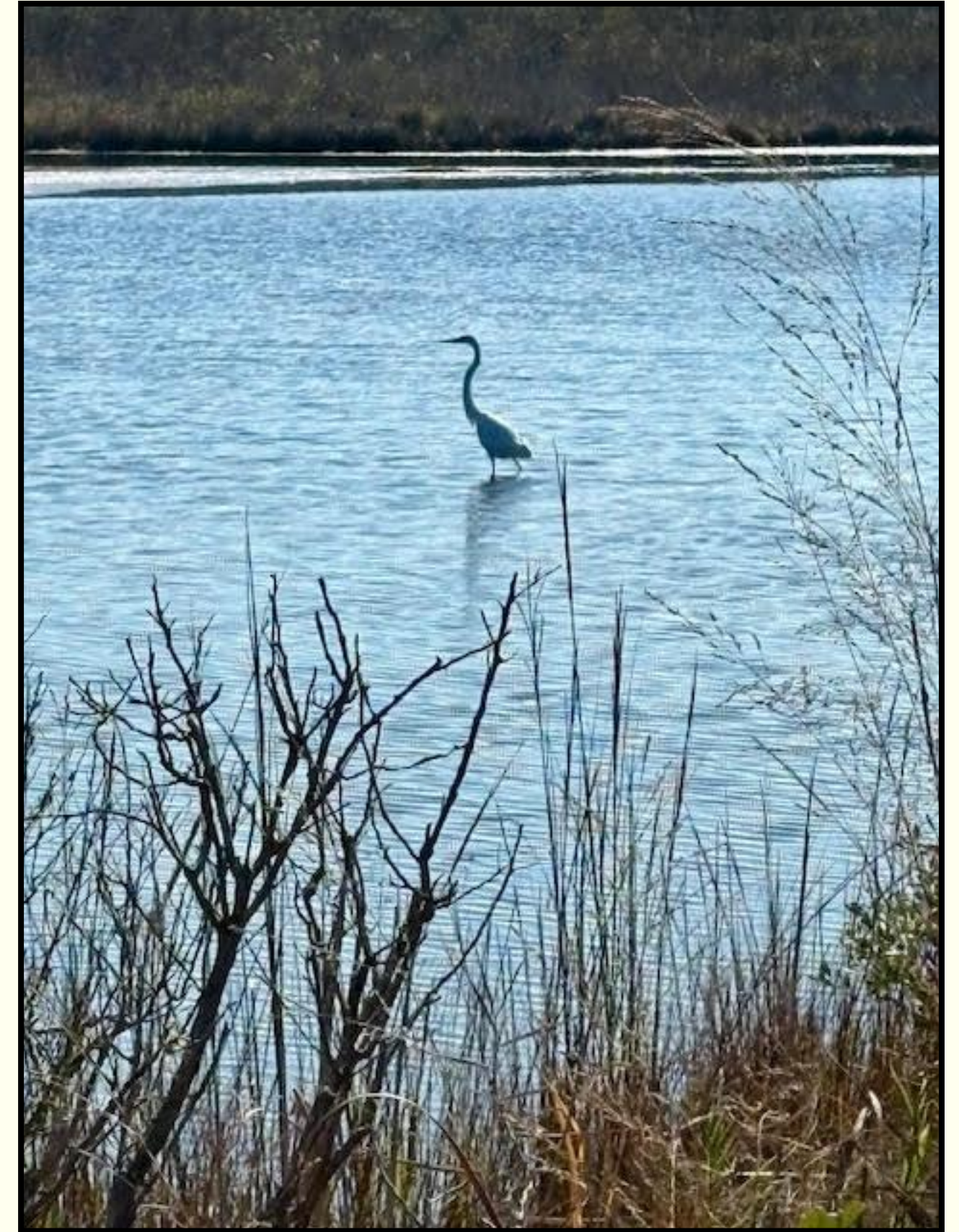
THE FACTS

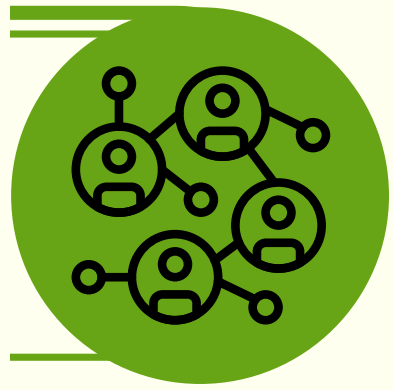


THE OUTREACH



THE RESULTS





# OUR PROCESS WAS BUILT ON 7 PRINCIPLES

Stay with  
the facts

1

Commit to a  
robust public  
outreach effort

2

Listen  
listen  
listen

3

Respect and  
answer questions  
and concerns

4

Build support  
across the  
community

5

Recognize  
freeboard is one  
piece of a larger  
puzzle

6

Speak to  
current and  
future concerns

7





# THE FACTS



## Much of Lewes Lies within a Floodplain

- 67.8% of total land area in floodplain
- Over 1,000 of our homes are in a floodplain
  - 1,239 in 1% chance
  - 524 parcels in 0.2% chance
- Realized high tide averaged 15" over projected high tide (representing a dress rehearsal for 2045 with the projected SLR amount)
- Number of flood days increasing per year
  - 2000 4 days
  - 2021—13 days
  - 2050—60-90 days



# THE FACTS

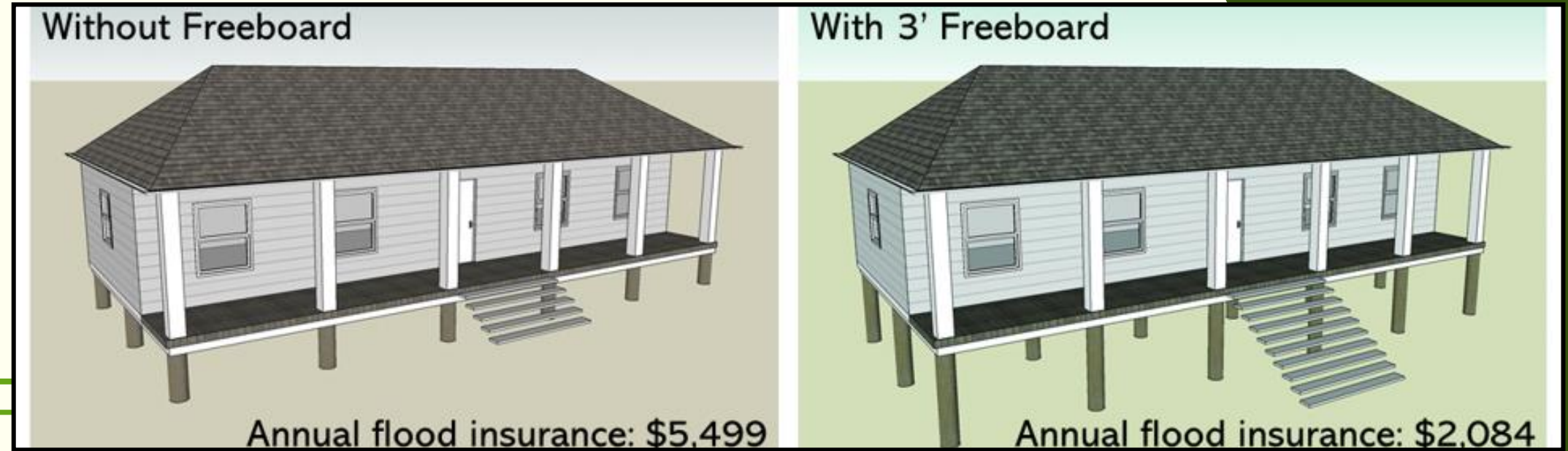


## Risks are Rising

- Increase storm intensity and frequency
- Higher storm surges
- Rising sea level
- Increased risk of flooding
- Floodplain area projected to increase in size and depth
- Delaware is #5 on list of most at risk states for physical risk (hurricane, wildfire, flooding)



# THE FACTS



## Benefits are Real

- Improves coastal community resiliency
- Lessons impact of recovery and repair
- Can reduce flood insurance premiums under NFIP
- Adds to community economic stability
- Protects properties and value
- Attracts investment





# THE OUTREACH



## Outreach Effort Built Support

- Tap specialists and credible data to convey message
- Run a fully transparent process
- Keep elected officials current
- Know the arguments for and against
- Reach out to builders
- Research what other communities have done
- Focus on public property value and the economics
- Convene public workshops





# THE OUTREACH



## Outreach Effort Built Support

- Incorporate creative ways to message
  - Eco tapestry project
  - Share pictures and use graphics to convey messages
  - Next generation video





# THE OUTREACH



## Eco Tapestry Footprint Project

- Became a travelling public hearing encouraging public participation
- Reached residents, visitors, community leaders, senior citizens, and the next generation
- Has driven the agenda for current and future work







# THE OUTREACH



## Share Pictures

- A picture is worth a thousand words







# THE OUTREACH



## Next Generation Video

- The next generation challenged decisionmakers to care about what they would inherit



The Next Generation's Message for Our Community ...

**Won't you stand with us?**





# THE RESULTS



## Freeboard Ordinance Approved

- No change to existing homes
- In the 1% or 100 year floodplain
  - Adopted a 36-inch freeboard from an 18 inch
  - Raised building height to 35.5 feet from 34 feet
- In the 0.2 % or 500 year floodplain
  - Adopted an 18-inch freeboard from the no freeboard requirement
  - Raised building height to 34 feet from 30.5
  - Voluntary to start, mandatory by June 2026



# THE RESULTS



## Eco Tapestry Input

The messages on the eco tapestry have driven our environmental agenda





# THANK YOU

---

Let's work collaboratively to make  
our coastal communities resilient  
for generations to come

