

- *Sound and Town Mamaroneck Matters article for 11/7/08*
- - One of the biggest issues facing Mamaroneck is flooding. The Village is located at the bottom of three separate watersheds (Mamaroneck and Sheldrake Rivers and the Beaver Swamp Brook). Thirty-two square miles of land drain into the Long Island Sound through Mamaroneck. During both large and small rain events, that adds up to a lot of water coursing down the rivers. History has recorded that Mamaroneck has suffered flooding since humans started keeping track. Common sense tells us that flooding has probably been part of our history since the glaciers receded thousands of years ago and formed the local geography.
 -
 - After the devastating floods of 2007, we have devoted time and resources to flooding issues. I have attended several meetings about flooding and have heard the same thing at each: there is no one solution. We need to have and use “several tools in our toolbox.” This is the approach we are taking in the Village of Mamaroneck and today’s column will focus on one aspect – potential structural solutions. I will address other aspects of flood mitigation in future columns.
 -
 - As most people already know, thanks to Congresswoman Nita Lowey, the US Army Corps of Engineers is once again involved in Mamaroneck. The Corps is getting ready to begin a \$7 million re-evaluation study of the Sheldrake and Mamaroneck River watersheds in spring 2009. Both New York State and Westchester County are helping fund the study with commitments up to \$900,000 each. While the start date is later than we’d like, the schedule is faster than the Corps’ usual pace.
 -
 - This study is expected to take 30 months to complete. It will include analyses of a range of options that include both structural (moving water away from people) and non-structural (moving people away from water) solutions. Several options had been analyzed and discarded in previous studies including detention basins upriver (not enough space to hold enough water) and river diversion tunnels (not environmentally sound).
 -
 - In 2007, prior to the Army Corps’ commitment, the Village of Mamaroneck engaged an engineering consultant to develop possible solutions to flooding along the Mamaroneck and Sheldrake Rivers. This consultant recommended widening the Mamaroneck River downstream of Ward Avenue. The project is estimated to cost in excess of \$25 million. This possible solution is “on hold” until after the outcome of the Army Corps’ project is known.
 -
 - The smaller watershed, Beaver Swamp Brook, has not been forgotten. This waterway begins in Harrison and enters the Village behind the Rye Neck High School. It is the cause of the flooding in the Stoneybrook Avenue neighborhood and near the CVS on Boston Post Road where the brook goes under the Post Road and empties into Guion Creek, a tidal wetland.
 -
 - Harrison suffers from flooding along the Beaver Swamp Brook and we are working with them to determine the best course of action to alleviate problems in Harrison without causing additional flooding in Mamaroneck. In fact, their consultants have developed a potential solution to widen the river and alleviate flooding along its entire length. These plans are still very preliminary and conceptual. There are many details that need to be addressed. Harrison is looking for funding for the next phase of the project.
 -
 - *Watch for more flood news in future columns and on the Village’s new website at www.village.mamaroneck.ny.us.*