



REPORT FROM MIDDLE ISLAND

Fred Craig, David Ward, and Ryan Thompson made an inspection trip to Middle Island on Monday, September 24. The following is Fred's report on Island conditions.

Arriving via the Cape Creek Docks

One benefit of having our own docks was that we could come in from the river and not depend on the ferry for initial recovery operations. The timing of the dock repair was timely for us and did aid in our recovery very substantially. Kudos to Alan, Jeff and Cooper for getting it done. The docks are in good shape.

General impressions of houses

Our focus has been on getting our Middle Island infrastructure in shape for property owners' return to the island. We have not done a complete survey of property exteriors; however, based on both the Association's helicopter survey and our impressions from our visit, our houses fared well. (Of course we can't assess the interiors, where at a minimum the refrigerators and freezers will pose a very unpleasant cleanup task.) The only exterior damage evident during the partial surveys done Tuesday were some shingles blown off a few roofs, some overturned porch furniture, some limbs down on drives and decks, and one door blown open. There was also some damage to window and porch screens and sand blasting of the paint on the houses on East Beach.

[Note: links to the aerial surveys are available on our home page www.middleislandpoa.com]

The Roads

Several days ago, the Village moved large limbs and debris to the side of the road to create one lane for emergency access from the entrance to the Sanctuary gate, including Dogwood Ridge. Having that basic access was very helpful, speeding our work assessing Middle Island.

When we arrived, we did a video survey with photographs of the entire length of the road with the storm debris on it. We can identify the areas of over-wash from high water due to rain, tides, and wind-driven surge.

David and Ryan were able to clear the roads yesterday, using the blade on the tractor to drag off most of the debris. By Friday David and Ryan should have the roads completely passable and the large overhanging limbs out of the trees. We will still need to do some major debris removal, but it's in piles now. It will need to be chipped up. They also removed all of the major trees over driveways and hanging limbs. They removed the tree on Susie Anderson's driveway and in our roads where the village had only

cut a 10-foot swath in the middle of the trees for Passage. They also removed several other branches on property owners' lots that were hanging out over the roads.

The roads are remarkably unscathed. Once the remaining loose debris is blown off the roads, we still need to address brooming them again to get rid of the 1-2" stones on the surface.

The basin near the east end of Dogwood Ridge Lane is still under water. We should evaluate whether there are easy ways to address this recurring problem.

While the drain installed at the low point on East Beach Drive helped somewhat, and there was no ponding when we arrived, it is clearly that the drain is not sufficient to handle major downpours, let alone the more than two feet of rain that fell during Florence. The water reopened the break in the berm at 12 East Beach, causing major erosion under the entrance apron and under the pavement of East Beach Drive. In collaboration with the property owners along that side of East Beach Drive, we will need to re-establish the natural flow of storm water from the road. In the meantime, Ryan and David got the roadway repaired, backfilling the 3x3x2 ft hole, the 15' ditch, and the undercuts of both the apron slab and the asphalt roadway with gravel and Sakrete I supplied.

Power supply, transformers, and the water supply

None of our Transformers were affected as they were on the other parts of the island. Ours were high and dry. It did not look like any of them had been inspected as of last night, but perhaps visual inspection of the exterior sufficed. If Duke Energy could isolate the circuits supplying Middle Island, our systems we could be back up and running in a few days.

The village was draining the fresh water line down to the marina gate so we should have fresh water when we get back.

Beach and Beach Access

East Beach fared well. We did not have any overwash of the frontal dune on East Beach, and appear to have had some accretion to the beach and the dune. The beach access is in very good condition, with about a foot of sand on top of the highest section crossing the frontal dune. There is a bit of dune erosion between Bennett's and Caples and on down to Bluff Island. (In contrast, the frontal dune on South Beach was over topped and is largely gone.)

Marina area and bridges

The creek waters came up to the top of the ramp. Water from rain, tides, and wind driven surge also flowed over both bridges. Many of the bridge planks are in a very deteriorated condition (not due to the storm). We did get some scour from the drainage of the marshes and there's a lot of debris underneath the bridges that needs to be removed. We won't be able to bring anything heavy in over the bridges for the ramp rehabilitation or replacement. We also need to inspect the underside of the bridge beams. We should reinstall the water pipes under the bridges that burst, with drains to allow winterization. The marina electrical service needs to be reviewed as well.

Debris and waste removal

We need to discuss with the Village the placement of large limbs and tree trunks for removal by the Village contractor. The Village has brought a barge full of dumpsters to the island and will be providing information about how different waste streams will be handled. A bit of a warning here: the food in my

freezer was already so spoiled as to make the house smell. Be prepared be prepared, as that may be the worst thing you have to do.

In closing...

On the “count your blessing” side of the storm, you might go to Mojo's Facebook page and see the degree of flooding on the island. Andrea Pitera posted them yesterday from photographs given to her by Chris McCall. It looked bad from the helicopter ride I took over the municipal buildings on Sunday. Bald Head was in pretty bad shape. Much of the rest of the island shows standing water and downed trees down, no power and therefore no sewage service.

And of course the pictures from elsewhere in the state are even more disturbing.

We dodged a bullet on Middle Island. Most of the rest of the island and much of southeastern North Carolina was not so lucky.

Fred Craig