

April 23, 2013

The Honorable Chris Christie
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Christie:

Thank you for meeting with me to discuss Hoboken's severe flooding problems. As I mentioned, and as you witnessed during your visit, Superstorm Sandy was a disaster for the City of Hoboken.

An estimated 80 percent of our City flooded with a toxic mix of the Hudson River brackish water, raw sewage, and home heating oil that covered our streets and flooded our homes. Raw sewage backed up through toilets into residents' homes, businesses, our hospital and fire stations, causing well over \$100 million in damage to an estimated 1,750 homes and businesses. Hoboken flooded with the most toxic water in the State, and for this reason we were disappointed that free mold seminars were not offered anywhere in Hudson County.

Governor, this was an extreme crisis for Hoboken, and since we cannot possibly raise our homes on pilings, we need help with funding a comprehensive solution to protect our City and nearly \$10 billion in ratables. In addition, residents and businesses are receiving virtually no coverage from insurance companies. Just yesterday, a great local business told me they received \$15,000 in coverage for \$178,000 in inventory and construction damage.

In addition to Hurricane Sandy, Hoboken also floods extensively on a regular basis every year from the ever increasingly severe rain events. While I understand the shore needs to be protected and represents a treasure of New Jersey, Hoboken represents an urban treasure of the State and needs to be treated equally and provided assistance this year for help with our flooding problem.

Working with various stakeholders, we have developed a comprehensive plan to address our flooding, and it starts with more pumps along our waterfront to provide emergency protection for our entire City at a cost of \$22 million. Western Hoboken would have been flooded for weeks after Sandy if we did not have our one pump station that pumped out 75 million gallons per day. I can personally attest to the fact that parts of the Southwest neighborhood were flooded for nearly a week after Hurricane Irene without the Observer Highway pump, and that was without flooding from the Hudson River. With the one pump station, the more severe flooding from Hurricane Sandy was drained in five days. We need more pumps as soon as possible to protect the entire City.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

In addition, Hoboken is developing plans to retain as much rainwater as possible by purchasing new land for parks, and we have applied for funding to build underground detention systems. We have already identified open space sites in the hazard area and have appropriated \$20 million that can serve as the 25% match for this request.

Finally, there is a conceptual plan for building a series of berms, flood walls, and implementing an innovative flood break system to protect the City from future storm surges. We have met several times with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and respectfully request a letter of support from you so that Hoboken, Weehawken, and Jersey City, can be a part of their regional study to fully evaluate the proposed wall protection system.

In the immediate term regarding funding for the pumps, Hoboken should receive unconditional support in the same manner as the rest of the State. Receiving this unconditional support is absolutely essential both as a matter of fundamental fairness and because it will not be possible to proceed with a variety of development projects that burden Hoboken's infrastructure until the flood problem has been adequately addressed. Just as shore towns are not being asked for development in exchange for protecting them from future storms, the solution to Hoboken's flooding challenges cannot be dependent on future development.

I have met with numerous members of your Administration to discuss these concerns including Marc Ferzan, Commissioner Martin, Commissioner Constable and others. Unfortunately, federal policies, including FEMA regulations, are stacked against urban areas, and none of their suggestions have been possible to get help for Hoboken. Governor, I look to you to level the playing field and protect important urban communities such as Hoboken. Consider this example: if Hobokenites could raise our homes and businesses on pilings (which is not physically or financially possible), we would be receiving over \$52 million in assistance from the National Flood Insurance Program. Instead, we face hefty insurance costs in the future for policies that provide little to no coverage. These policies must change to acknowledge the unique realities of urban areas. I know that takes time, so out of fairness, we ask for you to level the playing field now to protect a community that is also critical to the future economic health of the State of New Jersey.

Hoboken has excellent opportunities for the future, if we can figure out a way to alleviate our flooding in the near term. I hope your Administration will fully fund these incredibly important pumps since they are already fully designed and represent a shovel ready project that could immediately help to protect Hoboken.

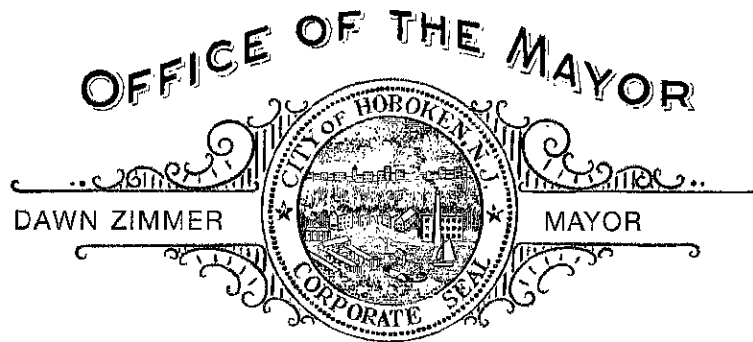
I think both the State of New Jersey and the City of Hoboken have just reasons to be proud of our response in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. I hope we will be able to work together so we can be equally proud of our efforts to protect all of the affected areas fairly and in a manner that takes into account the different but equally important needs of each community. Thank you again for all you have done to protect our State and for hearing out my sincere concerns.

Best,



Dawn Zimmer

Cc: Bob Martin, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection
Richard E. Constable III, Esq., Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs
Marc Ferzan, Executive Director of Superstorm Sandy Recovery



CITY HALL
HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY

March 21, 2013

Joseph Hurley, Deputy Coordinator
Hudson Count Office of Emergency Management
595 County Avenue
Secaucus New Jersey 07094

RE: North Hudson Sewerage Authority Wet Weather Pump Stations

Dear Mr. Hurley:

The purpose of this letter is to express the City of Hoboken's enthusiastic support for North Hudson Sewerage Authority's (NHSA) Municipality Letter of Intent (LOI) for three proposed wet weather pump stations.

Hoboken, which was once an island with tidal marshes to the west, is extremely vulnerable to coastal storms and flooding. For more than 100 years, the City has had a severe flooding problem that results in raw sewage from our combined sewer system overflowing into low elevation areas when strong storms occur during high tide.

During Superstorm Sandy, more than half of the City was flooded for several days. Significant portions of the City were inaccessible for almost week, vital municipal services were interrupted, and damage costs exceeded \$100 million. The H-1 wet weather pump station that was constructed by NHSA in September, 2011 drained sections of the City 48 hours faster than had it not been in operation, which greatly aided in the City's recovery. While this single pump has reduced flooding during smaller rain events in Southwest Hoboken, it is not sufficient for larger storms, and it does not address flooding in other areas.

The installation of additional pumps is one part of a three-pronged approach the City supports to comprehensively address our flooding challenge. In addition, we are applying for funds to acquire land in flood-prone areas for open space with large underground detention systems. This, combined with other green solutions, would divert or store rain water runoff to minimize flooding. Finally, we are considering flood walls to protect from storm surges. Additional pumps are critical to addressing our vulnerability to flooding from both storm surges and rainwater runoff.

In the interest of public health and safety, the City strongly endorses the Authority's plan and will continue to work with the NHSA to protect our residents. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mayor Dawn Zimmer