

# Towns Along Watershed Join Together To Fund Flood Control Project

Cranford, Millburn and other towns along the Rahway River have entered into an interlocal agreement to fund early stages of the project.

- By [Toniann Antonelli](#), July 24, 2012

Governing bodies from the communities that are represented on the [Mayors Council on Rahway River Watershed Flood Control](#) agreed last week to enter into an interlocal agreement to fund the legal analysis on the development of the South Mountain Reservation detention dam.

The project, once constructed, is expected to [detain](#) storm water at peak flow conditions that will reduce water elevations in communities such as Millburn, Springfield, Union, Kenilworth, Cranford and Rahway. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's hydrology assessment indicated the project could reduce water elevations by almost 3 feet at the Route 78 confluence of the Rahway River.

Cranford officials discussed the interlocal agreement during a recent Township Committee workshop meeting. Mayor David Robinson and Township Engineer Richard Marsden explained the plan and the [flood remediation](#) benefits the detention dam will have. "Cranford is pleased to participate to ensure the project takes a [step](#) forward to mitigate some of the flooding concerns our region has faced," Robinson said. Marsden said the plan will include a hydraulic assessment as well as environmental assessments to determine exactly where to build the structure. "We're trying to accelerate this one project," Marsden said.

Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo is supportive of the plan, officials said.

"The cooperation shown by the communities that have decided to move forward is forward looking and is an attempt to implement solutions to flooding," Millburn Mayor Sarah Haimoff said.

In addition to environmental assessments, legal analysis will be done to work out agreements with the city of Orange and Essex County where the project is being sited. The Mayors Council has made a funding request to the State of New Jersey for planning [funds](#) to perform the environmental and design assessments. Most area legislators have made request on the watershed communities' behalf to include state funding for this effort, according to former Cranford Mayor Daniel Aschenbach, who remains active with the Mayors Council.

"Some communities have not signed on to the agreement as yet given the river doesn't directly impact homeowners during storms. The Mayors Council is striving to ensure all watershed communities better understand the quantity and quality of the storm water contribution they make to what eventually reaches the river and then over flows its banks," Aschenbach said.

On Sept. 20, along with the Rahway River Association, the Mayors Council will be sponsoring a regional storm water management conference to be held in Millburn. Mayors, administrators, engineers, planning and zoning board members and others will be invited to learn about the impact poor storm water management has and to set objectives to mitigate.