

Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan

Summary of April 20, 2021 Steering Committee Meeting held Virtually via Zoom 2:00-4:00pm

Presentations, support documents, and other resources can be found at <http://www.a-npdc.org/accomack-northampton-planning-district-commission/coastal-resources/hazard-mitigation-planning/>

Members may access a recording of this call at: tinyurl.com/4wn6p937

Steering Committee Members Present:

Susan McGhee, Northampton County
Jeb Brady, Town of Cape Charles
Tom Brockenbrough, Accomack County
Sarah Dickey, Accomack County
Bryan Rush, Chincoteague Emergency Services
Robert Williams, Town of Wachapreague
Matthew Spuck, Town of Onancock
Jackie Davis, Town of Cheriton
Patsy Stith, Town of Nassawadox
Charles Wilbur, Town of Melfa

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Town of Painter
Town of Accomac
Town of Saxis
Town of Exmore
Town of Eastville
Town of Tangier
Town of Keller
Town of Belle Haven
Town of Hallwood
Town of Parksley
Town of Onley

Steering Committee Alternates Present:

Jeanette Eby, Town of Bloxom

VDEM Present:

Harrison Bresee, VDEM

A-NPDC Staff Present:

Shannon Alexander
Ashley Mills
Thomas Hicks, Berkley Group
Jon McCoy, Berkley Group

Planning Council Members Present:

Evelyn Shotwell, Chincoteague Chamber
Susan Bates, The Nature Conservancy

Planning Council Members Absent:

Hali Plourde-Rogers, ESLT
Scott Hall, ESCC

Welcome and Introductions

Shannon Alexander, Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) Director of Planning, and Thomas Hicks, The Berkley Group, welcomed participants and directed participants to take roll call using an online form.

Shannon Alexander shared that she has accepted a position in the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Natural Heritage Division and that her last day with the PDC is May 6. Ashley Mills, the new Regional Planner with the PDC, and the Berkley Group will ensure the plan moves forward in Shannon's absence.

Round Table Discussion: *What has been your experience with debris removal?*

Committee members were asked to share their experience with debris removal. Mayor Stith, Town of Nassawadox, shared her experience on removing derelict structures as a mitigation action prior to a hazard event. The group discussed the difficulties of removing derelict structures and brainstormed funding programs to assist with the removal of these structures. Harrison Bresee, VDEM, suggested the mitigation program through FEMA to address repetitive loss properties. He will research further for other programs available to address derelict structures as well.

Tom Brockenbrough shared the removal of the Whispering Pines Hotel but was unsure of the funding sources for removal. Susan McGhee shared that public works deals with debris removal and are trained annually to do so. Matthew Spuck asked if any locality has ordinances for spot blight abatement. Shannon shared the Town of Parksley has ordinances, as well as both counties.

Key Takeaways and Updates

Shannon Alexander shared a brief presentation of upcoming programs and opportunities to benefit the local governments. These include:

- The Community Flood Preparedness Fund managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The public comment period ends **May 12**.
- RAFT Community Workshop on "Building Resiliency into Comprehensive Planning" on April 23 from 9-11:30am.
- Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Amendments.
- New Federal Relief Funds.
- Broadband Update.
- Large Scale Infrastructure.
- Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) applications (formerly BUILD and TIGER) are due July 12, 2021.
- VDOT Revenue Sharing Program.
- VA Department of Conservation and Recreation Recreational Trails Program grant is open April 1-June 30. Virginia Land Conservation Foundation funding will be open next winter for the FY22 application cycle.

Shannon Alexander's presentation is available with hyperlinks in the PDF version of the PowerPoint presentation.

RAFT Status Update

Wie Yusuf, Professor and Assistant Director of Old Dominion University's Institute for Coastal Adaptation and Resilience, shared a presentation on the Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT). The intent of this presentation was to update the steering committee with RAFT's recent projects. Her presentation is available in the PDF version of the PowerPoint presentation.

Locality Meetings & HMP Chapter Updates

Ashley Mills, Regional Planner, met with several localities to update their chapters of the HMP. Robert Williams asked if there is a date the Wachapreague chapter would be completed. Ashley Mills indicated there is no date currently set for completion of that chapter, however, the deadline for adoption of the plan by each jurisdiction is January 2022.

Thomas Hicks and Shannon Alexander discussed potential methods to ensure the plan is reviewed and updated annually. An annual review and update will ensure the plan is current and easier to update at the five-year update.

Mitigation Strategies

Thomas Hicks led a discussion on the update to the mitigation goals. The committee decided to adopt regionwide mitigation goals with specific projects defined at the local level. Strategic Goal 1 was adopted without changes. The committee decided to amend Strategic Goal 2 to include language for post-hazard event response. The committee discussed a greater focus on education to address repetitive loss structures in the strategies for Strategic Goal 3. No changes were made to the wording of Strategic Goal 3. The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) "Community Lifelines" guided the development of Strategic Goal 4. The steering committee expressed a desire to capture each community's individual needs but agreed to the direction of Strategic Goal 4. Specific needs are recommended to be included in each locality's mitigation programs. The committee discussed including the migrant agricultural worker population as a specific strategy under Strategic Goal 5. Accomack and Northampton communities utilize services to target the migrant population for education and outreach regarding hazard events. The committee directed Berkley Group staff to further research other locality efforts to address migrant populations in hazard mitigation plans.

New Resources

Thomas Hicks shared FEMA's Geospatial Resource Center, a virtual tool that provides content to local governments to assist in hazard modeling. This tool is useful to combine with existing GIS capabilities. Some of the other programs included in this tool are the Prioritization Operations Support Tool, Lifeline Dashboards, Crowdsourcing-Partner Products, and the Storm Simulation Tool in Hurrevac.

Next Steps

The next steps of the project will be to review the existing regional mitigation objectives from the previous edition of the plan. Localities will need to review these objectives and determine if they have been accomplished or if they need to be brought into the new plan. Berkley Group and ANPDC staff will work together to send these mitigation objectives to the localities for their review.

Steering committee members will receive a link to approve the strategic goals and strategies as amended during the meeting. Ashley Mills requested any locality who has not already met with her individually to update their individual chapter to make an appointment with her at amills@a-npdc.org

Next Meeting

The meeting ended at 4:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on May 18.