

Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan

Summary of May 18, 2021 Steering Committee Meeting held Virtually via Zoom 2:00-4:00pm

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

Steering Committee Members Present:

Susan McGhee, Northampton County
Jeb Brady, Town of Cape Charles
Robert Williams, Town of Wachapreague
Patsy Stith, Town of Nassawadox
Thomas Beasley, Town of Bloxom

Steering Committee Members Absent:

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

Steering Committee Alternates Present:

Jeanette Eby, Town of Bloxom

A-NPDC Staff Present:

Ashley Mills, A-N PDC
Thomas Hicks, Berkley Group
Jon McCoy, Berkley Group
Aaron Berryhill, Berkley Group

Planning Council Members Absent:

Scott Hall, ESCC
Hali Plourde-Rogers, ESLT
Evelyn Shotwell, Chincoteague Chamber
Susan Bates, The Nature Conservancy

Welcome and Introductions

Thomas Hicks, The Berkley Group, welcomed participants and directed participants to take roll call using an online form. He gave a round of introductions and detailed the changes to the planning team working on the Hazard Mitigation Plan. He explained the In-Kind contributions tracking form and asked for all work on this project to be tracked using the google drive link to ensure that funding for projects and grants can be maximized.

HMP Updates

Thomas Hicks and Ashley Mills provided a brief review of updates on the plan. Ashley informed the committee that she has recently met with many of the towns and counties involved in this process to obtain the updated chapter information.

Round Table Discussion: *How can the region use the hazard mitigation plan to develop relationship that will improve local infrastructure?*

Committee members were asked to share how they felt that the hazard mitigation plan can be used to develop relationships to improve local infrastructure. Some respondents mentioned that they have been working on drainage but are lacking the funding and equipment to complete the necessary projects to improve drainage. Committee members identified cooperation issues with private landowners as a concern for maintaining drainage ditches as well. Thomas Hicks reiterated that the HMP can be a tool to apply for and secure funding for specific projects.

Since the issues facing local communities includes a lack of funding as well as policy guidance, the plan can help to clarify the process for making infrastructure improvements. The plan can also help to build the necessary relationships and connections with relevant actors to make necessary infrastructure improvements.

Discussion of Strategic Goals and Strategies

The results of the survey were explained, demonstrating overall acceptance of goals and strategies. The committee discussed changes to Strategic Goal #3 and #5.

Committee members explained that not all communities participate in the Community Rating System (CRS) program and do not identify repetitive loss areas. FEMA conducts the identification of repetitive loss areas in these locations and identification is not the responsibility of local communities. The committee decided to amend Strategic Goal #3 to include FEMA's role in the process.

Committee members suggested including coastal towns in Strategic Goal #5. Committee members felt that coastal towns and island residents face similar issues in disaster and emergency response. Berkley Group staff and A-NPDC staff will review and incorporate these suggestions into the plan.

Round Table Discussion: What are your recollections of storm events in the past 5 years?

The 2016 HMP includes testimonials, quotes, and archived memories of storm events during the five years prior to drafting that plan. Jonathan McCoy asked for input about recent community experience with

storm events to include in the drafting of this plan. He encouraged committee members to share personal testimonials, as well as photos of storm events, either on the call or by email (jon.mccoy@bgllc.net).

Regional Mitigation Objectives

Thomas Hicks explained the purpose of the Mitigation Objectives and the need for these objectives to be specific, targeted, and actionable. These objectives have been ongoing for many years and should be assessed for this plan to understand if they have been completed or need to be included in this update. The committee members were asked to complete a form (<https://arcg.is/bf54K>) to verify the status of their locality's mitigation objectives. Berkley Group and A-NPDC staff will use this information in drafting the plan.

Next Steps

The next steps for the project will be to update and draft content of plan chapters. This content will be initially presented in the next June meeting. The meeting ended at 3:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on June 15.