

**THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE
REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
October 2, 2014**

1. Summary of the September 4, 2014 Meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Environmental Committee

The Summary of the September 4, 2014 Meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Environmental Committee was approved as distributed.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Comments on Waters of the U.S. Definition

The Committee had no additional comments to the proposed regional comments on the definition of "Waters of the U.S."

4. Section 309 – Land and Water Quality Preservation Grant Project Update

Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, updated the Committee on the policy work being done for the third year of the HRPDC's Section 309 grant on land and water quality protection. This work is expanding on the second year of the report, with a focus on reducing impervious surface requirements, removing impediments to native vegetation, and promoting redevelopment and environmental site design. Each section includes background information, a policy recommendation, and specific ordinance changes that could be made to implement that recommendation.

Ms. Sara Kidd, HRPDC, updated the Committee on the modeling work being conducted as part of the third year of the HRPDC's Section 309 grant. This work builds on the research and modeling work done in the first two year. The focus of the third year is on using CommunityViz to model development impacts to inform local comprehensive plans. The impact of reducing minimum parking areas was the focus for urban areas. For suburban areas, the subject was transfer of development rights programs. The urban study assessed how changes in parking regulations affected the amount of impervious surface area from off-street parking, and used a comparison of Norfolk's recently updated parking requirements with the previous requirements. Overall, the reduction in total spaces was small, but the reduction in impervious area was more significant. The suburban study looked at Suffolk's existing transfer of development rights program to model how many units were eligible for transfer now compared to alternate scenarios. The current TDR program applies to a limited subset of the city's land with a focus on farmland and critical areas such as floodplains. The receiving areas are the central business district and village centers. Alternate scenarios included increasing the transferability of non-wetland floodplains not located in Resource Protection Areas to 100% and removing the requirement for prime farmland. Future

steps could include incorporating the runoff reduction method into both analyses and taking advantage of the land use designer module of CommunityViz to calculate custom impacts (parking and runoff).

5. Legislative Agenda

Ms. Julia Hillegass, HRPDC, briefed the Committee on the draft regional legislative agenda that was being put together for the Commission. The agenda includes many of the proposals from previous years. The Committee offered several additional items to consider:

- Innovative stormwater BMPs (Virginia Beach)
- VACO proposal on stormwater fees
- Adequate funding for local stormwater management programs
- SWCD's and cost-share funding of agricultural BMPs
- Limits on balloon releases
- Opposition to new exemptions to stormwater management regulations
- Modifying the guidance document for action plans

The committee did not support including a proposal to remove the requirement for post-construction water quality standards from the construction general permit.

Mr. McFarlane reported that the Special Committee on Recurrent Flooding and Sea Level Rise supported monitoring of groundwater aquifers to measure subsidence.

6. Sea Level Rise Program Update

Mr. McFarlane updated the Committee on issues related to sea level rise. The Joint Committee on Recurrent Flooding and the Governor's Climate Change and Resiliency Update Commission both met on September 10th. The HRPDC Special Committee on Recurrent Flooding and Sea Level Rise met on September 26th. The Committee recommended that the Commission adopt a resolution encouraging localities to adopt freeboard requirements for buildings in floodplains if they have not already done so, and to consider adopting higher standards.

7. Coastal Zone Management Program Update

The Coastal Policy Team met on September 30th in Richmond. They are still considering how to address the issue with the Coastal Lands Management enforceable policy not covering areas in coastal localities that are not within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The CZM Program is considering moving up the application process for PDC competitive grants. DGIF is in the process of updating the State Wildlife Action Plan and is hoping to meet with each of the PDCs to discuss potential changes to the plan. The 2014 Coastal Partners Workshop will be held in Richmond in December. Part of the workshop will focus on developing the next Section 309 Coastal Zone Enhancement Program Assessment and 5-Year Grant Strategies for 2016-2020. The draft assessment and strategies are due May 1, 2015, and the final version is due September 1, 2015.

8. Stormwater Budget

Ms. Katie Cullipher presented the final stormwater budget to the Committee. The amount allocated to “stormwater direct” was reduced from \$69,000 to \$61,000. Each locality present voted in favor of the budget. The HRPDC staff will contact those who were not present to get their votes.

9. Virginia Beach Sea Level Rise Final Report

The Committee voted to recommend that the Commission approve the report, “Developing a Local Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan for Virginia Beach,” for publication and distribution.

10. Status Reports

Ms. Hillegass reported that “Water Words That Work” training will be held October 22-23. She will send out additional information.

Ms. Kidd reported that there will be a meeting to discuss the Virginia Outdoors Plan after the November Committee meeting beginning at 1 p.m.

Ms. June Whitehurst, Norfolk, reported that Norfolk has received comments from DEQ on their Phase I permits. The city has been asked to address the comments by October 10 for the 2014 annual report. Ms. Whitehurst also asked if there had been any follow up on consolidating different program audits. Mr. Noah Hill, DEQ, responded that DEQ is developing a work plan for local program reviews and intends to give localities the option of concurrent or non-concurrent reviews. Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC, stated that Ms. Joan Salvati, DEQ, will be coming to the next Committee meeting. Ms. Whitehurst also reported that SLAF grant applications are due November 24th.

Ms. Gayle Hicks, Hampton, asked about erosion and sediment control thresholds for single-family and land disturbing permits.

Mr. Clay Bernick Virginia Beach, reported that city council is expected to adopt new flood insurance rate maps on October 7 that will then be effective as of January 16, 2015. The draft green sea plan is out for comment, Virginia Beach has met with Currituck County on the plan and is scheduling a meeting with Chesapeake.

Ms. Diane Quick, Portsmouth, reported that the city has an open position for a stormwater/E&S inspector.

Mr. Noah Hill, DEQ, reported that a new employee has joined the office. They will mostly work on the Peninsula. A grant Request for Applications with a \$50,000 cap has been announced. The spending deadline is June 30, 2015, and funds can be used for Phase III ordinance updates and septic pumpout implementation. No match is required.

Mr. Chris Moore, CBF, reported that the new Brock Center in Virginia Beach will have an open house /grand opening on November 16 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The building uses rainwater as a source of drinking water. Also, the Center for Watershed Protection will be hosting VSMP training in December.

Mr. John Paine, URS, reported that there is a large discrepancy between the Chesapeake Bay Program's efficiencies and the BMP Clearinghouse's efficiencies. The methods result in significantly different outcomes.

VWEA will be hosting a "lunch and learn" stormwater workshop including DEQ action plan guidance on November 10, probably in Hampton.

The DEQ Tidewater Regional Office will be hosting a workshop on October 8th.

11. Other Matters

The next meeting of the Regional Environmental Committee is scheduled for November 6, 2014 at the HRPDC office in Chesapeake, Virginia. Materials will be sent in advance for review.