

**THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE  
HRPDC COASTAL RESILIENCY COMMITTEE  
MARCH 25, 2016**

**1. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**2. Multi-Jurisdictional Studies with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

Col. Jason Kelly, Commander, Norfolk District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, gave a presentation to the Committee on a proposal for localities to work together on multi-jurisdictional feasibility studies for Corps-funded resiliency projects. These studies fall under the Corps' Civil Work mission and are now being implemented under the 3-3-3 rule. By default, each study can take a maximum of three years, cost a total of \$3 million (half federal, half match), and can be conducted through three levels of Corps administration (district, division, headquarters). The goal at the end of a feasibility study is to develop a Chief's Report, which will contain recommendations for construction projects. These studies are based on the framework used for the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS), which was conducted after Hurricane Sandy. The NACCS addresses risk management, support resilient coastal communities, and considers sea level rise and other climate change impacts. The current proposal is still in its beginning phase, but the Corps wants locality input on what appropriate scales and boundaries might be for multi-jurisdictional studies (instead of single jurisdiction studies). The starting point is to use PDC boundaries and to prioritize regions based on vulnerability and previous impacts. These studies would need to be authorized through a Water Resources Development Act by Congress. Funding would also need to be authorized.

Mr. Eric Martin, Chesapeake, asked why there was a four year delay between the resolution authorizing the Norfolk study and the signing of the cost share agreement. Col. Kelly responded that the process to authorize and appropriate funding can often take several years, due to budget needs, restrictions on new starts, and other impediments.

The Committee asked if the suggested boundaries were locked in. They are not.

The Committee recommended that the Commission advocate for the authorization of these studies through letters to the region's congressional delegation.

### **3. Land Subsidence**

Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC, briefed the Committee on a proposal to fund monitoring of land subsidence in Hampton Roads, which was requested by the Commission in January 2015. The USGS recently completed a report that outlined two complementary approaches to monitoring land subsidence. The first approach is to establish and regularly survey a benchmark network. This would cost approximately \$100,000 initially for setup and equipment, with an additional \$20,000-\$40,000 per year for surveying and data analysis. The second approach is to install one or more extensometers. Initial costs would be \$700,000 to \$2,500,000 depending on the depth of the monitors and the number, with an additional \$20,000 annually for operations, maintenance, and data analysis.

The Committee recommended that the Commission fund establishing and monitoring a benchmark network. The Committee recommended that the Commission seek funding from the state or federal government for extensometers.

### **4. FEMA Policy Update**

Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, updated the Committee on discussions by the Coastal Resiliency Work Group related to FEMA policies and the National Flood Insurance Program. The work group identified several problems or issues with FEMA's programs for elevating homes:

- There is not enough competition in the market, so costs are too high
- Cities must contract directly with contractors, even though construction is taking place on private property
- VDEM's Recovery and Mitigation office is difficult to deal with
- Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) coverage has not increased since the 1980s

The work group recommended allowing tri-party contracts for elevation projects (between the city, contractor, and homeowner), pursuing an increased in ICC coverage, and encouraging FEMA to expand beyond elevation and acquisition projects, including more demo/rebuild projects.

The HRPDC staff will contact FEMA and VDEM to try to address these issues.

### **5. Update on State Efforts Related to Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding**

There were no updates on state efforts.

## **6. Updates on Local Efforts Related to Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding**

Mr. Martin reported that the city is considering voluntary buy-outs in the South Hill neighborhood to address sea level rise and incompatible land uses. Funding for residential buyouts is slated to be more than \$1,000,000.

Mr. Tom Leahy, Virginia Beach, reported that the city's study with Dewberry is ongoing. The city is also raising houses. The city is scheduled to adopt its new comprehensive plan next month.

Mr. Mark Carter, York County, reported that York County is working on construction drawings for raising six homes.

Mr. Brian Lewis, Gloucester County, reported that the County has 14 design plans for home elevations and one project under construction.

Ms. Ellen Roberts, Poquoson, reported that the city has received three grants for elevations to raise 10, 8, and 3 homes.

Ms. Gayle Hicks, Hampton, reported that the city is also elevating several homes and is working with Waggoner and Ball Architects on a project to begin implementing some of the Dutch Dialogues recommendations.

## **7. Other Matters**

The next meeting of the Coastal Resiliency Committee will be held in June 2016.