Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan

Technical Advisory Committee – Economic Development Subcommittee

Subject	Economic Development Subcommittee Meeting #3 Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework	Date	April 26, 2021
Facilitator	Sara Dunnigan	Time	2:30pm – 4:00pm
Location	WebEx - https://governor.virginia.gov/i/7o9eq	Scribe	Ashley Samonisky

#	Name	Organization/Role	Attended?
Invitees/Attendees			
Finance Subcommittee Members and Staff Advisors			
1.	Sara Dunnigan - Chair	Deputy Director, GO Virginia and Economic Development, Department of Housing and Community Development	Y
2.	John Bateman - Vice Chair	Regional Planner, Northern Neck Planning District Commission	Y
3.	Katie Sallee - Staff	Confidential Assistant to the Secretary of Natural Resources	Y
4.	Kate Gibson	Deputy Director, George Washington Regional Commission	
5.	Denise Nelson	Environmental Engineer, George Washington Regional Commission	
6.	Jennifer Morgan	GWRC	Y
7.	Dr. Troy Hartley	Director, Virginia Sea Grant	Y
8.	Robert W. Lazaro	Executive Director, Northern Virginia Regional Commission	
9.	Lewis L. Lawrence, III	Executive Director, Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission	Y
10.	Curtis Smith	Deputy Director, Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission	Y
11.	Stephen Moret	President & CEO, The Virginia Economic Development Partnership	Y
12.	Georgie Márquez	Principle, Andre Marquez Architects	Y
13.	Emily Steinhilber	Coordinator, Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency at Old Dominion University	Y
14.	Dr. Robert Weiss	Director, Center for Coastal Studies at Virginia Tech	Y
15.	Greg Grootendorst	HRPDC	Y
Scheduled Speakers			
Designated Alternates			
Subcommittee Advisors			
Other Participants			
16.	Ann Phillips	Rear Admiral, US Navy (Ret.) - Special Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Adaptation and Protection	Y
17.	Matt Dalon	DCR	Y
18.	Connor Winstead	DCR	Y
19.	Nick Meade	DEQ	Y
20.	Aaron Puritz	WebEx Administrator	Y
21.	Tracy Munyan	Program Administrative Manager, Housing & Community Development	Y
22.	Benjamin MacFarlane	Senior Regional Planner, HRPDC	Y
23.	Lee Hutchinson		Y
24.	Paul Robinson		Y
25.	Katerina Oskarsson	Chief Strategy Officer for RISE Resilience Innovation	Y
Consultant Support			
26.	Johanna Greenspan-Johnston	Dewberry	Y
27.	Ashley Samonisky	Vision Planning and Consulting	Y

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1.	Roll Call and Quorum Affirmation	Sara Dunnigan comenced by taking roll call. A Quorum is present.
2.	Welcome and Chapter 1289 Reading	John Bateman read the required Section 1289 verbiage and asked for a motion to proceed with the meeting virtually. Lewis Lawrence motioned; Jennifer Morgan seconded. Motion passed. Please make any comments/questions in the chat box. If there are any issues with connectivity, please contact Katie Sallee at katie.sallee@governor.virginia.gov or by phone at 804-663-7489.
3.	Dewberry Team Introductions	Sara opened the floor to Johanna Greenspan-Johnston to introduce the Dewberry Team and their roles and responsibilities. Rear Admiral Ann Phillips advised there will also be a new hire joining the team in a support capacity. Sara discussed a preliminary meeting between the Subcommittee and Dewberry to align the goals and priorities of the plan and the contractor support, with the Subcommittee's efforts.

4.	Review Alignment Survey Draft	A survey was in development before contractor support came on and Sara asked for comments or suggestions on the draft survey (See Attached Slides). It is recommended that this survey be sent to current stakeholders, as well as the developing list of state regional and local economic development practitioners. It is suggested a 5-point Likert scale be used. A verbal discussion was held to finalize the language.
		
		Question #2 (See Attached Slides).
		• Lewie – Regarding the best available science, when we discuss "best available," do we need to specify that best available science includes engineering science and not just water quality science?
		   o A – Jennifer Morgan - Why do you feel we need to be that specific? Dealing with resilience is usually engineering and design, not just water quality, they are very different. When we look at solution, we need considerations such as dFIRMs, storm surge, and design requirements, none of which have to do with water quality. I understood this to be broader than water quality, but maybe I am mistaken.
		   o John – Are you discussing the difference between the built environment and the natural environment?
		   o Lewie- No. As we are the only group funding projects, they need to be designed to withstand certain FEMA-defined disaster levels. This encompasses more than water quality issues. If plans come in with an engineer's stamp, it will likely address both, but we need to state "best practices, including engineering". The better question is, is engineering a science?
		   o Dr. Troy Hartley – The best available science may also involve regulatory meetings. I concur that we may want to expand the base of knowledge we are considering here. That could also include landscape design or architects.

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		- Sara – This was taken directly from the framework, so we do not want to edit too much, but to assist the audience with clarity we might be able to make some adjustments. - Ann – If we want to include engineering then I feel we can add it. There is more to consider than water science and VIMS does not have engineers. - Dr. Hartley – I propose wording "informed by the best science, engineering, and design." • Dr. Hartley – In some questions there are two questions embedded in one, and the answer to the first part might be separate than the answer to the second. - Sara – Good Point, noted, I can separate these. - Ann – We discussed how this can fit into outreach, and how to convert the poll to a survey document/software. This is already assembled in Google Forms and Matt Dalon has sent it to you. If you are ready and have a list of people to send it to, go ahead and distribute. Question # 4 (See Attached Slides). • Could we include a reference to fish and wildlife habitat? - Rob Weiss - Should the survey include language saying "by prioritizing natural and nature-based solutions? Fish and wildlife habitats are natural solutions, but not necessarily nature-based, they are different things. Question #5 (See Attached Slides). • Lewis – Without defining "community" in the regions, there is no scale or perspective. The geographic extent is not defined without a clear polygon. - Sara – When I hear community, I think locality or political division. Regional means PDC, which serves multiple localities. - John – A locality could be community, town, municipality, whichever term is used, but regional is multiple localities that participate through a PDC or other economic development group. - Jennifer – What would the implication be if "communities" was defined under the jurisdiction of a city or municipality. - John - Why do we need regional if our goal is to get as granular as possible? Communities have local issues to be addressed. - Sara - Many operate at a regional scale. - Lewie – I suggest we either remove the term "community" or define it as a political subdivision. • Dr. Rob Weiss - What is the smallest scale of economic development. - Sara – It could get smaller such as certified main streets but we have not included sub-locality groups in our stakeholder list. - Weiss – I believe #4 could be shortened. Suggest: "My economic development efforts recognize the importance of protecting and

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		enhancing green infrastructure by prioritizing natural and nature-based solutions."
		
		○ Dr. Hartley – Is the important part that the needs are tailored to an individual community, or should we remove "regional"?
		○ John - It sounds different, but also more preferable.
		○ Lewie – This sounds more inclusive. If the question is focused on an entity in the study space doing economic development, irrespective of being enable by the general assembly, we need to acknowledge that there are agencies of all sizes doing this work.
		○ John - Could we list options (cities, towns, etc.) to avoid falling into main street organizations or affiliates?
		○ Sara – Should we include these sub-jurisdictional stakeholders in our list?
		○ John – I think we should, the outreach Subcommittee has asked for stakeholders and they run the gamut from state down to sub-jurisdictional. We do not want to risk alienating groups by not asking for their input early.
		
		Question #6 (See Attached Slides).
		• Dr. Hartley – Is it necessary to ask about fiscal realities?
		  ○ Lewie – Is there a difference between thinking about the realities versus the ability to finance a project? One is cashflow, the other is planning. There may be entities with no taxing authority or revenue generating capabilities, that are dependent on someone else to fund the project, versus income generating communities that can finance their own projects.
		  ○ What is the goal of the survey, to warn entities that the project may be expensive, or to inform entities who may be looking for others to fund the projects? They will need to understand how the reimbursements work.
		  ○ Sara – We were looking for a baseline to serve as a good data point to analyze alignment and incentives where possible. There may be total alignment in one area and complete disconnect in another.
		  ○ Dr. Hartley – Economic Development organizations are not the ones actually putting together and implementing the Adaptation Plan. Is this trying to say, "do you understand the responsibilities of the planning, emergency management, and resilience committees as they implement projects?"
		  ○ Jennifer – I see this as choosing between two projects where one improves the protection of a community but costs more, versus a project in a community that does not understand the implications but costs less.
		  ○ Sara – Some Stakeholders may receive this and it will not be relevant to them, but some entities in the communities which are responsible for economic development may already consider these issues in the study area, and that is the goal. Perhaps we add an N/A option for when a question is not in their domain or if they do not have an answer.

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		o Dr. Weiss - Could this say "financing solution" instead of "cost-effective solutions?" I suggest the language read "effective financing solutions."
		
		 Question #8 (See Attached Slides).
		 • Dr. Hartley – Some of these questions are broad, or have layers, in some cases we are asking a question in a question. In #8, regional considerations and equity issues are two different considerations. In #9 we are asking if they are effective or if they are incorporating projections. I do not have any ideas on how to solve this without creating more questions.
		     o Sara – Propose to remove "effectively" from the language.
		
		 Question #9 (See Attached Slides).
		 • Dr. Weiss – How many entities already do Item #9? This is a difficult ask.
		     o Sara – This is an interesting question, but we look at site development. Many areas help create a business-ready site, with significant investment, both public and private, to accomplish this. It would be interesting to see more entities responses for site development if they anticipate future flood occurrences.
		     o Dr. Weiss – How are they doing this? Are they looking at all scenarios or only "do-nothing" solutions? We need to know what the consequences are of doing nothing without adaptation and then show the value of doing at least something. This does not have to be a scientific projection but something heading towards that. This could end up being a very involved process and not feasible for smaller scale units.
		     o Emily - Agree that spelling out the curve might be helpful, but not all recipients of this survey will know what we are talking about. Clarifying language will be helpful. Even if everyone responds "strongly disagree" or "not helpful" then we are identifying a place to align which can also be helpful.
		     o Sara - Should we clarify which projections to refence?
		     o Weiss – No, it is a very complicated. SLR is just one consequence of certain projections. I usually deal with four consequences, and this gets very complicated. Earlier we asked if they acknowledge it, that may be enough. It asks if they take projections into consideration, it may not be quantifiable, but they are considering it. Even acknowledging them is a step.
		     o Emily - Using language for natural/nature-based solutions, or giving people an example may help. We should give them a hint on how to incorporate it.
		     o Lewis - That is assuming that local governments believe they have a responsibility to act. They will not have responsibilities on private property. But once they see an erosion of the tax base they will start to notice. There are tradeoffs, and the rest of the locality will shoulder the burden.
		
		 • Robert – Is it feasible to leave #9 out?

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		o John – We need to gauge if they are acknowledging this at all as a consideration. Is this a consideration in economic development efforts?
		o Johanna – If they are considering it, we need to see how it plays out in programming. Will people be allowed to provide more info, like an open-ended response.
		o Sara - Yes. We do not have to ask #9, but from an economic perspective the coastal zone-built environment would be interesting. We could deploy the poll.
		o Dr. Weiss - Instead of coastal zone, suggest it say "coastal built environment."
		o Dr. Hartley – Including simple demographics in the introduction can also help. Example: How long have you been in the field? Have you read the Framework? etc. This may help with the more nuanced questions.
		o Emily - Should we provide a link to the Framework for anyone who answers no?
		o Sara – Yes, we have it in the introduction. We can group or map responses to geographically analyze responses to improve alignment. We can target our future efforts this way.
		Sara will incorporate all comments and recirculate for final review. The Subcommittee will attempt a test poll before distributing across the regions.
5.	Stakeholder List	Sara advised that the survey will be sent to Individuals or practitioners, state, regional, and local, who administer programs that will be impacted in the coastal area. PDCs, other planning districts, localities, economic development leads for communities, are included.
		• Stephen Moret – The local levels that do not have the capacity may not be responsive to too many of these tools/asks. It might make sense to think about categorizing people and the organizations they represent to see how responses add up.
		o Sara – Great idea, this could be a barrier to alignment as well. Community size and sophistication will have an impact.
		o Dr. Weiss – Could we include a drop-down list to select their affiliation? As we think about the future, finding a way to make things as easy as possible for respondents to take the actions we need will be huge benefit.
		• Matt – The questions are currently framed as the respondent answering on what they ARE doing. Is there any interest in what they think economic development SHOULD be doing in the future? Would we get more honest answers if they do not feel they are grading themselves?
		o Sara – This survey was designed to gather info on the as-is state. The question of what you think the economic development responsibility is regarding resilience issues might be an interesting question though.

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		o Dr. Hartley – If we are presenting this it might be a good way to test the question design. o John – Do we expect stakeholders to further disseminate the questionnaire? o Sara – I prefer to avoid duplicate responses within a jurisdiction. We are not surveying individuals, but rather decision makers in these organizations. o John – In that case we need some granular responses such as a local EDA or Chamber of Commerce. o Sara – We do have EDAs, and we discussed Chambers at the past meeting. Chambers are not currently on the list, but if you feel they have responsibilities to economic development programs we could include them. o Stephen – It does not cost anything to add them. They are also business associations, and they all operate differently. Trade associations could also help. I feel most people's view will be that it is important but that someone else is responsible for implementation. If there was a specific action we want them to take, then it may be productive, but I do not think they will fundamentally rethink how they operate. If this is the goal, we many need to develop some training to that effect. Otherwise, what we want from each group may be different. o John – Agreed. There is a point to the survey and it is collecting this information. The wider and more diverse the pool, the more information we will gather. o John – Can we also ask the respondents what their role is? The internal cues may help gather more information.

6.	Subcommittees Final Deliverables & Timeline	Sara advised that a Gantt chart showing subcommittee assignment, deliverable, and timing, is in preparation and can be shared with Subcommittee members, but as a reminder, these documents are works in progress and things may change.
		
		It was noted that other Subcommittees had presenters at the TAC. This may be worth considering for this Subcommittee as well. Sara asked if anyone has ideas on who to invite to speak that could highlight the implementation of some of the economic development programs.
		
		• Greg Grootendorst – I can ask for Economic Development at Hampton Roads to sit in, as they would be a good addition.
		  o Dr. Hartley – We could bring in presenters from outside the state with relevant background. We could learn implementation tactics and other best practices and tools.
		  o Sara – When recruiting a company to a community, EDAs want to show the area in a good light. These tools tactics and opportunities are worth presenting. If anyone has examples from Louisiana or other states or countries, please let us know.
		
		Sara will send the full stakeholder list to the Subcommittee. They are asked to make additions, and send their updates back to Sara. This is a reminder to not reply all,

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		please send all emails directly. Additionally, if anyone else is interested in testing or helping with the survey please let Sara know.
7.	Open Discussion	Emily Steinhilber advised that she is in a new role as the Director of the Environmental Defense Fund, Virginia Coastal Resilience. Carol Considine will take over for her and Jess Whitehead will also support ODU.
8.	Public Comment Period	No registrations for public comments.
9.	Adjourn	Sara asked for a motion to adjourn. Greg Grootendorst moved, John Bateman seconded, motion passed. Meeting concluded at 4:02pm. Next meeting will be held 2:30-4:00pm on May 24th.

	Action Items		
#	**Action Item**	**Owner (Organization)**	**Due Date**
1.	Send the Dewberry work plan and timeline to the Subcommittee for review.	Sara Dunnigan	4/27/2021
2.	If anyone has ideas on who to invite to speak that could highlight the implementation of some of the economic development programs, please send those suggestions to Sara Dunnigan.	All	TBD

If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Samonisky, Vision Planning and Consulting, at asamonisky@vision-pc.net.