

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan
Technical Advisory Committee – Studies, Research, and Best Practices Subcommittee

Subject	Relocation Handbook Working Group Studies/Research/Best Practices Subcommittee Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework	Date	April 27, 2021
Facilitator	Dr. Robert Weiss	Time	2:00pm – 3:00pm
Location	WebEx - https://governor.virginia.gov/i/fd9kt	Scribe	Shurui Zhang

Invitees/Attendees			
#	Name	Organization/Role	Attended?
Studies, Research, and Best Practices Subcommittee Members and Staff Advisors			
1.	Dr. Robert Weiss – Working Group Lead	Director, Center for Coastal Studies at Virginia Tech	Y
2.	Shurui Zhang - Staff	Commonwealth Coastal and Marine Policy Fellow, Virginia Sea Grant	Y
3.	Elizabeth Andrews	Director, Virginia Coastal Policy Center at William & Mary Law School	Y
4.	Whitney Katchmark	Principal Water Resources Engineer, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission	Y
5.	Dr. Mark Luckenbach	Associate Dean for Research and Advisory Services, Virginia Institute of Marine Science at William & Mary	Y
6.	Ashley Montgomery	Associate Designer, Hanbury	Y
7.	Dr. Robert S. Young	Geology Professor, Program Director for the Study of Developed Shorelines, Western Carolina University	Y
Subcommittee Advisors			
8.	Shep Moon	Coastal Planner, Virginia CZM Program	Y
Other Participants			
9.	Ann Phillips	Rear Admiral, US Navy (Ret.) – Office of the Governor	Y
10.	Matt Dalon	DCR	Y
11.	Connor Winstead	DCR	Y

Agenda/Minutes		
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1.	Welcome and Chapter 1289 Reading	Dr. Weiss provided an introduction on how the meeting will proceed, meeting etiquette, and requested participants to ask questions through the chat box. Public comments will be taken during the last 30 minutes of the meeting from the chat box from those attendees who registered to speak. He then read through the required Chapter 1289 virtual meeting language. Please contact Shurui Zhang at phone: 217-979-8438 if you have any connectivity issues.
2.	Roll Call and Quorum Affirmation	Dr. Weiss took roll and advised that a quorum was present. He then asked for a motion to move forward with the virtual meeting. Motion Passed unanimously.
3.	Presentation – <i>Thinking about Buyouts and Managed Retreat</i> - Dr. Rob Young	Dr. Weiss provided an agenda for the working group meeting and introduced Dr. Rob Young. Dr. Young gave a presentation on buyouts, and the works by the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines (See Slide Attachment). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q – Dr. Robert Weiss – If you think about your work in North Carolina, what are some of the specific recommendations aside from the generalities that we should look into?

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A – Dr. Rob Young – The biggest problem is that we haven’t done a good job of crunching the numbers for areas we might target for buyouts. We need to have the data that shows people the trade-offs. There are the impressions that diminishing tax base is bad and coastal investments, investment properties, in particular, tend to have large price tags. I think we need to do a better job showing the municipalities and the elected officials that buyout is not a losing venture for their tax base and community. It is not giving up. It is very strategic and a way to focus resources on the sustainable parts of the community to ensure that we preserve those communities in the economy, and a larger tax base for the long run. We just need more case studies where we have a specific fiscal analysis that’s done for the targeted areas.
4.	Working-Group Updates	<p>An email was sent to members with a spreadsheet to collect input on initiatives and mechanisms from other states with a request to edit/add to the columns to identify what information the students will need to collect. Dr. Weiss asked for suggestions on the columns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elizabeth Andrews – So often it boils down to we don’t have the cost of doing nothing versus the cost of doing something as Rob talked about. It’s not just the option of leaving completely or do nothing. There are a lot of in-between stages and the lack of data is a big impediment for localities. I would like to have Whitney chime in with her experience. It seems that localities don’t have the data on that so it’s hard to make a decision. ○ Whitney Katchmark – Ann has done a briefing of the Framework with our city managers and the Relocation Handbook is the most concerning piece. They said they weren’t ready, so if we could try to help them get ready, it would be great. Localities are not all in the same boat; some of them have developed projects, and some localities haven’t seriously engaged with the problem areas. It would be worth trying to find case studies that look like situations in Virginia. I like Rob’s approach of laying things out, but that is not being debated in lots of situations ○ Q – Dr. Robert Weiss – You say they are not ready, what do we need to do to change that? How do we get them ready? ○ A – Ann Phillips – This conversation Whitney was talking about happened last year after the Framework was released, I was talking with the city managers. The first statement from them was “we are not ready to talk about it”. Then the discussion shifted to which cities had already given this some considerations. Norfolk, who has done their Vision 2100, is focusing on the high ground. Though not talking in terms of relocation or buyout, they are doing some of both. It is strategic, long-term urban planning. They are thinking about where they want to focus activities, and where they want to de-incentivize activities. I would say that the Dillion Rule in Virginia is a factor here because cities are independent and they are deriving their tax base from their property taxes and they don’t want to lose those property

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		<p>taxes for obvious reasons. I am also getting messages from people who are not city managers saying we have to have this conversation. There are areas in the Commonwealth that are giving some thought, at least from a planning perspective. As Rob Young pointed out, in some cases we don't have enough good data to make a good case from a financing perspective. Another point I would like to add by looking at the spreadsheet is that there are a lot of successful relocation in riverine communities and showing the value. There are few successful coastal relocations, though there are some successful coastal buyout programs. Let's think about Fawn's conversation yesterday that New Jersey's program is buying out low- and middle-income homes inland. She made a point of saying they have not bought out coastal properties. There is an opportunity for the Commonwealth to think about it strategically, and we have an opportunity to start a dialog without forcing localities into the discussion if they are not there yet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rob Young – Typically at the municipal level or the county level, most people don't have a good idea of how much they are spending in areas of coastal hazards. I don't mean the money they are spending to build a levee or seawall, but I mean the money they spend in staff time focusing on the particular community or emergency management resources. What Horry County, NC started to do is to track their spending by neighborhoods so they have an understanding of which neighborhoods they are spending almost no money on because there is no exposure, and which neighborhood they are spending a lot with stormwater management or king tides emergencies. It is instructive to add them. Everybody is paying taxes, but there are parts of the community that are absorbing more resources. If you understand where the spending is, you will develop an understanding of where buyout plans might make sense. We might still not make decisions involving buyouts or relocation, but at the community level at least being about to talk about allocating resources is the first and hardest step. No one in Norfolk would say that they have a retreat plan, but that's what Ann was essentially describing. It's in little pieces and it's strategic. You are being proactive. ○ Elizabeth Andrews – Retreat is just a matter of relocating away from risks or challenges. We had examples in Virginia, like the Town of Grundy was relocated, and we had people retreating off of barrier islands. It's a matter of planning and providing safe communities. Part of it may be the terminology. ○ Dr. Robert Weiss – If I heard from all of you correctly, you want to take this as an opportunity to start a conversation and be strategic about it. Is it the essence of what you want with the Relocation Handbook? ○ Ann Phillips – Yes. I think that's what we should do. ○ Robert Weiss – Then the question is that is the handbook a physical book, or should it be a multitude of strategies relating to going into communities and do public education, such as presenting data, suggesting studies? Similar to Rob Young's institute has done, it is not just a book with options, but it is allowing people to think in a strategic

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Robert Weiss – Research work will happen in the second part of May. I would like to put Shurui in charge of the student group and coordinate different topics.
5.	Public Comment Period	There is no public comment.
6.	Adjourn	Dr. Weiss asked for motion to adjourn. Rob Young moved; Whitney Katchmark seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:23pm.

DRAFT