



Hudson Valley Regional Council Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 20, 2019, 3:30 – 5:30 PM
HVRC Office, 3 Washington Center, 2nd Floor
Newburgh, NY 12550

1. Call to Order: Ms. Pomeroy called the meeting to order at 3:37 PM and requested public comment on agenda items. There were no public comments. Introductions by attendees were provided for all for phone and in-person attendees. Delay to move to adopt March 14, 2019, meeting minutes until Mr. Rolison called in. At 4:49 Mr. Porr moved to accept the March 14, 2019 meeting minutes and Mr. Wrafter seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.
2. Guest Speaker: Ms. Pomeroy introduced the Guest Speaker, Kytt MacManus, Senior Systems Analyst / GIS Developer, CIESIN, Earth Institute, Columbia University, who presented on the Hudson River Tool and Building Footprint Tool for Municipal Officials.
 - a. Mr. MacManus shared background information on the NASA Socio-Economic Data and Applications Center (SEDAC) & Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) and mentioned that SEDAC from NASA may be the most well-known CIESIN project. He also mentioned several other projects and noted that the focus on all projects is to make data actionable for decision making.
 - b. Mr. MacManus presented on the [Hudson River Flood Impacts Decision Support System](#) (HRFIDSS), a tool that allows users to assess the impacts of flood inundation posed by sea level rise, storm surge, and rain events on communities bordering the lower Hudson River north of NYC. Data includes “historical top floods” as well as flood modeling of “synthetic storms” to assess different scenarios, including the most severe sea level rise (SLR) scenario of 24-36” by 2030. Methods included the Flood Hazard Assessment and the results demonstrate the flood exceedance curves for the Hudson and its floodplain. Mr. MacManus shared information on the various components of the tool:
 - i. Evaluating the human impacts: This included an impacts assessments component (which estimate the damage to buildings), the “damage estimate”. Critical infrastructure: this project combined multiple publicly accessible data sets that were previously siloed; they can now be queried. Critical infrastructure component: a map reviewed showed a 500-year flood zone and locations of critical infrastructure in the area around Albany as an example of this component. Interpreting the impact estimates: the results produced in this project are generally slightly lower than the FEMA model (which is considered the worst-case scenario). Mr. MacManus explained that considering the magnitude of hazards is more important than the exact value of them.
 - ii. Social Vulnerability Index Component: this Index identified at-risk populations of US census block groups. Principal Components: Mr. MacManus noted that the demographic variables can be grouped as they statistically generally behave similarly (e.g., over 75 years old can be grouped with recipients of Social Security benefits, and so on). To interpret the Social Vulnerability Index, the convergence of flood impacts in

socially vulnerable areas should be considered as those populations are least likely to be resilient.

- iii. Natural Resilience Features Component: Mr. MacManus discussed how natural areas such as forest, wetlands, and floodplains, etc. are important for resilience. Westchester County along LI Sound was modeled, including the impact of inundation from SLR (without surge). These data are available for download and uptake (i.e., use of this online database) is directly related to outreach; when outreach declines so does uptake. Discussion focused on how to promote this Tool so that it may be used by Counties and local planning boards as there is particular need by local municipalities for this tool. Ms. Pomeroy voiced the need to use this tool in relation to economic development and planning. There was also discussion regarding when the LI shoreline will be available. Mr. MacManus stated that Suffolk and Nassau County data were not part of this project, but indicated that these data could potentially be released as a zip file.
- iv. Mr. MacManus then gave a live demonstration of the Mapping Tool, and there were questions on how to interpret different inundation and flood scenarios, such as 24 inches of SLR. (SLR scenarios with or without storm may be selected, for example.) There was a discussion regarding SLR and The NYC Panel on Climate Change report: six inches of SLR has been documented already in the Battery. Mr. Noble shared information on the City of Kingston's "Rising Waters" study that used Scenic Hudson SLR Mapper. The City recently raised their WWTP and pumps out of the flood zone, a six-million-dollar project. Mr. McCartt mentioned that Westchester County already has these data available via the Westchester Data GIS Center, and discussion ensued regarding the fact that not all communities have the capacity and resources to develop and make these tools available. There was also mention of Westchester as one of the top 10 GIS resources nationwide and their leadership in this field.
- v. Use to Support Planning and Policy: Mr. MacManus shared that the tool may be used in research applications, such as its use by Hudsonia Inc. at Bard College. The NYS Community Risk and Resiliency Act was discussed, as well as the NYSERDA-funded project: "Building Data for Climate Change Adaptation". The project goal was to make an open-access data available on buildings. The recent NY Times release of "Map of Every Building in America" was mentioned, although the data used in that map is not necessarily of consistent quality. Much of the data come from County/Municipality GIS Offices. LiDAR data pros are that it's automated and cons are that it can be out of date and can be of inconsistent quality. There was a discussion of LiDAR technology (it is radar); it only maps the tops of trees/ buildings and not the ground up; many areas have been manually digitized which can be consistent and have significant coverage, but it very labor intensive to digitize buildings individually. Discussion was of the potential significance and usefulness of incorporating ground floor building heights and how these updated data are important for emergency services and other applications as well. The results have been validated with manual checking. These data can be used to gain an idea of how much and where damage could be expected in order to make more informed decisions.
- vi. Future opportunities: At the close of Mr. MacManus's presentation there was discussion

on the benefits in seeing what SLR actually looks like. Ms. Pomeroy asked how to contact Mr. MacManus and he indicated that he is available directly to respond to inquiries on these tools. They will be continuing to work on the building footprints for at least another year; with continued governor's office and NYSERDA support these projects can continue. Mr. MacManus noted that he is available to collaborate with interested communities on letters indicating need to NYSERDA. Mr. MacManus noted the importance of accessing building footprint data from counties for this analysis work.

- c. Ms. Castillo queried the Board regarding interest in setting up a Google Drive to share these presentation materials and other relevant Board documents in the future. The discussion indicated support for this, provided that materials will also continue to be shared as attachments to emails.

3. Old Business

- a. June 2019 CEDS Update: Peter Fairweather provided a brief presentation by phone starting at 4:38 PM. Mr. Fairweather and Ms. Pomeroy have now met with all seven counties and have completed a SWOT analysis, etc. Mr. Fairweather stated that economic development includes infrastructure resiliency considerations and that the goal is to have data like that of the previous presentation's available. It was asked of Mr. Fairweather whether the CEDs will refer to these other data sets and sources or if the CEDs incorporates these data into its report.
 - i. Ms. Pomeroy indicated that the EDA funds projects that incorporate sustainability and resiliency, of which the specifics are outlined in the CEDs. The goals include economic development through infrastructure improvements and improving economic competitiveness through the development of workforce skills. Ms. Pomeroy mentioned that there are EDA bricks and mortar projects for workforce training centers. The discussion focused on transit-oriented development as a way of creating opportunities and increased access to jobs. The importance of continuing to build connections to agriculture as a food source was also touched on. Ms. Gibbons shared that Westchester owns a farm, "Hilltop" and there is interest in developing it as a food distribution hub (using a large truck to transport local foods into NYC, for example).
 - ii. Ms. Pomeroy shared a list of projects funded since 2010 in the Hudson Valley, these were generally self-funded at about half of the total project costs. Mr. Porr asked about the status of the TSEC Program, and Ms. Pomeroy stated that they were not funded again after the initial two-year grant and mentioned that the Women's Enterprise Development Center was also not re-funded by EDA. Ms. Pomeroy noted that the EDA's focus is always economic distress, job training, and workforce development. Ms. Gibbons and Ms. Pomeroy discussed the possibility of EDA funding for the Westchester County food hub. Ms. Pomeroy indicated that EDA funding is open enrollment funding and can be utilized as soon as 6-9 months after awarded; she also indicated that a satellite office in Cortlandt would be a priority project for EDA to fund due to the job loss associated with the closing of Indian Point. Ms. Pomeroy stated that after the draft CEDs is accepted by the Board of Directors there will be a 30-day public comment period after it is posted, and indicated that the goal is for it to be officially adopted by the December Board meeting after all public comment, etc.

b. Programmatic & Municipal Funding Opportunities Updates

- i. 604(b): Ms. Pomeroy provided an update on the new four-year work plan, which includes building a database of existing source water assessments and providing trainings for municipal officials in MS4 communities.
- ii. Clean Energy Communities: Ms. McGovern stated that many communities are continuing to actively participate in NYSEDA's Clean Energy Communities Program, as well as the Climate Smart Communities Program. She also shared that Hudson Valley Community Power CCA has launched, with seven participating communities that will have 100% NYS generated renewable power as the default supply for residents and small business as of July 1. Ms. Castillo stated that HVRC staff presented on the Clean Energy and Climate Smart Communities Programs to the Putnam County Legislature this year, and that the County has since passed the Climate Smart Communities Pledge and become a participating Climate Smart community.
- iii. Kingston Organics: Ms. Castillo indicated that they are moving forward with this project and have one more onsite waste sort. She stated that the recent survey regarding composting was very successful with a notably high response rate. She also mentioned the idea of an HVRC-hosted organics diversion/composting calculator, which was positively received.
- iv. Putnam Clean Heating & Cooling: Ms. Castillo discussed this NYSEDA grant that was awarded to WESTCOP on which HVRC will be subcontracting via Bright Energy Services starting later this summer.

c. Organizational

- i. Mid-Year Financial Report: Ms. Pomeroy shared the P&L report with attendees and stated that she has more homework to do surrounding expenses, etc., that are needed to provide to the accountant.
- ii. 401k Plan Update / NYS Retirement System: Ms. Pomeroy shared research where she found that some other Regional Councils are part of a county government in their regions while others participate directly in the NYS Retirement system. Ms. Pomeroy has not yet received responses regarding adoption by one of our Counties and indicated that for now we will continue to purchase private health insurance for employees via MVP.
- iii. By-Laws Update: Ms. Castillo shared the memorandum on the status of the By-Laws update. These are very outdated, having been adopted in 1992. The memorandum indicated that HVRC is tax-exempt but needs to amend its Certificates of Incorporation in order to maintain its tax-exempt status. HVRC is using GFRPL and CDRPC's By-Laws as model for the update. HVRC does not need to do a 990 because the organization is quasi-governmental.
- iv. Personnel Policies Update: Ms. Castillo shared the next steps outlined in the memorandum regarding the policies update and stated that the goal is for committee members to be appointed at the September Board meeting. Mr. Rolison indicated the importance of these policy updates and stated that perhaps the September or December Board meeting should be a work session dedicated solely to these key policy document

updates.

- v. Website Update: Ms. McGovern indicated that the new website will be launched within four weeks.
- vi. HVRC Board Officers Update: Ms. Pomeroy shared that she submitted the full EDA application for the 2021-2024 funding cycles. She noted a new EDA requirement for letters from member Counties outlining their match for this funding and that she will be asking for these from the Counties soon.

4. New Business

- a. 2019 Grant Applications: Ms. Castillo discussed HVRC's pending Climate Action Planning Institute NYSDEC Climate Smart Communities grant proposal. If awarded, this grant will facilitate completion of local government operation GHG emissions inventories and development of draft climate action plans for cohorts of up to 10 local governments. This proposal is being developed and discussed with several Mid-Hudson Region counties.

- 5. Public Comment & Adjournment: Ms. Pomeroy requested public comments; no comments from the public were made. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Porr at 5:21 PM and seconded by Mr. Wrafter; the motion unanimously passed.

Minutes submitted by Europa McGovern.

Minutes reviewed and approved by Board Secretary Ira Steingart.

Attendance at the Hudson Valley Regional Council Board Meeting

Thursday, June 20, 2019

Dutchess County

Eoin Wrafter (for Marc Molinaro, proxy
for Pulver)

Greg Pulver *

Rob Rolison (proxy for Constantino,
Brescia, McCarthy, Sutherland)

Jim Constantino *

Shirley Adams

Orange County

Harry Porr (for Steve Neuhaus)

Steven Brescia *

Janet Sutherland *

Sullivan County

Mark McCarthy *

Ulster County

Steven Noble

Westchester County

Bridget Gibbons (for George Latimer)

Wilson Kimball *

Christopher Crane (phone)

Others

Nancy Montgomery

Sunday Tinelle (phone, proxy for Kimball)

Peter McCartt

* Present by Proxy.

HVRC Staff: Pat Pomeroy, Carla Castillo, Europa McGovern.