

Meeting Notes

March 16, 2010

Community Involvement Advisory Council

Members Present: William Pelham, Dr. Jay Julis, Pamela Meitner, LaVaida Owens-White, Harold Truxon. Five members present. **Quorum not met.**

Members Absent: Bruce Allison, Douglas Corey, Robert Frederick, Dr. Bethany Hall-Long, Brian E. Lewis, and Marvin Thomas.

Others Present: James Brunswick, Vicki Ward, Gail Henderson, Christina Wirtz and Terri Brixen of DNREC; Dennis Barbour, Pat Coluzzi, Greg Ferrese, Terri Sullivan, Walter Ourzuk, and Bryan Hall of the City of Rehoboth; Kate Layton of Dover/Kent Co.MPO; Cheri Whitney of Edgemoor Revitalization Cooperative; Steve Baccino and Representative Valerie Longhurst of Bear Babe Ruth; Kate Hackett and Debbie Heaton of The Nature Conservancy; Bill Galvin and Sharen Elrock of Transportation Management Association; and Jen Bruhler of the Delaware Center for Horticulture.

Meeting Called to Order

Mr. Pelham called the meeting to order welcoming all and then introduced the members of the council that were present. He also said a goodbye to Vicki Ward and thanked her for exemplary work with the council and introduced Gail Henderson.

I. Meeting Protocol Review

The protocol was mentioned as in evidence on the backside of members' nameplates.

II. Grant Review

NEW CASTLE COUNTY

Bear Babe Ruth

Steve Baccino stated that the project includes nine new baseballs fields and one Miracle League field. The requested \$74,450 is needed for further environmental enhancements to the site including erosion and sediment control, storm water management, gabion installation and construction engineering services. The baseball fields would be a move ahead for the disabled community by providing a full season of baseball for children in wheel chairs to use. Currently there are 800 children who play in the league and these children could assist other children.

Mr. Pelham said that CEPF funds were previously made to the project and asked who owns the land, and **Mr. Baccino** answered the land is leased with New Castle County for 20 years and they are inquiring about buying the land.

Mr. Truxon asked what was done with the previous \$150,000 granted in 2007 and **Mr. Baccino** answered that \$600,000 has been raised and was used to break the land and begin the environmental enhancements such as erosion and sediment control but more money is needed to finish the enhancements.

Rep. Longhurst said the money is needed to complete the environmental stage on the 20 acres of land and that the project is divided into two phases.

Ms. Meitner asked what is the total cost of the project and who some of the other contributors are and **Mr. Baccino** answered the total cost is 5 million dollars. They have received \$25,000 from UPS, \$25,000 from Crystal Trust Bank and CTF funds from legislators in the district. They have identified \$50,000 from different sources. The New Castle County Chamber of Commerce has adopted this project and made it their project of the year. **Mr. Baccino** said they also have a \$10,000 a year corporate sponsorship.

Rep. Longhurst said the league has done some fundraising through community affairs.

Mr. Pelham asked when the project is completed and operating what sources are in place for maintenance and **Mr. Baccino** answered that an example is Sports at the Beach where regional tournaments are hosted for operating monies.

Mr. Baccino said that only \$50,000 is needed to complete Phase I and he will provide a list of funding they have received.

Mr. Brunswick said the subcommittee had two major concerns. After 3 years and the initial funding of \$150,000, they have only raised \$600,000 which is only 12 percent of the total cost of the \$5 million. The second is their capacity for fundraising. **Ms. Meitner** said a concern of the committee is the likelihood of a future request from them for more money. **Mr. Baccino** said there is a need for funding to complete Phase I but after that they will continue to use other funding. New Castle County is not allowing access so \$50,000 is needed to complete Phase I.

Mr. Julius asked if an audit had been done and **Mr. Baccino** said they use an accounting firm but no official audit had been done.

Edgemoor Revitalization Cooperative

Ms. Whitney said the cooperative along with the Diamond State Land Trust want to convert older houses into home owner residences. The houses were built in early 40's and are located beside the Dupont Edgemoor plant. The houses are very hard to heat and cool with an energy cost of \$600 or \$700 a month for 1,000 square feet. The cooperative is in partnership with the Center for Energy and Environmental Policy to help residents reduce home energy costs by 30 percent. The houses will have solar roofs and be energy efficient. Diamond State Land Trust will do two houses a year of the six permanently available in a land trust. The other piece is to form a partnership with many entities that would eventually recruit a green jobs program and local unions. The community has an unemployment rate that is double the rest of the state for adults between the ages of 18 to 27. They will hold 4 monthly energy conservation training workshops.

Ms. Meitner asked what the \$6000 in the budget for events is and **Ms. Whitney** answered for workshops and meetings to collaborate on the efforts needed for coordination. **Ms. Meitner** asked if the \$6000 was for room, rent, or materials and **Ms. Whitney** answered the money is for materials, housing, marketing and transportation. **Mr. Pelham** asked if there was a list of the \$6000 expenses and **Ms. Whitney** answered no.

Ms. Meitner asked about the \$7,500 for the director's salary and **Ms. Whitney** answered the \$7,500 was 20 to 25 percent of the director's salary. The project would take a lot of oversight, and include a Train the Trainers class. The director would need to build human capacity and target the young people in the community to help them understand their civic duty.

Ms. Meitner asked how the \$4000 for energy events differs from the \$6000 for other events and **Ms. Whitney** answered collaboration is in the \$6000 to get to events. The general recruitment of families in the workshops is a separate line item.

Mr. Pelham asked what is their total request and **Ms. Whitney** answered \$25,000.

Transportation Management Association of Delaware

Mr. Osborne said the TMA is part of an air quality bus partnership. The program is a cooperative to make 5 bus passes available to individuals through their employers in order to reduce single occupancies vehicles on the road. They were not sure if all the employees really

used the passes last year so this year the number of passes distributed will be reduced. Last year employers went on line and asked for passes to be made available to their employees and there seem to be a disconnect with the employees and all the passes were used. This year the employees go on line and answer an air quality questionnaire and then get the 5 bus passes. The passes are day passes and the number of trips per pass is up. More people are using the passes to get to and from work and adding another trip. The passes are good anywhere in the state except for the beaches and on the weekends. Their goal is to distribute bus passes particularly on ozone action days. Dart First State will provide 35,000 air quality bus passes. The Cooperative decided that once the employers are enrolled, the employees have to take the questionnaire on line in order to contact the individual rather than the employer.

Ms. Meitner asked if the survey gives useful information and **Mr. Osborne** said the questionnaire has ozone as the centerpiece and helps people understand about the ozone action days.

Ms. Meitner asked if most of the grant goes for salaries with no other funding and **Mr. Osborne** said yes, and there are no other alternative supports and without this grant it will not happen.

Mr. Pelham asked what percentage of tickets are distributed to the 3 difference counties, especially Sussex and **Mr. Osborne** answered he could get that information from DART First State. The new tickets are encoded with a magnetic strip to see where they are being used. **Mr. Pelham** asked if they could be sold on the street and **Mr. Osborne** answered the passes have a serial number but no way to tell who actually uses the passes.

Ms. Meitner asked what will happen next year, will they come again for funds and **Mr. Osborne** answered he did not know how it will continue. It may end this year. They do have the 35,000 pass commitment from DART and the air quality partnership executive director is on the Transit Committee but the traditional funding for highway and transit is declining. He will submit their most recent financial statements to James Brunswick.

Mr. Truxon asked if the council will get a copy of how the money was spent and **Mr. Osborne** answered that most was in labor and the staffs time to distribute the passes. They have to keep track of all their time on time sheets which go through Terri Brixen, project administrator, because they are a 501C4.

KENT COUNTY

Dover Kent County MPO

Ms. Layton said the Dover Kent County MPO needs help in paying for advertisements in the Dover Mall and the Midway Theater. The ads would get the air quality message of cleaner air out to the public. The MPO is a nonprofit agency that outlines how federal transportation money is spent. This summer they want to run one ad in the Dover Mall and the Midway Theater in Lewes. The MPO believes they can reach thousands of people through the ads. The ads will run for 30 seconds before each show. The ads will be part of an 11 minute rotation on a nonstop loop which lasts 20 to 30 minutes before each movie. They can track the number of hits to listed web sites during the campaign and the web site contains a survey which asks people if they saw the ad at the movies. It is difficult to specifically track the success of the ads, but they have found them an effective way to reach a wide audience.

Mr. Pelham asked what amount they are requesting for the project and **Ms. Layton** answered \$4,500 which includes the creation of the ads.

SUSSEX COUNTY

DE Center for Horticulture

Jen Bruhler said the Seaford Department of Parks, the Seaford Historical Society and the DE Center for Horticulture have chosen five different locations in Seaford to plant a total of 320 trees by identifying communities that are below the recommended levels of trees. They focus on planting large shade trees with the most environmental benefits. The properties they plan to plant on are the Seaford Library and Cultural Center, the Seaford Sports Complex, Soroptimist Park, Nylon Boulevard and the Governor Ross Mansion and Plantation. They are hoping to start a pilot project in New Castle County. Volunteers planting will be part of the project and there are two locations where volunteers are already on board. There is some maintenance costs built into this project and the volunteers will then take on the long term maintenance. They are asking for \$69,805 which is mainly because of the high cost of professional services. The \$40,000 for professional services includes costs of 100 BUB trees, contractor costs with bid materials, pre digging of all holes for planting and follow up watering. Number 22 of the budget is Consumable Supplies which includes bear root trees with all the soils shaken off and at the cost 95 dollars a tree. The Seaford Parks and DE Center for horticulture are contributing in kind to that.

Mr. Pelham asked who would write the specifications and then inspect and **Ms. Bruhler** answered the Delaware Center for Horticulture does the project planning from start to finish and they have a certified tree architect.

Ms. Meitner asked what is the \$7600 for staff expenses and **Ms. Bruhler** answered for direct time cost for coordinating the project, figuring out the location, preparing bid materials, supervising, coordinating the volunteers and built in training with the parks.

Ms. Meitner asked since you are bidding out for a contract consultant what would you do if the cost is more or less than projecting and **Ms. Bruhler** answered they would use their best estimating abilities and adjust the project accordingly. They would talk with their partners and funding sources and possibly adjust the number or size of the trees.

The Nature Conservancy

Ms. Hackett said the project is to complete the purchase of 29 acres of the Middleford North Preserve. The Nature Conservancy is a nonprofit organization with two offices in DE whose mission is to preserve lands that provide habitat for plants and animals and have high levels of natural landscape benefits. They focus on two landscapes generally the Delaware Bayshores and the Nanticoke River Watershed. The Nanticoke River Watershed is one of the last great places important to the future of DE 150,000 acres of tidal and non tidal wetlands containing at least 200 rare plants and species. The purchase of the 29 acres will serve as a buffer to the Middleford North Preserve and a connection to the Redden State Forest which can provide benefits for species migration. The Nature Conservancy acquired 70 acres of the Middleford Preserve from Janet Rogers which was a part of a family farm. Some of the species on the property are globally impaired such as the Pillated Woodpecker, the Prothonotary Warbler, the Atlantic White Cedar which is the sole food source for a caterpillar, and 80 species of migratory birds.

Ms. Meitner asked what the costs are associated with maintaining and going forward and **Ms. Hackett** answered they have an endowment for stewardship costs for maintenance and staff.

Mr. Pelham asked when the organization started and **Ms. Hackett** answered locally in 1999 but nationally in the 1950's.

Mr. Truxon asked after the Sussex County Council approved the grant of \$58,000 did they approach the tax ditch authority and **Ms. Hackett** answered no they have not approached the tax ditch authority because there was not a lot of tax ditching.

Ms. Owens-White asked if they are going to expand beyond the border and **Ms. Hackett** answered they are always looking for an opportunity to expand and are interested in working with the family in purchasing more land. They are always reaching out to property owners to preserve land. They may reapply in the future but since a land transfer takes a long time they don't anticipate it will be next year.

City of Rehoboth Beach Urban Forest Assessment

Brian Hall said that part of Rehoboth's unique character is that it is a coastal town and a forest community. Rehoboth's Parks and Recreation Commission has supervised the enhancement and revitalization of their forests to include their comprehensive land use plan. They have undertaken efforts to review and revise the City's existing urban forest ordinance including mitigation and replanting. The one thing they do not have is a baseline for inventory and assessment to prioritize the reforestation of the community and be fiscally responsible with their resources. **Commissioner Barbour** said he was a coauthor of 2006 tree ordinance which was the 1st ordinance to cover trees on private property requiring each property to have at least 3 trees and only allowing the cutting down of trees where the house is built. The City needs to determine what trees are on the public lands right now. He said this is a one-time grant solely for the purpose of soliciting a contractor to assess the resources. They want the contractor to begin the tree assessment this spring and summer which is the best time to check the trees health and vigor. The supervisor staff, code enforcement officer, and the tree arbor are already on the staff. All that is needed to get started is the \$15,000. The Mayor and City Council support the grant application.

Ms. Owens-White asked what the budgeting requests were for administering this project and **Mr. White** answered the grant of \$15,000 from this committee and fines from the city to offset the costs of the project. The \$15,000 is for a professional team to assess and map their resources.

III. Open Forum

The Council discussed how to proceed and agreed to vote on the projects at the April 16, 2010 meeting. Mr. Pelham explained to the presenters that since a quorum of the council was not present the voting will take place by the council at the April 20, 2010 meeting. Mr. Julius made a motion that the council review the applications and vote at the April 20, 2010 meeting. Ms. Owens-White second the motion and all were in favor.

IV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Henderson
Administrative Specialist II, DNREC

The notes of this meeting are not intended to be a verbatim record of the topics that were presented or discussed. They are for the use of the Community Involvement Advisory Council members and the public in supplementing their personal notes and recall of presentations.