

Community Involvement Advisory Council (CIAC)
Meeting Notes
April 17, 2007

Members Present: Dr. Bruce Allison, James Brunswick, Janice Durham, Dr. Jay Julis, Pamela Meitner, La Vaida Owens-White, William Pelham, Donald Scholfield, David Small

I. Meeting Called to Order – Chair, Bill Pelham

Chair Bill Pelham called the meeting to order at 9:45.

II. Meeting Protocol Review

III. Approval of Meeting Notes

Bill called for a motion of the approval of the February 13, CIAC meeting notes. Pam Meitner moved the notes be approved with a second by Jay Julis.

In review of the notes Mr. Truxon called attention to the DuPont Hay Road Iron Rich Site – Schnabel Study Report section on page 7 of the minutes whereby EPA says there is something at the location.

Bill identified the paragraph starting with the word “Reference”, the bed of the Shellpot Creek is an environmentally troubled area. Bill read the segment. EPA characterized as hazardous. This site is 16 acres 30 to 40 inches, which should be corrected to feet, not inches. The area had been grandfathered.

Pam additionally requested a correction; the site is on the bank of Shellpot Creek, the state is trying to convey the fact that the property is not significantly contaminated. Originally there was a product that DuPont thought they could sell. It was staged at this location. There was an EPA investigation. EPA found low levels of dioxins and it was classified as hazardous waste. It was first thought the product could be sold, but after it was categorized as a hazardous waste, it had to be disposed of according to regulations. In the third paragraph it was not considered contaminated, in the fourth paragraph it is being cleaned up.

Bill confirmed Mr. Truxon was satisfied with the explanation. With the change of the 30 to 40 feet change from inches the approval was put to a vote.

With all in favor, the notes of the February 13, 2007 CIAC meeting were approved.

IV. DNREC Internship Program – Mr. Jim Brooks

Jim greeted the group and introduced himself as the recruiter and AA officer at DNREC. He explained an internship program had been started and information sent to colleges in Delaware. Delaware students with the highest likelihood of living and working in Delaware are being recruited. Resources are dwindling, baby boomers aging, so recruitment is needed to jump start the program for workers who will stay. We got state money to enhance the program and recruit from the student population. Start up was the first of April with receipt of resumes closing on April 16th. Some students got word through James Brunswick’s distribution to Wesley College, University of Delaware and Delaware State University. No applicants were received from Wilmington College. Jay indicated the announcement was received from James but he would like more information for next year.

Jim Brooks explained we were limited in time and money. All state agencies could apply, for the \$250,000. We were one of four who applied for the money and received \$48,000. We will ask for more next year.

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Pam asked if the \$48,000 was for a full year or the summer. Jim informed it would be for 3 months in the summer of real work.

Is the pay by the number of positions? Ten were recruited. Interested managers will guide the interns through the processes that correlate with their individual studies. When people realize the crises, we will be in competition with other state agencies, federal government and the military. We must look outside ourselves. Also we are looking to increase diversity within DNREC.

Bill questioned if all the jobs were in Dover?

Jim informed the jobs were throughout the state, mainly in Kent, some in New Castle County and Sussex working with mosquitoes and in the mud and muck.

Pam asked if the students were in their third or fourth year?

Jim – All students attending college in the first year of college through post graduate.

Jim advised the 4 most critical positions were targeted; Environmental Scientist, Analytical Chemist, Engineering and Biology. We look to expand with more money next year and recruit other commonly sought after disciplines. DNREC has more of the offshoot disciplines than any other department. When it comes to the environment, trying to find folks with talent to take care of the land, earth and air, are far more difficult.

James – What is the state of diversity in DNREC?

Jim – In 2004 when I joined DNREC the Secretary said our numbers look bad. The idea is to have a reflection of the surrounding communities, we did not, so we had to work to increase our numbers. We have 735 full time merit employees, and employ 1,200 through merit and seasonal positions in DNREC, as Seasonal employees in Parks and amusement areas. Our previous percentages reflect 9.7 % minority and 30% women in and today we have 35% women and 11.2 % minority. We are doing all we can to attract folks from every walk of life to our agency. DNREC seems to be a secret in the state. The areas of air, earth and environment are not subjects common to most people. So we have challenges

Bill – You mentioned the current 11.2 % of present employed minorities. What is the informal target of the surrounding community?

Jim – The AA plan for DE sites 7 primary categories; Officials and Administrators, Professionals, Office and Clerical, Paraprofessionals, Technicians, Protective Services and Skilled Craft. We have not reached a balance with the labor market in any but one (1) for Minorities and one (1) for Women. For the state to reach its Affirmative Actions goal, we must increase our diversity numbers. DHSS has met; DOC has met their in part because of large numbers. We are a medium size organization. People like DNREC and stay for a long time, one division has an average length of service of 29.5 years who are about to leave in huge numbers. It's like that for all departments; we want to get a jump on the problem. There are opportunities for “moving up” and “coming in” to the system that we need to utilize and increase diversity.

Pam – What is the difference in turnover between white males vs. minority groups?

Jim – Probably slight, the turnover for minorities is not that noticeable because there are not that many, so it is greater for white males. I would like to see that as a problem.

Pam – So you don't see attrition of minorities as a problem? Is the problem hiring in but not moving up into the organization. Is that something else to look at?

Jim – We are working on mentoring, upward mobility training. It is difficult to find minorities in the disciplines we need at DNREC. When we achieve the goal of attracting, they are a valuable commodity, to other organizations that are also seeking and will hire at higher salaries. For example, Park Rangers begin at \$30,000, once they are trained and groomed; they are hired by state police. When we attract applicants, and are able to retain them, they stay.

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James – How do DNREC salaries compare to other state agencies?

Jim B – This is a state wide conversation, DNREC salaries compared to other state and the disciplines are comparable. Cost of living, populist of the state, could probably make a case. Surrounding states, VA, MD, NY we don't touch. So we are going for DE home grown, DE students. Salaries as compared to private industry are atrocious, the gap is outrageous.

Bill -great presentation.

Janice Durham commented that DNREC is a wonderful place to work, and wished Jim well with the project.

Dr. Bruce who teaches at Wesley College expressed his thanks. And ask if Jim would be going after more money next year and how long of a time period would the state support the project?

Jim – This is all new, so we jumped on the opportunity, thinking everyone in the state would also, but only 4 applied. In talking to Jane Hahn, the state recruiter, she felt money would be around for the next few years, depending on how it was utilized, and positive outcomes. We are expecting it to continue next year and are going to ask for more, we asked for \$48,000 and \$48,000 was granted. We must show how we used the money by June 30 and if it is not allocated they will probably take back funds. They will not get any back from us. We attracted 23 students' resumes so far.

Bill – must make a response for RFP. Did the money come from EPA

James – not sure where, state recruiter said given a grant.

Jan – Jim's done a great job. Jim had to go to a training session and left business cards.

Truxon – don't know how he missed out.

Bill moved to the next item on the agenda, turning to James.

V. Ombudsman Report

A. Annual Report

James stated this has been a busy year. The Annual report is laid out in 3 major areas; Collaborative Partnerships, New CIAC Membership, and the Community Environmental Project Fund Report.

The Collaborative Partnership section addresses much of the work of the last year which involved the development of collaborative problem-solving relationships with community organizations. The EPA has developed this approach to community participation. The process involves bringing together multiple stakeholder groups in a community that is adversely impacted by an environmental problem. Collaboration involves each group in defining the problem, developing responses and contributing their resources to solve the environmental problem.

One challenge in every partnership has been understanding the scope of DNREC's regulatory authority. For example, the expansion of the Cherry Island Landfill. Going into the public hearing there was a lot of concern in the community over the proposed height of the landfill. When the audience discovered that DNREC did not have regulatory authority to control the height of the landfill, community leaders thought that they was being misled. We need ongoing relationships that help the public to understand the role of the organization in solving their problems before we get to the crisis.

There were seven collaborative partnerships that we can go through one by one.

1. Septic Initiative Partnership – We have discussed this many times, so you know we have Sussex County Strong Communities, DNREC, other state agencies at the table with Sussex County government.. All of these stakeholders are affected by the pollution control strategy which will require in many cases

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upgrades or new septic systems and mandatory compliance inspections. The partnership is addressing the need for loans and grant money to finance upgrades and replacement of septic systems in the low – moderate income communities in the Inland Bays. We have just held our first Leadership Dialogue with Sussex County government. It confirmed the issues that cause a hardship for Sussex County government not having enough funds. We'll have two more dialogues. One with low – moderate income community residents and another with state and local funding agencies.

2. Wilmington Recycling –Thanks to funding from the CIAC, Community Environmental Project Fund we paid for a bus for Wilmington stakeholders to tour the Green Mountain/RecycleBank facility in Philadelphia. Norman Griffiths, Finance Committee Chair, Bud Friel Environmental Committee Chair and three labor union leaders toured the city's curbside recycling program. After the tour, the City leaders were convinced to make a serious attempt at recycling. City workers, the City Council, DNREC, Recycle Bank and Green Mountain all did their part to make the trial project successful.

Last month at the press conference announcing the end of the successful pilot project, and the start up of city-wide curbside recycling, Mayor Baker thanked DNREC the representatives for their role in making the citywide project happen. The City of Wilmington now thinks of DNREC as a partner in making recycling work city-wide in Wilmington.

3. Claymont Community Coalition – This has been a moving target. Last year Claymont Community Coalition leadership met with the management of six local facilities. The partners collaborated on the development of a \$100,000 CARE (Communities Acting for a Renewed Environment). They did not receive the grant, so we failed to make our original goal, the EPA made a commitment to provide staff and technical assistance to work with the Claymont Coalition and industries in the area to create the Claymont Industry Partnership. The Claymont Industry Partnership held their initial meeting last month to formally launch the partnership. The Partnership will meet for the second time in June

5. Fugitive Dust – Representatives from three Southbridge Wilmington community organizations held a series of meetings with facility operators whose businesses are sources of airborne dust in that community. The meetings focused on strategies to reduce the dust from standing materials, truck traffic, etc. Eight facility operators signed on, to undertake some of the voluntary measures to reduce the dust from their facilities. The voluntary actions will be incorporated into permit conditions as required steps in the proposed operating permits for the facilities.

6. Brownfield Job Training Program – There have been several meetings involving DNREC Site Investigation and Restoration, Branch (SIRB), and Delaware Technical and Community College to expand their partnership with labor unions; Longshoremens Local 1634 B and Laborers Local 199 on their successful Brownfields Job Training program.

The partnership will investigate funding from sources such as the National Institute of Health Environmental Services to expand the brownfields job training program so that it could reach beyond state borders to provide brownfields training for workers in the entire region.

7. Alternative Dispute Resolution Training (ADR) Eight people representing DNREC, and community based organizations from New Castle, Kent, and Sussex counties participated in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) training. It was conducted by the EPA Region 3 Office of Environmental Justice and the Environmental Law Institute. The training was held in Philadelphia on March 15 -17. One outcome of the training was a commitment from the Environmental Law Institute to work with our groups to pursue funding for technical assistance help with organizational capacity building and training to address their local environmental issues.

Bill asked if we have a method or process for looking at the environmental issues and communities in Kent County.

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James replied that The Capitol Park Civic Association is concerned with the pollution of the St Jones River. There are opportunities there; a major issue is fish consumption, and swimming advisories in the St Jones River. Don urged that it is very important to get DNREC to put up signs to let people know the water is unsafe.

James informed that is a public health issue, DPH takes the lead on that. He added, the Septic Initiative has state-wide implications that will eventually address funding for septic issues in Kent County also

New Members with the CIAC

James - The report list the members that completed service in 2006. New members include; Dr. Jay Julis, Dr. Bruce Allison, and Ms. Jan Durham.

CEPF

In 2006, eleven projects were funded totaling 1.75 million dollars. The report divides the funded projects into five areas; Ecological Tourism, Recycling, Urban Forestry, Environmental Restoration and Pollution Elimination.

Pam noted there was an extra 0 on page 9 in the year 2006. Pam also indicated she had never seen any mid term or final reports and would like them sent electronically. Jay indicated he also would like to see the details. Bill asked if the reports could be summarized into a one page report. Pam questioned if there were any projects we should have reports about but didn't?

James replied perhaps two, one is the Delaware City Branch Canal Greenway project which is not off the ground yet, so there has been no draw down of funds. The second is the Delaware City Ecotourism. The final report is the plan which is just being written up in the final form. We have reports for all the others, and some pictures.

Bill suggested this be an AGENDA point for next meeting.

James indicated on page 11 under Ecological Tourism, the **Delaware City Canal Greenway Project** at 1.4 million dollars is the largest project.

Pam questioned the start date and if we had an explanation of what's going on? It was indicated the plans were developed and submitted to the Army Corp of Engineers, The EPA and so on. The CIAC made the first funding commitment, so the CEPF will leverage federal funds. If federal money does not come through this fiscal year; they will try again next year with Congressman Castle's support. There are many phases in the master plan; however, I think somewhere around 2 million more in federal dollars must be in hand to begin the project.

Habitat for Humanity – CEPF funding enabled the opening of the ReStore. The project recycles used construction materials and diverts them from the Cherry Island Landfill. It is expanding now. This project and our partnership with the City of Wilmington helped to jump start recycling.

The City of Wilmington and RecycleBank have been successful in launching the state's first city-wide, curbside recycling program. They will complete the city wide roll out by the end of May and have approximately 24,000 city households participating

Acorn Institute - ACORN Community Organizers went to 1230 households that were not participating in recycling. The result of the outreach and education was that 470 of those households that were not participating began recycling. The evaluation of the project with ACORN, Recycle Bank and the Solid and Hazardous Waste Management Branch looked good. There was a 43% ratio of contacts to newly recycling

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households. The percentage of the outcome was fine, but on a cost basis, it took about \$100 per household to get people participating. It will be challenging to figure out more cost effective approaches in the city wide rollout.

Bill asked if the numbers at the head of each section correlate to our grants. Yes

James continued; we also had three urban forestry Projects; Southbridge Urban Forestry, 11th Street Tree Planting, and the Delaware Center for Horticulture. Two are in Southbridge Wilmington. You can see quite a physical difference on blocks with the new trees. The 11th Street Bridge group had a successful tree planting and they are going for another grant of \$20,000 from with the Delaware Center for Horticulture.

Pam questioned the Southbridge project, what is hazardous tree? Broken trees, dead limbs. Jim indicated there are many obstacles to planting new trees, homeowners have maintenance issues. Pam indicated the 2nd bullet on page 14 should be past tense (pruned), "moved and pruned".

Ham Run Stream restoration project. The cost of stream restoration will require an additional \$65,000.00. Mr. Grabowski, of the Marshallton Civic Association, is working with their project sponsors in Parks to develop proposals for the additional \$65,000. The Civic Association will approach DelDot and other agencies for funding. They believe that local legislators will help them with the needed funding and expect to get the project completed this Fall.

Ardentown Forest Restoration is far along and has drawn down all of the project fundin. James will be speaking to the project sponsors and would like to take a look at the final project.

Bill indicated on page 16, at the bottom of page, item 1 Invasives Removal is in capital and there are no capitals after that.

Finally, the **Septic Initiative** is under way, with budget dialogs with county and the General Assembly.

James said that's it for annual report, we will go though it with Dave Small before it is submitted to the General Assembly. Bill suggested that after members have had more time to review the comments, the Council members' comments can be incorporated with the report next week. Comments are needed by Monday the 23rd. Are there any other comments?

Jay noted it was a nice summary.

CEPF – June 1st deadline is coming up. June 6th is good for LaVadia ; would June 6 suit the council members to hold the subcommittee meeting. We are pressed for time with June 12th as the next council meeting. The June 6 date can be a physical meeting or a telephone conference call. Members on the subcommittee are Pam, Jan, La Vadia, Bob, Marvin and Don. It was agreed June 6 in the morning via conference call would be best for all. The start time will be 9:00 or 9:30 with a reminder call the day before.

Looking at the CEPF account balance, 1,800,000. Is that after the transfer in of the 1.4 million Delaware City project? Is that from DNREC to the council? James affirmed, yes. Funding remains in the DNREC accout so that we can accumulate interest.

Once you take out all our commitments, what does it leave us? Many members were unclear as to the actual balance of the fund. James will talk with finance prior to the grant subcommittee review. Some funds have not yet been processed in.

Bill asked if there were any more questions on accounting.

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Bill – We are open to the Public Forum if anyone would like to make comments.

Bill invited guests to the CIAC meeting to introduce themselves:

Ron Hunsicker, introduced himself as a Councilman with the Town of Bowers Beach. The town is responding to increased development and wishes to develop a closer relationship with DNREC. His presence today is part of his program to become involved.

Mark Ostroff , Executive Director of St. Joseph's at Providence Creek. The organization has some 300 acres which includes 12 ½ acres of park. He saw the state news article on the Community Environmental Project Fund which, was very interesting, since they have lots of acreage, a community farm and agricultural education programs. Their natural resources are, mostly undeveloped. The University of Delaware is doing minor things with mosquitoes, birds and west Nile virus. We are at the beginning of developing the natural resources of the property. We have started work on an ad hoc group, looking for folks with expertise, as we are searching for direction.

St Joseph's is located west of Smryna , in Clayton, just past Clayton Avenue, at a dead end, close to a big stone arch, just north of downtown Clayton. The creek runs through the property, which was annexed to Clayton.

Jan asked if he had attended any of the Parks and Recreation meetings? Mark indicated he was working with Kent County but asked who in particular he might contact with Parks. Jan provided Chazz Salken's name.

Phil Thayer – President of North Saint Georges Civic Association – met James last week and talked with the Colonial School system that turned over project similar to DE City. He has an area in town in disrepair, and is looking to turn it into a city park. There is concern about the sewage, and the soil is not going to sustain continued development. The county will not support new sewers, with no sewer there, where does the sediment go? He is involved with the county, with input and direction from our community. He is also concerned with the exhaust from dump trucks. Some restoration is needed where equipment came through and destroyed plantings. We have the manpower, but we just need the funds for supplies, etc. The community has roughly \$1,000 in their account.

James will meet with him and the civic association. Bill questioned if they were non-profit to which Phil Thayer replied, yes, they are a non profit. Bill questioned if he intended to submit a proposal. Phil will send one by June 1st.

Jan – Sharon Bruin is the president of the Del State Parks Association with the City of Newark 302-366-7060 e-mail shardruen@aol.com.

Bill – any other comments?

Bob - We make a motion to move the Sept 1 deadline to Sept 4, because of the first falling on a Saturday, so we will use the first available business day. Jay seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

James said the last funding cycle we advertised. I would like to get an ad for the June 1st deadline for the News Journal. Bill questioned how many weeks? James said it would be about 1 month ahead. He would like to get the ad out early and do a mailing to interested groups.

Bob – I hereby Motion we approve advertising for 30 days. Pam seconded the motion. With no other discussion, all were in favor. Motion carried.

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The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki E. Ward

Administrative Specialist III, 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 for presentations.