The redevelopment of Historic Fort DuPont Complex

Request for proposals:
March 30, 2012
Blue and green areas total 443 acres
A brief history of Fort DuPont

Admiral Samuel Francis DuPont
1863: Created as an auxiliary site to Fort Delaware
1899: Renamed for Real Admiral Samuel F. Du Pont during Spanish-American War

During World War II the fort housed prisoners of war from the German Afrika Corps

After the war, the property was declared surplus and the land turned over to the state.

1948: Governor Bacon Health Center dedicated

Today, historic features include the old fort, the parade ground, and several structures from the 1940s including the POW guard tower and barracks.
Fort DuPont includes six Endicott Period gun batteries which currently have limited accessibility. Top left, Read; top right, Elder; above, Gibson.
This underutilized property has enormous potential to come alive again as a sustainable, mixed-use community – producing jobs, revenue, housing choices, recreational and other amenities while preserving its historic character.
Strategic goals

- Preservation of historic architecture and heritage (National Historic District)
- Economic redevelopment (commercial, housing, educational, institutional)
- Outdoor recreation and restoring habitat
- Innovative housing choices that meet changing market demands

Former post exchange and gymnasium
argent of the state’s presence and involvement at the site
- Attraction of outside investment
- Cutting-edge sustainable design features, including climate-change adaptation
- Integration with Delaware City and C&D trail project
Vision must integrate with plans for Delaware City, Fort Delaware and C&D Canal Trail.

Sterling Hotel, Delaware City
Many unique assets

Clockwise, from left: 398-seat theater opened in 1933. State-owned boat launch into Branch Canal. Waterfront on Delaware Bay. Church was dedicated in 1941.
Also some unique challenges

- Subject to flooding and sea-level rise
- Currently a hodge-podge of uses
- Many buildings in disrepair
- Army landfill on site
- Secluded from, but near heavy industrial area
Delaware’s newest – and least visited – state park

Area is known for its birding opportunities
Building styles and conditions
Above: Guardhouse, then and now. Right, quartermaster storehouse, then and now. Top right, the Glass House was floated across the Delaware River from Fort Mott, NJ.

Building styles and conditions
Clockwise, from above: Tilton Building, for residents; Paynter Building, vacant; Main Building; treatment currently provided under contract to state here.

Building styles and conditions
Above, four NCO duplexes were built in 1933. Left, the Commanding Officer’s quarters is currently part of Governor Bacon hospital complex.
2012 Bond Bill:

“... develop a plan for the redesign and redevelopment of the Fort DuPont complex in Delaware City that encourages economic development that is compatible with current historic structures and recreational purposes.”

**Working Group:** DNREC, DelDOT, DEDO, Historic and Cultural Affairs, State Housing Authority, State Planning Office, Delaware City
View southwest from Reedy Point Bridge: Grass Dale complex

Vintage photos provided by author Breandan Mackie

Proposals due April 30
RFP NAT12100-FDUP
Available on Delaware’s Procurement Website: http://bids.delaware.gov