

Delaware Wetland Advisory Committee

September 25, 2014 meeting notes

Welcome and Announcements

Chairman Parkowski called the meeting to order at 9:13 a.m.

Items today include reviewing and voting on DFB item, discussing draft final report presented by DNREC, public input and planning a possible last meeting.

Review of August meeting notes

Minutes will be amended to add an exact wording of the DFB recommendation.

No opposition to approving the meeting minutes once amended.

DFB recommendation

Recommendation to amend the Real Estate Transfer Tax to allocate an additional \$5 million, totaling \$15 million. \$10 million will be allocated to Ag Preservation Foundation and \$5 million to Forestry Preservation. Comments by legislators included growing operating budget and difficulties in balancing the budget. These moneys should be approved when the state has the ability. Agricultural Lands Preservation Foundation administers the Ag Lands Preservation Program. A comment was made that the absence of the Open Space Program in this recommendation will make it difficult for more widespread support in the conservation community. Open Space and Ag Land have some differences (e.g. administrative fees, purchase for public access); hopefully Sec. Small could develop similar funding effort for Open Space.

Recommendation passes with 21 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 not present, 1 abstain, and 3 not voting. Note: two supporting votes are contingent upon seeking a similar effort for Open Space Program. The opposing vote felt this recommendation was reaching the fringe of the purpose of the group.

Motion from Phil McGinnis that Sec. Small craft a comparable approach to support the Open Space Program at \$10 million (\$9 million for land protection and \$1 million for infrastructure). Comment asking where the focus on wetlands is. Wetlands should be covered in the umbrella of the Open Space program. Open Space program also protects public forest land which contain most freshwater wetlands. Both of these programs took a 72% hit in 2008-09 during recession so any effort to increase funding is supported.

Motion passes with 20 supporting votes, 1 opposed, 2 not present, 2 abstain and 3 not voting.

Draft Final Report

As a committee we defined wetlands last February as those recognized on the federal level. There are more extensive maps provided by DNREC that should be used for planning but should be verified and delineated in the field. County planners may be using landscape level maps strictly.

Mike P- would like his email to WAC defining wetlands and the 3 prong definition included in report. Include comments by Sen. Hocker and Venables.

Chris: nice and brief. No additions or deletions.

Sarah: do we have permission to include emails?

Sec Kee: no additions

DNS: nothing to add

KCP: nothing to add

George H.: NP

Dave Hugg: nothing to add

Seaford: NTA

Manus: will email comments to DNREC, cover photo.

DelDOT: needs to confer with regular WAC representative.

McCulley: no comments.

DFA: no comments

Marty: page 3 discussion of voting procedures. DNREC presented recommended voting procedures.

Engineers: move recommendations up in the report to before the proceedings.

Venables: still confused what wetlands are. A lot of proceedings to read through.

Wilson: well covered. Supportive of a succinct report.

Comments from Public:

Virgil: DNREC maps were with good intentions. If no wetlands are mapped on a property they recommend no delineation which is good for landowners.

Sec. Small: appreciative of the Committee's time and passion. Is a lot of work left to do; education portion has not been addressed. Thank you to Mike Parkowski for graciously serving as chair to the committee.

Chairman Parkowski noted that diverse views have been broached with civility. He has tried to allow all views to be heard, to allow transparency. Thank you for everyone's participation. Hocker, Venables and Wilson did not sponsor SB78 but have been present at every meeting. Everyone has had a chance to comment on draft report.

Other Committee Business

Schedule final meeting & vote to approve final report: Future viewpoints and comments can be made electronically.

Adjourned 11:21

Name	Agency	Present?	DFB#1	DFB#2
Chris Bason	Center for the Inland Bays	Y	Y	Y
Edward Bonner	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	N	NV	NV
Sarah Cooksey	DNREC – Coastal Programs	Y	Y*	Y
Mark Davis	Dept. of Agriculture	Alt Ed Kee	Y	Y
Tim Deschepper	Town of Middletown – LLG	N	NP	NP
Hal Godwin	Sussex County Planning	Y	Y	Y
Brenna Goggin	Delaware Nature Society	Proxy Chris Bason	Y	Y
Mary Ellen Gray	Division of Planning – Kent County	Y	Y	Y
George Haggerty	New Castle County Planning	Y	Y	Y
Rep. Debra Heffernan	Delaware House of Representatives	N	NP	NP
Sen. Gerald Hocker	Delaware Senate	Y	Y	Y
David Hugg	Town Hall (Smyrna) -- LLG	Y	Y	Y
Sally Kepfer	Natural Resource Conservation Service	N	NV	NV
Josh Littleton	City of Seaford – League of Local Govts.	Y	Y	Y
Andy Manus	Land Conservationist	Y	AB	AB
Robert McCleary	DeIDOT	Alt Jim Pappas	Y	Y
Jim McCulley	Home Builders Association of Delaware	Y	Y	Y
Phil McGinnis	Delaware Association of Realtors	Y	Y	Y
Brian Michalski	Delaware Forestry Association	Proxy Ed Kee	Y	AB
Paul Morrill	Committee of 100	Y	N	N
Michael Parkowski	Delaware Bar Association	Y	Y	Y
Frank Piorko	DNREC – Watershed Stewardship	Y	Y	Y
Marty Ross	Delaware Farm Bureau	Y	Y	Y
Alex Schmidt	Council of Engineering Companies	Y	Y	Y
Porter Schutt	The Conservation Fund/Open Space Council	Alt Kate Hackett	Y*	Y
Sen. Robert Venables	Delaware Senate	Y	Y	Y
Bob Walls	Farm Services Agency	N	NV	NV
Rep. Dave Wilson	Delaware House of Representatives	Y	Y	Y

* Denotes a supporting vote contingent that similar funding also be sought for the Open Space Program.