

WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES

June 19, 2018

Committee Members Present: Fred Peckham, Doug Case, Al Henry, Jim Greier, Pat Jeffer,
Evan Padua
Committee Members Absent: Deb Conway or Andy Boyar
Staff : Laurie Ramie, Pete Golod, Linda Drollinger
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Guests: None

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Peckham called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. A motion by Case, seconded by Henry, to approve the April 17 meeting minutes was carried. (The May 15 meeting had to be cancelled due to a power outage.) There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business

April 24 Economic Research Project: A National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) working session with Sharon Davis, Tatiana Orlov and consultant Michele Archie was held at the Tusten Town Hall. Ramie and Golod attended, as did Heister and Hahn from NPS and UDC Chair Robinson. The purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss results from the community survey of economic issues. 150 responses were received, and the data is still being analyzed. There was free-ranging discussion about traditional and emerging industries, how to retain young people, lure back those who have left, and attract the demographic known as "the creative class." There was discussion of how quality of life values are more important than some business characteristics in attracting residents. It also asked if/how the area could attract and sustain entrepreneurs without sacrificing its rural character. And it asked how the area self-identifies, for branding purposes. The Upper Delaware is a little east of the Poconos and a little west of the Catskills. Should it seek to identify itself as a unique region with its own chamber of commerce concept? A public report will be produced at the conclusion of the study, with no known timetable.

May 21 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Meeting Minutes: (Copy of minutes provided in members' packets.) Tim Newman, Hancock Councilman, attended as a guest. Ramie noted that Newman was an active participant and the group hoped that his attendance will continue. Treasurer Richardson provided a worksheet with transactions for the Promoting Butterfly Habitat Grants program since 2017 showing, to date, inflows of \$10,100 and outflows of \$8,084.

Butterfly Habitat Grants: One application for a Butterfly Habitat Grant was received from the Lumberland Fire Department for \$500 to establish a butterfly garden with a sculpture at the Pond Eddy Firehouse. Funding will cover the purchase of plants, bushes and fertilizer.

UDSB Identification Signs: Replacement signs are available for existing logo signage showing wear; there are 17 large rectangular UDSB signs on brown backgrounds and 12 with the logo alone. Ramie let UDSB municipalities know that replacement signs are available. Ramie noted that the Byway was designated in 2002, so it is not surprising that the signs are beginning to fade.

New Attraction Signs: Phase I of the NYS DOT project is installing signs identifying attractions and amenities along the byway route; Phase II will be placing of UDSB wayfinding signs on I-86 and I-84.

\$250,000 Visitor Center Capital Project Grant: Pontier, Richardson and Ramie met with Sullivan County Manager Joshua Potosek, Planning Commissioner and UDSB Alternate Freda Eisenberg, Associate Planner and UDSB Representative Jacksy, and Legislator Nadia Rajsz on May 21 to discuss the UDSB's still active state grant for visitor center construction secured by Senator John Bonacic in 2007. The Hamlet of Callicoon's visioning process coincided with the railroad company's vacating of the historic train station in that hamlet, which led to discussion of securing that building for various community uses, one of them a visitor center with restrooms, exhibit space, a café, and office space. UDSB has been looking for a visitor center location for many years, and welcomes the opportunity to use the Callicoon Depot. Doing so would be contingent on the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York

(DASNY), the agency administering the grant, allowing the grant to be used for renovations on a property that isn't owned by the grant recipient. Ramie said preliminary research indicates that a long-term lease, one with a minimum five-year term, should satisfy DASNY requirements. Henry expressed disbelief that New York State could allow \$250,000 in taxpayer money to be used for renovation of a building guaranteed as a visitor center for only five years. Ramie said the railroad's parent company has a long-term lease and seems amenable to extending it in five-year increments. Central New York Railroad (CNYR) has offered a five-year draft lease option and UDSB Chair Pontier said he thinks CNYR has eight years left on its lease. As UDSB does not have \$250,000 to advance for this reimbursement grant, it could ask Sullivan County, which has the funding as well as legal, grants, and engineering divisions essential to the project, to accept assignment of the state grant. All parties (Callicoon Business Association (CBA), Sullivan County and UDSB, Inc.) would have to be in agreement. The current building is a replica of the Queen Anne style of the original depot (circa 1899) lost in a fire and is part of the Callicoon Historic District. Any renovation must be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. UDSB passed a resolution to proceed with a visitor center in Callicoon in collaboration with Sullivan County and CBA. Because Senator Bonacic championed the grant, his pending retirement will serve as a deadline for the project.

Miscellaneous: On July 21, UDSB is presenting a program by Ed McMahon, renowned community planner, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Narrowsburg Union. So far, only 26 reservations have been received. UDSB is hoping for at least three times that number. The UDSB website had been hacked again. Its developer has been asked to repair it and tighten security. The UDSB Facebook page posts automatically to the UDSB website. The next meeting of UDSB will be Monday, June 25, 2018.

June 14 Upper Delaware BioBlitz Steering Committee Call: Ramie participated in this call. The upcoming June 30 BioBlitz event in Starlight, PA (at the intersection of Routes 370/191) will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Gales Property owned by Norcross Wildlife Foundation at the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Delaware River. Free and open to the public, the event will feature nine teams investigating aquatic insects, birds and fish, mammals, mosses and lichens, mushrooms, reptiles and amphibians, plants, grasses and trees, and terrestrial bugs. There will be mushroom walks, forest walks, birdwatching walks, photography and art programs, music, and a performance by the NAACL Theatre of "Trees." The night before the BioBlitz, there will be a bat capture and release demonstration. Golod and Drollinger will staff a UDC information booth. Ramie said volunteers are still being sought to assist with various tasks. Preliminary BioBlitz results will be presented at the August 2 UDC meeting. For more information and directions to the site, visit www.upperdelawarebioblitz.com.

May 24 Steam Corridor Management Plan Meeting: Golod and Hamilton participated in this meeting held at Hancock Town Hall. Per Golod, the plan was developed in conjunction with the Upper Delaware Tailwaters Coalition, Friends of the Upper Delaware River and other Upper Delaware stakeholders and is almost ready for rollout. The role of the Upper Delaware River Stream Corridor Management Plan (SCMP) is to provide non-regulatory guidance to municipalities and other watershed practitioners for the future management and restoration of Delaware County waterways below the New York City Delaware River basin reservoirs. The SCMP should be used by all communities within the watershed project area to ensure a comprehensive, holistic and multi-jurisdictional approach to watershed protection in the Upper Delaware River region below the NYC Delaware basin reservoirs. One near term goal is to encourage New York City's involvement and investment in watershed protection and restoration below the NYC Delaware basin reservoirs in alignment with the guidance and recommendations outlined in the SCMP. Long-term goals include expanding the reach of the SCMP to include areas of the watershed outside the scope of this project and promoting the SCMP as a model document and methodology for other watershed planning efforts throughout the Delaware River watershed. The SCMP is designed to coordinate with local land use programs and activities as well as with federal, state and local regulatory agencies. Peckham mentioned that some river municipalities receive funds from New York City Water Supply for sewer installation and other civic projects, but said Hancock receives none. Ramie noted that New York City DEP had contributed to the construction of the Hancock Firehouse.

2018 Delaware River Sojourn (Upper Delaware segment June 16-18): Report: Ramie attended the Sunday, June 17 leg, from Callicoon to Narrowsburg, with lunch stop at Skinners Falls. The Saturday leg of the Upper Delaware segment began at the Northeast Wilderness Experience Campground near Equinunk and ended at Callicoon. The

June 18 leg was a Lackawaxen River stretch made possible by a Brookfield Renewable Energies (Wallenpaupack Reservoir owner/operator) release that raised the river to paddling level. On Friday June 15, the Sojourn and NPS UPDE hosted a river cleanup. Approximately 10 volunteers cleaned up a four-mile section of the river, from Buckingham to Lordville. Paddler Counts: Saturday-105; Sunday-100; and Monday-101. Ramie said the Sunday leg started 90 minutes late, so was behind schedule for the lunch stop at Skinners Falls, where she met the paddlers to take photos and get personal accounts for the upcoming Upper Delaware newsletter. A lecture on geology accompanied the lunch break. NPS Community Planner Jennifer Claster was among the June 17 paddlers.

New Business

6/20 Green Infrastructure in the Delaware River Watershed: This meeting will be held in Monticello from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Ramie and Golod will attend for UDC, Claster for NPS. A report will be provided next month.

6/21 DRBC Water Management Advisory Committee: Golod will participate via webcast, as the agenda is light and does not warrant a six-hour drive to and from the DRBC's office in West Trenton, NJ.

6/22 Local History Roundtable: Ramie will attend this meeting of local Wayne and Pike County historical societies at Lake Wallenpaupack. A tour of the Williams House, which serves as the museum for the Wallenpaupack Historical Society, is on the agenda.

7/10-11 NPS Long-Range Interpretive Plan Meeting Announcement: Golod reported that UDC will be hosting Session II of ongoing NPS stakeholders meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday, July 10-11, from 9:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Ramie and Golod plan to attend. Over an eight-month period, NPS is preparing a five-year plan for its Interpretation and Education Program. The invitation states, "Park staff and other specialists will be available that evening to explain the process and accept feedback from attendees. Your insights, opinions, and expertise are important to us as we collaborate to create visitor experiences that result in earnest stewards of this special place we are entrusted to protect." RSVP to Ingrid_peterec@nps.gov or (570) 685-4871.

Delaware River Flow & Storage Report: Committee members reviewed the New York City Water Supply storage report and Delaware River Basin Commission Reservoir Levels report, both updated as of June 18. Total storage is at 96.7%, which is normal for this date. Cannonsville Reservoir is at 94.0% of capacity, with 95.7B gallons.

Other: Padua reported that a recent, brief Cannonsville Reservoir release suddenly raised the river level 700 cfs. Then just as suddenly it dropped back to its previous level. He also observed that this spring's ice-scouring was more dramatic than in recent years; Hamilton noted that substrate variations and riverbed changes from year to year are normal aspects of river life. Henry discussed the findings of recent water quality testing done just below the Cannonsville Reservoir. Peckham said the phosphate levels were high but improving. Henry referenced a WNEP TV news broadcast <http://wnep.com/2018/06/19/study-finds-water-quality-improving-in-bradford-county/> citing a university study of Bradford County, PA groundwater that showed water quality improvement despite numerous hydraulic fracturing sites in the area. [On June 20, Peckham supplied this link to a New York Times article citing a Yale study on the topic: <https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2018/06/18/us/ap-us-gas-drilling-water-quality.html>]. Regarding the PA House of Representatives hearing on the DRBC fracking ban, Henry said Ned Lang, Tom Shepstone and Steve Tambini testimony is available on Youtube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiU_GVUKudw. Lang's video documentation of Barnes Landfill leachate overflow can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CT7k32tpQE>.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Jeffer, seconded by Greier, to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Linda Drollinger, 06/21/18