

**Upper Delaware Council
PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
March 24, 2026**

Committee Members Present: Larry Richardson, Jeff Dexter, Al Henry, Aaron Robinson, Harold Roeder (Zoom), Ginny Dudko, Michael Keller (Zoom), Cathleen Breen (6:49pm)

Committee Members Absent: None

Staff: Laurie Ramie, Kerry Engelhardt, Stephanie Driscoll

NPS Partners: Carly Marshall (Zoom, 6:43pm)

Guests: Bill Dudko

The UDC’s Project Review Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 2026. Chairperson Richardson called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Approval of February 24, 2026 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Henry seconded by G. Dudko to approve the 2/24 meeting minutes, carried.

Resources and Land Use Specialist Update:

DRBC Dockets – There were no projects in the State of New York listed on the DRBC’s Notice of Applications Received in March.

Town of Cochecton

97 Sand & Gravel LLC – Engelhardt said we were copied on a permit renewal for a sand and gravel mine in Cochecton, received today. She will review to ensure that no Substantial Conformance review is necessary. Richardson said the applicant obtained a variance years ago. Engelhardt said she will still take a look. Ramie said that the permit renewal, which includes a change of conditions, was sent to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway today too due to the location along NYS Rt. 97.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Projects

DRBC Dockets – There were no projects in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania listed on the DRBC’s Notice of Applications Received in March.

Open Substantial Conformance Reviews

Project ID	Project Name	Municipality	Action	Status
2026-01	Open Space & Recreation Plan, and Natural Resources Inventory	Tusten, NY	Local Plan Review	Letter recommending substantial conformance sent to NPS 3/19.
2026-02	Summer Recreation for Children	Lackawaxen, PA	Class II – Conditional Use Permit	Letter recommending substantial conformance sent to NPS 2/6.
2026-03	Callicoon Riverside Park	Delaware, NY	Class II – Governmental Applicant	Letter recommending substantial conformance sent to NPS 3/6.
2026-04	Highlands Salon	Tusten, NY	Class II – Special Use Permit	Letter recommending substantial conformance sent to NPS 3/6.
2026-05	Keller Williams	Tusten, NY	Class II – Special Use Permit	Letter recommending substantial conformance sent to NPS 3/6.

Additional Comments:

- Engelhardt said she plans to reach out to the Town of Lumberland regarding The Outpost. Last we heard was that they were not compliant.

2. Richardson said that the Cochection Pumphouse will be coming before the Zoning Board of Appeals on 4/1. It appears the previous occupant never got the correct permits. They had a permit at one time for a food cart on the side of the road and allegedly never received any other type of permits. There are issues where the new owners want to have parking and a septic tank, and a well that may be on railroad property. B. Dudko said the well may have served the pumphouse at one time. Engelhardt said this came up at the meeting with Sullivan County Planning she had this month. We reviewed the Cochection Pumphouse when they wanted to put additional buildings up. She’s surprised this permit issue didn’t come up then.

3. Ramie said she read in the *Sullivan County Democrat* that the Delaware Valley School in Callicoon had been sold. It has changed hands multiple times over the years. The new owners haven’t decided what they’re doing with it yet, according to the article. Henry asked who bought it? Ramie said a development company.

4. Henry asked if PennDOT or NYDOT has ever submitted anything to the UDC if they are working in a stream? If the general public was working in a stream, someone would want to know. PennDOT is currently working on the stream by Peggy Runway Rd. Over the course of the past month, PennDOT has put boulders across the stream. Have they submitted anything for review? Engelhardt said we only get things ahead of time if they are going to do something like replace a bridge. Dexter said the bridge there appears to be sinking. Henry said that’s what PennDOT is working it. He was curious, since if we saw someone else doing a project like that we would have reviewed it. Ramie said we can inquire about it. Richardson said we could ask the NPS if they’ve been advised? Marshall said she will look into it.

FY 2026 Technical Assistance Grants

Final project completion is due August 21.

Applicant	Project Description	Award	Project Status
2026-01 Town of Tusten	Zoning Revisions	\$3,000	Mid-term progress report submitted
2026-02 Town of Delaware	Callicoon Crosswalk Study	\$3,000	Project Completed and award check issued
2026-03 Damascus Township	ADA Website	\$3,000	Mid-term progress report submitted

New Business:

Substantial Conformance Review 2026-06: Natural Nail Salon (Shohola): Engelhardt said that Carleen’s Natural Nails in Shohola has obtained a Conditional Use Permit to put a nail salon in an existing building on Richardson Ave. The location was previously an art gallery and prior to that a real estate office. Robinson said that the applicant got approval from Pennsylvania and it ultimately comes from there since it’s for cosmetology/esthetician. The building inspector said it was a very easy approval; the applicant installed all new equipment in the space. Engelhardt said she saw some posts on social media and the space looks very nice. G. Dudko asked where this salon is? Robinson said it’s in the old firehouse next to Hageman’s Bait and Tackle. Engelhardt said on tax maps it lists the location as Shohola Township property and it doesn’t pay taxes. Robinson said the property was reverted back to previous ownership when the town took over the schoolhouse. Engelhardt said within the Land and Water Use Guidelines of the River Management Plan, retail establishments are defined as commercial development that sells goods or services. That definition fits this application and is a compatible use in hamlets. We have not received any proposed signage. She feels this business is appropriate in this setting as the use is not more intense than neighboring businesses. She recommends a finding of substantial conformance to the River Management Plan. A motion by Henry to recommend the Natural Nail Salon in Shohola Township conforms to the River Management Plan be sent to the full council, seconded by G. Dudko carried.

Substantial Conformance Review 2026-07: Zoning Ordinance Revision (Lackawaxen): Engelhardt said she found this listed in one of the local newspapers and wasn’t able to get the proposed ordinance until yesterday. There isn’t a lot to the revision; they are adding standards to an existing conditional use in the Neighborhood Development District (ND), “building, contracting and related businesses.” The revised ordinance will refer to the building

standards in Section 534 of the Lackawaxen Zoning Ordinance. This specific section currently refers to contracting businesses and trades in the Rural District (RU) District. Lackawaxen's attorney said the intent is for everything in Section 534 to apply to this conditional use in the ND district as well. This seems to have been revised because of an application for a Conditional Use Permit in the ND District with a contracting business that wanted to establish a contractors yard. There have been conversations with the Planning Commission and they wanted to make sure this resident would be setting up the yard in accordance with this section of the ordinance. There was at least one person at the public meeting who wasn't thrilled about the new ordinance and said people don't want a business like that as a neighbor. However, it is already a Conditional Use and allowed. The minimum lot size is 5 acres, with this lot being around 10 acres. The township is not adding a Conditional Use, just adding more standards for the existing. She doesn't believe this brings the township out of substantial conformance. Marshall said she looked at the conditions added and nothing looked like it would be a conflict. A motion by Robinson to recommend that Lackawaxen Township's Zoning Ordinance revision substantially conforms to the River Management Plan be sent to the full council, seconded by Henry, carried.

3/17 Meeting with Sullivan County Planning Department: Engelhardt said she and Marshall met with the Sullivan County Planning Department staff on 3/17 to talk about procedures and to make sure the UDC/NPS is kept in the loop with projects in the corridor that require a 239 Review and vice versa. G. Dudko asked what a 239 Review is? Engelhardt said a County Planning Review. Ramie said it references General Municipal Law 239. Engelhardt said they each discussed what was going on and that's when Sullivan County Planning mentioned happenings with the Cochecton Pumphouse. They asked if the UDC/NPS were aware of the dams in the river corridor. She plans to follow up on that. Sullivan County Planning told them about trainings; in NY you are required to get 4 hours of educational training if you serve on a Planning Board. Sullivan County Planning is offering in-person courses that are fairly popular. Engelhardt plans to check those out. They are currently working on developing a county wide Comprehensive Plan. They planned one in 2005 that never got adopted. They also learned that bat nesting season starts on 4/1; Sullivan County Planning is planning to take some dead ash trees down at the Callicoon Riverside Park before bat nesting season. Richardson said that previously, Sullivan County tried to do a county wide Groundwater Survey that mapped out aquifers in the region. Unfortunately, some people thought it would force people to pay for metered water from their well, so it was never done. He thinks it's a great idea and something the county should pursue. Sullivan County Legislator Cat Scott said the county is looking into doing that again, and Engelhardt confirmed that that was discussed as well.

Update on 2025 Annual Enforcement Review: Engelhardt said she will request data from her updated list of recipients for 2025 code enforcement activity.

Other: Robinson said that Shohola reviewed its well ordinances separate from zoning which was around 20 years old. Over time, there have been some issues that pop up. The Planning Board reviewed it and decided to make a couple of changes. One of those was that for some reason the ordinance called for a 10-foot setback off a property line. Setbacks are governed more by the pollution sources, not the lines. Engelhardt asked if that was to make sure it's 20-ft from another well? Robinson said the distances they are concerned about are between a well and septic. The setback requirement has been necessitating many variances on smaller lots. That process is expensive for the applicant. The supervisor advised the review and came up with minor changes, deciding to change the setback to 0' which does not contradict the Pennsylvania state standard. Instead of going through an expensive process, the applicant can come in and state their case informally. Robinson asked if this something the UDC should review? Engelhardt said yes, if it is an ordinance that affects property in the river corridor. Robinson said they planned to discuss it at the next Supervisors meeting. He will check with Shohola's attorney Jason Ohliger since he isn't exactly sure of the protocol. If the ordinance is ready, he'll have him email it to Engelhardt. Richardson asked if Shohola changed the setback for a well to 0'? Robinson said only on a boundary that isn't affected by roadway, driveway, etc. Richardson said you can make a case on why it's good to have a setback. A case in Sullivan County was when an old farm had a well close to a boundary. New people moved in and put animals on the property that turned out to be intensive. They made a mess and polluted the neighboring existing well. It cost the homeowner over \$3,000 to put in a purification system. Robinson said in Shohola if there is a change in use, they need to come before the Planning Board who would pick up on the well and would make sure activity is farther than 10 feet to protect water quality. Henry said he just looked it up quickly, and in Pennsylvania it needs to be 10-feet from a property line; that's what PA code says. He showed Robinson. Robinson said he would look into this. Shohola got their information from the DEP website.

G. Dudko told Marshall that the Roebling Bridge seems to be separating from the road on both sides, causing a massive “bump”. They may have to put up a temporary caution sign. Marshall thanked G. Dudko and said she’d ask Facilities Manager Jessica Weinman about it.

Old Business:

Revised Annual Review of Enforcement Programs 2023-2024: Engelhardt said she went back through Lackawaxen and Westfall’s permits with a fine tooth comb. She thanked Marshall for pointing out discrepancies in the numbers. In going through the list from Lackawaxen, there were short term rentals included in building permits, so she took those out. There is a decent amount of new residences, decks, and work being done on the inside of homes. At the top of page 9 is the number of building permits in 2024 including for the Summer Recreation for Children in Lackawaxen we just reviewed at the last Project Review meeting. They replaced 8 bunk houses, updated bath houses, and made new sewage connections. She has driven by and could see some of the new buildings there. In Westfall, there was nothing in the corridor at all. She also updated the tables and double checked all the math. G. Dudko thanked Engelhardt for all her hard work. Engelhardt said some municipalities are easy like Lackawaxen who send projects in the corridor, while Westfall sends everything. A motion by G. Dudko to send the final Annual Review of Enforcement Programs 2023-2024 to the National Park Service as per our Cooperative Agreement requirement for approval, seconded by Henry, carried.

AI Data Centers Information: Engelhardt said she attended a workshop by Penn State Extension at the Training Center in Pike County. They plan to have a lot more webinars and workshops related to various aspects of AI itself. This was a one-hour presentation to a packed room. They opened up by stating they would stay as neutral as possible, and that you “can’t put a genie back in the bottle”, meaning they are here now so how can we deal with it? When you think of data centers and how terrible they are going to be, you don’t realize they exist on a whole scale of sizes. They range from large facilities on 20-40 acres or micro facilities under 5,000 square feet. Micro facilities exist in buildings and places you need a small, localized facility. We talked previously about not worrying about data centers in the river corridor because of their dimension needs, but you in fact may be able to fit a micro facility here. But, if it’s not big then maybe it’s okay? The UDC needs to take a position on this. The presentation was given by Penn State, so it was more Pennsylvania-focused. They talked about how Eastern PA is an energy-rich area along with the Appalachian region, which is second to Russia in energy production due to natural gas reserves. Data centers on smaller scales will be in urban areas, with a lot of larger centers in rural areas which have cheap land and an abundance of water. During construction they can generate 100s-1,000s of jobs, but a lot are specialized so they wouldn’t be hiring locally. Operationally, they would have a few people located at the facility long term, but tech support generally wouldn’t be needed on site.

Lordville Road – Response from PennDOT: Ramie said you might remember that former Hancock UDC Representative Katt Judd had brought up concerns about Lordville Rd. (State Route 1023). Ramie had sent a note through PennDOT’s Customer Care Center about it on 4/8/2025. PennDOT said they would look into it. On 3/13/2026 she received a message from a PennDOT Maintenance Engineer stating that they will look into the issue and continue to monitor it. The issue has been marked as “closed”. Henry asked if anyone has seen the condition of the road lately? Ramie said she hasn’t, Judd was referring to the portion in Equinunk, PA.

Other: Robinson asked if anyone had heard that NPS is requiring Skinners Falls Bridge to be rebuilt? He saw a report on Blue Ridge Cable. Engelhardt said the UDC reviewed the letter that Kurnath wrote to PennDOT on that with comments on the revised Planning and Environmental Linkages Study. Ramie said that letter and conversation from the UDC’s meeting sparked media attention.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion moved by Henry, seconded by G. Dudko to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. carried.