

UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES November 2, 2017

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, November 2, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Jim Greier called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and roll call followed.

In attendance: Town of Hancock-Fred Peckham, Town of Fremont-Jim Greier, Town of Delaware-Harold G. Roeder, Jr., Town of Cochecton-Larry Richardson, Town of Tusten-Susan Sullivan, Town of Highland-Debra Conway, Town of Deerpark-Ginny Dudko, Damascus Township-Jeff Dexter, Berlin Township-Alan Henry, Lackawaxen Township-Doug Case, Shohola Township-Aaron Robinson, State of New York-Bill Rudge, Delaware River Basin Commission-Clarke Rupert, National Park Service-Kris Heister. Staff in attendance: Executive Director-Laurie Ramie, Resource Specialist-Pete Golod, Secretary-Cindy Odell. Absent: Town of Lumberland, Westfall Township, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Media: Dave Hulse. Guests: Carla Hahn, Antonia Price, Dr. Claire Jantz, Jim Barth, Roger Saumure.

Presentation on “DRB2017: Project Summary and Next Steps” by Dr. Claire Jantz and Antonia Price of Shippensburg University’s Center for Land Use and Sustainability (CLUS): Greier introduced Jantz and Price. Jantz noted that the DRB2070 project was funded by the William Penn Foundation to forecast land use change, particularly urban land use change, out to 2070 for the whole Delaware River Basin. She provided a brief overview of what the Center for Land Use and Sustainability does, noting that they are housed in the in the Department of Geography and Earth Science but they engage with faculty and students across campus. Jantz said that the CLUS does a lot of grant-related work, continuing and professional education, and outreach and student engagement. She shared information of some of their recent accomplishments including the completion of the Delaware River Basin Project just this past summer for which they are still in the “roll out” phase. As part of this project, they focused on the three areas of mapping, modeling, and monitoring. They’ve created, through cooperation with partners at the University of Vermont, a high-resolution land-use/land-cover map for the entire Delaware River Basin that is consistent across the whole basin.

Price stated the project was a complicated one with much data going into it and also included a lot of community feedback and outreach. She said a series of workshops was conducted to determine what people saw as strengths and weaknesses in the Delaware River Basin. She provided details of the workshops, one of which was held here at the UDC office. Price said it was really great to have that stakeholder involvement because their goal with this project is to make sure that the products are relevant and useful for everyone that is going to be using them. She explained what was done with the information gathered at the workshops and through an on-line survey, and showed several slides of what participants saw as development catalysts, protection catalysts, and future scenarios. Price explained how alternative land cover scenarios in the Delaware River Basin were developed. Information on the three scenarios that were developed - Baseline/business as usual; Alternative 1 – growth along corridors (“sprawl” with greenfield development); and Alternative 2 – growth in historic centers (“conservation” with infill and land protection) - can be found on their website www.drbproject.org/products. Price noted.

Jantz noted that from all of the work, they were able to release a series of data products including the High-Resolution Land Cover Data. From the modeling work, there are a series of ways to access and

interact with the data, she added. For GIS professionals, the data files can be downloaded from the website. There is also an ArcGIS online tool for people with little to no GIS experience. That is available at <https://arcg.is/IneLqS>. She said they also interfaced with the Academy of Natural Sciences because they've developed what they call a Stream Reach Assessment Tool. This is another on-line visual tool that includes a lot of other data about water quality. It is available at www.streamreachttools.org. Jantz showed several slides of snapshots of what their data depicting Modeled Land Use in 2070 look like and explained them to members.

Jantz said they continue to work across the Delaware River Basin. She said they have a new grant with the William Penn Foundation to look at climate change and land use. She provided some detail of the work that will be done.

Jantz reported that they've done some work looking at energy infrastructure and renewables in the Delaware River Basin in response to some new literature that's now indicating that energy infrastructure is going to be a major driver of land use change. She showed slides of solar potential, and the mapping of pipeline and transmission infrastructure and energy infrastructure units (turbine locations, electric power plants, electric generator units and electric substations).

Jantz said they continue to develop the online GIS tool for project review and provided a status update. She said they will return early next year to provide a more comprehensive update on the GIS tool project.

Henry asked who will have access to the GIS tool. Hahn replied the intention is for the GIS tool to be available to the Upper Delaware Council staff, the towns and townships, and the National Park Service.

Greier thanked Jantz and Price for their presentation.

Approval of October 5 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Peckham seconded by Dudko to approve the October 5 meeting minutes was carried unanimously.

Public Comment on the Agenda: None

Committee Reports: Committee reports were provided based on the meeting minutes. They were: October 17 Water Use/Resource Management by Peckham, October 24 Project Review by Richardson, and October 24 Operations by Greier.

Status Reports

Delaware River Basin Commission: In opening, Rupert noted that on this date 56 years ago a ceremonial signing of the Delaware River Basin Compact was hosted by President John F. Kennedy at the White House. He shared President Kennedy's remarks which were, "Today's formal signing of the Delaware River Basin Compact is a significant event. Its significance lies in the unique character of the Compact and the great hope for comprehensive plans for full and effective development of the Delaware River Valley. The highly industrialized character of the Basin and the heavy population concentrated in the region presents a real challenge to the Commission in its efforts to devise a water resource program suited to the area's needs.

Included within the Commission's jurisdiction is the control and development of adequate water supplies, pollution control, flood protection, watershed management, recreation, hydroelectric power and the regulation of withdrawals and the diversion of water.

I am designating the Honorable Stewart L. Udall, the Secretary of the Interior, to be the Federal representative on the Commission. I know he will work with and have the counsel and cooperation of the many departments and agencies of the Federal Government concerned with water and resource development. I am sorry he is not with us today, but as you know, he is out of the country in Japan. He has, however, expressed his willingness to serve in this capacity, and I know he shares the optimism of the four States concerning the future of the Delaware Basin.

We are glad to join with Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania in this bold venture. The task set for the Commission will not be easy to achieve, but we are confident that the cooperation that has brought forth this Compact will endure and that, working together, real progress can be made for the people of the Basin."

Rupert referred to the hydrologic report provided in members' packets. He noted there has been a lot of rain since the report was last updated and stated that the current combined storage for the New York City Delaware River Basin Storage is at 70%. He provided details on recent precipitation patterns and totals and said the gage at Montague was measuring 6,500 cfs at noon. The median is 2,700 cfs and the mean is 4,000 cfs, he added for comparison purposes.

Rupert reported that the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold its next regularly scheduled public hearing on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 and its next regularly scheduled business meeting on Wednesday, December 13, 2017. Both the public hearing and business meeting are open to the public and will be held at the Washington Crossing Historic Park Visitor Center, 1112 River Road, Washington Crossing, Pa. More information on these meetings is available on the DRBC website. He added that Natural Gas will not be a focus of the November 15 meeting.

Rupert stated that at the September 13 business meeting, the Commissioners approved a resolution directing the Executive Director of the DRBC to prepare and publish for public comment a revised set of draft Regulations to address Natural Gas Development activities in the basin. Staff is working diligently on having this done by November 30th. He told members to look for this information to be posted on the DRBC website.

Rupert advised members that they can sign up to receive via email periodic DRBC-related information and updates on different topics of interest by going to the DRBC website at <http://www.nj.gov/drbc/contact/interest/>.

Peckham asked if there will be public hearings once the draft regulations are published. Rupert said all the details will be laid out at the time the draft regulations are released. Peckham said he hopes a public hearing will be held in the Upper Delaware Region. Rupert told him there will be.

Rupert reported that the DRBC is hosting a drive to collect clean, gently used coats, hats, scarves, and gloves until Dec. 15. The donated warm clothing will be given to the Rescue Mission of Trenton. Additional information on this drive is available on the website.

Richardson stated that some of the local town officials have expressed frustration with the regulating and permitting procedures for their sewer plants. He said their frustration is that they say that the plants are regulated by New York State, but the plants require additional review by the Delaware River Basin Commission along with substantial permit fees beyond that. These town officials are questioning where the DRBC gets the authority to oversee these plants that are regulated by New York State. Rupert noted that the authority would come from the Delaware River Basin Compact and added that he does not work with the permitting side of the Commission. He said there is coordination between the DRBC and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation through the One Process/One Permit Program which is intended to promote close collaboration and enhance administrative efficiencies between DRBC and the four basin states (Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania) while ensuring that equal or better environmental outcomes are obtained. Rudge echoed that there is coordination between the agencies and it is his understanding that DEC consults with the DRBC before a SPDES permit is issued for the plants. He is unsure why there would be an additional regulation requirement. Rupert and Rudge said they will look into the authority for the DRBC to regulate and charge fees for municipal sewer plant permits beyond state fees and report back.

Sullivan said she recently heard that the DRBC was going to re-calculate the amount of water in the Delaware River Basin system. Rupert said he is not aware of such an examination taking place, but he will look into that and report back. A brief discussion about the New York City Water System of which the Delaware System is only a part took place. Rupert noted that New York City gets about half of their water from the Delaware System and the other half from other systems. A discussion about the population served by the Delaware River Basin took place. Over 15 million people rely on the waters of the Delaware River Basin. The 15 million figure includes those that live within the boundaries of the Delaware River Basin and about seven million people in New York City and northern New Jersey who live outside the basin. Golod noted that he has not heard anything at the recent meetings he's attended or read in any literature that talked about any type of re-calculation of the Upper Delaware Reservoirs.

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation: Rudge said that he checked on the DEC's response to the UDC's request to the Commissioner for state funding. He was told they are working on it.

PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources: No report in the absence of Representative Tim Dugan, however, Ramie provided an update at Dugan's request. He said, "As for Commonwealth news, a budget with spending plan has essentially been passed. It seems that everyone in Harrisburg is working to figure out the details now. DCNR has basically maintained a cost-to-carry budget for FY2017-18; no major increase or decrease."

National Park Service-Upper Delaware: Heister said work continues on the Park Service's Annual Report for FY 2017.

Heister reported that they have received the certification for the Planner position. There are ten applicants that they will be able to consider. She hopes a Planner will be a great addition to the team.

UDC Executive Director's Report: Ramie reported there is an offer to meet with the Regional Manager for U.S. Senator Pat Toomey at his district office in Wilkes Barre, PA on Thursday, November 16 or Friday, November 17 mid-morning. Dexter stated that Damascus Supervisor Steve Adams is interested in attending the meeting. Roeder and Henry expressed interest in going. Ramie shared a list of topics that would be covered and said that others are welcome to attend. She asked to let her know in advance if anyone else plans to participate. Henry suggested sending advance material on the Council to the Senator's aide. Ramie said she will do that.

Ramie said we are arranging an informal workshop to discuss the partnership between the UDC and the Park Service. She noted that Superintendent Heister is open to the idea. Ramie said we'd like to develop an agenda for this workshop and asked members to submit specific topics of interest in order to guide the discussion. She added, as stated in the UDC's letter to Superintendent Heister, "The desired outcome of the conversation is to agree on mutual goals to move forward in a mission-oriented atmosphere of respectful productivity, with a clear understanding of authorities, administrative roles, the most effective communication strategies to meet our internal needs, and ideas to strengthen our external relationships with the river valley community at large." Ramie said this workshop would be by invitation, since it is not an official meeting, on a date to be confirmed.

Ramie reported that we don't have approval yet of our FY 2018 funds and as a result, are operating on our unrestricted funds. She provided the amount spent on our October bills. Regarding the state funding project, Ramie said we have not received any additional support letters beyond the one from the Town of Delaware. Greier asked that all New York town UDC representatives check on the status of support letters for the UDC's request for inclusion in the NYS DEC 2018-2019 budget.

Ramie said she participated in a conference call on Tuesday, October 31, arranged by Steve Schwartz from Equinunk to discuss the possibility of organizing another Upper Delaware BioBlitz in 2018. The two-day event brings in scientists to document the diversity of the ecosystem at a particular site by conducting counts of living things for 24 hours then bringing in the public on the second day to learn the results and take part in programs. BioBlitzes have been held in 2013, 2014, and 2016. The first year the event was held at a property in northern Wayne County and the last two times were at the Ten Mile River Scout Camp in the Town of Tusten. Ramie reported that the consensus of the participants on the call was that the event is a worthwhile one if funds can be raised (estimated minimum budget is \$7,500) and a site can be located. She said that this year the group would like to go back to Pennsylvania and are accepting nominations for sites. The proposed weekend of the 2018 BioBlitz is June 29 to July 1 either on Friday and Saturday, or Saturday and Sunday. Ramie read the site selection criteria of "must haves" and "nice-to-haves" and said the deadline for applications is November 30th. Henry suggested that the number of past attendees be made known to anyone considering hosting the event. Golod stated that the 2016 BioBlitz was a "top-notch" event. Ramie said that nomination forms are available in the UDC office and will be posted to the Upper Delaware BioBlitz website at www.upperdelawarebioblitz.com. Sullivan suggested contacting the Delaware Highlands Conservancy for potential interested landowners. Ramie said the DHC is part of the Steering Committee.

Ramie referred members to the November calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities and Deadlines. She noted that the audit team from Eckersley & Ostrowski, LLC will be in the UDC office on November 6 & 7; the UDC office will be closed on November 10 & 23 in observance of Veterans' Day and Thanksgiving; and Golod's birthday on November 15. Ramie reminded members that the December 7 UDC meeting presentation will be "Shale Gas Development and Water Resource Considerations in the

Susquehanna River Basin” by David Yoxthimer, who is an Extension Associate with the Penn State Marcellus Center for Outreach and Research. He has asked for questions to tailor his discussion to our interests. Ramie asked members to submit any advance questions to her to provide to the speaker. She said she will be issuing a news release with wider circulations than the monthly meeting notices regarding the presentation.

Ramie reported that Tony Ritter had shared news that Bucknell University will host the 12th Annual Susquehanna River Symposium, "The Spirit of Two Great Rivers: The Susquehanna and the Delaware," on Nov. 10 & 11 in the Elaine Langone Center. The event is free and open to the public. No pre-registration is required.

Old Business:

Accept Project Review Committee Recommendation of “Evaluation of Cideries in the Upper Delaware Corridor”: Ramie said that on August 22nd, the Project Review Committee made a motion to recommend this Position Paper to the full Council, however it got caught up in the discussion over how to document these position papers within the River Management Plan and the Land and Water Use Guidelines. In the same way that the Council conceptually adopted the position paper on Renewable Energies Systems, we would like to get it on the record for this position paper. A copy of the “Evaluation of Cideries in the Upper Delaware Corridor” position paper was provided in members’ packets. A motion to conceptually adopt the “Evaluation of Cideries in the Upper Delaware Corridor” position paper was made by Richardson and seconded by Peckham. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

Other: Dave Hulse asked about the outcome of the October 19 conference call with the National Park Service. Ramie said the call was cancelled in favor of offering a written request for information regarding the UDC’s unrestricted fund. She said that letter was received on October 30th. A letter of response back to the Park Service was approved earlier this evening, she added.

New Business:

Appointment of a Nominating Committee for 2018 Officers: Greier appointed the following individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee to produce a slate of UDC officers for the calendar year 2018: Al Henry (Berlin Township), Larry Richardson (Town of Cochection) and Susan Sullivan (Town of Tusten). The Nominating Committee will issue its report at the December UDC meeting, with the election taking place at the January 2018 meeting.

Other: Richardson, as treasurer of the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc., presented the Council with a donation of \$1,200 on behalf of that non-profit organization. Greier accepted the check with thanks.

Public Comment: Jim Barth asked for clarification that 15 million are supplied with water from the basin, and that some live within the basin and some live outside of the basin. Rupert said that 15 million is the approximate number of people served by the basin; that would be ground water and surface water and it would include those living within the boundaries of the basin in addition to those that receive water via the out-of-basin diversion to Northern New Jersey and New York City. Rupert added that the diversion is established by the Supreme Court. Rupert said it is a challenge to come up with a number of people who actually get the water. That is why the DRBC tries to use the number in a general sense. A brief discussion about these numbers took place.

Barth asked Ramie if the UDC will consider holding the December meeting at another venue to accommodate the audience that may potentially show up for the presentation. Ramie said it is our intention currently to hold the meeting at the UDC office.

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder, seconded by Robinson to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell 11/13/17