

Upper Delaware Council
WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
April 19, 2016

Committee Members Present: Pat Jeffer, Al Henry, Fred Peckham, Andy Boyar (7:31 p.m.)
Committee Members Absent: Tony Ritter, Debra Conway
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton (7:05 p.m.)
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Cindy Odell
Guests: None

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Vice-chairperson Jeffer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

A motion by Henry seconded by Peckham to approve the March 15 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business:

Upper Delaware River Geologic Resource Mapping Inventory Project Update: Ramie referred to the handout regarding this project provided in members' packets. The information was received from James R. Leone, Geologist and Museum Scientist, of the New York State Museum and New York State Geological Survey (NYSGS). She reported that early stages of the mapping have begun for Phase 1 of the project. Voluntary cooperation from private land owners will be vital for the success of the project. Local knowledge of the region is invaluable for finding locations with unique geology. Representatives from NYSGS will be reaching out to land owners for their help. Ramie said more information will be offered once it is available. Peckham stated that the presentation by Dr. Andrew Kozłowski, Glacial Geologist and Senior Scientist at NYSGS, at the January full Council meeting was a very interesting one. Henry asked for clarification that this project will be taking place on the New York side of the Delaware River only. Ramie said that was correct.

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway March 28th Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the March 28th meeting of the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway were provided in members' packets for their information.

DRBC Regulated Flow Advisory Committee (FRAC) April 5 Meeting Report: Ramie said that this meeting was discussed at length at the April 7th full Council meeting. Included in members' packets is a copy of an article written by her for *The River Reporter*. She noted that the Decree Party Principals that spoke did not say anything to satisfy those in attendance at the meeting. People were quite disgruntled to learn that there aren't any changes planned for the Flexible Flow Management Plan (FFMP) scheduled to come out on June 1st. There is no unanimous agreement to any changes to the Plan, she added.

Geotourism Stewardship Council April 6th Meeting Update: Ramie stated that a motion directing her to arrange for the UDC's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sign-on to endorse the "Scenic Wild Delaware River" Geotourism project in advance of the MapGuide rollout dates of May 4th and 5th was made and carried at the April 7th full Council meeting. The MOU was received Monday, April 18th, she noted. Ramie said she will sign and return the MOU based on the April 7th motion.

Ramie reported that an update on the MapGuide nominations was provided at this meeting held at the Carriage House in Barryville. 801 users submitted 809 nominations.

At this meeting, members chose a logo design and photos that would appear on banners for the roll out events. Sample itineraries that would appear on the website were developed. Four themes will be included in the itineraries and in a section of the MapGuide that will be called "Local Voices". Those themes will be Arts, Culture, and History; Food, Drink, and Festivities; Outdoor Recreation, Nature, and Conservation; and Small Town life.

Much discussion took place regarding the administration of this program after the grant is completed. Currently 37 members make up the Geotourism Stewardship Council. Their future roles and responsibilities were discussed.

Ramie noted that the local roll out event will take place at the Narrowsburg Union on May 5th at 3:30 p.m. At these events, light refreshments will be offered and the people that have sites that are listed will receive their certificates showing that their site is branded by National Geographic and instructions for how to link to that website through a website badge.

Common Waters April 7th Meeting Update: This meeting was held at the Wayne Conservation District Office in Honesdale, PA. A presentation about the Stream Corridor Management Plan for the Upper Delaware River Tailwaters was offered. This plan focuses on the main stem of the Delaware River below the New York City reservoirs in Delaware County. Having a plan like this in place opens up many funding sources, Ramie noted. One meeting of the Project Advisory Committee has taken place to date. Two interns will be hired for the summer to perform field studies, Ramie added.

Wayne County Conservation announced during the roundtable sharing that they intend to apply for Growing Greener funds to do a similar corridor management plan specifically for the Equinunk Watershed. There are no regulations associated with the Plan, it is purely advisory, Ramie noted. Hamilton questioned Peckham who is active with the Equinunk Watershed Alliance. Peckham told him that John Fletcher primarily leads the organization. Ramie said that Heister announced that the NPS is getting closer to releasing the announcement for the Community/Watershed Planner position for the Upper Delaware.

Water Safety Committee April 8th Meeting Update: Odell said it was reported that the 2016 budget for the committee was approved with the loaner life jacket program postponed until 2017.

Odell stated that Upper Delaware River drowning statistics between 1980 and Feb. 2015 were provided. A total of 67 drownings have occurred. In 64 of those cases, no life jacket was worn and the life jacket came off in the other three.

Two interns will be hired for 2016 with a focus on the Life Jacket Study. NPS staff has been working closely with the Office of Public Risk Management on a visitor "exit survey" to see how effectively the messaging is reaching the target audience.

Advertising initiatives were discussed. Odell noted that a new billboard with the "Wear It!" message has been installed on Route 97 across from the Roebling Bridge. Peckham asked what the current regulations are regarding life jackets. Henry said it has to be a wearable device that is readily accessible. He added that life jackets are mandatory for boaters 12 years old and younger and during certain times of the year and when the water is above a certain level.

The Annual Partners meeting will take place here at the UDC office Friday, April 29th at 10:00 a.m. Odell provided details of the proposed agenda. The committee will look to the partners and liveries for suggestions and recommendations. The committee will meet again on Monday, April 25th in advance of the Partners meeting to iron out details.

Sullivan County Trail Committee April 12th Meeting Update: Ramie said notes summarizing the meeting are included in members' packets. She said a main topic of the meeting was the presentation by Chris Andreola from ADC Studios on the updates to the Trailkeeper website. The upgrades to the site will be available on May 1st, she added.

An update on Sullivan Renaissance grants was provided, Ramie stated. Healthy Communities Grants, which provides funding for projects to enhance and promote the physical and environmental health of communities including trail projects, community gardens, agricultural initiatives, tree planting programs and more, are still available, she added. Ramie provided details on Community Grants awarded to Liberty, Monticello, Fallsburg, Bethel, and Thompson.

Ramie said that a roundtable discussion of how the Committee can leverage/assist/ build on the municipal efforts and what the next steps for the Committee should be took place. She said the consideration of committing county planning staff to developing a county-wide trail plan was discussed. This would be considered if grant funding was not awarded to accomplish this plan.

Ramie said the Committee will look to use and also promote the Trailkeeper website more.

The next Sullivan County Trail Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17th at 3 p.m. in Monticello.

Henry questioned the status of the Water Trail Signage project. Ramie said they are not at the implementation stage of this project yet.

Other: Referring to an email sent by Town of Highland UDC Alternate Deb Conway, Henry noted that NYS DEC has successfully installed the signage near the cul-de-sac at the Highland Access. He added there is still no directional signage to the access from Route 97.

New Business

Review of Draft FY 2017 Work Plan: Ramie noted that the draft Work Plan was included in members' packets, but was also sent out in advance. Members agreed to review the document collectively page-by-page. Ramie stated that the first page now contains information about what time period this Work Plan covers. She noted that anything crossed out in the document is proposed for deletion and anything underlined is to be considered new. Ramie provided explanations for the proposed changes. Henry suggested that #1 under "Pollution Control and Abatement" which reads, "Continue to monitor, and take appropriate action, to resolve any potential issues of concern related to the operations of the Mast Hope Wastewater Treatment Plant in Lackawaxen, PA. (Ongoing)" be left in the Work Plan. He is not sure the issue is 100% resolved and would like for the committee to continue to monitor it. Boyar suggested it could be moved down on the list. Ramie said that task could be left in. A motion to recommend the FY 2017 Work Plan with the revision on page 8 to the full Council was made by Boyar, seconded by Henry and carried.

LWRP Update – RFP for Highland River Access Design: Ramie said this is for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. She wanted to share that Sullivan County is now prepared to send the Request for Proposals (RFP) out to hire a consultant for design and engineering for a river access in the Town of Highland on Route 97. The Highland access is one of six river accesses in Sullivan County considered part of the LWRP. It was considered the one easiest to make improvements to, Ramie added. She reported that Sullivan County received a grant from the New York State Department of State through the Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program to complete the work. Consultant work is expected to be finished 5 months after the contract is signed.

Delaware River Flow and Storage Report: A copy of the April 18th New York City DEP Current Reservoir Levels report was provided in members' packets. Total storage as of that date was 97.9% with Cannonsville at 98.7%. Normal total storage for this date is 98.4%. Members noted that average precipitation for the months of March and April were trending lower than the historical averages.

Other: Henry stated that he wanted to share a safety concern. He spoke of the large pile of debris lodged in the middle of the river below the Narrowsburg Bridge. He feels there are some safety concerns, referring to the large pile as a "strainer". He said he would like the Park Service to look into removing it. Members shared ideas for accomplishing this. Ramie said she will advise the Park Service of the committee's recommendation to remove the debris island that has formed near the Darbytown Access to eliminate a potential hazardous strainer situation for boaters.

Peckham referred to an email containing pictures of the Lordville "driveway" project he received on April 18th from Hancock alternate Katt Judd. He asked Hamilton if someone told him they were putting a house at that location. Hamilton told him that when he and Ranger Kevin Reish visited the site on March 25th, they assumed that was what was happening. He added that upon investigating it today, they found that a switchback has been added and the driveway extends all the way down to a landing by the river which is elevated approximately 15-20 feet above the present river level. Hamilton said that the Wayne Conservation District was not aware of the construction and they were going to investigate it. A section of guardrail was cut out and the driveway is off of a state road. A permit should have been obtained from the state if it wasn't, he added. Peckham said he brought attention to this project located in Manchester Township out of concern for erosion of the road. Hamilton said that if the project is located in the floodway, it is state DEP jurisdiction. Wayne Conservation District is going to investigate and report back to the state. Ramie said that Heister stated that she would provide an update on this and a couple of other issues at the April 26 Project Review Committee meeting.

A brief discussion about the house being constructed on River Road across from Lander's Narrowsburg Campground took place. Hamilton said that Wayne Conservation District did look at that site.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Boyar seconded by Peckham to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell, 4/26/16