



State of Delaware
Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation
89 Kings Highway
Dover, Delaware 19901

Council on Greenways & Trails

April 2, 2015

9:30 am to 12:00

Dover Public Library

Welcome & Introductions

John Martin, Acting Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:35a.m. He invited members and visitors to introduce themselves and identify their group affiliation or agency.

Approval of December 5, 2014 Meeting Minutes

John Martin called for a motion to approve the December 5, 2014 minutes. Mary Everhart motioned to approve minutes, Wendel Cassel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Recreational Trail Users Update

Hiking – Wendel Cassel -- Plans are continuing for the National Trails Day celebration. The Wilmington Trail Club has registered a number of hikes for June 6th on the American Hiking Society web site. The title of the hike is the Tri-State Marker Historic Hike.

The Wilmington Trail Club, the Friends of the WCC Preserve, and other PA, MD, and DE State and private organizations will celebrate the 250th anniversary of Mason-Dixon setting the corner post and dedicate the trail that finally gives public access to the Marker on Nationals Trails Day June 6, 2015. The Dedication Ceremony is scheduled for 11 AM. Hikers carrying the state flags of Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland will converge from all three states and meet at the Tri-State Marker to celebrate this new resource in the White Clay Valley and the people who made it all possible, plus the accomplishments of Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon 250 years ago.

Invitations have been sent to officials and representatives of White Clay Valley civic organizations and clubs; State and Local Governments; State Parks; and other organizations and individuals that have an interest in open spaces and trails.

Delaware Senator Dave Sokola who represents the lands in the White Clay Creek State Park has agreed to pursue a concurrent resolution covering both the Delaware House and Senate acknowledging the importance of the Tri-State Marker and trail and establishing a Mason-Dixon Day by legislative declaration.

PA Representative Chris Ross's office will pursue a similar Resolution in the Pennsylvania House for the Tri-State Marker event.

An article on the Tri-State Trail was published in the February issue of the American Trails Newsletter. <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/volunteer/Mason-Dixon-Line-Trail-MD-PA-DE.html>

Gary Kirk is leading an effort to obtain approval for a pedestrian crossing at Hopkins Road to connect the Tri-State Trail with the trails in the Carpenter Recreational Area. The crossing will be at a new location to improve sight lines and safety. This will require approvals by both Delaware and Pennsylvania State Parks for short dog leg sections of trail.

The WCC Preserve manager has given tentative approval for the dog leg section of trail referenced above as well as the PA portion of the section of trail between the Delaware WCC Nature Center and Arc Corner Road assuming that there aren't any hits on the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI).

We started work on bridges in Delaware portion of southern segment of the Tri-State Trail.

Mountain Biking – No report

Equestrian – Mary Everhart -- In January, Delaware Equine Council President Stan Vonasek, Trails Committee Chairman Mary Everhart and Sussex County Representative Lona Crist, had a meeting with Delaware land managers. The primary purpose of this meeting was to introduce (or reintroduce) members of all teams since new individuals had assumed positions with the equine council. A week after this meeting Stan Vonasek and Mary Everhart met with Secretary Small, Director Savekis and Susan Moerschel. Again, the purpose of this meeting was primarily to explain the mission of the Delaware Equine Council, who we represent and identify ways to benefit equestrians in their use of managed open space.

Beverly Barnett, Delaware Equine Council trail committee member, has been working to improve access for horse trailers in the Brandywine Creek State Park and First State National Monument area. On Monday, March 30 Delaware Equine Council members Barnett, Everhart, Hough and long-time equestrian and hiker Nancy Botella met with New Castle County Special Services staff members Bruce Hunter, Permit Supervisor and Jeff Swift, Property Supervisor. As a result of that meeting, we have identified dates and times when equestrians may apply for a permit to park at Forbes Field. Some details regarding use are still pending. In addition to the Forbes Field area, Ms. Barnett has also identified the following areas where trailer parking can be arranged on a "permission asked/granted" basis: Greenbrier driveway, 4700 Thompsons Bridge Road by contacting Katie Bacher (302-438-8979); Stewart Ramsey's lower field, 404 Ramsey Road by contacting him at 302-540-4680 or 302-477-1499; Thompsons Bridge parking lot at Brandywine Creek State Park where usage rules are clearly posted. Other areas will be explored and include: food court at 307 Rocky Run; Wilderness Canoe barn at 500 Woodlawn Road; and Twin Pines Farm on Route 202.

This Council member will attend the next quarterly meeting of the White Clay Creek Advisory Council and the next stakeholder meetings for the Brandywine Creek State Park trail planning team.

Riding this winter has been limited due to bad weather and poor footing. I am happy to report that conditions have been improving and we are beginning to venture out on the trails again.

DTF Grants – Bob Ehemann

Bob Ehemann presented a DTF Grant Amendment request from the City of Lewes for the trailhead acquisition at Monroe Ave. and Freeman Highway. The original grant was approved in 2013 for \$250,000 contingent upon final library plans to determine trailhead area. The approved plans for the property demonstrate that 1.3 acres is designated for the trailhead. The City requested 50% of the value of land based on a "What if" zoning change. Based on the current appraised value, the fair market value for the trailhead is \$572,000 (1.3 acres x \$440,000/acre). Therefore, the DTF contribution could be \$286,000.

Three options were presented:

- 1) deny request for additional funds
- 2) review and rank amendment request with all DTF applications this fall
- 3) amend the project now by \$36,000.

Motion by Charlie Emerson to approve the DTF Grant Amendment request for \$41,375; motion seconded by Scott Blaier. Motion carried unanimously.

Trail & Pathway Initiative Projects – Division staff

Tri-Valley Trail – multiple alignments are being considered connecting Smith Mill Road to northernmost boundary of the Big Pond tract in Possum Hill. Environmental and cultural resource screening underway. Field review with staff and Mike Ott and Gary Kirk (representing the White Clay Creek Citizens Advisory) will walk alignment.

Auburn Heights Preserve – Matthew Chesser reporting. NVF will become a future state park, name yet to determined. Phase 2 construction will be a 3 mile trail constructed spring 2016. Two bridges under design from Working Bridges, a non-profit. Saves cost over Continental Bridges, provides points of interpretation. Weyerhaeuser or other sponsors have shown interest in sponsoring or adopting a bridge. Need sole source approval to implement this from Office of Management & Budget. \$1.8 million contract for townhouses marketed to active recreationists will be built. Third bridge will connect to Snuff Mill. Fourth bridge, from hill top to Oversee hilltop, approximately 300 feet long, will cost approximately \$900,000.

Assawoman Canal - Bob Ehemann reported that trail construction is underway, the stone base is in place. Expected to be complete in June.

Rocky Run Bridge, Brandywine Creek SP - bridge design is complete, project will be bid this spring.

Castle Trail – Phased trail construction and Lums Pond South Trailhead – Susan Moerschel reported that the remaining Castle Trail (DE portions) components is divided into three projects.

Construction with the marina area will be completed in late 2015 – drainage issues, ADA compliance, sidewalk elements.

5138 feet of trail to be constructed spring 2015; cost \$400K CMAQ funds

6568 feet of trail to be constructed fall 2015; cost and funds to be determined.

A 1.8 mile section from Chesapeake City to the MD/DE line is under construction and completed by the end of May 2015.

Tri-Valley – Charlie Emerson asked that future maps show a connection on the south side of utility substation from Redd Park to the sidewalk along Paper Mill Road.

Trail Ranking – John Martin

A couple of meetings have been held to develop criteria for ranking. The group striving for quantitative basis for decision making. Three categories in ranking: trail demand/need; livability; investment strength. Next steps: add metrics and test ranking criteria. Use for DTF investments, RTP and Bond Bill trail projects. Committee members: John Martin, Charlie Emerson, Gary Kirk, Jim Ireland

Brandywine Creek State Park Trail Plan - David Bartoo

David Bartoo summarized Stakeholder meetings and announced that a meeting would be held in April. Future public workshop date to be scheduled for summer timeframe.

New Business

Council discussed crossing of Hopkins Road, White Clay region, to accommodate the Tri-State Marker Trail. A letter of support to Sec. Cohan and Rep. Baumbach was discussed. Motion by Wendel Cassel, seconded by Mary Everhart, to send a letter of support for crossing of Hopkins Road pending outcome of meetings with DelDOT Traffic engineer Pat Buckley.

Announcements & Updates

Walkable Bikeable Rally – May 7

National Trails Day – June 6

Council meeting – July 10

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Wendel Cassel with a second by Gary Kirk.

Meeting Attendance

Appointed Members

Wendel Cassel
Charles Emerson
Mary Everhart
Gary Kirk
John Martin

Agency Members

Division of Parks and Recreation

David Bartoo, Parks
Scott Blaier, Agriculture
Matthew Chesser, Parks
Bob Ehemann, Parks
Kendall Sommers, Parks
Susan Moerschel, Parks