**NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**35 Years of Service to Improving Delaware’s Quality Of Life**

**“Preserving Delaware’s Natural Areas Today For All Delawareans Tomorrow”**

**NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

September 8, 2016

Rose Cottage

102 South State Street

Dover, DE 19901

9:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

**Council Members:**

Debbie Heaton, Chair

Ted Palmer

John Williams, Esq.

Pete Martin

Christopher Heckscher

**Staff:**

Eileen Butler, Parks & Recreation, DNREC

Matthew Chesser, Parks & Recreation, DNREC

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**I. Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions/Announcements**

Ms. Heaton called the Natural Areas Advisory Council meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. welcoming Council members and staff and asked for announcements.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Heaton asked for a motion to approve the June 9, 2016 minutes. Motion was made by Mr. Williams to approve minutes, Mr. Palmer seconded. Motion carried.

**III. Old Business**

* *Lums Pond Woods* – A summary was provided to Council regarding the walk in a forested wetland portion of the Park that was taken with members of Council and two Park staff back in March. Council discussed the need to follow up with Park staff, with Mr. White to take the lead, to discuss a potential Nature Preserve dedication. Ms. Heaton indicated that she would follow up with Mr. White on next steps.
* *Costco* – Staff provided an update to Council on the request to delist a portion of the Christina River Natural Area. Both Council and program staff provided a response to Secretary Small. Both Council and staff are in agreement that the criteria to delist was not met by the applicant. Secretary Small is still deliberating on the issue.

**IV. Natural Areas Registry**

* *Red Clay Creek Valley Natural Area* – Council reviewed two parcels of land owned by the Delaware Nature Society that are adjacent to the Red Clay Creek Valley Natural Area for inclusion into the Natural Area Registry. The Delaware Nature Society plans to dedicate these parcels as part of the Burrows Run Tract of the Red Clay Creek Valley Nature Preserve. Council agrees that the parcels meet the criteria needed to be included on the Natural Area Registry due to the flora and fauna in and around the area. Mr. Williams made a motion to include the parcels due to the species and Mr. Heckscher seconded.

**V. Nature Preserve Dedications**

* *Burrows Run Nature Preserve parcel additions* – Councildid not take up this issue as the representative from the Delaware Nature Society was not present to discuss the organizations plans for the land. The conservation easement will be discussed at the December meeting.
1. **New Business**
* *Kent County land use review for natural area registry purposes –* Staff performed a

review of areas within Kent County for potential inclusion in the Natural Area Registry. There were only a few locations within the western portion of the County under review. Staff will inquire as to any Forestry plans that may be associated with the areas identified.

1. **Public Comment and Synopsis Reports From Other Councils, Stakeholders, and Partners**
* Staff shared with Council that Parks is working with New Castle County to review

 lands in and around the Frenchtown Woods area, the western side of the County on the

 boundary line with Maryland, for permanent preservation.

* Ms. Heaton discussed the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary’s work in revising the

Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. It will remain as a guide for the area for the next 10-20 years. There will be opportunities for members of the public to get involved in this endeavor.

* Mr. Martin brought up the work that Sussex County is doing to update its

Comprehensive Plan. Working groups are being established to discuss various land use issues that will be used to develop the Plan.

* Mr. Williams commented on the concern over the Coastal Zone Act and the potential for repurposing sites and how such action may threaten the purpose of the law.
1. **2016 Council Meeting Dates/Time**

 December 8

1. **Adjournment**

Ms. Heaton asked for a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:37 am.