

Draft **Meeting Minutes**

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR WHITE CLAY CREEK STATE PARK**

**OCTOBER 24, 2018, JUDGE MORRIS ESTATE**

Persons Present:

*Council Representatives:*

AFL/CIO – Delaware – not represented  
Coalition for Natural Stream Valleys – not represented  
Delaware Audubon Society – not represented  
Delaware Equine Council – Mary Everhart  
Delaware State Sportsmen’s Association – not represented  
Delmarva Ornithological Society – not represented  
Friends of White Clay Creek State Park – not represented  
Mason-Dixon Trail System – Mike Ott  
Omnia Humanitas – Cindy Kranz-Greene  
Silent Knights Soaring Society – Terry Lisansky  
Trail Dawgs – not represented  
Trail Spinners – James Ireland  
UAW CAP Council – Delaware – Bill Foster  
White Clay Flyfishers – Joe Allison  
White Clay Watershed Association – Linda Stapleford  
Wilmington Trail Club – Gary Kirk

*Division Representatives*

Vincent Porcellini – Superintendent, WCCSP  
Matt Ritter – Delaware State Parks  
John Wales – Delaware State Parks

*Members of the Public:*

None signed in.

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I. Call to order. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Chair Bill Foster. Council Representatives and Division Representatives introduced themselves.

II. Review of minutes. Cindy Kranz-Greene read the minutes of the October 24, 2017 meeting and Mary Everhart made a motion to approve them with one edit: correct the location to Judge Morris Estate and not Chamber House.

### III. Old Business

A. Update on general Park activities and questions from Council Representatives. Vincent Porcellini provided a hunting update:

- On October 6, archery hunting of deer started. Two dozen deer were harvested as of the meeting date. A youth hunt will take place November 4. Shotgun season will begin on November 10 and close on November 18. Archery season will continue until December 2. There is still no Sunday hunting in Delaware State Parks.
- Park personnel completed a deer population survey by spotlight beginning one hour after sunset on October 23. Approximately 90 to 100 deer were counted at Deerfield in five hours. Another count will be done on November 6 and data compared.
- There are no plans to allow small game hunting in the Delaware State Parks.
- There will be no managed hunt this year. Last year six deer were shot at Deerfield during the managed hunt.

B. Update on in-progress and planned construction projects

1. Tri Valley Trail Update. Vincent Porcellini and Matt Ritter addressed this topic. The park is waiting on permits from the county and state before doing the last round of paving. Completion is projected in mid-to late-November, after which bathrooms will be installed and finish paving will be done.
2. Group Campground Update. Matt Ritter and Vincent Porcellini walked around the proposed site off of Nine-Foot Road with the trail crew, environmental stewardship staff, and other DNREC groups. There is a historic site near Nine-Foot Road that could be a safety hazard including a slab roof with a hole in it that people could step into. Park personnel are trying to determine how to make it safe. The existing primitive camping site in the Carpenter area is accessed via Wells Lane and requires users to drive past two residences; the new location would be better.
3. Update on Bridge at Nature Center. Matt Ritter and Vincent Porcellini reported that bids are higher than expected, and State Parks Division are evaluating the bids now. They hope to complete bid evaluation in November.

4. Big Pond Update. Matt Ritter said there is no funding to do any work at that site and not big enough interest/need.
5. Tri-Valley Trail, Phase 2, Update. There is no timetable at present. There is a question about moving ahead with Phase 2 when other trails need work. [BY WHO] Rep. Paul Baumbach thought that funding was there for both Phases 1 and 2, but Matt Ritter doesn't think there is funding for Phase 2. Ritter will look into it and report back.

C. Master Plan Update. Matt Ritter reported that there has been no movement on the master plan yet. It is anticipated there will be an effort for DNREC staff and external users to work together to craft a proposed master plan followed by open houses for the public to review it and comment. Park users interested in being part of the stakeholders group should contact Bob Ehernan or Cindy Todd at Division of State Parks. The original master plan previously worked on was never finalized because user groups had conflicting goals. The master trail plan worked on over the last few years was also never finalized.

#### IV. New Business

A. Paper Mill Road culvert and tunnel. Rep. Paul Baumbach reported that the stream culvert under Paper Mill Road between Possum Park Road and Fox Den Road currently used as a connecting trail to Middle Run park will be replaced in April 2019, or possibly in August 2019, by DelDOT. The planned work includes a culvert for the creek only and a separate 8' x 8' box structure for trail users (bicycles and pedestrians) parallel to the stream culvert. Wetland mitigation work will also be done in the area. The work is expected to close Paper Mill Road for 10 days to two weeks.

B. Wayside exhibit. Bill Foster suggested the installation of a wayside exhibit near the intersection of Corner Ketch Road and Pleasant Valley Road building where white clay was mined in the park long ago. Gary Kirk said that he believes that there is already an effort underway to create this exhibit.

C. City of Newark developments near the park.

1. New foot/bicycle bridge over White Clay Creek at Paper Mill Road. Rep. Paul Baumbach provided an update on the new pedestrian and bicycle bridge along Paper Mill Road over White Clay Creek. The bridge will be 10- to 12-foot wide, 130-foot long, designed like Pomeroy Trail Bridge, and allow bicycle and pedestrian traffic to cross the creek more safely than the current sidewalk and bike lane. The projected cost is \$1.7 million (\$1.45 million if overrun provision not included). Funding includes \$1 million of federal and state grants. Newark City Council backed

the addition of city funding; Rep. Baumbach and Sen. Sokola were able to obtain \$400,000 for the project from legislative funds. This bridge will connect park users from Curtis Mill to the Pomeroy and James Hall trails, ultimately connecting to the Tri-Valley Trail.

2. Rodney Dormitory demolition and pond/park development at site. The Rodney complex area was swampy land before construction of the dormitory. With the recent closure of the dormitory, the university sold the site to the City of Newark. The city hopes to get approval from city residents via a bond to fund redevelopment of the site. Plans include the installation of a park and a storm water retention pond that should reduce storm flooding issues in that area and provide recreation.

V. Council Officers for 2018. There was a discussion of potential council officers for 2018. An election will be held at the January meeting.

VI. Items for future consideration by the Council.

A. Master Planning Participation. Cindy Kranz-Greene asked how the Council can get involved in the master plan development process. Matt Ritter said that DNREC is in the process of hiring a planner (Kendall Sommers no longer works for DNREC; Ron Vickers retired). Linda Stapleford commented that survey forms for the public should have a place to enter comments besides the items included on the form. Previous surveys were not designed in a way to capture input of this type; open ended questions could help get better input. Matt Ritter responded that the State Parks will do this. This item will be revisited in our next meeting and should be placed on the agenda.

B. Robinson House Complex and Nature Center. Cindy Kranz-Greene asked about the status of plans for this area. Matt replied that DNREC has a committee to evaluate all possibilities and are looking at the previous draft of the master plan as part of this. Vincent Porcellini added that the committee agreed that this area is where an educational complex should be located. Planning group has only met a few times and the effort is in its infancy. The Park currently uses the Robinson House for a few activities including overflow during summer camps. Development has been envisioned in two scenarios: one with unlimited funding and the sky is the limit; and the second more realistic plan accounting for more likely funding levels. For comparison/example, the Killens Pond nature center that was built more than a decade ago cost \$5 to \$6 million, and there are many obstacles and considerations in planning such as ADA access. The council would like a listing of the members of this planning committee and the projected planning timeline. Council member organizations may also be able to help State Parks by submitting applications for grants. This should be on the agenda for the next meeting.

C. Dates for Upcoming Meetings. The next meetings will be January 23, with a snow day

on January 30; April 24; July 24; and October 23. Vincent Porcellini requested that Kendall Sommers' email address is removed from the minutes and agenda email list and James Wagner's email address is added in her place. It is also requested that Rep. Baumbach and Sen. Sokola receive draft minutes in notification of the meeting preferably two weeks in advance.

VII. Adjournment. Jim Ireland moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM. The motion was seconded by Gary Kirk.

*Notes were recorded by Cindy Kranz-Greene, acting secretary, with supplementary notes by Linda Stapleford.*

Respectfully submitted,

*Peter P. McLaughlin, Jr., Council Secretary*