

**Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues
Haslett Armory, Room 219
June 20, 2019**

Meeting Summary

Committee Members Present:

Drew Boyce, Acting Chair, for Secretary Jennifer Cohan, Delaware Department of Transportation
Connie Holland, Director, Office of State Planning
Anas Ben Addi, Director, Delaware State Housing Authority
Lisa BorinOgden, Deputy Secretary for Secretary Shawn Garvin, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
Michael Scuse, Secretary, Delaware Department of Agriculture
Terry Pepper for Secretary Robert Coupe, Department of Safety and Homeland Security

Others Present

David Edgell, OSPC
Dorothy Morris, OSPC
Miriam Pomilio, OSPC
Stephen Bayer, OSPC
Lacey Hutchison, OMB
Karen Horton, Delaware State Housing Authority
Mike Tholstrup, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Linda Raab, Town of Clayton consultant
Mary E. Debenedictis, Town of Clayton
Chris Rogers, AECOM
Danielle Metcalf, Delaware City
Linda Ratchford, City of New Castle
Rick Ferrell, Retail Market Answer
Jesse Savage, Town of Bridgeville
Richard Grinnell, Town of Bridgeville
Kristen Krenzer, Town of Middletown
Debbie Pfeil, KCI Technologies, Town of Middletown
Kyle Gulbranson, AECOM, Town of Dagsboro
Cynthia Brought, Town of Dagsboro
Don Williams, City of Harrington

Acting Chairperson Boyce opened the meeting at approximately 10:30 am with welcome and Introductions.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Terry Pepper to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Michael Scuse and with no changes noted and no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

New Downtown Development District Applications

Delaware City

Connie Holland gave the staff report for Delaware City's DDD Application.

Chris Rodgers, the consultant working with Delaware City gave an overview of the proposed district plan. Daniel Metcalf with Delaware City represented the City.

Ms. Holland stated her concerns about Delaware City's crime-free ordinance. If designated as a DDD it will need to be repealed/amended. Anas Ben Addi gave an overview of why the Delaware State Housing Authority is concerned with this ordinance.

Lisa BorinOgden stated that DNREC wants floodplain protection to be one of Delaware City's top priority. Danielle Metcalf replied that it definitely was a top priority for the city.

Town of Middletown

Ms. Holland gave the staff report for Middletown's DDD Application.

Kristen Krenzer with the Town of Middletown thanked the committee & state planning office for the opportunity and gave an overview of their plan.

Debbie Pfeil, the consultant working with the Town of Middletown went over the Impact Fee Incentive. This incentive will reduce the impact fees by 75% which will range from an \$8,000 to a \$22,000 fee reduction of commercial and multi-family housing applicant. The town feels this is significant.

Questions:

Director Ben Addi asked who qualifies for the Impact Fee Incentive. Ms. Krenzer answered that it would apply to any commercial of mixed use permits within the DDD. It will also only apply to new permits.

City of New Castle

Ms. Holland gave the staff report for New Castle's DDD Application.

Linda Ratchford gave an overview of their plan, including some of the challenges of keeping a historic town.

Questions:

Terry Pepper asked if the town new the number of owner occupied homes versus the number of rental units versus rental occupied in the district. Ms. Holland suggested referring to the numbers in the application. Ms. Ratchford verified that the numbers were in the plan and that the City had a good mix of both.

Ms. BorinOgden requested that City of New Castle look into energy efficiency for this district.

Director Ben Addi asked if issues from the previous application had been resolved with the shape of the area, and it was verified that it had been resolved.

Town of Clayton

Ms. Holland gave the staff report for the Town of Clayton's DDD Application.

Linda Raab, the consultant for the Town of Clayton gave an overview of their plan noting the impact that the 30 jobs at Atlantic Tractor has on the town. Mary Ellen DeBenedictis represented the town.

Questions:

Director Ben Addi stated that he remembered the first application Clayton submitted when it was mentioned even if they were not given the DDD designation they still planned on moving ahead with some of the implementations and that he was glad to see that they are moving forward.

Director Ben Addi asked if there were any other large employers. Ms. Raab responded that there were not any within the actual district

Director Michael Scuse reiterated the importance of the 30 jobs at Atlantic Tractor.

Town of Bridgeville

Ms. Holland gave the staff report for the Town of Bridgeville's DDD Application.

Jesse Savage with the Town of Bridgeville introduced Rick Ferrell, Richard Grinell and himself. Mr. Ferrell gave an overview of their plan noting that the town had key projects ready to go if designated and that they included the Route 13 parcel as a way to try to encourage people to stop and then visit the downtown.

Ms. BorinOgden urged them to use stormwater studies in their plan.

Drew Boyce stated that the district needs to take into account corridor capacity when developing properties along Route 13.

Questions:

Director Ben Addi stated that if they look to their neighbors, Laurel and Seaford, their districts have moved away from the highways and asked why Bridgeville chose have their proposed district near Route 13. Mr. Savage responded that they were trying to use it as a gateway to downtown and hopes that it will attract more visitors.

Town of Dagsboro

Ms. Holland gave the staff report for the Town of Dagsboro's DDD Application.

Kyle Gulbranson, a consultant with the Town of Dagsboro gave an overview of their plan listing 2 priority projects. Cynthia Brought with the Town of Dagsboro mentioned that the town is working on improving their reputation and will continue to try to get the tax abatement passed.

Downtown Development Applications – Recommendations to the Governor

Delaware City –

A motion was made by Secretary Michael Scuse to recommend Delaware City's DDD Application to the Governor with the condition that they must meet with the OSPC to review their implementation plan and develop consensus on them municipality's next steps to implement the district. In addition, all incentive ordinances and the district administrator appointment must be adopted within 90 days. The City of Delaware City must also work with DSHA regarding the crime-free ordinance so that it is repealed/amended as a condition. The motion was seconded by Terry Pepper. With no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

Middletown –

A motion was made by Director Anas Ben Addi to recommend Middletown's DDD Application to the Governor with the condition that they must meet with the OSPC to review their implementation plan and develop consensus on them municipality's next steps to implement the district. In addition, all incentive ordinances and the district administrator appointment must be adopted within 90 days. The motion was seconded by Secretary Scuse. With no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

City of New Castle –

A motion was made by Secretary Scuse to recommend New Castle's DDD Application to the Governor with the condition that they must meet with the OSPC to review their implementation plan and develop consensus on them municipality's next steps to implement the district. In addition, all incentive ordinances and the district administrator appointment must be adopted within 90 days. The motion was seconded by Terry Pepper. With no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

Clayton -

A motion was made by Secretary Scuse to recommend Clayton's DDD Application to the Governor with the condition that they must meet with the OSPC to review their implementation plan and develop consensus on their municipality's next steps to implement the district. In addition, all incentive ordinances and the district administrator appointment must be adopted within 90 days. The motion was seconded by Terry Pepper. With no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

Bridgeville –

A motion was made by Secretary Scuse to not recommend Bridgeville's DDD Application to the Governor. The motion was seconded by Director Ben Addi. The motion was unanimously approved. It was recommended that they make some changes and resubmit if another round is opened.

Dagsboro –

A motion was made by Secretary Scuse to not recommend Dagsboro's DDD Application to the Governor. The motion was seconded by Terry Pepper. The motion was unanimously approved. It was recommended that they make some changes and resubmit if another round is opened.

Existing Downtown Development District Expansions

City of Harrington

Don Williams with the City of Harrington requested an expansion to their existing DDD to include 5 additional parcels located along New Street, Thorpe Street, and Ward Street contiguous to the existing DDD boundary. The addition of these parcels would bring the Town of Harrington DDD to 77.463 acres out of an allowable 95 acres

A motion was made by Director Ben Addi to approve the expansion. The motion was seconded by Terry Pepper. With no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

City of Milford

Rob Pierce spoke on behalf of the City of Milford to request an expansion to their existing DDD to include 96 additional parcels located primarily in the northwest portion of the district contiguous to the existing DDD boundary. The majority of this area is located in a Federal Opportunity Zone. The city proposed to remove some right-of-way and City owned lands in order to maximize the potential for private investment in the district. The net of the deletions and additions of these parcels would bring the City of Milford DDD to 184.89 acres out of an allowable 185 acres.

In addition, Milford requested to amend their local incentive ordinance. Currently the ordinance requires a minimum investment of \$15,000 to receive local incentives. The proposal is to eliminate the minimum investment threshold so that any investment in the district will receive incentives, which include building permit fee waivers, city water, sewer, & electric impact fee waivers, and full or partial tax abatement.

Secretary Scuse commended the City for the TDR program which is now in place.

A motion was made by Secretary Scuse to approve the expansion. The motion was seconded by Terry Pepper. With no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

City of Wilmington

Herb Inden represented the City of Wilmington and requested an expansion to their existing DDD to include additional parcels located primarily along the North Market Street corridor, known as Brandywine Village. This expansion is contiguous to the existing DDD boundary. There are also a few parcels to be added south of the Brandywine River as well. The city also proposed to remove the publically owned lands in the Government Center in order to maximize the potential for private investment in the district. The net of the deletions and additions of these parcels would bring the City of Wilmington DDD to 249.46 acres out of an allowable 250 acres.

A motion was made by Director Ben Addi to approve the expansion. The motion was seconded by Secretary Scuse. With no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Acting Chairperson Boyce asked for public comment; none was given.

Adjournment

With no additional business before the committee, a motion was made by Lisa BorinOgden to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Michael Scuse with no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 12:11 pm.

Draft Minutes posted to calendar: 7/10/2019

Minutes approved: 9/30/2019

Final minutes posted to public: 10/4/2019