

**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES**

MARCH 13, 2007

MEETING CONVENED 7:00 p.m., City Manager's Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Dentel residing, Steven Beard, Robert Bennett, Jennifer Byrne, Thomas Fruehstorfer, Kurt Phillip, Ajay Prasad, Kass Sheedy, Fred Stiegler

STAFF PRESENT: Charlie Emerson, Parks & Recreation Director

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 9, 2007

Mr. Fruehstorfer advised that the motion made under Item 7 reflected that he made and seconded the motion to approve the green energy purchase. That was corrected to reflect that Mr. Bennett made the motion.

Mr. Stiegler noted that on page 4, Item B. the word fluorescent was spelled incorrectly. Also, in the same paragraph the title for Sandra Burton was incorrect and it was suggested it should read "Sandra Burton of the Delaware Energy Office."

Mr. Bennett corrected page 4, Item E, the word "Lair" should read "Laird." In the same paragraph, Mr. Emerson changed the word "WILMAPCO" to read "Delaware State Parks."

MOTION BY MR. STIEGLER, SECONDED BY MR. PRASAD: THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 9, 2007 MEETING BE APPROVED AS AMENDED.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. VOTE: 5 to 0.

AYE: Beard, Bennett, Byrne, Dentel, Fruehstorfer, Phillip, Prasad, Sheedy, Stiegler.

NAY: 0

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments forthcoming.

3. LEED

Mr. Dentel advised that he completed the LEED incentives proposal and forwarded it to the City Secretary's Office to give to Council. It will be on the April 23rd Council agenda for discussion. At the CAC's April meeting he will provide a draft of his comments he planned to make at the City Council meeting. He suggested contacting people who were interested in this program and urging them to attend the Council meeting.

Mr. Dentel said he served on a County commission to look into green building, and that commission may recommend within the next two or three months making LEED certification mandatory for residential buildings. It was suggested that the members of the County commission be invited to the City Council meeting.

It was noted by Mr. Fruehstorfer that he had spoken to Mayor Funk and Councilman Pomeroy about the LEED program and both were hesitant to adopt a program that would act as a disincentive for development. They preferred offering incentives rather than telling people they had to do something.

Mr. Dentel also advised that he looked at the cost of workshops on the LEED program, and did a rough calculation of how much money would be coming into the green building fund versus how much it might cost to train someone to administer the program. He claimed the City staff would not have to run the LEED certification because that would be done through the U.S. Green Building Council.

4. SIERRA CLUB'S "COOL CITIES" PROGRAM

Mr. Beard had volunteered to contact the City of Wilmington to find out how they complied with the program and finally got to talk to their Communications Director, John Rago who put him in touch with the Commissioner of Public Works. What he learned did not coincide with what he read about the Cool Cities Program. He has a PDF version of the materials he received on this program, along with the City of Wilmington Mayor's Agreement, which he will forward to the members of the Commission for their review.

There was a brief discussion on the Green Tree City program that the City participated in which made the City eligible for grant funding which helped Parks and Recreation manage its tree canopy. The grant has enabled a huge number of trees to be planted in the City. The City has also been able to do a tree inventory of its open spaces.

This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

5. FLOODPLAIN AND STORMWATER REGULATIONS

Mr. Fruehstorfer provided a handout of his revised proposed improvements to the City's floodplain protection & stormwater management code and asked the Commission members for their comments at the next meeting. The main change in the materials was

the front page that he added, a few minor changes in the middle, as well as a bullet he added on the last page of the report.

Mr. Emerson advised that DNREC has put together a committee, the Christina Basin Tributary Action Team, that was addressing a number of the items included in Mr. Fruehstorfer's report. He further advised that the EPA adopted in April 2005 a new standard for total maximum daily loads. The Action Team would be making recommendations to DNREC to meet the new EPA guidelines. Numerous representatives are on the committee including Kelly Dinsmore from the City's Public Works Department. Mr. Emerson suggested contacting Kelly to get a full summary of where the Action Team was with their recommendations. He also suggested contacting Gerald Kaufman, Water Resources, who is very involved with this project. It was Mr. Emerson's understanding that they should be making recommendations in the very near future.

This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

6. A BETTER NEWARK AWARD

There was a discussion about what warranted receiving 'A Better Newark Award.' There was some discussion about the property across the street from the Newark Country Club where the property owner made several aesthetic improvements including the addition of an apartment garage.

Mr. Dentel nominated 116 Manns Avenue owned by Steve and Debbie Hegedus because it was the first house in Newark to take advantage of the green energy program by putting solar panels on the roof of the house.

This award was intended to be given quarterly. There was a time when it was a very important award the Commission gave and it was nice to recognize somebody for the criteria the Commission established. People were recognized for making efforts to their personal property. Mr. Emerson thought it was up to the Commission to decide what they wanted to make it. Ever since the award was instituted, Commission members have wrestled with the criteria for the award.

Mr. Dentel suggested working harder at noticing places that warranted the award to give the Commission a choice when selecting the property to receive the award.

Ms. Byrne will take pictures of 116 Manns Avenue and have them ready for the next meeting.

7. ANNUAL REPORT

The following agreed to provide a summary report to Mr. Dentel:

Steve Beard – Leeds Program

Tom Fruehstorfer – Recommendation re Floodplain Regulations

Jennifer Byrne – A Better Newark Award; Remove of Planning Departments Reports;
Kass Sheedy - Clean Up Day
Kurt Phillip – Adopt-A-Stream
Steve Dentel – Community Day; Green Energy Purchase.

This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

8. REVIEW OF PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORTS RE POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Mr. Bennett referred to the February 21st report that referenced the proposed subdivision of Saw Mill Place on Casho Mill Road. The proposal would be high density but it was an adult community that might help to reduce the amount of traffic. He suggested keeping an eye on this community but noted that any area that included a lot of floodplains had an automatic protection of the floodplains. Mr. Emerson added that if the project was approved by Council, the City would get about 25 acres of open space which included the floodplain area. Mr. Bennett also noted that the plan included preserving the existing historic building on the site. Ms. Sheedy had great concern with the traffic impact on Casho Mill Road and Elkton Road in light of the recent approval of Home Depot on Elkton Road.

Mr. Bennett questioned in the February 21st report Andrew Haines was working with the Christina School District for the consideration of leasing the school district's parking lot on Delaware Avenue. The City has now taken over the school district's parking lot on Delaware Avenue leasing monthly permits only. Fees would be shared between the City and the school district.

9. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

(a) Mr. Dentel suggested that the Commission revisit curbside recycling. The City of Wilmington was now doing curbside recycling as well as the Town of Rehoboth Beach and the City of Dover. Kass Sheedy will contact the City Manager's Office to see what if anything the Commission could do to move ahead with curbside recycling.

This item will be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

(b) Mr. Beard brought up the recent proposals he read about regarding generation plants—wind farms and natural gas. Mr. Dentel did not feel the Commission would have a lot of influence with that proposal because it was outside of their purview. Mr. Emerson interjected that the City negotiated the purchase of energy from energy producers but had nothing to do with how that energy was produced.

(c) Mr. Stiegler brought up the fact that Councilman Markham raised concern about water saving issues and suggested it would be a topic for this Commission to look into sometime in the future.

(d) Mr. Stiegler advised that he attended the public meeting on the reservoir sponsored by Councilman Markham at the Newark United Methodist Church. A question was raised about siltation from the reservoir into the White Clay Creek. Supposedly the initial design of the reservoir contained retention ponds for the silt but was eliminated due to reasons unknown. Mr. Emerson assured the Commission there was no sediment leaving the site and going into the White Clay Creek. He advised there was a solid stand of turf everywhere. Early on there were some problems with erosion but that situation was addressed and repaired and to Mr. Emerson's knowledge there was also a stormwater facility on site. It was suggested that any questions regarding this could be addressed to Roy Simonson, the Water and Wastewater Director. Mr. Dentel assured that no siltation was going into the creek.

(e) Mr. Stiegler said he spoke with Scott Lynch in the Delaware Energy Office who expected to make a presentation to the Commission on the role, mission, and function of their office. Mr. Dentel said he would contact Mr. Stiegler to discuss this further.

(f) Mr. Bennett asked what the status was of the hydrological study to which Mr. Emerson said he was in contact with NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) and was told they were so busy that they did not know when they would get to do the study.

10. Meeting adjourned. Time: 8:40 pm.

Patricia M. Fogg
Secretary

/pmf