

Meeting Minutes
**White Clay Creek Watershed
Management Committee**

April 19 7:00 PM
Franklin Township Building
20 Municipal Lane
Kemblesville, PA 19347

Attendees:

Chuck Barscz
David Hawk
Jake Michael
Fred Muller
Linda Stapleford
Martin Wells

Jessie Benjamin
Louis Kirkaldie
Rick Mickowski
Teddy Price
Kristen Travers
Leon H. Wilkinson

Edna J. Bente
Jerry Kauffman
Dorothy P. Miller
Heather Rose
Andy Urquhart

MINUTES January 13, 2003

→ *The minutes of the January 13, 2003 meeting were read and approved by members present.*

▪

APPROVAL OF FY '04 BUDGET

Linda Stapleford presented a revised FY '04 budget for the \$100,000 from National Park Service (NPS). This is a \$10,000 decrease correcting the September draft budget total to reflect funding NPS may need to direct to the Philadelphia office. This budget allocates \$7500 to Stroud processing of Streamwatch samples and preliminary analysis and \$6000 for a Historic District project, pending plan details. The budget was approved. Discussion then focused on the need for another entity than UD to handle the funds and accounting. Although this means a minimum cost of 5%, it was recognized there is no other choice at the present. Seeking such an entity (River Management Society, Delaware Nature Society, & Stroud Water Research Center were mentioned as possibilities) and permission to enter into an agreement were also approved. Subcommittee chairs were advised this would mean a % decrease in their budget amounts.

ELECTION OF CO-CHAIRS

Nominees from Exec. Subcommittee were Andy Urquhart from Delaware and Jessie Benjamin from Pennsylvania. No other nominations were made from the floor. Andy and Jessie were approved as the new co-chairs. Jerry and Fred were thanked for their able services and urged to continue to participate.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Subcommittee

Kristen Travers reported the planned joint Fish and Wildlife Subcommittee school field trips to Stroud Center are set for May and June. Programs will target a middle school in Avon Grove District, Pennsylvania and one in Christina District, Delaware. Signage language for a map display in both sides of the Preserve is being revised.

Fish & Wildlife

Ed O'Donnell asked L. Stapleford to report on progress of the joint school watershed education outreach effort with the Education subcommittee. These outreach programs complement the Stroud field trips and are also scheduled for May and June. Nine classes will be reached and the program integrates the

watershed stewardship message to the broader school population through a **SMARTYARDS** site at both schools.

The phased flora and fauna studies have begun at upper watershed sites selected by the Open Space subcommittee and others.

Open Space

Jessie reported for Robert Lonsdorf that a meeting had taken place with London Grove Township officials on open space issues. Primary focus was the establishment of a township Open Space Subcommittee and assistance in strategizing how to approach an Open Space referendum. London Grove will hold a May public meeting to raise awareness of the costs associated with development. Londonderry Township is expending some of their Open Space funds to do a Natural Areas inventory. The Subcommittee plans a multi-township meeting in the fall to encourage open space initiatives and facilitate coordination between the townships.

Recreational Trails

David Bartoo was not present; no one was aware of the status of the Request For Proposal for the trail brochure.

HISTORIC DISTRICT PROJECT

Martin Wells gave an overview of the proposed Historic District boundaries within and adjacent to the Preserve and including a Landenberg Loop. The Executive Subcommittee had previously given approval to serious investigation of such a proposal. The State Museum and Historic Commission have already toured the proposed sites and found it very suitable. Martin contacted Bob Wise who submitted a proposal to prepare the nomination over a 15-month period for \$7520. It was emphasized the District itself places no restrictions on the property owners; only township ordinances can do that.

A brief discussion followed of the problems encountered in Franklin Township because of a Historic District Overlay Ordinance. It was concluded that we should proceed with the project pending investigation of the best approach to inform the community and obtaining community support.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REPORT

Section 7 Reviews

DNREC Wedgewood Trail Extension

C. Barszcz reported that previous investigation of this project demonstrated DNREC plans were reasonable given the constraints of the federal funding.

Pike Creek Restoration Project

Biohabitats Inc is the state's contractor for restoration of 3000 linear feet of Pike Creek. Goals include decreasing stream bank erosion, increasing floodplain storage, increasing fish habitat, and establishing a forested riparian buffer. C. Barszcz contacted them and shared his and Jessie Farrel's concerns about the need for a management plan and need for education for the grounds crews.

Mill Creek restoration in Delaware Park Golf Course

C. Barszcz and L. Stapleford met with Delaware Park management, their engineers, and DNREC officials regarding plans for a stream restoration above the former large restoration project. The project proposes to reduce excessive flooding, bank erosion, and stream and course sedimentation. Initial plans for a straight channel and a 4 ft. high and 250 ft. long wall were unacceptable. The meeting was successful. The engineers will forego the wall and redraw plans, recognizing that sewer lines restrict design parameters; they will also re-engineer another small section of stream to create a more natural and stable channel.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Proposed Spring 05 watershed conference

Plans for a spring 2005 White Clay Creek Conference at Clayton Hall were announced. Rick Darke has agreed to be the keynote speaker at a day-long event. The focus is to facilitate coordination among government entities, technicians, conservation groups, residents, and the academic community in protecting the White Clay and to raise awareness among attendees of the watershed's special features (the reason it was designated as a Wild and Scenic River).

Municipal outreach

In keeping with the Management Committee's charge, L. Stapleford has begun making presentations at municipalities and increasing contacts with officials. A presentation was made to London Grove Planning Commission and a workshop is set for Franklin Township in June.

SMARTYARDS Project

Hills of Sullivan participants and Avon Grove Middle School and Shue Middle School received their plants and materials and are in the process of installing their plantings and signs. H. Rose suggested the Committee also share information about organic lawn maintenance in future outreach efforts.

Logo

Mark Deshon, a University of Delaware graphic artist, prepared a series of logo's in consultation with some Exec. Subcommittee members. Four of these were selected to present at the meeting for comments and voting; one design stood out as the favorite among members present. Comments to improve that design were recorded and will be shared with Mark for final design modification.

14 White Clay Creek Drive update

An appraiser was engaged for a second appraisal to submit to the City of Newark, with the understanding they would be under no obligation to purchase the property. This ½ acre property is next to existing parkland that provides passive recreation and floodplain protection. The Coalition for Natural Stream Valleys is paying for the appraisal cost

Bob Cheyne memorials

A memorial draft to post on the website is being reviewed by family members; they are also considering the best site in London Britain Township for a proposed tree planting in Bob's memory.

MISCELLANEOUS

WCC Water Withdrawal Data Base status

J. Kauffman reported that graduate students are tabulating the drawdown from existing and proposed private wells on a subwatershed basis and may have that data by the next meeting. He also announced that UD Ag Field Day is the last Saturday in April.

Outreach Stroud Water Festival

This has shifted from the spring to a fall event and has been revised to focus more on Stroud and the White Clay Creek. Our Committee will continue to participate.

Update on Newark Reservoir

The project is suspended temporarily until a new contractor can be selected. Disagreements arose regarding the design after construction began and a legal battle is currently underway between the City and the original construction firm.

Update on Needham property

This is a London Grove property, purchased by Buster Needham, which has become very controversial in the Township. An amendment to the Agricultural Preservation ordinance was passed by the Board of Supervisors which clarifies language and further restricts the guidelines for placing new (this did not

affect the current Needham property proposal) properties in Ag Preservation. The property was then denied Agricultural Security District status for a number of reasons. These mostly centered around the design submitted in the Conditional Use application. It was felt that developing the property in this way contradicted the intent of the Ag Security District. The Conditional Use hearing was then postponed indefinitely on the basis that the Board of Supervisors' legal counsel felt the application was incomplete. Until the legal matters are settled, no hearing can be held. If the applicant's argument wins out, the application will be considered and the Conditional Use hearing will be rescheduled. If not, the applicant would need to resubmit another application.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM

THE NEXT WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING IS TENTATIVELY PLANNED FOR:

*Tuesday June 8 at 1 p.m. at City of Newark Council Chambers, Municipal Building
220 Elkton Road, Newark, DE 19711*