



MEETING MINUTES

MAY 23, 10:00am-noon

New Garden Township Building, 299 Starr Road, Landenberg, PA 19350

Attendees:

Mike Zuk	Ed O'Donnell	Doug Janiec	Ken Battin
Rick Mickowski	Jamie Fosburgh	Tom Hubbard	Jenny Egan
Shane Morgan	Erin McCormick	Rachael Griffith	Kristen Travers
Melinda Daniels	Ellen Kohler	Martha Narvaez	Beth Burnam
April Schmitt	Tom Coleman		

Approval of February Minutes

New Business

Jamie Fosburgh, Chief, National Wild and Scenic Rivers Northeast Region was introduced to the Committee.

Melinda Daniels, Research Scientist at Stroud Water Research Center presented on a floodplain reconnection project she is working on in the White Clay (just south of the Stroud Center) in West Marlborough and London Grove Townships. The goal is to restore ecosystem functions in an altered watershed. Funding is from the Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program. They will be excavating the floodplain along the east side of the creek, adding additional flood storage potential and wetlands on a parcel of land they own just south of the Stroud Water Research Center off of Spencer Road. They will not be pulling back the streambanks along the length of the channel, just lowering the elevation of the floodplain and reconnecting it to the stream so that it can store more flood water and have more of a connection to the groundwater. Existing wetland is not to be disturbed. This is just one of the tools they are using to restore ecological function in this 8km squared watershed. Other best management practices that have been implemented in this watershed include riparian buffers, level lip spreaders, and the addition of large wood in channel. The project should be completed this fall.

Shane updated the Committee on the proposed cell tower in New Garden Township located at 1151 Yeatmans Station Rd. She indicated that while the township passed a new and improved ordinance prior to receiving a formal application, they were in talks with the company prior to it being passed and may not use the new ordinance language. The plan is for a 130' tree tower. The next hearing is on June 19 at 7pm, then a final hearing will be set for July. Shane indicated that the neighbors have formed a group and hired their own lawyer, and are working with a professor from Johns Hopkins to determine if the cell tower

will have a negative impact on local bald eagle populations. In terms of Wild and Scenic management plan, it seems that the best route is to state a negative visual impact given it's location next to the Preserve and Boundary Line Trail.

Subcommittee Reports

Land Preservation

Erin McCormick provided an update on current Natural Lands Trust Projects.

- Sinclair Morris is still moving forward and they hope to close this summer. The mortgage subordination was approved.
- St. Anthony's is also moving forward. They are currently working on the clean up details and responsibilities. The township and NLT would like to have this settled before signing into an agreement with St. Anthony's..
- Reynolds property is still held up in Orphans' Court, but there is hope that some progress has been made and the township has agreed to allow for more time to settle.
- The two other potential new projects in New Garden Township are still being discussed, but are still in the beginning stages.

Jenny Egan updated the committee on the Hutchinson project which may be selected as the pilot project for the Christina Healthy Water Fund. The farm has an out of date conservation plan, and Jenny is meeting with John Goodall to walk the site in the coming week.

Shane noted that The Land Conservancy of Southern Chester County has successfully acquired grant funding from DCNR to pursue land preservation in the White Clay. The Conservation Easement contains twenty four acres (over two adjacent parcels) with approximately 1200 feet of first order stream along the Middle Branch. Trail easements will be included connecting it to the White Clay Preserve in London Britain Township.

Research and Restoration

Shane and Beth updated the Committee on the Catch the Rain (Green Stormwater Infrastructure) pilot project progress. To date, we've had 25 applicants, gone on 15 site visits and produced accompanying site reports. So far, seven rain barrels have been installed and 1 tree planting. We are still learning and revising as we go to develop a program that works for the geography and people living in the White Clay.

Ellen Kohler updated the Committee on the Christina Watersheds Municipal Partnership pilot project. It is looking like the collaboration may only be between the two boroughs and their surrounding townships, based on need and opportunity for projects. It was noted that some of our townships, London Grove in particular, may have already reached their TMDL requirements based on the new land conversion data. London Grove has had progressive ordinances in place since the nineties. Ellen and Shane will be going out to the Board of

Supervisors meetings throughout June to update them on the project and potential conceptual plan. The plan must go out for public comment this July.

Shane updated the committee on the water quality monitoring to occur this summer into next year. Supplies have been purchased for the bacteria work, and Shane has entered into agreements with Stroud that will provide here with the remote sensors for the three sites in the White Clay. One grant is part of the DRWI and turbidity probes are included, the other grant is with EPA. Both provide the basic Mayfly sensor kit, and additional funds to cover other expenses related to the monitoring.

Shane showed pictures from her recent visit to Franklin Preserve with Rob Daniels and Meredith Mayer of the Brandywine Conservancy, and Greg Gagliano of Red Tail Restoration. The first year of land management has been completed successful. Invasive species removal, vine cutting, and selective herbicide applications, as well as general maintenance of the new planting have created a successful planting and meadow conditions for the new plantings. The tree tubes (with some replanting due to frost heave this winter), tree cages, and tree enclosures have all been successful this first year. Brandywine Conservancy will send an intern out to do a tree mortality count this summer. Shane would like to continue with the management strategy and asked for funding for year two for approximately 144 man hours, and \$1000 in supplies. The committee was supportive of continuing the work if Shane could find the money in the budget to do so. Shane will update the committee and send out a new proposal after reviewing the current budget and possible piecing some funds together from other sources.

Shane indicated that she needed help locating and planning for Delaware projects that the WCRF can be applied to. She suggested we form a WCRF Committee that actively seeks projects and brings them to the table. Doug Janiec made several suggestions and will look into some potential avenues. Once we have some solid suggestions, Shane will schedule a meeting to discuss them and start with planning. Some suggestions from the group at large included: Benthic studies, Using LIDAR (and drones) to classify the forest along the main branch south of the state line and prioritize planting efforts, water fund support, freshwater mussel support, working with New Castle County on public lands. It was also suggested that we use the funding for education programming for Delaware students.

Education/Outreach

Creek Fest Update - approximately 900 people attended despite the cold and the rain. She noted we had some leftover water tumblers available for committee members to take home.

Shane noted they are hoping to complete the interpretive sign for the Newark Reservoir this month. We were waiting for a high resolution picture of the reservoir, but the recent weather conditions pushed back the timeline.

Shane noted that there were hard copies of the 2017 White Clay Wild and Scenic Update available for the Committee.

Jamie Fosburgh gave a brief update on National Park Service status. The hiring freeze is over, but he expects to remain as acting chief for at least a year. Jamie noted that NPS expects the FY17 Budget for Partnership Rivers to remain the same as the Obama Administration's budget, bringing all rivers up to the same funding level. However, a new condition was passed by Congress adding an extra review process to Contract Agreements that are equal to or greater than \$100,000. The goal is to keep our contract agreement at \$99,000 until we see if this new rule sticks and how it works. Because of this there may be some additional NPS funding put into Wild and Scenic River Fellows. White Clay could apply for one of these post-graduate students. Jamie also noted that there would be a PWSR meeting in Westfield Massachusetts this July that Shane would be attending.

The Fourth Quarter 2016 Statement of Financials were reviewed.

Meeting adjourned at noon.