

Upper Delaware Council
PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Aug. 25, 2009

Committee Members Present: Roeder, Shafer, Richardson, Keesler, Peckham, Fluhr, Bowers
NPS Partner: Schultz
Staff: Douglass, Soete, Coney, Ramie
Guests: None

The committee chairperson Harold Roeder Jr. called the meeting to order at 8:48 p.m. A motion by Fluhr seconded by Bowers to approve the July 28 and Aug. 11 committee meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Discussion Items Report

The Discussion Items Report from Soete was handed out for review. Some highlights included:

Tennessee Gas Pipeline 300 Line Expansion Project: Soete received contact from AECOM who is working with Tennessee Gas on the 300 Line project. They are looking to protect an acre of forested wetlands in the Delaware River Watershed, specifically Panther Creek, Walker Lake Creek and Delaware River sub-watersheds in their effort/mitigation process to locate parcels containing forested wetland areas and/or rare species habitat for potential acquisition and protection as part of the 300 Line project. The request was forwarded via Soete's listserv. AECOM explained they are starting the PA DEP and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wetland permitting process and as part of that process, they need to mitigate for temporary and permanent impacts to forested wetlands. The permanent impacts are change in vegetation cover class. Tennessee will restore the wetlands but need to mitigate for temporal impacts, such as loss of mature trees.

New York Regional Interconnect Update: The FERC chairman has responded to Congressmen Hinchey, Hall and Arcuri thanking them for their July 7 letters and stated, "I assure you that the Commission will give the proceeding full and fair consideration as we address the complaints filed by the New York Independent System Operator and the issues raised by NYRI. Your letter and this reply have been placed in the public file for this proceeding, which serves to alert the Commission to the concerns of interested individuals and groups. Because this matter is pending before the Commission, however, I cannot discuss the merits of this case at this time."

The committee was provided with a copy of the letter. The Congressmen had urged FERC to not grant any cost allocation provisions to NYRI.

Natural gas leasing/drilling in the Region Update: The Northern Wayne Property Owners Alliance has posted to their website that “more than 62,000 acres in leases were signed in the last couple of weeks and there are still more acres coming in. Hess has started doing some courthouse work in title clearance. There are more than 2600 parcels to research.”

The draft *New York State Energy Plan 2009* was released in August and includes a Natural Gas Assessment. The draft Plan was prepared pursuant to Executive Order No. 2 issued by NYS Governor Paterson in April 2008, and a final Plan that incorporates public input will be delivered in the fall. In the examples of policy initiatives listed in the Plan, it includes “Encourage development of the Marcellus Shale natural gas formation with environmental safeguards that are protective of water supplies and natural resources.” Public hearings are scheduled on the Plan throughout the state. Those closest to the Upper Delaware River Watershed include Aug. 25 Binghamton; Sept. 15 Albany; and Sept. 24 Kingston. The complete draft State Energy Plan and full schedule of public hearings is available at www.nysenergyplan.com

The committee was provided with the Delaware River Basin Commission’s notice explaining a public hearing will be held on Sept. 23, 2009 to take testimony on the DRBC’s proposed “revisions” to the draft Docket for the application by Chesapeake for a surface water withdrawal for gas related activities. The draft Docket will be available for public review about 10 business days prior to the Sept. 23 hearing on the DRBC website at www.nj.gov/drbc. In order to meet the deadline of Sept. 23 for comments to the Docket’s “revisions”, the Council’s Project Review Committee would need to approve a comment letter at its Sept. 22 meeting.

Bluestone Mountain Estates – Damascus Township: The Damascus Township Supervisors approved a steep road plan for the proposed Bluestone Mountain Estates development, pending approval by Welcome Lake Fire Department officials. The developer is proposing an 11-lot housing subdivision off Plank Road on the mountain overlooking the Delaware River.

Old Business None

New Business

Technical Assistance Grants coming due 9-30-2009: Soete reminded the committee that various TAGs have a project deadline of 9-30-2009 and urged the members to remind their towns/townships to review their TAGs coming due in order to submit the paperwork needed for reimbursement requests.

Amendment to UDC Bylaws, Project Review Committee's right to issue committee comment letters: The committee wished to reinforce that the policy to allow the Project Review Committee to issue comment letters to meet project deadlines as necessary should be an amendment to the Council Bylaws, as proposed by Peckham.

Public Comment None

Adjournment A motion by Bowers seconded by Roeder to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m. was carried.

Carol Coney, Office Manager