

Upper Delaware Council  
PROJECT REVIEW COMM. MEETING MINUTES  
May 26, 2009

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

The committee chairperson Harold Roeder Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:26 p.m. A motion by Shafer seconded by Bowers to approve the April 28 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Discussion Items Report:** The report was reviewed by Soete.

**PPL Susquehanna-Roseland power line project:** PPL held a public hearing in Clarks Summit regarding its proposed power line. About 48 attended. There is some opposition to the line. The new line will have higher transmission towers on existing rights-of-way.

**Natural gas leasing/drilling in the Region:** The UDC staff continues to track many natural gas-related issues and keep others informed through daily e-mails. Mr. vanSwol's remarks at the UDC meeting generated some calls to the UDC office. A DRBC news release handed out at the Water Use/Resource Management Committee meeting indicated the DRBC executive director issued a determination notifying natural gas extraction project sponsors that they may not commence any natural gas extraction project located in shale formations within the drainage area of the basin's Special Protection Waters without first applying for and obtaining commission approval.

Peckham remarked that DRBC was to supplement state oversight, but it sounded like DRBC is taking over state regulatory procedure. Seems DRBC work is duplicating the state process. He wasn't sure how that works under the DRBC Compact. This step by DRBC might delay the gas permitting process.

Martinez offered that DRBC has legislative authority with water and surface withdrawals, and Douglass added that DRBC has the authority to review water quality issues. Peckham indicated the *Times Herald-Record* had a poll and 86% of respondents wanted gas drilling. Keesler felt it was DRBC's mandate to do this oversight. Once the river or water is damaged, it's too late for oversight. Peckham said he had natural gas in his water at home without any gas drilling taking place. They have not found any fracking fluid in well water yet in PA or NYS. Martinez indicated that DRBC's job is to have checks and balances on water quality. Peckham also felt that DRBC was jumping the gun as the NYS DEC has not released for public comment its supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (sGEIS) to cover gas drilling/exploration.

Martinez reported that NPS is looking at where the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act comes into play. Peckham pointed out the River Management Plan allows it. Martinez indicated that the Plan was done 20 years ago and this drilling technique wasn't available at that time. We have to determine is gas a threat or not. Shafer said DRBC has two permit applications at the present time. Martinez felt DRBC could address Peckham's concerns at the UDC meeting in June. Shafer said DRBC could expound on the news release handed out at the WU/RM meeting. Richardson reviewed what the multi-municipal gas task force was doing relative to the UDC grant provided. A consultant was hired to do a roads assessment study and he'll be meeting with the town highway superintendents. Peckham mentioned that the gas companies are looking at doing a maintenance agreement with the towns. Pennsylvania is putting 10-ton weight limits on some of its roads already. That will also affect other trucking industries, not just gas drillers. Richardson noted his town is in talks with Millennium Pipeline regarding repairing the town roads damaged during their project. Douglass mentioned that he had the Robson well drilling going on about 1.5 miles from his home. They are drilling into the Oriskany sandstone about 10,000 feet down. There is noise all the time. They've been drilling about 3 to 4 days. Peckham added when they're drilling, they go 24/7.

**NPS Mongaup Visitors Center:** Martinez said NPS is working with NYS DEC regarding temporary use of the DEC Mongaup access for a visitors center and also following up with Alliance Energy regarding their property across the road. NPS will use their Byway grant to prepare the DEC site. Peckham

wondered if the land for the welcome center will become part of the limited acreage NPS is allowed to purchase in the River corridor. Martinez noted it is not purchased, but would be donated land.

**Old Business** None

**New Business**

**TAG 2008-06, Fremont:** The committee received a request from the Town of Fremont to extend its TAG project, update zoning laws, for six-months. Following discussion, a motion by Bowers seconded by Shafer to approve the extension was carried.

**TAG Program 2009:** It was announced that a news release was issued and information is on the UDC website for the 2009 Technical Assistance Grants Program. The deadline for grant applications is July 31, 2009. UDC members were advised to notify their town/township to consider what projects they'd like to propose. The grant criteria are also posted online.

**Kiryas Joel water supply update:** Richardson asked that for next month's report he'd like to see listed the Kiryas Joel water supply talks with Orange County and its tapping into the Delaware Aqueduct.

**Public Comment** None

**Adjourn** A motion by Bowers seconded by Richardson to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. was carried.

Carol Coney, Office Manager