

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

Tuesday, January 9, 2007 1:00 PM
 London Britain Township Building
 Landenberg, PA

Attendees:

Chuck Barscz	Jessie Benjamin	Brandon Boberick
Robert Chartowich	Sally Cheyne	Martha Corrozi
Karen Darrell	Warren Davies	John Gaadt
Phil Geoghehan	Andrew Homsey	Jerry Kauffman
John Kennel	Carla Lucas	Jake Michael
Rick Mickowski	Dorothy P. Miller	Aileen Parrish
Adira Riben	Chris Ross representative	Fran Rubert
Linda Stapleford	Kathleen Sullivan	Kristen Travers
Andy Urquhart	-	-

Andy Urquhart called the meeting to order, welcomed visitors, and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

MINUTES September 12, 2006

- *The minutes of the September 12, 2006 meeting were read and approved by members with the correction that it is the **College of Agriculture and Natural Resources**.*

NEXT MEETINGS

It was decided to hold the next Management Committee meeting **Tuesday, April 10 7:00 p.m.**, in Delaware. If the City of Newark Council chambers are available it will be held there; if not it will be at the Judge Morris Estate. [Note: Judge Morris Estate is now confirmed as the meeting site.]

The next Executive Subcommittee meeting will be **Thursday, Jan. 18 at 10:00 a.m.** at London Grove Township Building to discuss the '07 budget and future program direction. All are welcome to attend.

WHITE CLAY CREEK STATE OF THE WATERSHED REPORT *Jerry Kauffman, Water Resources Agency, University of Delaware*

NOTE: This presentation is available at www.wr.udel.edu and the full report will be available in hard copy later this spring.

J. Kauffman began with the reminder that the University of Delaware is located in the White Clay Creek watershed and the main campus is in the headwaters of Cool Run, a tributary. A recently constructed rain garden was created in the front of his agency's building on Academy Street. Interpretive signage to explain its function and benefits to the watershed will soon be available for visitors. The public is invited to tour the site and other University water resource enhancement projects around campus.

After a brief description of the subwatersheds, he reported the changes in each subshed from the 1970's to the present for various demographic, land use, and water quality conditions. Mill Creek has seen the largest population increase with resulting changes to the landscape and impacts on the water resources. Dissolved oxygen declined generally through the mid '90's and has increased since then with the improvements to sewage treatment plants and Best Management Practices (BMPs) in Chester County. Phosphorus held steady until recently when it has declined in all the region's watersheds. Presumably this decline is due to the ban on phosphorus in detergents. However, orthophosphates are relatively high in the Middle Branch. Total Dissolved Solids decreased, probably due to the considerable number of Conservation District BMPs. Ground water appears to currently be utilized at a safe yield. Stream flow peaks have dramatically increased in the past 10 years and the minimums have correspondingly decreased.

Some areas noted in which action appears to be warranted include: relatively high nitrogen levels compared to the Christina or Brandywine with a recent upwards trend; a flow meter at Newark to track flows; 3 hazardous waste sites above the Newark area as a priority for clean-up; 7 dams between the mouth and the Pennsylvania line impede fish migration. The hope is to include Stroud Water Research Center's analysis of the past 12 years of

Stream Watch data in the final report. The Committee also discussed the value and possible methods of rating the watershed: 0 to 100; A, B, C, D; good, fair, poor; or just publish the data and let the reader interpret. To be decided by the committee at a future meeting.

LONDON GROVE COMMUNITY PARK *John Gaadt, Consultant for London Grove Twp*

J. Gaadt briefed the Committee on work he and David Sweet have been doing in planning for the London Grove Community Park. The 125-acre site is on the Middle Branch at the intersection of Rt. 841 and State Rd. Plans are for predominantly passive recreation (trails) with some recreational fields, pavilion, "natural amphitheater" (not benches) and an environmental studies classroom (talks are ongoing with Stroud WRC and the Avon Grove school district). The township is open to opportunities for reforesting riparian buffers. The state police are assisting with traffic safety issues. The Master Plan is being prepared and more meetings will be held before it is finalized. Comments from the public are welcome.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Subcommittee

K. Travers and R. Mickowski reported that 5000 copies of the watershed welcome packets titled *Welcome to Our Neighborhood, White Clay Creek Watershed* have been printed. Samples were available at the meeting. A Dockstader Grant and the Management Committee helped Stroud Water Research Center to fund the project and the Committee assisted with selection of the contents. It is a very attractive and informative resource for watershed stewardship education. About 1000 will be reserved for outreach work possibly with realtors, open space preservation contacts, and lectures/workshops on native plants and invasive plant control. After the packets are assembled, sets of 10 will be given to each municipality to ascertain how they might wish to use them and the number they may want. If demand exceeds the supply, additional copies could be printed, probably at a subsidized cost.

M. Zechiel, UD Water Resources Agency graduate student, is working on development of the second tackboard poster. Two *Community Spaces Natural Places* workshops were held in Delaware last fall with one more in February. Twelve roadway signs have been distributed to four Pennsylvania municipalities for installation at selected bridges and boundaries. D. Miller also suggested that we approach DeIDOT and PennDOT about bridge signage that states the actual name of the creek or tributary. It was also mentioned that previous discussions regarding bridge signage with both entities were not promising; perhaps it could be revisited in the future, however.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Contractor B. Wise met with Carol Lee, Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission (PHMC) to see if any revisions might improve chances for a successful Nomination for the London Tract Historic District. She did not think so. B. Wise will go ahead with an appeal to the Washington D.C. National Park Service office that has jurisdiction over Historic District nominations.

Fish & Wildlife

J. Benjamin reminded the Committee that the botanical surveys are continuing on a township-wide basis.

Recreational Trails

A January 18 meeting is scheduled to investigate a renegotiation of the contract for design of the trail map/visitor brochure. D. Bartoo is hopeful this will be successful and the project will begin moving forward again.

J. Michael informed the Committee of a possible project to link up trails from Newark up to the Avon Grove and Avondale area. This could be an opportunity for Committee participation. Since the creek does not lend itself to an actual river trail, C. Barscz indicated that from the National Park Service perspective, linkage to existing trails is a good focus. Franklin Township would favor such trail links and also over to Fair Hill Natural Resource Area in Maryland. The possibility of WCC trail signage was also discussed as a good educational opportunity. The idea of walking trail signage has been discussed previously as a method for increasing awareness; the more leisurely pace allows time for people to read interpretive signs.

Open Space

A number of municipalities have responded to an invitation to meet on a biannual basis to gain a more regional perspective. A presentation was made to landowners with more than 10 acres in London Grove. Landowners near

parking lot #1 at the north end of the Pennsylvania preserve are meeting again with J. Stefferud. The Wilkins Tract conservation easement should be finalized sometime in March – June. The committee will also look into any preservation opportunities with the Newark Country Club property; half of the property is in the White Clay Creek watershed. [Note: the Franklin Twp. Howard property 20 a. parcel was settled since the last meeting and there are currently 14 active land conservation projects underway in the watershed.]

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REPORT

Section 7 Review

C. Barscz informed the Committee of a National Park Service (NPS) website, www.nps.gov/nero/rivers; it is a great site for information on Wild & Scenic Rivers. Each Partnership River is listed here as well as Philadelphia staff projects and a database that lists all grant sources for rivers.

No final figures are available yet for the FY07 budget. However, there will be no earmarks and it is likely that it will roll back to FY06 funding or the House proposed budget, whichever is less. The funding the Committee would receive in the latter case is likely to fall from the \$95,000 in FY06 to \$75,000.

He also noted that Valley Grove, a 120 a. development of 1350 homesites, traditional urban design, has been approved by London Grove Township. He is now conducting a Section 7 review. Anyone wishing to see the plans and comment should speak with C. Barscz after the meeting.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

L. Stapleford reported briefly on the following items:

Homeowner Association Habitat Restoration Workshops – Two workshops were held in the fall to assist Homeowner Associations with habitat restoration in the open spaces they manage; attendance was disappointing. One more is planned from 10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Feb.24. The workshops are presented in coordination with Delaware Coastal Programs and funded by one of their grants. All residents of Homeowner Associations in the Delaware portion of the White Clay Creek watershed are invited; others may attend on a space available basis.

Website Design Assistance – A University of Delaware computer science professor is investigating the possibility of using the redesign of our website as a student project. Initial discussions are exciting and look promising.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

- J. Benjamin reminded the Committee that the 3-year co-chair terms for she and A. Urquhart expire in June. Members need to think about who might be candidates for these positions.
- The Status of the Watershed report should be available by the April meeting.
- Grant cycles for Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources are being revamped. In 2008 they will be switching the main funding cycle to the spring with the fall being the supplemental. To avoid people having to wait until next spring they will accept park development grant applications along with the planning and acquisition grant applications this spring with the deadline of April 13, 2007. There will be a grant workshop held on May 8, 2007. Contact Fran Rubert, DCNR, Southeast Regional Office for details on the workshop registration and grant application process.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.