



**November 20, 2024, Minutes of the Meeting  
Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission**

TIME: 10:00 a.m.  
DATE: November 20, 2024  
PLACE: Prallsville Mills, Stockton, New Jersey

**ATTENDING COMMISSIONERS:**

Vice-Chairman Bruce Stout, Commissioner Phillip Lubitz, Commissioner Designee Robin Madden, Commissioner John Reiser, Commissioner Douglas Palmer, and Commissioner Caryl “Chris” Shoffner participated via online platform and teleconference.

STAFF: Executive Director John Hutchison, Deputy Attorney General Jordan Viana, Commission Engineer Joseph Ruggeri, Executive Assistant Erica Vavrence, Communications Director Darlene Yuhas, and Colleen Maloney participated via online platform.

GUESTS: Michael Sellar, Facility Manager, New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA); Stephen Gates, Chief Engineer, NJWSA; Maggie Mitchell-Strehl, Acting Superintendent, Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park; Robert von Zumbusch, Kingston Historical Society; Robert Barth, D&R Canal Watch; James Chmielak; Michael Burns; Jovanna Zubko; Rosalind Westlake; Mitch Ardman.

Vice-Chairman Stout announced that this was a monthly meeting of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission and that the provisions of the “Senator Byron Baer Open Public Meetings Act” (OPMA) had been complied with in the scheduling of the meeting.

Vice-Chairman Stout announced that the meeting was being taped pursuant to the exception set forth at Section C.(1) of DEP Policy & Procedure 2.85 “Prohibition of Recording in the Workplace” Policy adopted on September 18, 2019.

Since Commission members were participating via telephonic device pursuant to Article III, Section 4 of the Commission Bylaws, Vice-Chairman Stout directed Executive Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout Present

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Commissioner Designee Madden	Present
Commissioner Reiser	Present
Commissioner Lubitz	Present
Commissioner Shoffner	Present
Commissioner Palmer	Present

Director Hutchison stated that a quorum was present.

### **Administrative Items**

#### **Confirmation of December 18, 2024, Meeting Date**

Vice-Chairman Stout stated that the next meeting of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission was scheduled for December 18, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

#### **Approval of proposed schedule of Commission meeting dates for 2025**

Vice-Chairman Stout stated that the proposed 2025 Commission meeting schedule had been distributed to the Commissioners. He stated that consistent with long-standing practice, meetings were proposed to be held on the third Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m. The Vice-Chairman asked for a motion to approve the meeting dates. Commissioner Lubitz made a motion to approve the schedule, which was seconded by Commissioner Shoffner. Vice-Chairman Stout asked Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Yes
Commissioner Designee Madden	Yes
Commissioner Reiser	Yes
Commissioner Lubitz	Yes
Commissioner Shoffner	Yes
Commissioner Palmer	Yes

The motion was approved.

### **Minutes**

#### **Approval of the Minutes of the October 16, 2024, Commission Meeting**

Vice-Chairman Stout inquired if any of the Commissioners wished to propose edits or corrections to the October 16, 2024, Commission meeting minutes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as prepared by staff. Commissioner Reiser made a motion to adopt the minutes as proposed, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Lubitz.

Vice-Chairman Stout asked Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Yes
Commissioner Designee Madden	Yes
Commissioner Reiser	Yes
Commissioner Lubitz	Yes
Commissioner Shoffner	Yes
Commissioner Palmer	Yes

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The motion was approved.

### **Review Zone Actions**

#### **Zone A Projects**

#24-1856D St. George Church -- Former Church Building Demolition (Hopewell Township)  
#24-3709C Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park -- Soil Boring and Monitoring Well Installation (Trenton City)  
#24-4224A 8-12 South Union Street -- Condominium Conversion (Lambertville City)  
#24-4594B 80 Wilson Street -- Proposed Townhomes (Lambertville City)  
#24-5029A 45 Clinton Street -- Solar Array Installation (Lambertville City)

Vice-Chairman Stout asked if any Commissioner wished to review the Zone A projects separately. The Vice-Chairman then announced that he would recuse himself from consideration of project DRCC# 24-4224A 8-12 South Union Street -- Condominium Conversion.

Hearing no other Commissioners, he called for a motion on the remaining four Zone A projects, exclusive of project DRCC# 24-4224A. Commissioner Reiser moved to approve the four projects, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Lubitz. Vice-Chairman Stout asked the Commissioners for comment on the four Zone A projects. Hearing none, he asked the public for comment. Hearing none, the Vice-Chairman asked Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Yes
Commissioner Designee Madden	Yes
Commissioner Reiser	Yes
Commissioner Lubitz	Yes
Commissioner Shoffner	Yes
Commissioner Palmer	Yes

The motion was approved.

Vice-Chairman Stout yielded the chair to Commissioner Lubitz and left the meeting at 10:10 a.m. Commissioner Lubitz asked for a motion on DRCC# 24-4224A 8-12 South Union Street -- Condominium Conversion. Commissioner Lubitz motioned to approve the project, which was seconded by Commissioner Reiser. Commissioner Lubitz asked for comment from the Commissioners and then the public. Hearing none, he asked Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Recused
Commissioner Designee Madden	Yes
Commissioner Reiser	Yes
Commissioner Lubitz	Yes
Commissioner Shoffner	Yes
Commissioner Palmer	Yes

The motion was approved.

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Vice-Chairman Stout rejoined the meeting at 10:13 a.m.

**Zone B Projects**

#23-3481D	Friendship Road-Route 130 -- Residential Development (South Brunswick Township)
#24-6143	321 Barbertown-Point Breeze Road -- Residential Development (Kingwood Township)
#24-6171	375-377 Terhune Road -- Multi-Family Residential Development (Municipality of Princeton)

Vice-Chairman Stout asked if any member of the Commission wished to consider any of the projects separately. Hearing none, he asked for a motion on the projects. Commissioner Shoffner made a motion to approve the projects, which was seconded by Commissioner Reiser. Vice-Chairman Stout asked for comment on the projects from the Commissioners. Hearing none, he asked if the public had any questions or comments. Hearing none, Vice-Chairman Stout asked Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Yes
Commissioner Designee Madden	Yes
Commissioner Reiser	Yes
Commissioner Lubitz	Yes
Commissioner Shoffner	Yes
Commissioner Palmer	Yes

The motion was approved.

**Executive Director's Report**

Director Hutchison reported on the Commission workload for the period encompassing October 16, 2024, to November 19, 2024. He stated that in addition to the 8 projects listed on the November meeting notice, staff issued 19 deficient staff reports, 10 jurisdictional determinations, 5 certificates of approval, and 3 general permits. As of November 19, 2024, there were 31 projects undergoing staff review.

The Director reported that fee collections totaled \$54,625 for the month. He noted that thus far in Fiscal Year 2025, the Commission had collected \$206,625 of the \$500,000 anticipated appropriation amount. He observed that with about 50% of the fiscal year completed, the Commission has collected about 41% of its anticipated annual appropriation.

Director Hutchison reported that additional progress was made on the Commission Master Plan update and revision project. The Department of the Treasury Scope Development Group scheduled a meeting with the Commission staff, the New Jersey Historic Trust, the DEP Office of Resource Development (ORD) and the State Park Service to discuss their proposed edits to the RFP Scope of Work document. He noted, separately, that Mr. White of DEP ORD met with Treasury officials on November 12, and Mr. White's opinion was that the Treasury Department was proposing only minor modifications to the document prepared by Commission staff. Director Hutchison stated that the New Jersey Historic Trust would be in attendance to ensure that the RFP process comports with the grant agreement, and that all parties remained focused on the present condition and future status of the canal's historic structures.

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Director Hutchison reported that he had the pleasure of interviewing canal historian William “Captain Bill” McKelvey for the ongoing oral history project related to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Commission and the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park. He stated that the initial interview was so successful that the Treasury Department Office of Information Technology suggested recording a second interview at the Canal Society of New Jersey Museum at Waterloo Village, where Mr. McKelvey was able to discuss the provenance of several of the D&R canal-related artifacts kept at the museum.

Director Hutchison reported that on November 12, he was the featured speaker at the annual meeting of the Kingston Historical Society, where he gave a brief presentation on the role the Commission plays in protecting the environmental, recreational, and historic resources of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. He noted that the first installment of the Commission’s “Taking Flight on the D&R Canal” drone video, posted on the Commission YouTube channel, was played for the attendees, and that the video footage received an overwhelmingly positive response from those present.

Director Hutchison reported that the project file digitization project continued to make impressive progress. He noted that in the previous month, 9 more file boxes were scanned, bringing the completed file box total to 177 of 526 boxes, or 34% of the total.

### **Park Superintendent’s Report**

Acting Superintendent Mitchell-Strehl reported that she and State Park Service staff had a valuable meeting with several park “friends” and advocacy groups.

The Acting Superintendent reported that she and park staff members had met with the Jersey Off Road Bicycle Association (JORBA) to discuss bicycle use at the Six Mile Run Reservoir site, and that staff would take an inventory of the bridges. State Park Service staff would be reviewing trails and making in-kind replacements as needed. She noted there was also discussion about JORBA outreach to both hikers and mountain bike users to educate cyclists on trail use rules and etiquette.

Additionally, Acting Superintendent Mitchell-Strehl reported that the Rockingham State Historic Site parking lot had been paved the previous month and that split rail fences were being repaired throughout the site.

### **New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) Report**

Mr. Sellar reported that the project to restore the western embankment of the Delaware and Raritan Feeder Canal in the Borough of Stockton was complete. Silt fencing had been removed, and the NJWSA was hopeful that the newly planted vegetation would become established.

Mr. Sellar reported that typical maintenance activities along the canal were ongoing, including end-of-season grass mowing and clearing of vegetative debris and fallen leaves.

Mr. Sellar stated that the November 13 State-issued drought warning had not -- as yet -- adversely affected the operations of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. He noted that the Delaware River Basin Commission had hosted a special public hearing on November 19 to receive comment on the matter of persistent dry conditions in the Delaware River Basin that could impact canal operations in the future.

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**New Business**

None.

**Old Business**

None.

**Public Comment**

Mr. von Zumbusch stated that he appreciated Director Hutchison's contribution and remarks at the Kingston Historical Society annual meeting, and that the drone footage was an added bonus. He observed that many people in the Kingston area know about the Delaware and Raritan Canal and park, but not many are aware of the Commission's role in protecting the park and preserving the surrounding watersheds.

Mr. von Zumbusch stated he found that the meeting hosted by Acting Superintendent Mitchell-Strehl and various canal groups was valuable and that it constituted a good start on building a positive relationship.

**Written Public Comments**

None.

**Adjournment**

There being no other business, Vice-Chairman Stout entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Shoffner made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Reiser. Vice-Chairman Stout called for a vote on the motion to adjourn, which was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hutchison", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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John Hutchison, Secretary