



**September 18, 2024, Minutes of the Meeting
Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission**

TIME: 10:00 a.m.
DATE: September 18, 2024
PLACE: Prallsville Mills, Stockton, New Jersey

ATTENDING COMMISSIONERS:

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

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

GUESTS: Michael Sellar, Facility Manager, New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA); Maggie Mitchell-Strehl, Acting Superintendent, Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park; Robert von Zumbusch, Kingston Historical Society; Robert Barth, D&R Canal Watch; Linda Barth, D&R Canal Watch; Adam Goldberg; Steve Gouin; David E. Earling; Michael J. Gross; Barbara Fanelli Ringheim; Justin Sallusto; Kristen Matthews; Mark Ax; Susannah Henschel; Dave Pasicznyk; Ian Hill, Van Cleef Engineering Associates.

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 in person and via telephonic device pursuant to Article III, Section 4 of the Commission Bylaws, Vice-Chairman Stout directed the Executive Director to call

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the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Present
Commissioner Designee Madden	Present
Commissioner Reiser	Absent
Commissioner Lubitz	Present
Commissioner Shoffner	Present
Commissioner Palmer	Present

Director Hutchison stated that a quorum was present.

Administrative Items

Confirmation of October 16, 2024, Meeting Date

Vice-Chairman Stout stated that the next meeting of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission was scheduled for October 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the August 21, 2024, Commission Meeting

Vice-Chairman Stout inquired if any of the Commissioners wished to propose edits or corrections to the August 21, 2024, Commission meeting minutes. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as prepared by staff. Commissioner Lubitz made a motion to adopt the minutes as proposed, which was seconded by Commissioner Shoffner.

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

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

The motion was approved.

Review Zone Actions

Zone A Project

#24-6159 15 Swan Street -- Proposed Deck (Lambertville City)

Vice-Chairman Stout asked for a motion on the project. Commissioner Palmer motioned to approve the project, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Lubitz. Vice-Chairman Stout asked for comment on the project from the Commissioners and, hearing none, from the public. Hearing none, Vice-Chairman Stout asked Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Yes
Commissioner Designee Madden	Yes

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Commissioner Reiser	Absent
Commissioner Lubitz	Yes
Commissioner Shoffner	Yes
Commissioner Palmer	Yes

The motion was approved.

Zone B Projects

#21-0471C	Montgomery Township -- Age-Restricted Affordable Housing (Montgomery Township)
#23-3019C	322 & 326 Cranbury-Half Acre Road -- Proposed Warehouse (Cranbury Township)
#24-4951A	967 Croton Road -- Solar Array Phase 2 (Franklin Township)
#23-5521A	East Windsor Municipal Utilities Authority -- Administrative Building and Maintenance Garage (East Windsor Township)
#24-6124	67 Pleasant Valley Road -- Addition (Hopewell Township)

Vice-Chairman Stout requested a motion to approve the Zone B projects. Commissioner Lubitz made a motion to approve the projects, which was seconded by Commissioner Shoffner. Vice-Chairman Stout inquired if any of the Commissioners had comment on the proposed projects. Hearing none, he asked the same of the public. Hearing none, Vice-Chairman Stout asked Director Hutchison to call the roll:

Vice-Chairman Stout	Yes
Commissioner Designee Madden	Yes
Commissioner Reiser	Absent
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 August 20, 2024, to September 17, 2024. He stated that in addition to the 6 projects listed on the August meeting notice, staff issued 20 deficient staff reports, 10 jurisdictional determinations, 9 certificates of approval, and 8 general permits. Also, staff organized and conducted 13 pre-application meetings related to proposed and pending projects. He noted that as of September 18, 2024, there were 25 projects undergoing staff review.

Director Hutchison reported that fee collections totaled \$25,500 for the month. He reported that in Fiscal Year 2025, the Commission had collected \$114,450 of the \$500,000 anticipated annual appropriation for FY 2025. He observed that with 25% of the fiscal year concluded, the Commission had collected 23% of its anticipated revenue amount.

Director Hutchison reported that the DEP Bureau of Geographic Information Systems (DEP/BGIS) provided the staff with a demonstration of the new Commission project database on September 12. He

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stated that the design, functionality, and reliability of the new database would be a considerable improvement over the current MS Access database, and that the project has exceeded his expectations in every respect. He noted that in addition to the obvious continuity of operations benefits, the new database would allow the staff to search projects using several search criteria, including aerial image overlays, parcel information (Block and Lot), applicant or engineer name, and type of permit document issued. He noted that staff would be able to sort prior projects and determine how many projects were undertaken in each zone, county, municipality, etc., and that the new database would also allow staff to measure distances and calculate areas. He noted that, once the staff is trained, it was his intention to migrate to the new database as soon as practicable and retire the existing MS Access database.

Director Hutchison noted that the project file digitization project continued to make progress. He reported that in the previous month 10 file boxes were scanned, bringing the completed file box total to 159 of 526 boxes, or 30% of the total. He noted that staff was slightly slowed this month due to the need to service the large document scanner, and that Ricoh made a service call and was able to repair the device.

Director Hutchison noted that among the general permits issued during the past month, an emergency after-the-fact General Permit No. 1 (GP-1) was issued to the NJDOT to repair a gap in the pedestrian sidewalk that occurred on July 26 on the bridge that conveys Bridge Street (N.J. State Highway Route No. 179) over the Delaware and Raritan Canal in the City of Lambertville (DRCC #24-6163).

Director Hutchison stated that he also issued a GP-1 to the DEP Office of Resource Development (ORD) for the in-kind replacement of the cedar shake roof at the Rockingham Historic Site Wash House building, which serves as the site children's museum (DRCC #24-3602F).

Park Superintendent's Report

Acting Superintendent Mitchell-Strehl reported that Park staff was aware of a vehicle parked on the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park multiuse trail near South Bound Brook Borough, and that the N.J. State Park Police would address the matter.

Acting Superintendent Mitchell-Strehl reported that State Park Service maintenance staff was working to eradicate invasive bamboo growing near the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park office at 145 Mapleton Road in South Brunswick Township.

Acting Superintendent Mitchell-Strehl reported that a drone show presented by the New Hope Chamber of Commerce launched from the Lambertville boat launch on September 13, 2024, and that the event was successful.

The Acting Superintendent reported that the September 14, 2024, 50th anniversary celebration for the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park and the Commission was a success, with approximately 80 people in attendance.

The Superintendent reported that work was completed, except for fencing, at the Trenton Greenway Bridge. The former Belvidere-Delaware/Pennsylvania Railroad Belvidere Division railroad bridge (i.e. Trenton Greenway Bridge) is located at point where the D&R Greenway trail splits from the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park multiuse trail in the City of Trenton in the vicinity of Jarvis Place. The project was coordinated by the State Park Service and NJDOT and entailed repairs to a historic railroad

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bridge (See DRCC #24-6146B).

Acting Superintendent Mitchell-Strehl reported that a Delaware River cleanup was scheduled for September 21, 2024, at Bulls Island Recreation Area, and that volunteers would be welcome.

At 10:18 a.m., Commissioner Reiser joined the meeting and indicated via telephone that he approved of the Review Zone projects on the Commission agenda.

New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) Report

Mr. Sellar reported that the NJWSA consultant for the rehabilitation of the Six Mile Run Culvert would complete restoration of the site and then demobilize.

Mr. Sellar reported that the project to restore the western embankment of the Delaware and Raritan Feeder Canal in the Borough of Stockton was nearing completion. He stated that the contractor would be reseeding vegetated areas as needed within the next week, after which silt fencing would be removed, and the Phase 1 of the embankment project, which entailed its restoration from a recreational use standpoint, would be considered complete.

Mr. Sellar reported that the area in which repairs were made to the leak at the so-called Workhouse Spillway, located across N.J. State Highway Route No. 29 from the Mercer County Correction Center in Hopewell Township, had been reseeded.

Mr. Sellar reported that the NJWSA continued to make adjustments in the middle segment of the Delaware and Raritan Canal to transfer excess canal water into the Millstone River at Kingston, rather than at Ten Mile Lock, in an effort to prevent a recurrence of the harmful algae bloom that occurred in the summer of 2023. He also noted that NJWSA was making adjustments to the water levels in Lambertville and Prallsville as it related to the water flow within the canal.

New Business

None.

Old Business

None.

Public Comment

Mrs. Barth stated her appreciation of Executive Director Hutchison and Communications Director Yuhas for their support and participation in the 50th anniversary event which was held at the Prallsville Mills on September 14, 2024.

Mrs. Barth reported that the D&R Canal Watch hosted the “Canal House Challenge” on Sunday, September 15, 2024, and that it was a great success with approximately 100 participants. She stated that visitors toured five bridgetender and locktender houses along the main canal at East Millstone, Blackwells Mills, Griggstown, Kingston and Port Mercer. She noted that friends groups and D&R Canal Watch welcomed visitors and provide tours and the histories of the buildings.

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Mrs. Barth stated that the D&R Canal Watch 2025 calendar and the poetry book celebrating the 50th anniversary of the park and the Commission were available for purchase.

Mr. Barth stated that on October 26, a “Tour de Towpath” event would take place at Cadwalader Park, in Trenton, with bike, walk and run challenges, and food trucks, music, and information booths from various non-profit organizations.

Mr. von Zumbusch stated his appreciation of the DEP and Commission staff for the successful 50th anniversary event at the Prallsville Mills. He stated that Director Hutchison was a capable moderator and that all the panelists made valuable contributions to the panel discussion. He congratulated Vicki Chirco for her work hosting the event.

Written Public Comments

None.

Adjournment

There being no other business, Commissioner Lubitz entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Reiser made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Palmer. Commissioner Lubitz 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,



John Hutchison, Secretary