
**January 9, 2019 Meeting of the
Coastal Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC)**

The regular meeting of CZAC was called to order by Mr. Don Benczkowski at 9:30 a.m., in the 12th Floor Conference Room of the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg, PA.

The following committee representatives were present:

Don Benczkowski	PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Coastal Resources Management (CRM) Program
Ken Shaffer	PA Public Utility Commission (PUC)
Mark Shaffer	Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission (PHMC)
Cindy Dunlap	PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
Amy Verbofsky	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

The following committee representatives attended the meeting by phone:

Shelby Clark	Erie County Department of Planning (ECDP)
Joy Knapp	Erie County Department of Planning (ECDP)

The following agency representatives (non-CZAC members) were present:

James Peifer	PA DEP, CRM
Jennifer Orr-Greene	PA DEP, CRM
Stacey Box	PA DEP, CRM
Matt Walderon	PA DEP, CRM
Sam Burton	PA DEP, CRM
Joe Sieber	PA DEP, CRM
Kevin Hess	PA DEP, CRM
Randy Brown	PA DEP, CRM Southeast Regional Staff
Sean Gimbel	PA DEP, Executive Assistant, Water Programs
Eric Szabo	PA Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)

Introductions: Don Benczkowski began the meeting 9:30 a.m., leading the introductions.

Minutes: There was no quorum, therefore the June 6, 2018 CZAC meeting minutes could not be approved.

Coastal Zone Program Update:

- Stacey Box provided an update of the approval of the most recent grant round which was accompanied by a DEP press release. Regarding the current round of NOAA pass-through grants, the program received 23 applications. The local committees completed review and rankings in December 2018. Stacey asked CZAC members to comment on projects no later than January 31, 2019. In turn, DEP staff will complete review and ratings in February 2019.
- Don Benczkowski stated that proposed federal appropriation levels appear to indicate a push to increase funding for coastal states. DEP will continue to monitor proposed appropriations

and report on the final budget at the next CZAC meeting.

Local Coastal Zone Updates:

- Amy Verbofsky (Delaware Valley Regional Planning Department) discussed a few notable projects, including major trail and circuit trail project updates and the Christian to Crescent project which should be completed by 2020. The coastal zone grant-funded rain gardens and part of the Bensalem Greenway projects were also discussed. Finally, Amy invited CZAC members to attend the April 2019 Mid-Atlantic Greenways and Trails Summit in Philadelphia.
- Amy led a lively group discussion on coastal resiliency and municipal flood planning, noting the DVRPC's new story map related to sea level rise projections. Amy is working closely with PEMA in the region's community flood risk ratings program.
- Joy Knapp (Erie County Planning Department) detailed seven recent planning and project development activities in Erie County, including new construction started on the Bayfront and Harbor Place sites and PennDOT's Bayfront Parkway Corridor. Joy updated the CZAC on the Erie County Municipal Stormwater assistance program, adding that her office is floating a feasibility study to assess a county stormwater fee.
- The Erie Western Port Authority is working on its new Master Development and Facilities Plan. The plan includes sea wall repairs and infrastructure improvements, public access facilities, stormwater implementation at the port/launch area and docks.

Section 309 Update:

- Kevin Hess (DEP) explained the status of the coastal program's Section 309 Assessment and Strategy. At this time, the program is two and a half years into the current strategy and must begin to write the new strategy in October 2019 to ensure timely executive staff review and approval. Kevin mentioned DEP's recently (November 2018) drafted a broad climate change plan for adoption, titled the *Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan*. This is by far the most comprehensive plan completed by DEP on the subject and included coastal-specific issues.
- Kevin announced that a new grant opportunity is now available via NOAA's coastal zone resiliency grants. Opening in January 2019, these grants present an opportunity for the successful coastal applicants. Shelby Clark expressed potential interest on behalf of Erie County and will contact Kevin for more detail.
- Finally, as part of the current Section 309 Strategy, Kevin noted that the coastal program is considering revising the September 22, 1980 Executive Order (1980-20) establishing the coastal program, with the intention to formally incorporate the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency as an agency member of CZAC, and to properly align other agencies which may have had name changes or no longer exist.

Delaware Estuary Mussel Investigation:

- Matt Walderon described his ongoing investigation into Delaware River mussel locations. Using side-scan sonar detection, Matt is identifying mussel locations to determine how the investigation can effectively map larger populations in the river. The side-scan readouts are qualitative (versus quantitative) results, producing mussel population polygons which are spatially distributed onto a new river map. Thus far, efforts have been completed of 165 video sites, from Trenton to Little Tinicum Island. Matt demonstrated actual video and splashcam photos. With certainty, we can state that side-scan imagery can be an effective method of identifying previously unknown mussel populations, although ground-truthing is vital and necessary for the most reliable evidence.
- CZAC members expressed interest in this investigation, asking several questions. Matt noted that DEP will work/share information with the Academy of Natural Science and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and likely EPA Region III. At this point, DEP is interested in discussing its findings with the PFBC. At issue is the degree to which mussel population locations will be released, and whether DEP will make the findings of the mussel investigation available via public release. At this time, these questions remain unanswered.

Developing a Green Stormwater Infrastructure Prioritization for Eastern Delaware County Municipalities:

- Dr. Robert Ryan, (Temple University) provided a presentation on the stormwater planning effort in Delaware County known as the eastern Delaware County Stormwater Collaborative. Dr. Ryan assisted twelve municipalities in developing this plan. This plan if implemented will help reduce sediment loads in the Darby and Cobbs Creeks.
- Dr. Ryan was joined by his landscape architect student Erin Ramsden who described how the collaborative group approached the prioritization of project sites and focus areas. Sites were selected using a hierarchy that identify potential GSI projects, established water quality improvements, and identified the best sites. The project used GIS to identify optimal sites and assist with prioritization and ranking for site selection. Erin noted that the main GIS factors included consideration of land use development type, open space, slope, soil type, parcel size, and proximity to schools.

Agency Updates:

- Cindy Dunlap (DCNR) reported on a recent (November 2018) grant announcement of 280 conservation and recreational projects. Ms. Dunlap stated that 2018 was an exceptionally good year during which, DCNR supported a number of green infrastructure projects, as well as a large number of trails, conservation projects, and riparian buffers. DCNR's next grant round opens January 25, 2019, closing April 10, 2019.
- Mark Shaffer (PHMC) updated CZAC regarding development of PHMC's new all-electronic project review system. The new system expects to have capability for the large workload of PHMC, having ability to handle an estimated 4,000-6,000 online project reports submissions each year. The first phase of the system becomes effective July 2018 and PHMC will no longer accept

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT

paper reports. Also, PHMC will replace its staff member vacancy covering the Northwest region of the state.

- Don Benczkowski said that the PA Game Commission has appointed a new person to CZAC (replacing Shayne Hoachlander) to join us at future meetings.

Public Comment:

- As required by the *PA Sunshine Act*, Don asked if there were any comments from the public. There were no public comments.

Other Business

- Don Benczkowski reported that the Coastal States Organization had undertaken a Great Lakes Coastal Resilience study which was not able to be complete due to study costs. The study has been postponed due to lack of funding until October 2020 which it hopefully will receive adequate funding for completion.
- Don concluded the meeting by stating the next CZAC meeting will be held at on June 19, 2019 in DEP's 10th floor conference room.*

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

*Note, this date has subsequently been changed to May 29,2019.