



Draft

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Citizen's Cafe Notes

DATE & TIME:

February 16, 2023 from 6:00 – 8:00pm

LOCATION:

Option 1: In-person

Delaware Center for the Inland Bays office
39375 Inlet Road
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Option 2: Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83091709354>

Meeting ID: 830 9170 9354

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

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ATTENDEES:

- Meeting called to order by Claire Simmers, CAC Chair
- Attendance
CAC (5): Lee Bunting, Frank Piorko, Cheryl Rehrig, Claire Simmers, Richard Watson
CAC not present (8): Dennis Bartow, Gary Cannon, Rick Chamberlin, Gail Dubowe, John Grandy, Pete Keenan, Amanda Pappas, Jaylyn Powell
CAC applicants: (4) Stephen Gonski, Tianyin (Tia) Ouyang, Ken Sigvardson, Ken Silverstein
CIB (8): Christophe Tulou, Michelle Schmidt, Lisa Swanger, Caitlin Chaney, Anna Fagan, Mattie Fox, Jackie Knoll, Mark Carter

- Public (9) (3) in person; (6) via Zoom)
-

AGENDA: Land Conservation

6:00-6:15 pm — Welcome

- Claire Simmers, CAC Chair
- Christophe Tulou, Executive Director, Delaware Center for the Inland Bays
He first talked about his background and connections to the CIB. In 1994 he was on the Board of Directors and worked on first CCMP. He also was on CIB Board as DNREC secretary. It is fortuitous that he returns to the CIB to celebrate 30 years of the CIB in 2024.
He then provided some general comments for CAC – having citizens' inputs are incredibly important. State of Bays report gives collective opportunities to chart the future with creative ideas and funding will follow. The CIB will develop the resources needed. The action words are – climate change - climate change - climate change. It is critical to build resilience and create a strong defense against ravages of climate change to protect our valuable resources. Investments in doing better in all critical areas will have payback.

6:15-6:45 pm — Guest Storytelling

- **Jimmy Kroon, Administrator/Program Manager, Delaware Department of Agriculture**
- Presentation link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wg_HA0Ya-IiJ8Gw3QmTEqnRHYNFUT1CL/view?usp=share_link
 - Directly manage farmland preservation program
 - In Delaware there are 525,000 acres of farmland. 1 in 8 jobs is in agriculture; 8.9 billion in economic activity
 - Provided overview of land use and land use change in Delaware; DE fourth in nation farmland lost to development (low density development in Sussex County due to proximity)
 - Farmland Preservation Program (1991). Governed by Aglands Preservation Foundation; board appointed by governor.
 - Entirely voluntary; 2-step process: enroll in farm Agriculture District for 10 years and then can part of preservation easement.
 - Appraising 360 (35,000 acres) farms this year; fair market value and agricultural value.
 - Select farms ranked by discount until run out of money
 - Total Easement Costs: \$265 million (\$181 million from State)
 - Preserved 148,124 acres (40,843 acres of forested acres).
 - Preserved 7,300 acres in Inland Bays Watershed
 - Landscape preservation (several linked parcels in one area)
 - Environmental wins:
 - Climate smart ag practices: cover crops; conservation tillage; other climate-smart farm practices

- Carbon mitigation strategy

Young Farmer Load Program: buy land with no-interest loan; getting agricultural easement.

Informational links from Jimmy Kroon on the last page of these notes

- Elena Stewart (**NRCS – National Resources Conservation Service**) – **Federal Agricultural Conservation Easement Program**
- Presentation Link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M18oeWBbJcO0bAvGPLMzeYitYLxjeJ62/view?usp=share_link
 - Agricultural Land Easement Program
 - Wetland Reserve Easement Program – WRE
 NRCS pays to restore the hydrology on private property and then pays the property owner for the development rights; Wetland Restoration Criteria and Guidelines. Recreate swallow wetland areas. Various eligibility criteria. Potential to utilize this program.
- Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
 Target landowners before put on market
 Restoration will stay.
 Lots of federal money; needs help in getting the word out about this.
 - Link to important information:
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/DE%20ACEP%20WRE%20Landowners%20Guide%203.2020%20only%20change%20to%20date%20and%202014%20FB%20removal.pdf>

6:45-7:15 pm — Center Storytelling

- **Michelle Schmidt, Director of Conservation & Watershed Planning, Delaware Center for the Inland Bays**
- Presentation Link:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/10bh6ecvTG7KiYx3Erb0hou3l6S-8QkRo/view?usp=share_link
 - Work with many partners; conservation is very important for a variety of financial, health & well-being, environmental, recreational etc. reasons
 - Included in CCMP in CM2-4 – easement and acquisition
 - 3 Goals: Funding; Partnerships; Property Identification
 - Two main groups: Sussex Conservation Partnership and Delaware Land Protection Coalition
 - Sussex Conservation Partnership – finding land
 - Sussex County key partner
 - How to do direct outreach in addition to what is available on the market
 - Michelle discussed several examples of land acquisitions. Conaway Road (4 acres; will become part of DNREC wildlife management area).
 - Not much land inventory, so question is how to become a bigger buyer of land
 - Delaware Land Protection Coalition – funding and partnerships
 - Membership is growing

- Delaware Open Space Program (DNREC) – protected 64,000 acres throughout the state
- Got money from Bond Bill add'l \$10m for a total of \$20m. A major effort in 2023 is to ask for permanent funding and an increase rather than be part of the Bond Bill.
- 2nd annual Conservation Day at Legislative Hall May 10, 2023 11-4. Details forthcoming, but Save-the-Date.

7:15-7:30pm – Citizens' Inputs

- Bob Clark – Beaches are not being protected from development
 - Roads are so clogged and more houses are being developed.
 - DNREC not responsive
 - Developers are a problem, for example, Freeman bought land and recreational boating being harmed directly and indirectly with less land and filling in the marshes with construction spoilage.
 - Dredging is being done causing issues with spoilage; Marshlands being filled in and destroying the environment – Seal Island needs to be restored.
- Nick – do developers have to do anything additional for conservation beyond paying transfer/realty tax? No, but voluntary efforts do happen
- Susan Anderheggen former resident of CT where she worked with a Land Trust group. She wanted to reinforce to focus on contiguous land and start early to recruit landowners.

7:25-8:00 pm — CAC Discussion

- Approval of CAC meeting minutes - October 27, 2022 - approved
 - New CAC Members all approved and welcomed
 - Stephen Gonski
 - Tianyin (Tia) Ouyang
 - Ken Sigvardson
 - Ken Silverstein
 - Center Updates - Lisa Swanger, Director of Outreach & Education, Delaware Center for the Inland Bays
 - Do More 24 Delaware: The Center's spring appeal is taking a new shape. Do More 24 Delaware is a unique 24-hour giving event that showcases the amazing and vital work of nonprofit organizations serving our state. The goal is to inspire Delawareans to come together for 24 hours and contribute as much as they can financially to the causes and organizations that they support. Do More 24 Delaware begins at 6 PM on March 2nd and concludes at 6 PM on March 3rd. Please consider supporting the Center during this 24 hours giving period, and help the Center leverage additional funds from foundations and corporate program sponsors. For more information, visit: <https://www.domore24delaware.org/fundraisers/center-for-the-inland-bays>
1. Keep an eye out on our website/social media channels for the following events:
 - Green Screen Film Festival: Wednesday, April 19th at Bear Trap Dunes; 5-6 PM, / \$30 a ticket, limited availability; 6-9 PM, General Admission / \$15 a ticket

- o Stand Up for the Bays Paddle Race & Festival: Saturday, June 3 at Holt's Landing State Park. Education booths, live music, food trucks, cold beverages, and more; Registration is now open here:
<https://runsignup.com/Race/DE/Dagsboro/StandUpfortheBaysPaddleRaceFest>
- 2. The Center is gearing up for a series of volunteer training sessions for those interested in participating in citizen science, reforestation, education, and outreach efforts. In-person and virtual participation options are available and the sessions will be recorded. For more information and to sign up, visit:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSe8GZzc7lh4RjAt4eIBDKWdp968cym3mD_CaVeXrR3Q9ggAAw/viewform
- 3. The Center's third and final session of this year's 3-part Winter Lecture Series will take place on March 7th from 5-7 PM at the Lewes Public Library. It will highlight native plants and pollinators and include an interactive component, including a honey tasting. Registration is free. In-person and virtual participation is available, but in-person space is limited. To learn more and sign up, visit:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kmbVYfkIHbRRF8Z9Hc0CTldvuuaQ63Cv7MmyJINev8/edit>
- 4. Mark your calendars for the Water Family Fest & Native Plant Sale hosted by the Center in collaboration with DNREC. It will take place on May 6th from 10 AM – 3 PM at the James Farm Ecological Preserve. The event is free and open to the public, and will feature local nurseries selling native plants, environmental organization exhibit booths, interactive environmental education activities, presentations, music, and local food. More details to come.
- 5. Please help us spread the word that there is an online form available for the public to submit concerns related to the health of the Inland Bays and their watershed! The form is on the CAC page of the Center's website (<https://forms.gle/i6eCm4Ou2edUjcXs8>).
- Discussion CAC and CCMP and PEEP (Lisa and Claire)
 - o To foster the development of CAC member-driven actions that meet CCMP and PEEP actions listing CAC as either a supporter or lead.
 - o Lisa summarized CAC Action Chart and PEEP
 - o We will encourage CAC to identify their personal interest, skillset(s), availability, and creativity to engage in any or all of the CCMP & PEEP actions.
 - o Lisa and Claire will distribute the informational links and then create a feedback survey and distribute to CAC members. This will form the basis for part of our CAC work in addition to continuing to act as communication conduits for our communities
 - o Link to CAC's CCMP and PEEP actions
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s9-cSoh91e_PsUuTBqqNiD-b2iRuq9lt/view?usp=share_link

CAC Meetings

6PM - 8:00PM

Center Conference Room and Zoom

Thursday, February 16, 2023

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Thursday, August 24, 2023

Thursday, October 26, 2023

Here are resources that Jimmy Kroon shared:

Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future

Full report

<https://farmlandinfo.org/publications/farms-under-threat-2040/>

Mapping Tool

<https://development2040.farmland.org/>

Delaware Report (my handout)

https://storage.googleapis.com/csp-fut2040.appspot.com/state-reports/FUT2040_DE.pdf

American Farmland Trust Greener Fields Reports

<https://farmlandinfo.org/publications/greener-fields-combating-climate-change-by-keeping-land-in-farming-in-new-york/>

<https://farmlandinfo.org/publications/greener-fields-california-communities-combating-climate-change/>

Online tools to view ag easements and spending. The easement dashboard is embedded here:

<https://agriculture.delaware.gov/agland-preservation-planning/reports/>

Public web map shows easements, districts, and young farmer loan properties:

<https://delaware.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5c34a96298ce479897444fc50301fd94>