



*Land Partnerships Update: Cumberland County Open Space Plan*

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**Committee Meeting #3 Notes**

SC#: 11100.10

Date / Time: 2:00 PM Tuesday July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Location: 18 North Hanover Street, Carlisle, PA

In Attendance:

Shireen Farr - Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau  
Bob Fisher - RJ Fisher & Associates  
Bill Forrey - Former Chief, PA Bureau of State Parks  
Larry Hatter - Greater Harrisburg Association of Realtors  
Justin Keller - Simone Collins (SC)  
Sherri Pursel - Greater Harrisburg Association of Realtors  
Peter Simone - SC  
Kirk Stoner - Cumberland County Planning Department (CCPD)  
Jeff Williams - Silver Spring Township Parks and Recreation  
Kim Williams - Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Stephanie Williams - CCPD  
Rebecca Wiser - CCPD  
Rebecca Rosser Yearick - Cumberland County Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Meeting Agenda:

1. Review and compare survey results to date (SC)
  - a. Random (Response as of 7/5 - 45)
  - b. Self-Selecting (Response as of 7/5 - 658)
2. Review DRAFT Implementation Strategies:
  - a. Natural Resource Protection (NRP) - Chapter 6
  - b. Farmland Preservation (FP) - Chapter 5

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Meeting Notes:

**Natural Resource Protection Comments:**

1. Bob F. asked if the 15% slopes shown on the priority conservation areas map are used as the basis for developing steep slope ordinances in various municipalities. Stephanie W. stated that this map was to generally depict environmentally sensitive natural resources.
2. Bob F. suggested that steep slope ordinances should only protect slopes greater than 25% and mentioned various existing residential developments that worked with maximum slopes of 15%. He mentioned that imposing natural resource

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- protection ordinances may devalue properties with significant natural resources.
3. Most were in agreement for a common sense approach to natural resource protection ordinances. The following main points were suggested:
    - Natural resource protections should focus on air and water quality.
    - Tree removal requirements should allow replacement trees off-site in riparian areas and farms.
    - It was acknowledged that model natural resource ordinances prepared by the County are only guidelines, and that implementation will be the responsibility of local municipalities.
    - Kim W. suggested prioritizing wellheads and drinking water sources in the development of model natural resource protection ordinances. She added that new PA DEP Erosion and Sedimentation Section 102 requirements do not require riparian buffers.
  4. Pete S. stated that natural resource protection ordinances are not anti-development and work well to maintain and improve quality of life while retaining natural features that positively contribute to property values.
  5. Most were in agreement that buffers are needed on farms; however this does not diminish the importance of implementing riparian buffers in residential areas.
  6. Kirk S. mentioned that NRP5 may need reworded since river conservation plans have been difficult to implement since funding for these plans is limited.
  7. It was suggested that the County determine appropriate roles for volunteer groups and consider providing funding for supplies and equipment to volunteers for stream, trail and park cleanups.
  8. An attendee asked if the County should revisit the Natural Area Inventory for endangered plant and animal species.
  9. Most in attendance agreed that a water resources study (as provided for in the MPC) is needed to justify proposed plan recommendations for protection water quality and to measure improvements in water quality resulting from implementation projects. Some municipalities will be required to do these studies as a part of new MS4 programs.
  10. It was suggested that the County turn to the master gardener organization for the identification and removal of invasive plants.

**Farmland Preservation Comments:**

1. Those in attendance suggested all farms in the farmland preservation program should be required to comply with new E&S regulations and prioritize farms on the preservation waiting list based on those that meet the new criteria.
2. Some expressed concerns of the County's ability to evaluate farms. Bob F. suggested using recent aerial photography to identify stream setbacks/ /buffers and collaborating with the NRCS to identify farms that comply with their programs.
3. Farms that have demonstrated readiness for CREP and EQUIP programs and those with a riparian buffers and a conservation plans should be prioritized in the waiting list for farmland preservation funding.
4. Kim W. mentioned that there is a new state historic tax credit for commercial

structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These funds could apply to historic barns used for commercial purposes.

5. Jeff W. noted that the Cumberland Valley FFA incorporates farming education and outreach at various community events. He suggested that park and recreation programs work with FFA groups to promote agriculture education and awareness at various community events.
6. Bill F. commented there are vast amounts of funds going to wastewater treatment plants to improve water quality to meet Chesapeake Bay nutrient loading reduction requirements. He suggested that a small portion of these funds could be used to improve water quality before treatment - since it is less expensive to implement water quality best management practices than it is to treat water.
7. Bob F. will send EPA information showing the costs to remove nutrients at the municipal treatment plant compared with costs for alternate upstream water quality best management practices that are far less expensive to implement.
8. An attendee stated the plan update should point to the Chesapeake Bay executive order to justify the proposed plan emphasis on water quality protections / enhancements.

**The next committee meeting is scheduled for 2:00 PM August 16, 2012. Topic: Parks, Trails & Greenways, Livable Communities.**