



**STATE OF DELAWARE
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING COORDINATION**

March 23, 2016

Mr. Stephen Segreto
Town of Bellefonte
901A Rosedale Ave.
Wilmington, DE 19809

RE: PLUS review 2016-02-01; Town of Bellefonte Pre-update Review

Dear Stephen:

Thank you for meeting with State agency planners on February 24, 2016 to discuss the update of Bellefonte's comprehensive plan. State agencies have reviewed the documents submitted and have asked that the following be considered when you update your plan for certification.

Office of State Planning Coordination – Contact: Herb Inden 739-3090

As we have discussed, the 2007 plan is a thorough and well done document and should serve the Town well as the basis for the ten year comprehensive plan update. Furthermore, the changes and modifications to be considered for this plan update should help Bellefonte to maintain and enhance the character and quality of life as Bellefonte continues to grow and develop.

As part of this update you should consider an assessment of the 2007 **Strategic Plan** detailed in the 2007 comprehensive plan, for example, as to what has been accomplished, what has yet to be accomplished and what is no longer feasible for consideration. This should then help in the development of your 2017 **Strategic Plan**.

Below is a list of State agency comments relating to the update of you plan. These comments should provide a starting point to determine which agencies will require further coordination as you update your plan.

Department of Transportation – Contact: Bill Brockenbrough 760-2109

- On page 58 of the 2007 Plan there are two references to DelDOT's Statewide and Regional Planning Section. That section of the Department has been reorganized and the relevant section for the Plan to reference is now the Local Systems Improvement Section, managed by Mr. Jeff Niezgoda. Mr. Niezgoda may be reached at (302) 760-2178.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control – Contact: Kevin Coyle 739-9071

DNREC offers several comments and suggestions to improve conservation and protection of the Town's resources. The intent of these comments is to improve the plan elements related to environmental protection, open space, recreation and water quality and supply. DNREC would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Town in a collaborative manner to discuss these recommendations and possible future ordinances.

Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Revisions

- **Page 29, Soils.** We suggest that the Town of Bellefonte Comprehensive Plan reference the NRCS soil survey update rather than the outdated 1971 USDA Soil Survey of New Castle County in their revised Comprehensive Plan. The updated soils information can be retrieved from the web soil survey at the following web link:
<http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>

For the applicant's convenience, the NRCS soil survey mapping update map of soils in the immediate vicinity of the Town of Bellefonte (outlined in red) is displayed in Figure 1.

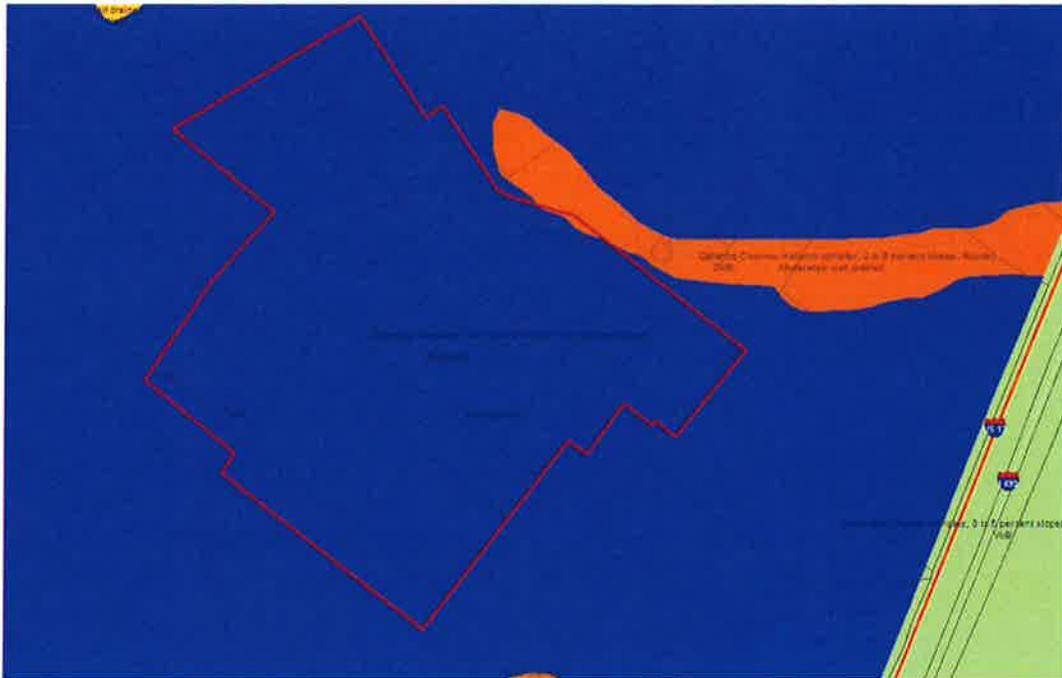


Figure 1: NRCS soil survey mapping update in the immediate vicinity of the Town of Bellefonte

- **Page 34, Water.** Does United Water Delaware have the capacity, in terms of water supply, to accommodate Bellefonte's future growth and development?
- **Page 34, Sewer.** Does the Town of Bellefonte's collection and conveyance system have the capacity to accommodate Bellefonte's future growth and development? Does the New Castle County wastewater treatment system have the capacity? These are good issues to explore as part of the intergovernmental coordination that is required when developing your comprehensive plan.
- **Page 37-38, Parks and Recreation.** In August of 2011, the Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation conducted a telephone survey of Delaware residents to gather information and trends on outdoor recreation patterns and preferences as well as other information on their landscape perception. These findings are the foundation of the 2013-2018 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) providing guidance for investments in needed outdoor recreation facilities and needs within county and municipal comprehensive plans. For the purpose of refining data and research findings, Delaware was divided into five planning regions. The Town of Bellefonte is located within SCORP Planning Region 1.

When looking at the findings from the 2011 telephone survey, it is apparent that Delawareans place a high importance on outdoor recreation. Statewide, 93% of Delaware residents indicated that outdoor recreation had some importance in their lives, while 67% said it was very important to them personally. These findings are very close

to the results of the same question asked in the 2008 public opinion telephone survey, indicating a continued demand for outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the State.

Outdoor Recreation Needs/Priorities

Based on the public opinion survey, the most needed outdoor recreation facilities in Laurel include:

High facility needs:

- Walking/Jogging Paths
- Swimming Pools
- Playgrounds
- Bike Paths
- Gardening
- Picnic Areas
- Off Leash Dog Areas
- Ball Fields
- Fishing Access
- Campgrounds

Moderate facility needs:

- Basketball Courts
- Hiking Trails
- Football Fields
- Mountain Bike Trails
- Tennis Courts
- Canoe/Kayak Launches
- Public Golf Courses

Recommendation: The Town of Bellefonte is encouraged to work toward incorporating and/or continuing to offer some of these opportunities in the development of their Comprehensive Plan.

- **Page 53, Redevelopment.** Brownfields are real property that may be vacant, abandoned or underutilized as a result of a reasonably-held belief that they may be environmentally contaminated (7 Del.C. § 9103(3)). Productive use of these idle properties provides “new” areas for economic development, primarily in former industrial/urban areas with existing utilities, roads and other infrastructure. DNREC encourages the development of Brownfields and can provide grant funding and other assistance when investigating and remediating Brownfield sites.

The Delaware Brownfields Marketplace is an interactive database that contains a list of market-ready Brownfield sites throughout Delaware. The inventory is designed to make it easier for potential buyers and developers to locate available Brownfield properties. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and helps to create jobs for Delaware citizens, while preserving Delaware's precious green space and natural resources.

To add sites in your municipality to the Marketplace (with owner approval) or to determine if any sites in your municipality are Brownfields, please contact Melissa Leckie at DNREC's Site Investigation and Restoration Section at (302) 395-2600 or by e-mail at Melissa.Leckie@state.de.us. For more information online, please visit: <http://apps.dnrec.state.de.us/BFExt/BFExtMain.aspx>

- **Pages 67-68, Environment.** What progress has been made regarding the Goals and Strategies outlined in the 2007 Plan? Accomplishments should be noted in the Plan.
- **Preparing for a Changing Climate.** Sea level rise is one of several climate change impacts that can affect communities, the others being variable precipitation and increasing temperatures. Together, precipitation and accelerated sea level rise contribute to increased flooding. The Climate Framework for Delaware recommends that DNREC, through the Division of Energy and Climate, provide technical support to local governments, in coordination with the Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), to enhance focus on climate impacts (including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions) and long-term sustainability (through adaptation and mitigation) in the comprehensive plan and in implementing ordinances. With that in mind, DNREC requests the opportunity to work with the Town and their consultants to develop language for the comprehensive plan that addresses climate change impacts, as well as adaptation and mitigation strategies for the Town to pursue through implementing ordinances.
- **Air Quality.** The Town of Bellefonte is encouraged to consider transportation alternatives and land use measures that will substantially enhance air quality and reduce air emissions. For instance, DNREC is in full support of efforts that improve traffic flow and reduce vehicle emissions. DNREC also supports efforts to provide "tie-ins" to the nearest bike paths and "links" to any nearby mass transport systems.

State Historic Preservation Office – Contact: Terence Burns 736-7404

- We appreciate the Town's recognition of community interest in preserving its town character and design, and hope they continue these efforts in the future. The Town should also do an architectural survey of properties in town, to determine if there are individual buildings or a district that may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. If the Town accomplishes this goal, it will be equipped to establish protections such as a historic zoning ordinance for the district and incentives to help protect the historic area. A major benefit of listing is that it makes properties eligible for financial incentives in the form of federal and state historic preservation tax credits and occasional grants. Such financial incentives will help in the maintenance of the aging housing stock,

which is one of the Town's Plan's concerns and recommendations. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Alice Guarrant at 302-736-7412.

Delaware State Housing Authority – Contact: Karen Horton 739-4263

- Title 22, Section 702 Del C., requires towns with populations less than 2,000 to state their position on housing growth.
- DSHA has developed a website, **Affordable Housing Resource Center**, to learn about resources and tools to help create housing for households earning 100% of median income or below. Our website can be found at: www.destatehousing.com "Affordable Housing Resource Center" under Other Programs.
- DSHA encourages municipalities receiving federal funds for housing to be aware of their Civil Rights obligations at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Specifically, federal fund recipients are obligated to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH) by taking proactive steps to promote racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities.

Since this was a Pre-update meeting for your plan update, we will need to see the completed document at a regular PLUS meeting once your Planning Commission has approved the draft plan for public review. Thank you for the opportunity to review this update. If you have any questions, please contact me at 302-739-3090.

Sincerely,



Constance C. Holland, AICP

Director, Office of State Planning Coordination