



# Land Preservation Task Force

Public Works  
Committee June 18, 2019



# Today's Focus

- Finalize Council's response to the Administration's proposal for the task force, *primarily* to finalize names and a start date
- Getting a task force moving to address the many land preservation issues of the County was the primary outcome of the March workshop we had
- Update on current land preservation-related issues



## Community Conversations

### About Land Preservation



GreeNCC

March 28, 2019

# Key Land Preservation Issues since January, 2017

- **Parks Task Force, Winter 2017**
  - Develop relationships with private landowners and seek guidance from State Open Space Council for future acquisitions
  - Identify underserved areas, coordinate with all levels of government and private sector
- **Draft Land Trust Ordinance # 18-075, Summer 2018, and Task Force Proposal**
- **Southern NCC Master Plan**
  - Widespread feedback indicating the importance of preservation
- **Community Conversations on Land Preservation, March 2019**
  - 100% of attendees thought NCC should create a task force
  - Habitat preservation and agricultural land preservation ranked by attendees as the 2 top preservation priorities
- **Park and Ag Preservation Acquisitions**

# Draft Task Force Tasks

- ID key issues: land protection, open space, agricultural preservation and growth.
- Outline status of land preservation and open space.
- Discuss fiscal impact of land preservation vs. growth.
- Outline the role of land preservation on water quality, aquifer protection, habitat protection, climate resiliency, and best land use practices in general;
- Recommend whether the County should create a land preservation trust.
- Recommend improvements to County and State land preservation programs, policies, and funding levels.
- Agricultural Preservation:
  - Review criteria and priorities for future acquisitions of agricultural preservation easements.
  - Research local agricultural products and services and their current and potential markets.
- Open space preservation / parkland:
  - Operational cost of existing parkland;
  - Improvement of passive and undeveloped parks; and
  - Criteria and priorities for future acquisitions.
- Explore sources of funding & partnerships.

# Structure and Timing

- **Membership** – 19 members
- **Chair:** Jeffrey Downing, Executive Director, Mt. Cuba Center
- **Sub-committees**
  - Farmland Preservation
  - Open Space Preservation
- **Meetings**
  - Full task force meets every other month, Wednesdays at 4pm, Gilliam Building
  - Sub-Committees determine their own meeting schedule
  - First meeting: July 17 or 24
    - Establish subcommittees and subcommittee chairs
    - Define bylaws
    - Set dates for next meetings
    - Provide brief overview of current county preservation status; include DropBox for relative background documents and future sharing
  - Report – Issue a report one year after the first meeting to make recommendations on issues mentioned above and the future of the task force

## Membership – 19 members

- Timothy Sheldon, Public Works Committee Co-Chair
- Janet Kilpatrick, Land Use Committee Co-Chair
- Kendall Sommers, Parks Division Manager, Department of Public Works
- Betsy Caufield, Planner II, Department of Land Use
- Austin Short, Secretary of Agriculture
- Elena Stewart, State Open Space Council
- Stuart Ramsey, President, New Castle County Farm Bureau
- Jack Coleman, Coleman Christmas Tree Farm (to be confirmed)
- Ginger North, Director of Conservation, Delaware Nature Society
- Jeffrey Downing, Executive Director, Mt. Cuba Center
- Maddi Valinski, Student, University of Delaware
- Lee Jarmon, Civic Leader, Route 9 Corridor
- Jen Kmiec, Executive Director, Committee of 100
  
- **Council Appointments**
  - 1 – Farm Bureau
  - 1 – Agricultural business
  - 2 – Environmental community
  - 2 – Citizens at large



# Discussion

