



The Town of Fenwick Island

800 Coastal Highway, Fenwick Island, DE 19944

302-539-3011 ~ 302-539-1305 fax

www.fenwickisland.delaware.gov

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

June 25, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Town Hall

Minutes

Members Present in Person: Susan Brennan, Julie Lee, Natalie Magdeburger

Members Present via Zoom: Stuart Rubenstein, Ann Riley, Lois Twilley

Members Absent: Winnie Lewis

Others Present: Erin Ellinger, Andrew Gainey(DNREC), Josh Lippert (DNREC), Karen Taylor (DNREC), Tim Leahy

Call to Order and Flag Salute

1. Discuss/approve minutes from meeting held June 11, 2026.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the June 11, 2026, meeting.

Moved by: Stuart Rubenstein

Seconded by: Julie Lee

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

2. Discuss DNREC's notice to coastal and bay beach communities plan regarding the Shoreline Public Access *with possible inclusion of DNREC Shoreline and Waterway Management Section personnel

The Commission welcomed representatives from DNREC's Shoreline and Waterway Management Section, including Josh Lippert, Shoreline and Waterway Program Administrator, and Andrew Gainey, Section Planner.

Mr. Lippert explained that DNREC's Shoreline Public Access Guidelines were published approximately six to eight months ago and are intended to ensure that Delaware's public beaches are equitable and accessible to the public. He explained that the guidelines are modeled after federal requirements for public beaches that receive beach nourishment, maintenance, and improvement funding. Communities receiving public funding for beach nourishment projects are expected to submit and receive approval for a Shoreline Public Access Plan.

Mr. Lippert reviewed several major components of the plan requirements, including the need for public beach access points, adequate parking, signage, bathrooms or nearby restroom access, lifeguard information, accessibility features, and other public beach amenities. He noted that the



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federal requirement for crossovers every half mile is firm, while other items, such as adequate parking, are reviewed with consideration of each community's unique layout and limitations.

The Commission discussed DNREC's preliminary comments regarding Fenwick Island, including references to public transportation, parking, and access concerns. Commission members explained that the Town has bus stops, clearly marked public parking, and recently completed a review and update of parking signage. It was noted that the Town also completed a street-by-street count of public parking spaces and would be able to provide that information as part of the Town's plan.

Commission members clarified the distinction between the incorporated Town of Fenwick Island and the unincorporated area south of Atlantic Avenue. Members explained that the incorporated Town maintains its beach ends, crossovers, trash collection, and beach access areas, while the unincorporated area is outside the Town's jurisdiction. The Commission emphasized that some concerns identified by DNREC may relate to the unincorporated area rather than the Town.

The Commission also discussed beach accessibility efforts already in place within the Town, including Mobi-Mats at beach access points, accessible parking areas, and assistance provided by the Beach Patrol. It was noted that the Beach Patrol completed approximately 268 transport trips last year, with return trips totaling approximately 536 trips, to help individuals access and leave the beach. Members expressed pride in the Town's efforts to help residents and visitors with mobility challenges enjoy the beach.

The Commission discussed restroom access and noted that the Town does not currently have space for public restroom facilities. However, nearby restroom facilities are available at Fenwick Island State Park, and facilities are also located near the Maryland/Delaware line. Mr. Lippert stated that bathrooms are not a requirement at this time and encouraged the Town to include information about nearby facilities and jurisdictional limitations in its plan.

Mr. Gainey recommended that the Town include maps and documentation showing crossover locations, Mobi-Mat locations, ADA parking, parking counts, signage, trash collection responsibilities, maintenance responsibilities, and potential future improvements. He stated that this information would help DNREC better understand how the Town's beach operates and what improvements may be considered over time.

The Commission discussed the importance of including photographs of beach access points, Mobi-Mats, trash cans, benches, bike racks, signage, and other amenities in the report. Members agreed that documenting these features would help clearly demonstrate the Town's current public access efforts.

The Commission also discussed parking availability. DNREC advised that the concept of "adequate parking" is not a one-size-fits-all standard and is reviewed based on the specific circumstances of each community. Mr. Lippert stated that a quarter-mile walk shed is often used



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as a general planning reference, but that DNREC understands each town has unique conditions. The Commission noted that the Town has approximately 275 public parking spaces and that parking is generally available, even during busy periods.

DNREC representatives offered to continue working with the Town and stated that they would be willing to review draft materials or participate in a smaller workshop before final submission. The Commission thanked DNREC for attending and for the additional clarification.

3. Discuss final draft of Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan Annual Report and 2025/2026 Implementation matrix

The Commission discussed the final draft of the Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan Annual Report and the 2025/2026 Implementation Matrix. Members noted that the documents had been reviewed and that the implementation matrix continues to serve as a strong tool for tracking progress on the Comprehensive Plan.

Motion: To accept and submit the Municipal Comprehensive Land Use Plan Annual Report and the Implementation Matrix to Town Council for approval.

Moved by: Julie Lee

Seconded by: Ann Riley

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

The Commission discussed collecting parking usage data during the summer season, particularly over the Fourth of July weekend and other high-use weekends. Members suggested using ParkMobile reports, photographs, and possible staff observations to help document actual parking use. It was noted that ParkMobile data may not capture all parking activity, especially vehicles using Town parking passes, but would still provide helpful documentation.

New Business

The Commission discussed whether a July meeting would be necessary given summer schedules and the December deadline for the Shoreline Public Access Plan. Members agreed that summer could be used to collect data, photographs, and other supporting documentation for the report.



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Public Participation

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 9:51 AM.

Moved by: Stuart Rubenstein

Seconded by: Julie Lee

Result: Motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting: September 24 at 9:00 AM