

August 26, 2019

Secretary Shawn M. Garvin
DNREC
The Richardson & Robbins Building
89 Kings Highway
Dover, DE 19901

Mr. Garvin:

The *Route 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee* would like to thank DNREC for supporting the production and implementation of the Route 9 Master Plan. As a valued member of the plan's Steering Committee, DNREC made contributions and insights which strengthened the plan. Likewise, we are pleased that DNREC has continued to stay involved after that group evolved into a Monitoring Committee to continue outreach and guide implementation.

We would, however, encourage DNREC to become more involved with our Public Health Subcommittee. There is a huge disconnect between this community's perceptions of health outcomes from environmental causes (particularly cancer) and what state public health data show. Our Health Subcommittee was formed to help bridge that divide. We reached out to DNREC, specifically, to be apart of that group in order to provide insights during conversations around environmental causes of poor health outcomes. And, while DNREC representatives have attended all the committee's meetings, they have been unengaged.

Nevertheless, our progress has been strong. Civic leaders, working with the Department of Public Health and the University of Delaware's Partnership for Healthy Communities, have begun to piece together what local health data are available and what data are missing. We reestablished a partnership with Nemours to better coordinate with their local work and understand what data they can bring to the table; we are working to do the same with Christina Care. And we have begun efforts in partnership with DeIDOT to step up street sweeping and drain clearing efforts – long called for by DNREC – to help better control dust pollution.

But we could do more with DNREC's involvement. This should begin by responding to questions and statements raised from civic leaders at the May meeting and supporting the work of the committee with the insights and experiences members of the DNREC team bring to the table.

Again, the aim of this effort is to help bridge the gulf in understanding between the Route 9 community and state surrounding how the local environment impacts public health. We are seeking to begin doing that through conversations. Conversations that will lead everyone to a better understanding of health data, a better understanding of the local social determinants of health, a better understanding of environmental impacts, and a better understanding of community experiences.

The mission of the Route 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee is to help guide and fulfill the recommendations of the Master Plan, which established a shared vision for the transportation and land use redevelopment of the Route 9 corridor. This work will be accomplished through a collaborative dialogue between its membership, which includes implementing agencies, local civic and community leaders, other key stakeholders, and the communities they represent.

On behalf of the Monitoring Committee, which reviewed and supported the sending of this letter, I want to thank DNREC again for its efforts and involvement to date. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. I can be reached at: 302 – 737 – 6205 x113 or at: bswiatek@wilmapco.org.

Sincerely,



Bill Swiatek
Principal Planner, WILMAPCO
Chairperson, Route 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee