

January 28, 2020

Mr. Mike Feeley
Executive Editor
The News Journal Media Group
P.O. Box 15505
Wilmington, DE 19850

Mr. Feeley:

Your recent article about Dunleith contained errors pertaining to the Route 9 Master Plan (www.wilmapco.org/route9). While we appreciate the Journal retracting the worst of these, the adjusted text remains misleading.

The story speaks to the need for government efforts to better engage African American communities. The Plan (completed by the Wilmington Area Planning Council, WILMAPCO) is an example of this type of engagement in action. Local civic leaders helped to guide the Plan's development. On-the-street outreach in Dunleith and other area communities informed its recommendations. Today, a Monitoring Committee, comprised of government and community leaders, is supporting implementation.

The story confuses the work of this Monitoring Committee with that of the WILMAPCO Public Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC is a regional body of civic leaders that advises WILMAPCO on outreach activities and spreads the word about WILMAPCO to their communities. No African Americans currently serve on the PAC – a problem that WILMAPCO has acknowledged and is working to rectify.

The PAC, however, had no responsibility for the creation of the Route 9 Master Plan, has no responsibility for its implementation, nor, indeed, outreach to inform Route 9 residents about it. That is all accomplished through the Monitoring Committee.

Given the presence of many dedicated African American civic leaders on the Monitoring Committee, WILMAPCO recently encouraged its members to also consider serving on its PAC. We recommend putting all this within proper context in the article, or simply remove the text linking the PAC with the Route 9 Master Plan.

Sincerely,



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