

Q&A

Coastal Zone Conversion Permit Act Stakeholder Interviews

October 25, 2017

In early October 2017, DNREC invited a number of stakeholder groups to participate in interviews with the Consensus Building Institute (CBI) regarding the Coastal Zone Conversion Permit Act, which requires DNREC to develop regulations for Conversion Permits by Oct. 1, 2019. DNREC enlisted CBI to help gather stakeholder input on a variety of topics as a preliminary step prior to the establishment of a Regulatory Advisory Committee, which will provide further guidance on the Conversion Permit regulations.

Who was invited to provide an interview, and how were they chosen?

To develop an initial list of interviewees, CBI reviewed all the names and organizations involved in the initial 1990s Coastal Zone Act Memorandum of Agreement, as well as the names and affiliations of individuals who provided testimony on the Coastal Zone Conversion Permit Act in the Delaware House and Senate hearings. DNREC reviewed and revised the list to create a final list representing a broad spectrum of views, stakeholders, and organizations. Participants were also invited to bring other members of their organization to the interviews with CBI.

The list of persons invited to participate in this initial phase is available on the Coastal Zone Conversion Permit webpage: de.gov/conversionpermits.

What will be asked in these interviews?

Questions will focus on two primary topics: 1) understanding stakeholder concerns about specific components of the Coastal Zone Conversion Permit Act, and 2) understanding preferences for how decisions regarding regulations should be made. This includes asking participants about what types of organizations/sectors should serve on a regulatory advisory committee, what the advisory committee role should be in drafting regulations, and how best to engage the public in those decisions.

Will these interviews be used to write draft regulations?

No. These initial interviews will not collect input on regulation content or language and will not result in draft regulations.

Are interviews private and confidential?

DNREC wishes to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to openly voice their opinions and concerns. CBI will summarize the range of issues and opinions to DNREC. In the information provided to DNREC, including draft and final summary reports, CBI will not attribute any particular concern or statement to any individual or organization. In other words, the summary report will describe what was said, but not who said it. DNREC will receive the same information that is released to the public.

Will the public be informed of what was said in these interviews?

Yes. Draft and final versions of the summary report that details the content and findings of the interviews will be readily available to the public on the Conversion Permit webpage: de.gov/conversionpermits.

Will there be opportunity for me to provide input?

Yes. A public workshop will be held after the initial stakeholder interviews are complete but before CBI provides their final summary report to DNREC. This workshop will allow additional citizens and stakeholder groups to voice their concerns and suggestions. This information will be incorporated into the final summary report.

DNREC will announce the workshop through a press release and listserv notice, and it will be listed on the public meeting calendar.

Additional public workshops focused on the development of Conversion Permit regulations themselves will be held in numerous locations after a Regulatory Advisory Committee is established. It is envisioned that these workshops will occur in spring 2018 and again in the fall of 2018.

How can I stay informed?

DNREC will utilize the Conversion Permit website (de.gov/conversionpermits) to post documents, information and notices. The draft and final summary reports produced by CBI will also be posted there.

Interested persons can stay up-to-date by checking the conversion permits website and by signing up for the listserv by sending a blank email to join-dnrec_coastal_zone@lists.state.de.us. A confirmation email will be sent to you when you have successfully signed up.