

From: Patrick Gaffney <pgaffney@udel.edu>
To: Ted Becker <tbecker@ci.lewes.de.us>; Bonnie Osler <bosler@ci.lewes.de.us>; Andrew Williams <awilliams@ci.lewes.de.us>; Tim Ritzert <trizert@ci.lewes.de.us>; Rob Morgan <rmorgan@ci.lewes.de.us>
Sent: Thu, Oct 8, 2020 2:20 pm
Subject: wetland buffer ordinance

Dear Mayor and City Council members:

I will not be able to attend tonight's Zoom meeting of the City Council, but would like to submit this comment on the proposed wetland buffer ordinance developed by a subcommittee of the Lewes Planning Commission. As I understand it, the buffer subcommittee is endorsing a proposed ordinance that would allow wetland buffers considerably smaller than the size recommended by available scientific evidence, and much smaller than those of neighboring jurisdictions. In particular, I'm very surprised that the buffer subcommittee, which has no relevant scientific background, did not reach out to the considerable expertise available locally. It is also very concerning that the minimal buffer width proposed completely ignores the impact of climate change. I understand that the subcommittee is aware of the document entitled *Planner's Guide to Wetland Buffers for Local Governments*, but they have, for reasons unknown, ignored its recommendations.

The Lewes area faces serious challenges from the effects of rapid growth and climate change. Please insist that the buffer subcommittee revisit their proposed buffer ordinance, using available evidence-based guidelines to draft an ordinance that will more effectively protect the natural environment of Lewes. Functional wetland buffers will protect not only the property of Lewes residents during severe weather events, but will also support the natural environment, which contributes greatly to making Lewes a great place to live.

Thank you for your consideration.

Patrick Gaffney, Professor (retired)
School of Marine Science and Policy
University of Delaware
Cannon Lab Rm 229
700 Pilottown Road
Lewes, DE 19958
(302) 645-4364