

Fort DuPont redevelopment plans moving forward in Delaware City

By [Shana O'Malley](#) · July 23, 2014

Delaware Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation that will help the state move forward with the redevelopment of Fort DuPont in Delaware City.

On Wednesday, Markell joined state leaders to sign House Bill 310, which establishes the Fort DuPont Redevelopment and Preservation Corporation. Under the redevelopment plan, the complex would be transformed into a hub to increase tourism by expanding outdoor recreational activities, restoring wildlife habitat and renovating old buildings.

As part of the legislation, Fort DuPont's governing corporation will be made up of an 11-member board of directors that will include local and state representatives. The law also provides for a 13-member Advisory Council to assist the board in areas of historic preservation, real estate and parks and recreation.

Markell said that the site is especially desirable because of its location along the Delaware Bayshore.

"I'd been through here and by here a few times, but [have] never really taken the time to look around at what I think is one of the real gems, one of the real jewels in the state of Delaware," he said. "This site is spectacular, not just because of all the open space, but [because of its] setting right off the water."

Constructed in the 1860s, Fort DuPont was in active use from the Civil War through World War II. In recent history, the site has been used to house the Gov. Bacon Health Center, a state-run long-term health care facility. However, many buildings on the property are not in use.

In light of this, the Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control has worked with the Delaware City community since 2012 to develop a [master plan](#) for the redevelopment of the 325-acre site.

"Fort DuPont has played an important role in Delaware's history and this legislation will help assure that this site does not fall victim to neglect," said DNREC Secretary David Small. "This legislation builds on the strong and innovative partnerships that were developed during the creation of the master plan which provides a framework for potential limited development and improved resiliency of the site."