



FORT DUPONT COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



SHAPED BY HISTORY & ANCHORED IN NATURE

SEPTEMBER 2023

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR FORT DUPONT



The Strategic Planning Committee has been working with the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) to create the mission, vision, value statements, and preliminary outcomes which will populate the strategic plan. There have been two working sessions and a survey,




the results of which will be brought before the Board on September 13th and shared at a Community Meeting on September 19th in the Delaware City Fire Hall, 815 5th St, Delaware City, DE 19706 from 6pm to 8pm.

See our other list of events on the back page.

REPORTS

The Audit for fiscal year 2022 is now available here: <http://bit.ly/3OVYCya>

Pints & Punkins

A Free Neighborhood Social For Fort Dupont Residents

October 13th
5 to 8pm

On The Parade Grounds
Live Music By Mike Miller - Food and Water Provided
Bonfire & Games - Bring a Blanket or Chair
BYOB



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DID YOU KNOW?

MOTHBALLING

Have a history question Fort DuPont?
Send it our way and she will endeavor
to answer it: tbuchanan@fortdupont.org

Providing temporary protection and stabilization for vacant historic buildings can arrest deterioration and buy us valuable time to raise money for preservation or to find a adaptive reuse for the property, like this duplex on Old Battery Lane. A well planned mothballing project involves documenting the history and condition of the building, stabilizing the structure to slow down its deterioration, and finally mothballing the structure to secure it.

The three highest priorities for the building while it is mothballed are

- 1) to protect the building from sudden loss,
- 2) to weatherize and maintain the property to stop moisture penetration, and
- 3) to control the humidity levels inside once the building has been secured.

The duplex will be secured to protect it from vandalism, break-ins and natural disasters.

Utilities will be looked at to



determine only what is necessary to protect the building and to facilitate routine maintenance of the structure.

While issues regarding mothballing may seem simple, the variables and intricacies of possible solutions make the decision-making process very important. A thorough evaluation will be performed prior to mothballing.

In addition, a variety of professional services as well as volunteer assistance are needed for careful planning and repair.

This will ensure that this historic property will be in stable condition for its eventual preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration.

A LITTLE HISTORY



The Oozlefinch is a legendary featherless bird of the Coast Artillery Corps, is reported to fly only backwards to keep dust, trivia, and other inconsequentialia out of his eyes. The first recorded history of the Oozlefinch comes from some writings of Captain H. M. Merriam of Fort Monroe, Virginia in about 1905. He apparently was the only man who alleged he had seen the mythical creature.

Sometime before Christmas of 1905 or '06, while shopping in Hampton, Virginia, Mrs. Tilton, the wife of Colonel E. R. Tilton, (also of Fort Monroe, who followed Captain Merriam) came across a model of a bird which appeared to duplicate Captain Merriam's description of the Oozlefinch. A purchase was made and Colonel Tilton transported the bird to the Fort Monroe Officers Club, and there it was accorded a perch behind the bar, and where it remained for many, many years. The Oozlefinch is no longer popular among servicemen as a guardian, but we think his military history, dedication to servicemen and pure whimsy make him a perfect mascot for Fort Dupont.

MEET THE TEAM

LARRY MACLAREN

Larry MaClaren is Fort Dupont's Landscape Maintenance Manager. He and his team are responsible for the beautiful landscaping on the campus. Larry came to us 2.5 years ago, where he left his supervisory role at Reybold after 16 years.

Larry credits his love of natural landscaping to his mentor, Kevin McDonough, and taught him how native plantings with the location and ecology in mind are beneficial to pollinators, deer, birds and even bugs which draw beneficial predators.

For instance, in Chapel Grove, we used river birches, which hold more water, oak leaf hydrangea, and *Ltea Virginica*, which can handle the shade from the birches. Working with Tim Slavin, they have a policy that states that for every diseased tree they remove, they plant two native trees. His whole vision for the future is to preserve and conserve the landscape, practice a sustainable ecologically driven landscape and remain stewards of nature. Larry and his wife will soon have a little "seedling" of their own. They are



expecting a baby girl in early November.

Take a walk around the campus and take a look at the Bearded beggartick (*Bidens aristosa*), also known as tickseed sunflower, is a US native plant in the aster family. (See photo at right). Its multi-branched stems boast yellow flowers which bloom late summer into early fall and produces a thin, dry seed that often has barbs which readily attach to clothing, giving it the name tickseed. It supports a range of pollinators including bees, butterflies, and other native insects as well as attracting natural predators of pest species.



STARS AT THE FORT

Driving around the campus, you may have noticed some metal stars on the roof vents of some of the older buildings. We've been looking for answers - where did they come from, and why are they there?

We turned to former First State National Park Superintendent Russ Smith, who spoke with some members of the Coast Defense Study Group (CDSG), a non-profit corporation dedicated to the study of seacoast fortifications.

"These are army star ventilators.



They appear to be a common architectural feature of the OQMG (Office of the Quartermaster General) second period of standardization, 1890-1917. We've seen them from coast to coast, mostly on larger

structures like barracks and QM buildings. They are probably on one of the sheets of architectural drawings in building such as the OQMG standard plan 181A, double coast artillery barracks, at Fort DuPont," said Quent Schillare.

"I don't know when they started to put the star ventilators on OQMG standard plan buildings, but they were used during the period 1890-1917 on hundreds of Army buildings across the United States. In essence, it's the manufacturer logo."

DELAWARE CITY DAY & WALK FOR AUTISM



As it was last year, Delaware City Day and the Walk For Autism here on Fort Dupont are on the same day - October 7th.

There were no problems at all with both happening at the same time last year. But it's best to plan your activities for the day. There will be some traffic congestion in both Delaware City and Fort Dupont and parking lot attendants will be guiding visitors. Just give yourself some extra time.



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

1. **The "Dip"** - ADEL Construction has been awarded the contract to fix the "dip" between the roundabout and Old Elm Avenue. Construction will start on 10/9, and the project is expected to take roughly thirty days. We appreciate your patience during this time.

2. **Pre-construction Testing** - Environmental testing has been done on the chapel, the bakery and the theater in advance of construction work. Some minor issues were detected and remediation will begin before basic utilities go in.

3. **Marina Village** - The preliminary plan has been submitted to Delaware City for consideration by the Planning Commission. Additionally, the plan requires Board of Adjustment approval to address the parking requirements for the stacked condominiums. Additional approvals (Office of State Fire Marshal, DelDOT, DNREC) are pending.

IMPORTANT DATES

September 19th 6pm-8pm
Community Update
Delaware City Fire Hall

October 7th 9:30am
Walk For Autism
Fort Dupont Campus

October 11th 6-7:30pm
FDRPC Board Meeting
Community Center

October 13th 5-8pm
Pints & Punkins
Our Neighborhood Social

November 8th 6-7:30pm
FDRPC Board Meeting
Community Center

December 13th 8:30am-10am
FDRPC Board Meeting
Community Center

**Always check the website for updated agendas or last-minute changes*



Residents:

Do you have questions or concerns? Email them to Terry Buchanan, our Director of Communications at tbuchanan@fortdupont.org.