# PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee meeting was held on April 13, 2015, at 3:30 p.m. with Chairman Dixon presiding. Members present were Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Anderson (arrived at 3:40 p.m.), Mr. Caldwell, and Mrs. Horsey.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS**

**Mr. Hutchison moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mrs. Horsey and unanimously carried.**

**Presentation - Martin Luther King Jr. Educational Community Center**

Dr. Garcia (Gus) Walker stated that he serves on the Martin Luther King Jr. Educational Community Center Committee and it was hoped that this community center would be located in Dover in the near future. He introduced the other members of the committee, including Dr. Ira Roach III and Dr. Derone Daniels, who are involved with a General Educational Development (GED) diploma program for youth in the Dover area, Ms. Anne Smith, who deals in hospitality and who set up the hospitality curriculum at Delaware State University, Mr. Alex Cropper, licensed drug and alcohol counselor, and Mr. Bobby Wilson. Dr. Walker stated that he was a retired educator and counselor.

Dr. Walker stated that City Council was not being asked for money but for a facility that could accommodate the Community Center. He reviewed a presentation entitled, "MLK Educational Community Center" and explained that between 7,000 to 9,000 individuals were currently incarcerated in the State of Delaware, approximately 44% of them do not have a high school diploma or GED, and approximately 1,500 to 2,000 individuals are on probation or parole at one time or another. Dr. Walker stated that these individuals are not allowed to use facilities such as the Polytech Adult Education Center because the Center does not accept felons or sex crime offenders and advised members that the proposed program would serve individuals in Kent County who are "down and out" and "fall through the cracks" by providing GED high school diplomas.

Dr. Walker reviewed the mission goals of the program, including human service, workforce development/job training, substance/mental health programs, food programs, emergency shelter and promoting a safe and sanitary community environment for all ages and cultures, and crisis prevention. He indicated that another goal was to partner with the City, including the Mayor, City Council, and those involved in the Downtown Dover Development District; State government; local police departments; local non-profit organizations; and schools for fundraising, community building, community service, and education. Dr. Walker advised members that the goal of fostering community could be met by hosting holiday meals, town meetings, family gatherings, and individual recognition and memorial events in partnership with the clergy and the Dover Panhellenic Council. He noted that the Dover Panhellenic Council consists of nine (9) Greek-letter sororities and fraternities made up of 400 or 500 college-educated individuals who are required to do community service. He stated that many people in various parts of town have the same ideals and he expressed the desire to have everyone "put their heads together" to work toward saving communities. Dr. Walker stated that the MLK Educational Center Committee already met with the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA) and is forming a partnership with them to coordinate

efforts. Dr. Walker stated that sustainability was a major goal of the organization and expressed their desire to use the mission statement and goals to achieve their financial needs and future aims to provide care, restoration, and improvement of the facilities; support staff development; increase volunteer engagement; and energize broad participation.

Mr. Hutchison thanked Dr. Walker for the presentation and, based on Mr. Hutchison's 25 years in law enforcement, confirmed the serious need in the City and Kent County to address the concerns raised; however, he questioned where funding would come from to support the center. Responding, Dr. Walker stated that funding would come from State and local grant funds, and start-up funding would basically be coming from personal interests. He indicated that this is a 501(c)(3) organization and that grant writers were currently writing the grants for these types of programs.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding the number of people that the facility could handle at one (1) time, Dr. Walker stated that Mr. Cropper had estimated that over 125 individuals could be served.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison about operating hours, Dr. Walker stated that the office portion of the organization would be a nine (9) to five (5) operation; however, they would be on call 24 hours per day.

Mr. Hutchison questioned whether the organization had reached out to the upper management of State government to see whether there was an opportunity for partnership, so that individuals could be assigned to the MLK Education Community Center instead of being incarcerated. Responding, Dr. Walker indicated that he had not spoken with upper management; however, he had contacted the Department of Probation and Parole, which would be the gatekeeper for sending these individuals to be serviced. Dr. Walker confirmed that the focus of the group was mainly on those coming out of incarceration, stating that there are organizations that deal with kids aged six (6) to 18 to try to keep them out of the prison system, educate them, and let them matriculate at different universities and communities; however, those aged 16 through 40 plus are "lost." He advised members that those without a high school diploma can be seen walking the streets and "sometimes coming through our door at night." Dr. Walker stated that many of these individuals have become disenchanted with life and their self-esteem has declined due to many fallbacks. He felt that this population should not be forgotten because we live in gated communities, do our nine (9) to five (5) jobs, pay rent and taxes, and stay away from these areas, noting that the problem is getting larger and larger.

In response to Mrs. Horsey regarding the ideal location of the building, Dr. Walker indicated that one (1) of the main locations discussed was the former Dover Public Library; however, he noted that there were several vacant areas. He indicated that they were "willing to just take a building to get going" and hoped to return in two (2) years and show success. He stated that, "you might even give us this building," explaining there was a need for a brick and mortar building to handle the group counseling sessions, which would be held five (5) days per week and some weekends. He noted that transportation would be included in the program for individuals who need it.

Mr. Hutchison stated, for the record, that he absolutely embraced the concept being discussed; however, he was not happy about a downtown location. He stated that the City was embarking upon a wonderful opportunity, with commitment from the Governor's Office and Kent County Levy Court to attack the issues and concerns in downtown Dover, and felt that this area could not be rehabilitated if more issues and concerns were brought there. He stated that he would welcome the opportunity to work with the committee on a location.

Responding to Mr. Anderson regarding when the program would begin once a location was found, Dr. Walker stated that the program would be able to start July 1, 2015, without or without a facility, noting that it might be in his kitchen.

Mr. Anderson also offered to help with a location.

Dr. Walker stated that Dr. Daniels runs a faith-based GED program with a 100% graduation rate and there are great substance abuse counselors doing their job every day. He advised members that there are people with great hearts out there working right now, but support is needed. He expressed the need to "let our pockets face up with our hearts" to sustain this program.

In response to Dr. Walker's request to meet and talk about facilities available in the Dover area, Mr. Hutchison introduced Mr. Bill Neaton, Economic Development Manager, stating that Mr. Neaton had a list of available buildings and could provide guidance. He expressed the need to identify what size building was needed and focus on making sure that the location would fit the needs.

In response to Dr. Walker regarding the cost to the organization for the use of the building, Mr. Neaton stated that this would have to be determined by the owner of the building.

Mr. Hutchison reiterated the need for the program and thanked the Committee for its presentation.

Mr. Anderson thanked Dr. Walker and the team for this "great" proposal, stating that it is desperately needed. He indicated that there are many services in the City, but there are gaps in getting the services to the location of those who need them, and it is essential to solve this problem. Mr. Anderson stated that one (1) of the best ways to get people off the streets is to have a place where they can be productive, which would be very positive and add value to the City. He hoped that the location selected would be accessible to those most likely to be in need of it, and he reiterated the need for transportation.

Mr. Dixon stated his appreciation for all the hard work of the Committee and encouraged them to contact him if he could be of service. He noted the need for help in the City and indicated that he wanted to see the program work.

**Benchmarks Established for the Economic Development Office**

Mr. Bill Neaton, Economic Development Manager, stated that the benchmarks for the Economic Development Office (EDO) are presented semi-annually and would be reviewed in two (2) segments: 1) the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP) and 2) City-wide economic development.

Mr. Ed Perez, Downtown Coordinator, reviewed the benchmarks for the DDP. He indicated that the DDP had led or organized 26 events in downtown Dover year to date, with seven (7) additional events scheduled, and were on target to meet their goal of 30. The scheduled events included First Fridays in April, May and June. Staff was also collaborating on Artsyfest, a new event scheduled in April, and helping with the Restoring Central Dover Community Fair.

In regard to the objective to set and reach an annual fundraising goal for the DDP, Mr. Perez stated that the DDP's Organization Committee was being restructured and would now focus on grant writing. He noted that there would be ongoing research to pursue grants that will apply specifically to the type of work that the DDP does to help supplement some its activities.

In regard to monitoring the satisfaction of downtown merchants and business owners, Mr. Perez stated that the DDP was on schedule to conduct this survey in May.

In reference to monitoring businesses opened in the downtown target area, Mr. Perez stated that the projections for 2014-2015 were for six (6) new businesses and a net of four (4) new businesses to open in the Downtown Dover target area. Mr. Perez advised members that five (5) new businesses had been opened, with a current net gain of four (4) new businesses, so the DDP was on target to meet that goal.

In reference to working with property owners and entrepreneurs to fill vacant commercial spaces on Loockerman Street with businesses, Mr. Perez stated that four (4) vacant spaces had been filled: Dinos & Darlings, 9 West Loockerman Street; Pure Luxury Salon, 32 West Loockerman Street, Suite 109; Celebrity Style Vintage Boutique, 32 West Loockerman Street, Suite 101-B; and Artsy Fartsy crafts, 32 West Loockerman Street, Suite 101-D.

Mr. Anderson inquired about the response from downtown businesses and merchants to some of the new initiatives in the Downtown Development District. Responding, Mr. Neaton explained that five (5) public workshops had been held over the last month and a half, and meetings had been held with realtors and bankers. He stated that a meeting was held specifically with downtown merchants to explain the Downtown Development District Program and was very successful, with over 30 merchants attending. Mr. Neaton advised members that Mr. Kirby Hudson, the City's new Assistant City Manager, recently completed a walking tour of the downtown area with Mr. Perez and they determined that, regardless of all of the related advertising and meetings, some merchants had not been exposed to the program. A follow-up meeting was scheduled for April 30, 2015 at the Bayard Plaza and invitations would be hand delivered to merchants on the west side of town and the areas outside of Loockerman Street. Mr. Neaton stated that the downtown merchants had embraced the program and several meetings had been held with developers from outside of the area who are

looking to bring large development into the downtown area. Mr. Neaton stated that the EDO is very excited about the potential for the Downtown Development District and asked for support from the Committee and Council to make sure that funding for the program moves forward into the State's next fiscal year. He indicated some concern because the $7M that was allocated Statewide in FY 15 for large Downtown Development District projects had been spoken for, and he expressed the desire to make sure that the State continues the program into FY 16.

Mr. Anderson stated that he was glad to hear of the good response and he felt that the City would be "in great shape" next year because its program is superior to any other in the State.

Mr. Neaton advised members that the Planning Office and the EDO had invited anyone who was interested to come in to discuss the program individually. The EDO met last week with five (5) different individuals, and the Planning Office met with a similar number of interested individuals.

In response to Mr. Anderson regarding whether the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) had helped or cooperated on this program, Mr. Neaton explained that the program is administered through the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) and is not a DEDO interoffice program. Having said that, he indicated that DEDO is always very supportive of these programs.

Mr. Anderson questioned if DEDO was helpful in getting related out-of-state businesses directed to the City. Responding, Mr. Neaton stated that they had not been; however, Mr. Kirby Hudson, Assistant City Manager, had been instrumental in bringing some outside developers into the area.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding whether anyone had actually applied for funding, Mr. Neaton stated that they had. Mr. Neaton explained that the way the program works is that applications are submitted for large projects and funds are then reserved. Two (2) applications had been received for large project funds with a $250,000 threshold. For smaller projects, under $250,000, project work is completed and then an application is submitted to the DSHA for reimbursement, which is to occur within 60 days after certification.

Mr. Hutchison questioned if applicants know for sure that they will receive reimbursement once a project is completed. Responding, Mr. Neaton stated that applicants are asked to meet with Planning Department or EDO staff before moving forward with a project to make sure that they meet all the qualifications, that the project is in the district, that it fits the plan, and that it is something that staff can assure them that they will be reimbursed for at the end of the project.

Responding to Mr. Neaton, Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, stated that staff would be receiving updates from the DSHA on the amount of funds still available; however, at this point no applications had been received for small project funds, so all of that money was still available. She stated that there would be a problem if many projects finish at the same time and the demand comes all at one (1) time. She assured members that staff was keeping close tabs on this and making sure to communicate to inquirers that they should get their applications in as quickly as possible.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding the threshold for smaller projects, Mrs. Townshend reiterated that the smaller projects discussed would be below a $250,000 investment and would be eligible to receive a State grant up to $45,000.

Mr. Dixon stated the importance of monitoring projects and Mr. Neaton indicated that this was very important to staff.

In regard to City-wide economic development, Mr. Neaton referenced the Strategic Objectives for Fiscal year 2014-2015, stating that one (1) of the objectives for the EDO and the City is to complete infrastructure construction at the Garrison Oak Technology Park (GOTP). He stated that although the report indicated that the infrastructure was about 35% complete, a construction update received on April 10, 2015 revealed that the portion being constructed by A-Del Construction Company, including the roadway, sewers, sanitary sewer, water and storm water, was 50% to 70% complete. The eastern portion of the road was now complete, the base coat in the entrance and back to the Garrison Energy Center (GEC) was paved, and the majority of it had sidewalks and curbing. Mr. Neaton indicated that this had allowed for the start of infrastructure improvements to the western portion of the GOTP, which was important because traffic was now being funneled into the eastern portion of the park so that the water, storm water, and sewer lines can be laid, and the Uzin Utz manufacturing facility was very close to being completed. Mr. Neaton suggested that members take a run to White Oak Road to view the site. He stated that Mr. Philip Utz advised him that they expect to start production at the end of May and this would require infrastructure to be in place, including the roadway and natural gas line to that location. Mr. Neaton indicated that a six (6) week timeline had been set with A-Del Construction, and the City expected them to comply. He advised members that George & Lynch, Inc., one (1) of the other two (2) contractors at the site, was working on the pump station, which was almost complete, had been hooked into the GEC, and was being utilized for their discharge. Mr. Neaton stated that the other major project at the GOTP is a 1.5M gallon water tower, which was approximately 40% to 50% complete. Although this project is behind its original schedule, it is ahead of the revised schedule that had been worked out.

Mr. Neaton stated that he had been tasked with bringing two (2) new businesses to the GOTP, but noted that he plans to bring 12 new businesses since the City has 12 additional lots there. He indicated that he had met with one (1) prospect several times over the last six (6) months, and last week they informed him they would be putting together a proposal for an additional parcel of land at the GOTP. Mr. Neaton informed members that this is a technology company and, once their identity can be announced, he felt members would be very pleased, noting that a lot of things still have to come into place for this project to occur.

Mr. Neaton stated that an hour prior to the meeting he was speaking with an investor from Europe who hopes to come at that end of the month to look at several parcels at the GOTP. This would be a large employer. He indicated that staff had been working with this party for well over a year and were excited that they are coming to look at the infrastructure and the parcel.

Mr. Neaton advised members that Mr. Alan Levin, Secretary, DEDO, had been to the GOTP several weeks ago and Mr. Levin had indicated that he was pleasantly surprised at the investment the City had made in the site. Mr. Neaton stated that he was sure that the City would get some support from the State and that the State would send some businesses here rather than to New Castle County.

Mr. Neaton informed members that the GEC was beginning to ramp up and was doing some testing, which would cause some strange noises over the next few weeks. The City is starting to supply them with water and taking their discharge. In six (6) weeks they will be hooked into the grid and be a fully functioning power plant.

In relation to City-wide economic development, Mr. Neaton stated that a number of new businesses had come into town, including Urban Furniture, located in the former Metro grocery store that had been vacant for six (6) years, and Airbase Carpet was also occupying a portion of this building. Mr. Neaton explained that staff had been working very closely with the owners of the former Walmart building, who have submitted a very aggressive plan for that area with a lot of new retail businesses and some restaurant pad sites.

Mr. Neaton indicated that staff had met with the developers and owners of the Kmart building, which is a company out of Cleveland, Ohio. He indicated that they have "really nice plans" for that facility that will put a couple of tenants into the building and it was hoped that these plans would be submitted in the near future.

Mr. Neaton indicated that Produce Junction would be going into the old TigerDirect building near PetSmart, a building that has had numerous businesses followed by vacancies. He advised members that Produce Junction was a very well established company with 19 locations on the east coast and was the largest independent purchaser of bananas out of the Port of Wilmington. He stated that this is a big company and he looked forward to having them here.

Mr. Neaton stated that construction was occurring at the former Chicago Uno and former Dover Litho sites and a couple of grand openings would be happening in those buildings over the next several months.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding the Playtex site, Mr. Neaton stated that Playtex was expanding their facility and remodeling the interior of their building and the Planning Department, City Manager's Office, Mayor's Office, and EDO had been working with them regularly. Mr. Neaton advised that the City had received a proposal from an engineering company for enhancements to the Clara Street entrance. Responding to Mr. Hutchison regarding the timetable of the project, Mr. Neaton stated that the expected completion date was in 2017.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Neaton stated that there had been good cooperation from the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) on the Playtex project. He stated that DelDOT had been working very closely with the Planning Department and had been very responsive to staff's requests, noting that the State wants this project to work.

Mr. Hutchison expressed thanks for staff's commitment and focus. He stated that economic development takes a partnership between the City, State and County in order to make all these things work and a lot of energy to make things happen. He felt that the City of Dover was on the cutting edge right now and stated that the City had the opportunity and responsibility to make sure the right steps are being taken in moving forward.

**Update - Recreation Needs Assessment**

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, stated that she was working on pulling together information related to the Recreation Needs Assessment and that she hoped to be able to put time into the project during the coming week.

**Review of Youth Advisory Committee Membership Applications**

Mr. Anderson stated that applications were still be collected for the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). He indicated that he had communicated recently with the principal of Dover High School regarding this. He was unsure if the Parks and Recreation Department had received any applications; however, he stated that enough applications had been received to have a strong committee and asked that these applicants be considered. Mr. Anderson recommended that the individual who submitted the third application be contacted and asked to fill it out properly and resubmit it for the next meeting, because part of the point of the YAC is to help people learn how to do things in a professional way.

Mr. Hutchison inquired if Councilman Anderson was reaching out to any college students in this regard. Responding, Mr. Anderson stated that the actual members of the Committee will come essentially from eighth through twelfth grades, due to the way the resolution was originally drafted. He indicated that subcommittee members and volunteers could be people from all over the community, including college students, and several college students are actually engaged with this.

Mr. Hutchison stated that he had the opportunity to read the applications and they each bring something a little different to the table.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding the number of members that he would like to see, Mr. Anderson stated that he envisioned nine (9) members. He indicated that the National Council on Life and Labor Research (NCALL) and Dover High School had some applications that Mr. Anderson had not yet received, so there would be more coming and may be reviewed at the next Committee meeting. He felt there were enough to get a strong YAC and a strong quorum and hoped that more members could be added as more applications are completed.

Mrs. Horsey stated, in going over the applications fairly quickly, she felt that there were many applicants that had given very strong positive answers and looked like they would be good future leaders, and this is a good way for them to start.

Mr. Dixon stated that the YAC was one (1) of the dreams of the late Councilwoman Sophia Russell and that the City would continue to work hard to keep this alive and moving.

**Mr. Hutchison moved to accept the applications as presented *(as on file in the Office of the City Clerk)*, with the exception of the application that was not filled out, seconded by Mrs. Horsey and carried by a vote of four (4) yes (Dixon, Hutchison, Caldwell, and Horsey) and one (1) abstention (Anderson).**

Mr. Anderson stated that he abstained from voting because his daughter was an applicant.

During their meeting held on November 10, 2014, members considered the First State National Monument - Wayside Planning for The Green. Members recommended approval of proposed wayside exhibits for the First State National Monument, stipulating that there be outreach to the members of the Friends of Old Dover, and this recommendation was approved by City Council during their meeting held on November 24, 2014.

During the Committee meeting held on April 13, 2015, Mrs. Horsey provided members with the finished text for the wayside exhibits ***(Attachment #1)***, stating her understanding that the waysides would be erected before Dover Days. She indicated that she had already sent this to the Mayor, and Mr. Anderson suggested that she email this information to the City Clerk's Office for distribution to Council and Mr. Caldwell.

**By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Wallace R. Dixon
Chairman

WRC/MK/js/dd/tm
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*Attachment*
*Attachment #1 - Wayside Exhibits - First State National Monument*

ATTACHMENT #1
PR&CE Committee Meeting of 04/13/2015

# Delaware Decides

In early December 1787 the thirty delegates to the Delaware ratifying convention were called upon to make a momentous decision. For five days they considered whether to approve the new, stronger central government proposed at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia the previous summer. Finally, on the 7th, the delegates unanimously voted to ratify the United States Constitution, making Delaware the first state to do so.

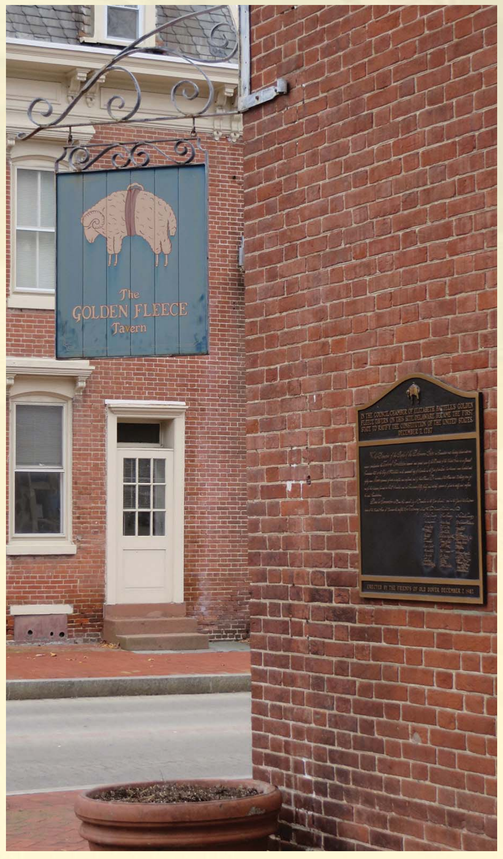


Gunning Bedford, Jr.

*Portraits courtesy of State of Delaware Historical and Cultural Affairs*



Richard Bassett




*"...fully, freely, and entirely approve of, assent to, ratify, and confirm the said Constitution."*

Delaware's ratification document, December 7, 1787

## The Golden Fleece Tavern

Delegates to the ratifying convention gathered at The Golden Fleece Tavern, the same place where the state assembly sometimes met. The tavern is long-gone, but its site is well-marked at the corner of State Street and The Green.

## The Delegates

Gunning Bedford, Jr., Richard Bassett, Jacob Broom, John Dickinson, and George Read were delegates to the Constitutional Convention at Philadelphia in 1787. Bassett and Bedford were also among the delegates to the ratifying convention in Dover.

Background Artwork *Delaware, The First State* by Robert E. Goodier, courtesy of PNC Bank

ATTACHMENT #1
PR&CE Committee Meeting of 04/13/2015

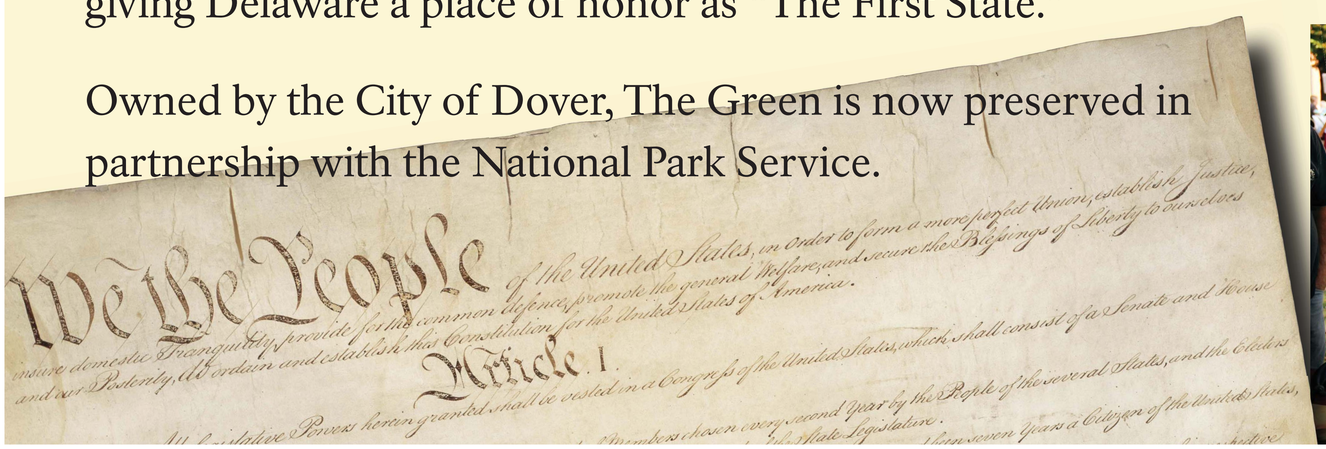
# The Green



*Troops Leaving Dover Green*, Stanley Arthur's imaginative painting depicts The Green during the American Revolution
Courtesy of the State of Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs Collection

William Penn established the town of Dover in 1683. As surveyed in 1717, the town featured three public squares including The Green. Surrounded by government buildings, shops, homes, and taverns, The Green became the heart of Dover. During the American Revolution, it was the setting for troop reviews, markets, and public gatherings. On December 7, 1787 thirty delegates , ten from each county, met at the Golden Fleece Tavern facing The Green and ratified the United States Constitution, giving Delaware a place of honor as "The First State."

Owned by the City of Dover, The Green is now preserved in partnership with the National Park Service.






## The Green Over Time

The usual quiet dignity of The Green belies its role as a hub of community activity. As in the past, annual festivals bring color, music, dancing, and historical demonstrations. Dover Days in the spring is a blend of traditions and modern attractions. The Market Fair each autumn faithfully recreates various aspects of 18th century life including crafts, games, and a militia muster.

