

THE VANTAGE POINT



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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ANNOUNCING THE 2018 *Great Places in Pennsylvania*

The PA Chapter of APA kicked-off the “*Great Places in Pennsylvania*” Program in 2014 to recognize places with exemplary character, quality, identity, cultural interest, and community involvement. Great Places build healthy and strong communities by helping to attract and retain residents and businesses, as well as attract visitors.

The Great Places categories for 2018 were Great Public Spaces and Great Greenways/Trails. Following review and rating of the sixteen nominations by a panel of eight judges, five Great Public Spaces and three Great Greenways/Trails were designated as the 2018 Great Places in PA. To date, the Chapter has designated 31 Great Places across the Commonwealth. In past years, other categories have included Great Neighborhoods and Great Streets

GREAT PUBLIC SPACES

A Great Public Space is a vibrant place where people of all ages gather to play, socialize, enjoy a meal or concert, relax, or just enjoy the outdoors. It is a focal point for community events, which bring people together and bolster the economy. The 2018 Great Public Spaces are below.

Buhl Park: In 1911, Frank Buhl acquired 300 acres of land in the City of Hermitage, Mercer County, with a vision of creating “a place of recreation” for residents. He subsequently donated the land and facilities to the Trustees in 1915, together with funds to operate and maintain the Park. The Trustees, working collaboratively with the Buhl Park Corporation and others, have

continued to carry-out Mr. Buhl’s vision. Today, the Park includes a diverse array of facilities for persons of all ages and abilities. Among the facilities is a 9-hole golf course, driving range, disc golf course, swimming pool, playgrounds, dog park, arboretum, fitness trail, a 9-acre lake, tennis courts, a Nature Explore learning center, and an outdoor Performing Arts Center. Many events occur in the Park, such as sporting tournaments, concerts, festivals, Youth Fishing Day, and “Buhl Day,” a huge community picnic celebrating the Buhl legacy. With over 400,000 visitors annually, Buhl Park is proclaimed to be “a place where lives happen and memories are made.” Here’s a link to an excellent news article about [Buhl Park’s designation as a great place.](#)

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The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association celebrates excellence in planning.

Congratulations to the 2018 Great Places in Pennsylvania!

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Central Park: This 140 acre Park is the focal point of Doylestown Township in Bucks County. Residents and visitors gather at the Park for recreation, social interaction, and community events. Kids Castle, a majestic playground inspired by the castles of Henry Chapman Mercer and enclosed by a fence lined with one of a kind donated artwork, is one of the highlights. Central Park is also home to an amphitheater, outdoor fitness equipment, picnic pavilions, sport fields and courts, trails with connections to neighboring municipalities, and environmental education areas (wetlands, native plant garden, natural habitats). Among the trails is a sensory trail dedicated to developing sensory experiences for children with special needs. The Park, which attracts individuals and families from all over the world, is truly a place for community gathering, inspiration, and making countless memories.



Emmaus Triangle Park: Emmaus Borough, in Lehigh County, is the only town in Pennsylvania with a triangle as its center. The triangle, which has been part of the Emmaus community since 1759, originally served as the location for crops and livestock to benefit townspeople, then as the site of a hotel. Following demolition of the hotel in 1923, the triangle was officially established as a park. Today, people of all ages frequent the Park, locally referred to as “The Triangle,” to enjoy passive recreation and community events. A special feature, located in the heart of The Triangle, is a fountain that is lighted during the evening hours May through October. Other features include park benches, drinking fountain, flowers, trees, calendar kiosk, and wrought iron fencing. Among the events hosted in the Park are an Old Fashioned Christmas Lighting, SnowBlast Winter Arts Festival, Farewell to Summer Festival, educational presentations, and the starting point for foot and bike races. Residents and visitors alike take pride in this special place.

Susquehanna Riverfront: This historic and scenic section of the West Branch Susquehanna River waterfront, in the City of Lock Haven and Woodward Township (Clinton County), was once threatened by a controversial US Army Corps of Engineers dike-levee flood protection project. In an effort to protect features treasured by residents, a local planning team participated in the design phase and was successful in having five key amenities included: a riverwalk; a pavilion, access ramps, bleacher seating, and a concrete swimming enclosure to revive the YMCA beach; an amphitheater; a Riverview Park; and a public boat launch. Since completion of the flood protection project in 1995, the City, Township, and others have partnered to implement riverfront improvements and host events to enhance public enjoyment of this cherished area. Popular events along this lively riverfront include the Labor Day Speedboat Regatta, Riverfest, Great Island Adventure Triathlon, and a summer concert series on a floating stage. Residents and visitors find the new riverfront to be a special place for all to enjoy.

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Village of Boiling Springs: Located in the heart of the Cumberland Valley, Boiling Springs gets its name from 30 artisanal springs in the area that appear to “boil” up from the ground. This quaint, historic, and walkable hamlet offers a variety of restaurants, shops, cultural sites, and recreational activities. A focal point is Children’s Lake, a year-round home to a variety of aquatic life and waterfowl that offers fishing, boating, and a place for community gatherings. Boiling Springs is recognized on the National Register of Historic Places and the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, and is designated a “Trail Community” along the Appalachian Trail. New walking trails connect the Village to nearby public parks and recreational areas. Community events, such as Foundry Day, “Anything Floats” competition, A Day at the Lake, and Labor Day Festival, attract thousands of visitors annually to experience arts and crafts, ghost tours, history tours, horse-drawn carriage rides, live music, and more. The diversity of community character, assets, and activities creates small-town charm for all to experience.



GREAT GREENWAYS/TRAILS

A Great Greenway/Trail is a linear parcel of land or right-of-way set aside to preserve/protect open space, scenic landscapes, historical resources, natural resources and/or plant/animal habitats. It provides linkages to connect people to parks, schools, downtowns, places of employment, pristine natural areas, and/or historical structures and features. It can be limited to foot traffic or accommodate multiple users. The 2018 Great Greenways/Trails are acknowledged below.

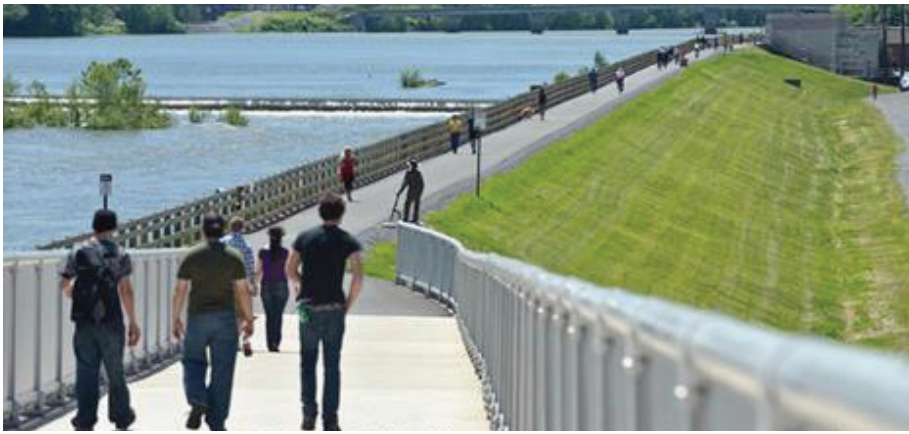
Boyce Mayview Park: This 475-acre regional park in Upper St. Clair Township, Allegheny County, contains a 10+ mile trail system, portions of which are ADA accessible. Trail users experience much environmental diversity, such as open meadows, forests, wetlands, scenic overlooks, and high value habitats for waterfowl, birds, wildlife, and plants. Green infrastructure is also prevalent in the form of pervious pavement, rain gardens, and bioswales. Additionally, the area’s heritage is expressed through interpretation of the coexistence of nature, technology, agriculture, and industry. Public-private partnerships have been instrumental in the maintenance and expansion of the trail system to allow for increased access to other Park amenities, as well as to surrounding residential neighborhoods and commercial spaces. Boyce Mayview Park is a unique asset for the community that allows persons of all abilities to enjoy the majesty of nature throughout the seasons.



Schuylkill River West Trail: Heuser Park in Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County, serves as the trailhead for this 2.2 mile, 12-foot wide, trail that connects to Valley Forge National Park along the southern shoreline of the Schuylkill River. The trail is ADA accessible, thus accommodates people of all abilities. Along the route, there is access between the Trail and key destinations, such as employment, shopping districts, residential areas, and regional transportation options. The Trail was designed to preserve the natural environment and incorporated green infrastructure practices to manage stormwater. Much of the Trail is well-canopied and users can experience wetlands, meadows, wild flowers, and wildlife along the route. The Trail has accomplished the Township’s goal to create a “sensitively designed, safe, easy-to-use, and well-maintained pedestrian and bicycle route” that provides outdoor enthusiasts with another source of community identity and provide. Long term plans propose extending the trail eastward to connect with downtown Philadelphia.



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Susquehanna Riverwalk: City of Williamsport, Lycoming County: The County Commissioners and Planning Commission first envisioned a Riverwalk along the levee system on the West Branch of the Susquehanna, in 2000. It was subsequently included as a goal in the 2002 Susquehanna Greenway Partnership Strategic Vision. Through a unique partnership between the City, County, and SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority, the Riverwalk became a reality in 2008. Today, it connects the City, South Williamsport

Borough, Armstrong Township, Loyalsock Township, and Montoursville Borough and has linkages to residential areas, schools, parks, and downtowns. Several other connectors are either planned or under development. The Riverwalk offers panoramic views of the River, as well as views of nesting locations for Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons, and migrating birds. Public art displays and interpretive signage also add to its attractiveness as a scenic place to walk, run, bike, or simply enjoy the outdoors. The Riverwalk contributes

not only to creating a healthy community, but also to stimulating the economy. Here's a link to a nice news article about the [Susquehanna Riverwalk Great Places presentation](#).

The designated Great Places demonstrate the rewarding results that occur through community partnerships, planning, and dedication. In recognizing the 2018 Great Places in Pennsylvania, APA-PA celebrates the many community leaders and officials, professionals, and residents who contributed to making the Great Public Spaces and Greenways/Trails.

When traveling or seeking an enjoyable adventure, consider visiting the “*Great Places in Pennsylvania*.” Information about the 2018 Great Places and previously designated Great Places is available on the Chapter website (www.planningpa.org).

Stay tuned for the opportunity to nominate Great Places in 2019. It's not too soon to start thinking about great places to nominate in your community. ♦



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SEE YOU THERE!

APA-PA2018
annual conference

OCTOBER 14-16, 2018
Bayfront Convention Center • Erie, PA

“Plan on Erie”

HOLD THE DATE!

APA-PA2019
annual conference

OCTOBER 20-22, 2019

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel

Reading, PA



INSIDER

A Message from President **James Cowhey, AICP**

As I write this, I'm preparing to resume my duties as Chapter president after a leave of absence required to recover from a stroke I had on Thanksgiving Day. I really appreciate the kindness extended by the Chapter Board of Directors and administrators during my recovery. I am also grateful for the well wishes I received from Chapter members who learned of my situation. Amy McKinney graciously accepted the duties of acting-president and carried on chapter business including organizing a work session for the new chapter development plan. *Thank you, Amy!*

I've been reflecting on our profession and what we have to offer our communities. **We must be advocates for planning and the value that we bring to community problem-solving and place-making.** Planners bring a collaborative method to issue resolution that is unique among the professions that are involved in land use, construction, infrastructure, and other community-building activities. **While we must listen and incorporate good ideas wherever they come from, we should not be overly deferential to other disciplines.** Too much deference serves to undermine the value of planning. I hope I never again hear a planner say, "I'm not an attorney, but..." or "I'm not an engineer, but...". These phrases are self-defeating both in the moment and in the long term for our profession.

Planners exist at the juncture of physical disciplines like engineering, architecture, and environmental science and the "softer" disciplines of law and public policy. We are experts on how these disciplines connect and interact. We are required to have some understanding about a variety of disciplines including law, engineering, environmental science, public policy, and architecture. **To this understanding we bring planning's inclusionary process and analysis which is necessary to foster deliberation and equity in community development.** For example, I read recently of a situation in which planners, after initially being excluded, added value that led to a more workable solution and better place. A section of a town's downtown main street was the locus of several pedestrian/vehicle accidents. Pedestrians were crossing the street mid-block to get to a transit stop on the other side of the street. The town consulted with its engineer who recommend that a bench be installed at the transit stop so as to entice transit riders to wait there for the bus. So far, so good. But, after installation of the bench, pedestrians continued to cross the street mid-block and that initiated conflicts with vehicular traffic. Finally, the town planner was brought in to assess the situation. The planner's first step, and one that was not taken initially, was to engage pedestrians and transit riders about the situation. The planner found that

pedestrians waited for the bus on the opposite, shady side of the street. On hot days, they'd wait in the shade until the bus was approaching and then dash across the street to the bus stop. This information was not known or considered in the initial solution. The planner's answer was to provide more shade with a shelter over the bench that was recommended by the engineer and street trees at the bus stop. Transit riders quickly adapted to the new shady transit stop. The result was a safer street and a better place.

The planner's insights into process and people was the key to finding a real solution. I'm sure we all have similar stories about how planners' unique perspective helped craft a truly meaningful solution. **The lesson? Respect and consider other disciplines for the expertise they add to the process and be advocates for broader more inclusionary planning processes that involve people in your community.**

The conference committee and Chapter administrators are finalizing preparations for the Chapter conference in Erie. The conference is always an informative and engaging way to reinforce and hone our skills as planners. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

Enjoy the rest of your summer! ♦

Vantage Point 2018-2019 Editorial Deadlines

Winter 2018-19 Issue: Nov. 2

Spring 2019 Issue: Feb. 8

Summer 2019 Issue: May 17

Fall 2019 Issue: Aug. 9



Do you know of anyone from our PA Chapter of APA family who has passed away during the year? Please let us know so that we can notify everyone through the In Memoriam page on the website, and through this newsletter. *Thank you!*

In Memoriam of William B. Hawk



William B. Hawk, 78, of Lower Paxton Township, passed peacefully into his new home in heaven on Saturday July 14, 2018. Born October 2, 1939, in Harrisburg, he was a son of the late Bruce and Georgie Hawk. He was a 1957 graduate of John Harris High School, and, a 1961 graduate of Lebanon Valley College. In 1986, he and his wife, Miriam "Billie" Hawk, founded the Hawk Gallery & Framing Studio, which they operated together for over 20 years. Previously, he had been an Administrator for the Leader Nursing & Rehabilitation Centers and the Susquehanna Center.

He had also served as Director of the Dauphin County Authority.

Since January 1, 1996, Bill has held the Office of Supervisor for Lower Paxton Township. Bill served as Chairman of the Board, and, as Chairman of the Township Authority for 18 years. At the time of his passing, he was serving as the Secretary for the Board of Supervisors. A member of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, for the past 14 years, he was elected to serve as President in April 2018. ♦

Scholarships Awarded to planning students

The PA Chapter of APA awarded scholarships from the **Francis Pitkin Scholarship Fund**, the **Richard P. Byler Charitable Fund of the Philadelphia Foundation**, the **Richard G. Bickel Planning Education** and the **Leslie and Greta Spaulding Education Fund** for the 2018-2019 academic year. Three students benefited from the generosity of these funds and donations from Chapter members. The following students were recipients:

Abigail Roberts	Indiana University of PA
Jala Johnson	University of Pittsburgh
Laier-Rayshon Smith	Harvard



American Planning Association **Pennsylvania Chapter**

Making Great Communities Happen

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Contact information is available at www.planningpa.org under "About Us!"

PDO *corner*

By Alexis Williams, AICP, PP, Professional Development Officer

The annual APA-PA conference is fast approaching! It will be taking place in Erie this year. The annual conference is not only a great opportunity to learn the latest information and innovations in planning taking place across the state, but a perfect opportunity to catch up on those Certification Maintenance (CM) credits. AICP members must complete CM hours in order to maintain this professional certification. APA requires AICP members to obtain 32 CM credits every two years including courses in Planning Ethics and Law. Attendees of this year's conference have the opportunity to earn up 12.25 CM credits, including law and ethics.

If you particularly need those ethics credits, we have two great sessions lined up at the conference this year. Come to the Sunday afternoon ethics session and watch fellow planners from across the state as they act out skits (originally created by the Delaware APA Chapter) to demonstrate some of the challenges

professional planners face in their daily work. Another exciting ethics session will take place on Monday afternoon where speakers from Mercyhurst University will talk about the importance of data integrity in planning in today's world where the phrase "fake news" is becoming commonplace.

As always, the Chapter's Professional Development Committee (PDC) will also be offering a conference session on AICP exam prep. If you are registered to take the exam in November or considering taking it in a future cycle, come join us as we discuss tips and tricks to prepare for it.

Speaking of the Professional Development Committee, the PDC recently gained two new members: Jack Varaly will be the new Northeast Section representative and Rebecca Ross will be the new Southeast Section representative. Their appointments will be formalized at upcoming Section Council meetings. ♦

Congratulations!

Congratulations to the new AICPs from Pennsylvania!

Congratulations to the newly certified planners who have passed the May 2018 Comprehensive Planning Exam and joined the AICP!

Kyle Beidler
Andrew Bomberger
Julie Cprek
Margaret Dobbs
Alisa Goren
Samantha Kuntz
Joshua Mallow
Regina Manzo Anderson
Jared Mast
Kelly Pflicke
Sarah Richardsen
Michael Robertson
Evan Severs
Evan Tobin
Samuel Thrush
Rebecca Wetzler
Matthew Zapson

Also, congratulations to the newest AICP Candidates!

Al Beatty
Derek Lombardi
James Sasser
Jenna Wargo

The AICP Candidate Pilot Program is an initiative offered by APA for students and graduates of PAB-accredited programs that provides the opportunity to sit for the AICP exam prior to earning professional planning experience.

For more information on the AICP Candidate Pilot Program visit: <https://www.planning.org/aicp/candidate/>



Southwest Section Update

The Southwest Section recently held an election for officers for their Section Council. These officers begin their terms in 2019. Congratulations to the following:

Section Chair: **Laura Ludwig, AICP**
Section Vice-Chair: **Jeff Raykes, AICP**
Section Secretary: **Rhiannon Haller, AICP**
Section Treasury: **Daniel Carpenter**
Section Professional Planner Member-at-Large:
Josh Spano, Jordan Holloway and Corey Young

Sound Planning Helps Achieve Results

Proactive planning for community projects can create opportunities and lower implementation costs

By Ryan Judge and Justin Dula, AICP of the Delaware County Planning Department

Planning ahead can help communities take advantage of opportunities to implement projects through efforts led by private developers or partner agencies, such as PennDOT and Transit Agencies. **A good plan, with clear recommendations and a vision developed through community outreach, is important first step in moving projects forward.**

Upper Darby Township in Delaware County, for example, recently completed a study for the Garrett Road corridor. The study reviewed existing traffic patterns, pedestrian activity, transit service, and surrounding land use. During the planning process, which was led by Traffic Planning and Design, Inc., the Township and planning team became aware of PennDOT plans to resurface Garrett Road in the summer of 2018. The planning team and Township fast-tracked recommendations for a road diet and developed a new striping plan for driving lanes, turn lanes, crosswalks, and on-street parking. PennDOT incorporated the new striping pattern into its recently completed resurfacing project at no additional costs to the Township or to PennDOT. Thanks to the Township's **proactive planning approach**, Garrett Road is now safer and more efficient for all users. In fact, the report states that "travel simulations under the road diet conversion suggest that travel times for the majority of commuting motorists will improve during the peak hours." PennDOT hopes to have more **successful examples like Garrett Road** by coordinating more closely with local communities through **PennDOT Connects**, which aims to incorporate local planning efforts into PennDOT projects.

It isn't only the public sector that finds planning useful in speeding up projects. **Private land development projects are also a great opportunity** for communities to work with stakeholders to implement planned projects. Community plans can help to guide improvements to public infrastructure to ensure they build towards the community's vision. Media Borough's 2015 comprehensive plan identified the need to create a safer and more welcoming western gateway to the Borough. This plan provided clear direction to private developers that improvements to the intersection alignment and better pedestrian connections were a priority for the community. Subsequent development implemented an improved roadway alignment that is safer for pedestrians and drivers, while creating a gateway for Media.

Sound planning efforts and close coordination with stakeholders can set a clear vision for a project and provide communities with the foundation to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. ♦



Chestnut Street Crosswalks



Before Media West End



After Media West End

FALL 2018 PMPEI COURSE DATES AND LOCATIONS*

*For registration and course information contact
Terri Dickow at PSAB 800-232-7722 ext 1042*

Course in Community Planning

Allentown (Lehigh County)	Lehigh Valley PC office	September 6, 13, 20
Altoona (Blair County)	Logan Twp Municipal Complex	November 13, 20, 27
Honesdale (Wayne County)	Wayne Co. Park St. Complex	September 11, 18, 25
Reading (Berks County)	Albright College	September 27; October 4, 11
Harrisburg (Dauphin County)	Swatara Twp. Municipal Bldg.	October 9, 16, 23
Jessup (Lackawanna County)	Lackawanna Co Emergency Mgt Center	October 18, 25; November 1

Course in Zoning

Lansdale (Montgomery County)	Lansdale Borough Hall	September 13, 20, 27
Oakdale (Allegheny County)	Allegheny Co Community College West Hills Center	October 22, 29; November 5
Ligonier (Westmoreland County)	Ligonier Twp Municipal Bldg.	November 5, 12, 19
Doylestown (Bucks County)	Delaware Valley University	October 10, 17, 24

Course in Subdivision & Land Development Review

Carlisle (Cumberland County)	Cumberland County PC office	July 19, 26; August 2
West Chester (Chester County)	West Chester U Graduate Center	October 17, 23, 30
Allentown (Lehigh County)	Lehigh Valley PC office	November 1, 8, 15
Doylestown (Bucks County)	Delaware Valley University	September 19, 26; October 3

Course in Zoning Administration

Wilmington Twp (Mercer County)	Wilmington Twp. Municipal Bldg.	October 16, 23, 30
Allentown (Lehigh County)	Lehigh Valley Plan Comm office	October 16, 23, 30
York County	Lower Windsor T (10/17; York (10/24, 31)	October 17, 24, 31

WEBINAR

Benefits of a Planning Commission	September 18	12 noon
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**As of August 29, 2018*