

THE VANTAGE POINT



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association

Summer 2019 • Number 192 • www.planningpa.org



Who?

The Pennsylvania Chapter
of the American Planning
Association

What?

Annual Conference

When?

Sunday, October 20 through
Tuesday, October 22

Where?

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Reading

Why?

Skills building, network-
ing, top-notch education,
new ideas, great keynote
addresses, services and prod-
ucts on display, catching up
with fellow planners, plan-
ning officials and students...
all in Reading!



APA-PA 2019

annual conference

Our 2019 Conference Planning Committee is pleased to announce that details are falling into place for another great conference. Included will be three phenomenal plenary sessions; over 40 concurrent sessions, including Fast, Fun, Fervent sessions; plenty of networking opportunities; and exciting Mobile Workshops.

Our Welcome Reception on Sunday evening is taking place at the Berks History Center. The Berks History Center Museum is home to over 32,000 artifacts and a dozen carefully curated galleries and exhibits that showcase Berks County's unique heritage. It will be a great opportunity to meet up with friends and colleagues.

Our Annual Conference will include:

- Jason Duckworth, Arcadia Land Company
- Chris Kroner, MASS Design Group
- Legislative Update
- Annual Awards
- State of the Chapter Address



Inside This Issue:

Insider	2
Chester County RoE	3
PDO Corner	5
Laura Ludwig Profile	6
2019 Governor's Awards	8



INSIDER

A Message from President James Cowhey, AICP

Welcome to the Summer 2019 edition of Vantage Point! I am happy to report that the Chapter has made the transition to our new Chapter administrative services contractor, DRI Professional Services without any unexpected obstacles or delays. Tracy Schorle, DRI's Director of Client Services worked closely with the Chapter Executive Committee to ensure that all aspects of the change were efficient and timely. Importantly, DRI retained Kim Gusic as APA PA Chapter Administrator. Kim joined DRI after 10 years with Susan Shermer, the Chapter's former Administrator. The Board looks forward to continuing our relationship with Kim and the team at DRI and to the new ideas and innovations they bring to the Chapter. Kim's knowledge of Chapter administrative needs and procedures was invaluable during the transition and ensures that the business of the Chapter will continue the same dedication to serving our members as we have all come to expect. Retaining Kim as Chapter Administrator provided the Board with peace of mind that is rare when making a change like this one. I especially want to thank Leah Eppinger, Amy McKinney, Justin Dula, and Sara Pandl for their time and assistance in selecting a new contractor for administrative services. Please read on to learn more about what's going on in your Chapter. ♦

New Equity, Housing, and Transportation Policy Tools for Planners

APA members now have access to three new policy guides on [equity](#), [housing](#), and [surface transportation](#). The guides, which represent APA's official position on these critical issues, will arm planners with powerful tools to advocate for:

- Equity in all planning;
- Accessible, affordable, and available housing; and
- Transportation policies that leverage big data to mitigate the impacts of Climate Change, improve safety, and broaden accessibility.

APA's first-ever Planning for Equity Policy Guide and the Surface Transportation and Housing Policy Guides are products of a two-year, member-led process that elicited hundreds of comments from APA chapter and division leaders and members that influenced the final policy endorsements. Each was debated, amended, and approved by more than 100 APA chapter representatives at the NPC19 Delegate Assembly in April and ratified by APA's Board of Directors in May. ♦



American Planning Association **Pennsylvania Chapter**

Making Great Communities Happen

587 James Drive
Harrisburg, PA 17112
717 671-4510 (P)
717 545-9247 (F)
www.planningpa.org

Kim Gusic
Chapter Administrator
kgusic@dri.org

The Vantage Point is published four times a year by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association and is available at www.planningpa.org. Material may be reprinted provided *The Vantage Point* is credited. The views expressed in *The Vantage Point* are not necessarily those of the PA Chapter of APA. Send comments and subscription requests to info@planningpa.org.

PA Chapter

Executive Committee

PRESIDENT

James Cowhey, AICP

Lancaster County Planning Commission

VICE PRESIDENT

Amy McKinney

Lawrence County Planning Department

SECRETARY

Leah Eppinger, AICP

Housing Authority of Dauphin County

TREASURER

Justin Dula, AICP

PA Dept. of Environmental Protection

LEHIGH VALLEY SECTION REPRESENTATIVE

Sara Pandl, AICP/RLA

Lower Macungie Township

NORTHEAST SECTION REPRESENTATIVE

Peter T. Wulforth, AICP

Penn State Cooperative Extension

SOUTHWEST SECTION REPRESENTATIVE

Laura Ludwig, AICP

North Fayette Township

PAST PRESIDENT

Brian O'Leary, AICP

Chester County Planning Commission

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Zachery Hammaker

Section Chairs

Central

Rachelle Abbott, AICP

STEP, Inc.

Lehigh Valley

Sara Pandl, AICP/RLA

Lower Macungie Township

Northeast

Peter Wulforth, AICP

Penn State Cooperative Extension

Northwest

Amy McKinney

Lawrence County Planning Department

Southeast

Justin Dula, AICP

PA Dept. of Environmental Protection

Southwest

Laura Ludwig, AICP

North Fayette Township

Committee Chairs

Professional Development Officer/Professional

Development Committee Chair

Alexis Williams, AICP, PP

Planning Officials Development Officer/

Chair of the Planning Officials Development

Committee

Troy Truax, AICP

Communications/Membership Co-Chairs

Amy Evans, AICP

Amy McKinney

Education Committee Chair

David McFarland, III, AICP

Legislative Committee Chair

Ed LeClear, AICP

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

Chester County Unveils Return on Environment Report

By **Brian N. O'Leary**, AICP, Executive Director of Chester County Planning Commission

Did you know there are so many more benefits to preserving open space than what meets the eye? In addition to keeping Chester County beautiful, protected open space provides valuable economic, environmental, and public health benefits.

These benefits have been documented in a new study, *Return on Environment: The Economic Value of Protected Open Space in Chester County*, which was unveiled by the Chester County Commissioners during an Open Space Summit in early May.

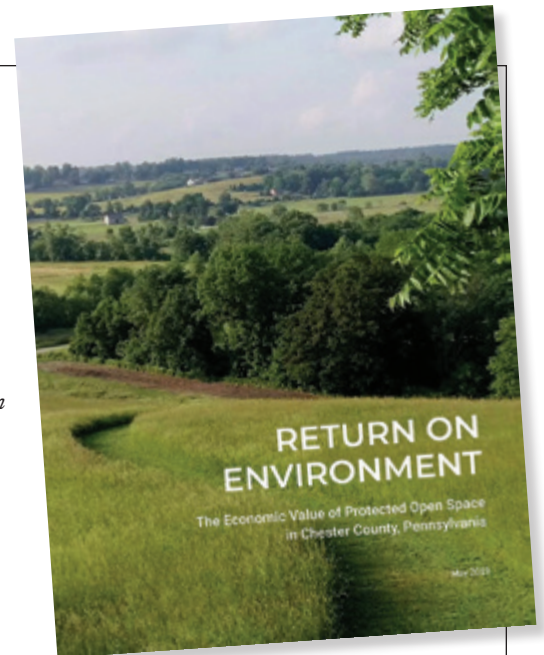
In 1989, Chester County became the first in the region to formally set aside funds for a rigorous open space preservation program through the passage of a \$50 million bond referendum. Today, about 28.8 percent of land, or 140,000 acres, has been preserved as protected open space in Chester County, which is more land than the size of Philadelphia. Study results demonstrate the valuable economic, environmental, and public health benefits that open space preservation has provided, including:

- Homes in the county are valued at over \$11,000 more when they are located within a half-mile of preserved open space, according to the study. In total, it's a gain of more than \$1.65 billion for Chester County's homeowners and economy.
- If protected lands were lost to development, Chester County would need to spend \$97 million a year to replicate vital services such as flood control and air and water pollution mitigation through costly alternative methods.
- Recreational activities on open space account for over \$170 mil-

lion in avoided medical costs every year.

- Protected open space creates jobs and attracts people who spend in the community. Each year, open space accounts for \$238 million in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



West Gosben Community Park



Marsh Creek State Park



spending and \$69 million in salaries earned through 1,800 jobs.

- Agriculture on protected farmland puts about \$135 million back into the economy each year.
- Developing open space into housing can be costly for municipalities and school districts. For every \$1 received from residential developments through taxes, local governments spend \$1.11 on services, whereas only 7 cents are spent on services for each dollar in tax received from farmland and preserved open space.

The report was prepared by Chester County departments, land conservancies, municipal representatives, economic development agencies, and Econsult Solutions, Inc., an economic consulting firm that provides econometric and analytic expertise to businesses and policymakers nationwide.

View the report and video: <http://chescoplanning.org/openspace/roe.cfm>. ♦

View towards protected open space in Kennett Township (upper left); Chester Valley Trail.

Penn State Extension Land Use Webinars

By Peter Wulfhorst AICP

PENN STATE EXTENSION will be conducting the next Land Use Webinar series starting in July 2019 and continuing until November 2019. The webinars will occur on the third Wednesday of each month from 12 p.m.–1:15 p.m. Recordings of the webinars will also be made available to registrants. The cost of the webinar series is \$50 for all 5 webinars and \$95 for all 5 webinars for those who want to get CM credits as well as Professional Engineering credits. In addition, Registered Landscape Architects registration is \$65.

Registration information can be found at starting in June at <https://extension.psu.edu/land-use-webinar>.

The Winter/Spring topics include the following:

- Stormwater Utilities
- Strengthening Economic Resilience in Appalachia
- Complete Streets, Planning & Policies
- Environmental Rights Amendment
- TBD

The dates are **July 17, August 21, September 18, October 16 & November 20.**

For registration information, please contact Extension Educator Peter Wulfhorst at 570-296-3400 or email at ptw3@psu.edu.



While all AICP planners know that we are required to obtain 1.5 mandatory law CM credits and 1.5 mandatory ethics credits during our two-year reporting cycle, what many may not know is that APA's AICP Commission is currently considering changes to the Certification Maintenance Program regarding mandatory CM credits. CM mandatory topics and associated credits have not changed since the program began 10 years ago.

The Commission is considering increasing the number of mandatory credits required for each reporting period from three credits to four by:

- **Adding a mandatory credit on equity to the required ethics credits.** The Commission felt it was important to tie this new credit to the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct because equity and social justice are critical issues in the code's "Aspirational Principles" section. Adding a mandatory equity credit would address the full breadth of social justice, diversity, and inclusion issues.
- **Adding a mandatory credit on a targeted topic that will remain in place for at least four years.** This would: 1) add flexibility to the CM program's ability to address the common professional development needs of all certified planners; and 2) promote greater understanding within the planning profession of innovative practices, emerging issues, trends, specialties, and best practices. The subject of this targeted credit would vary and be determined by the AICP Commission. Climate would be the first targeted topic.
- **Reducing the number of mandatory credits—on all topics—from 1.5 to one.** A one-hour increment gives CM providers more flexibility in the length of their offerings, which in turn may free time for additional sessions

and increase the variety of sessions offered.

- **Requiring that a session eligible for mandatory CM credit be at least one hour.** Currently, all CM-eligible sessions, whether on law, ethics, or a general (non-mandatory) planning topic, must be at least 30 minutes long. In July, the AICP Commission approved reducing the minimum length of a general CM session from 30 to 15 minutes. However, due to the importance and complexity of the mandatory topics, the Commission is considering requiring that sessions offering credit on mandatory CM topics be at least one hour long (and offer one CM credit).

- The Commission is maintaining law as a mandatory topic but is considering reducing the minimum required credit from 1.5 to one.

The AICP Commission has been receiving and reviewing comments regarding the proposed changes and will take final action on the proposed changes after all component meetings at the fall Leadership meetings in Washington, D.C. If approved, the expected implementation date is January 1, 2021. More information about the proposed changes, including frequently asked questions, can be found at: <https://www.planning.org/cm/updates/>. ♦

AICP Exam Prep Session

This year's all-day AICP exam prep session was held on February 23rd in Harrisburg. Alexis Williams, Leah Eppinger, Dave McFarland, Rebecca Ross, and Sam Thrush took time from their weekend to help aspiring AICPs learn information and tips to pass the AICP exam. Over two dozen people were in attendance, including attendees from other states. A shorter exam prep session will be offered at the annual conference in Reading this fall. If you are considering taking the AICP exam in the future, please join us for that session!





Chapter Volunteer Profile

Laura Ludwig

By Amy Evans, AICP

Laura Ludwig, APA-PA's new Southwest Section Chair, is the Community Development Director at North Fayette Township (just west of Pittsburgh) and has worked in public administration for many years, first as a community organizer for Oakland Planning & Development Corporation, and later as a housing and community development consultant for Mullin & Lonergan. Laura is a lifelong Pennsylvanian, growing up in the Harrisburg area, then moving to attend the University of Pittsburgh. We recently were able to talk with Laura about her experience as a planner, and life in general.

How did you become interested in planning as a career?

As part of my political science major at Pitt, I took an Intro to Public Administration course that fascinated me. That class inspired me to pursue a Master's degree through Pitt's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. This is when I realized that working in some level of government really appealed to me.

Is there an aspect to your job that you didn't foresee when you started out?

The almost unavoidable way you become a part-time counselor. People give you their life stories as they explain their questions or problems!

What is a typical day like for you?

There really is no typical day. Sometimes I am in meetings all day. Other days, I have a to-do list lined up, only to be pulled into the field to investigate a complaint or spend the morning sizing up a tricky zoning question. It's one of the things I like about the job!



What three words best describe you?

Creative. Personable. Driven.

Flash back to when you were 10 years old. What did you want to be when you grew up?

My Mom was a nurse, so I had some interest in that—until I realized I didn't like needles or blood. After that, I planned to be a teacher all the way through my undergraduate years.

You have worked for private and nonprofit consultants, and also for local government. What differences have you noticed?

In my years as a consultant, I loved working with many different communities and organizations on any number of projects. The variety of experience is amazing. But I also felt a desire to remain in one place, a place where I would be able to see the combined effects of my efforts over

the years. My position at North Fayette Township has allowed me that.

What's a personal goal you would like to accomplish in the next year?

I have a long term vision of launching my own planning and consulting firm. My goal in the next year is to lay the foundations for this. I am both excited and terrified!

Where might we find you when you're not working?

You can find me running or biking on the trails in the Pittsburgh region. On May 5th, I ran my first half-marathon, an accomplishment I am proud of and plan to repeat. You'll also find me shuttling my 8-year old daughter and 5-year old son to and from their activities.

If we went to happy hour, what would you order?

Either a Moscow Mule or a nice, hazy IPA.

You have an unlimited travel budget but can't leave Pennsylvania. What's your dream vacation?

To rent an RV and spend a few weeks wandering around the state. I'd stop at amusement parks, check out my favorite small towns, and spend a lot of time in our state parks. I love PA, but if my RV could leave it, I'd do the same thing on the west coast.

Name three pet peeves.

People who use the last of the toilet paper and don't replace the roll.

One car taking up two parking spaces.

Litterers!

Bonus answer: slow internet. ♦



American Planning Association
**Pennsylvania Chapter
Legislative Committee**

Making Great Communities Happen

Legislative Committee Call for Membership

By Ed LeClear, AICP

The Legislative Committee needs your help. This is not your normal request for committee membership. We are not asking for APA-PA chapter members to join the committee (although, we would love to have you if you were interested). Instead, we have a more focused (and less time-intensive) way you can participate.

In an effort to build relationships with individual legislators, our committee is seeking planners across the state who are willing to meet with their local legislators or to ascertain who already has relationships with legislators. Our approach to becoming a part of the conversation at the state capitol is to focus on relationship-building. As legislators get to know the planners in their communities and the expertise they provide locally, they will look to us for guidance on issues where we have expertise. As issues arise, we may also look to you to make planners' concerns known to legislators. In such cases, we would provide guidance and talking points. Please let us know if you are willing to participate in these efforts. If you already have a relationship with your legislator (she or he knows your name, for example, or you have met with her or him in the past) and you are willing to build on that, please also indicate which legislator.

Specifically, we are looking for individuals who have interest in volunteering to help with one or both of the following activities:

- 1) Providing review and comment (and possibly suggested edits) on Pennsylvania legislation directly relevant to the planning profession. We are looking to build a group of "Issue Experts" who have expertise in specific areas of planning (transportation, municipal land use, environmental/stormwater, housing, etc....).
- 2) Building relationships with legislators, legislative committee staff and executive branch staff in order to be a "first point of contact" when questions on legislation arise, or when APA-PA input is needed.

The committee developed a very brief tool to collect your interest and input at the following link: <https://planningpa.org/advocacy/legislative-committee/legislative-survey/>

Please fill out the survey to let us know your interest by Wednesday, July 31st. We will be in touch shortly afterwards. Thank you for your interest and continued support of the committee's efforts. 2020 is going to be a very big year on the legislative front and we need to be ready. ♦



PennDOT Training Modules Offered

In support of municipal participation in PennDOT Connects, PennDOT has posted the following 15-minute training modules on the PennDOT Connects page of its website, <https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/Pages/PennDOT-Connects.aspx>. This information will be particularly useful for planning and zoning staff as well as for planning commission members, elected officials, and others. Each module is short enough to be shared in municipal meetings to inform local decision-making.

- Access Management Regulations and Coordinated HOP Processing
- Loan and Funding Reimbursement Programs
- Site Design and Roadway Standards
- Transit Revitalization Investment Districts (TRID)
- Capital Improvement Programming (CIP)
- Integrating Transportation and Land Use in Comprehensive Plans (PUB 688)
- Traffic Operations
- Transportation Impact Fees

For additional PennDOT Connects resources, training and technical assistance information, visit <https://paconnects.org/>.

Wolf Administration Recognizes Recipients of 2019 Governor's Awards for Local Government *Excellence*

April 10, 2019

Harrisburg, PA—On behalf of Governor Tom Wolf, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Dennis Davin today recognized municipalities and local government officials for their dedication and commitment to strengthen their communities and better serve their residents.

“With all the attention paid to federal and state politics, it’s easy to overlook that the level of government that has the greatest impact on an individual’s day-to-day life is on the local level,” Secretary Davin said. “When local governments go above and beyond by implementing new technologies, forming new partnerships, or developing new ways to tackle their problems, that has a huge effect on residents’ quality of life. The purpose of these awards is to commend those municipalities and individuals that showed incredible service to their communities.”

Nine communities and ten individuals from across the commonwealth were recognized for excellent service as part of the 23rd Annual Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence.

The following local government officials were recognized for their dedication to public service and their communities:

- **Edward Brensinger**, Supervisor, North Lebanon Township, Lebanon County (*nominated by PA State Association of Township Supervisors*)
- **Thomas M. Oliverio**, Mayor, Zelienople Borough, Butler County (*nominated by PA State Association of Boroughs*)
- **William S. Rossey**, Immediate Past President, PA State Association of Boroughs; Borough Manager, Sharpsburg Bor-

ough, Allegheny County (*nominated by PA State Association of Boroughs*)

- **Michael Higgins**, President, PA State Association of Township Commissioners; Commissioner, Aston Township, Delaware County (*nominated by PA State Association of Township Commissioners*)
- **Matt Pacifico**, Mayor, City of Altoona, Blair County (*nominated by PA Municipal League*)
- **Fiore Leone**, Council Member, Erie County (*nominated by County Commissioners Association of PA*)
- **L. Stewart Neff**, Supervisor, Warriors Mark Township, Huntingdon County (*nominated by PA Association of Councils of Governments*)
- **Dr. Stanford Lembeck**, Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute, State College, Centre County (*nominated by PA Chapter of American Planning Association*)
- **Daniel J. Becker**, Chairman, East Cocalico Township Authority, Lancaster County (*nominated by PA Municipal Authorities Association*)
- **Matthew A. Cranmer**, Manager, Municipal Water Authority of Adams Township, Butler County (*nominated by PA Municipal Authorities Association*)

The following municipalities, organizations, and counties were recognized:

Building Community Partnerships

Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County

The Westmoreland County Firefighters Initiative (WestCoFire) was formed out of a partnership among Hempfield Township, the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, Westmoreland County Community College, Hempfield Bureau of Fire, and the volunteer fire departments of Westmoreland County. The purpose of WestCoFire is to ensure the sustainability of the volunteer firefighting corps for the county’s future. Hempfield Township recognized the challenges that volunteer fire departments are facing and took it upon themselves to secure the partners and resources necessary to develop the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant proposal that enlisted the county’s fire departments to increase the number of firefighters. Eighty-three of the county’s fire stations agreed to participate in the regional SAFER grant application hosted by the Hempfield Bureau of Fire, which was created from the proceeds of the sale of the township’s municipal authority. The grant provides money for physical exams and insurance policies, tuition reimbursement, training costs, stipends for responding to calls, and marketing for recruitment. With the WestCoFire initiative, fire departments will be able to respond with sufficient numbers of competent, trained, and certified firefighters for all calls throughout the county.

Responding to Adversity

Bethel Park, Allegheny County

On June 20, 2018, Bethel Park witnessed a historic flooding event. The flood prompted a collaborative

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Excellence, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

response, with neighbors assisting neighbors with flood clean-up and garbage removal. Local businesses donated food, cleaning supplies, and other items to help in the clean-up and recovery efforts. Contractors volunteered their time and services to repair electrical, plumbing, and structural systems. Municipal Council, Mayor Jack Allen, and municipal staff worked tirelessly to help residents recover and get infrastructure repaired quickly. The local emergency management coordinator organized an event to allow residents to come in and speak with representatives from numerous government and nonprofit agencies to find the help for their specific problem. Local municipalities and other government agencies offered assistance in the form of providing engineers and equipment to help speed up recovery. Municipal Council subsequently faced the difficult decision to increase taxes, in part to fund storm water projects to help reduce the damaging effects of future flood events and to reduce pollutant discharges into local waterways. These projects make Bethel Park a stronger community by reducing the effects of flooding on homes and businesses and improving the water quality for Bethel Park and downstream municipalities.

Promoting Community and Economic Revitalization

Department of Economic Development and Neighborhood Revitalization, City of Lancaster, Lancaster County

Over the last decade, the Lancaster Department of Economic Development and Neighborhood Revitalization has secured nearly \$1 billion of private investment in the city. That investment has come in the form of projects as diverse as the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, the

Clipper Magazine Stadium, and the revitalization of Lancaster Square. Lancaster Square is one of the lone holdovers from the negative effects of urban renewal and represents some of the challenges Lancaster faced—a time when Lancaster had blighted properties, an uninviting downtown, and a bleak economic future. A revitalized Lancaster Square brings numerous tangible and intangible benefits to the city. The nearly \$30 million invested in the redevelopment project at 101 North Queen Street will help increase the city's property tax revenue, and the new restaurants and boutiques will add even more quality of life to the downtown. Over the last decade, Lancaster has found itself on several culinary, livability, and travel top ten lists.

Innovative Community and Governmental Initiatives

The Reading Bridges Workgroup, Reading City, Berks County

The Reading Bridges workgroup was created as a public-private partnership between the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance, the Berks County commissioners, the City of Reading, the borough of West Reading, Penn-

DOT, and several local businesses. The workgroup brought together a diverse group of partners to discuss current and future priority road and bridge projects in the greater Reading area. The partnership kept Reading vibrant during construction of two major bridge projects. It identified issues, evaluated opportunities, and developed a communication strategy to disseminate information through the ReadingBridges.net website. The group facilitated special meetings with local business owners and residents to discuss detour routes and alternatives to driving. PennDOT has shared the success of the Reading Bridges Partnership as an example for the statewide PennDOT Connects initiative, showcasing ways to foster better collaboration with communities on transportation projects.

Fiscal Accountability & Best Management Practices

Milton Borough, Northumberland County

Borough Manager Chuck Beck and Secretary/Treasurer Shelly Sandstrom worked to complete a borough-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



Dr. Stanford Lembeck, Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute, nominated by PA Chapter of American Planning Association, is recognized for dedication to public service and community.

Excellence, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

wide survey that qualified Milton as a low- and moderate-income community, allowing the use of Community Development Block Grant funding throughout the borough without the necessity of qualifying each individual neighborhood. The police department and borough hall underwent major renovations through grants and reserve funds with no financing necessary. Additionally, the borough was able to invest over \$1 million into interest-bearing accounts adding increased revenue for the borough. Beck and Sandstrom moved the borough's three pension plans that had been losing money to a different company resulting in an average gain of 15 percent in interest, providing substantial savings to Milton each year. They also worked to provide in-house labor and equipment to help complete the Brown Avenue and Columbia Avenue Park projects, saving residents' money that would have had to be expended if contracted out. Finally, they cross-trained the borough management staff and created savings to the taxpayers by modifying the borough's recycling program.

Innovative Planning & Sound Land Use Practices

Middletown Township, Delaware County

To combat economic challenges, Middletown Township is redeveloping the Granite Run Mall into the Promenade, a mixed-use retail and housing development that can serve as a model for other struggling malls across the commonwealth. The township also created a multi-tract master plan for the shuttered Franklin Mint that will benefit the residents and community for decades to come. Part of the restoration of the Franklin Mint includes working with SEPTA to develop a Transit Revitalization Investment District that will finance infrastructure improvements within the district.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments

Blight is a massive problem in this area of Pennsylvania. In 2012, the Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments (COG) partnered with the Steel Rivers COG to quantify the damaging effects of blight. The analysis found that within the collaboration's 40 municipalities, the cost of blight was staggering. Turtle Creek Valley COG focused on effective code enforcement, which is important to not only maintain healthy and safe communities for the residents also to reverse the damaging effects of blight. In March 2015 the COG, in conjunction with the Borough of Churchill and Wilkins Township, initiated the pilot code enforcement program. In 2019, the program added Chalfant Borough, East McKeesport Borough, and Wilmerding Borough. The shared services code enforcement program's two key tenets of success are its professional certified staff and its use of innovative technology and database systems. Additionally, inspectors meet regularly to discuss best practices and share information about problem property owners.

Information Technology

Mercer, Lawrence, Butler, and Venango Counties

The counties of Mercer, Lawrence, Butler, and Venango joined in a partnership in which they jointly purchased a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system for their respective 9-1-1 centers. The CAD system operates as the brain of any 9-1-1 center. Until now, each county 9-1-1 center has deployed its own CAD system in a silo, meaning the CAD systems were not "talking" to each other and contained only individual county information. With the joint CAD system that these counties purchased, now one 9-1-1 center can put any unit from all four counties on any call, eliminating duplication of calls to different departments in different counties. This will save valuable time and possibly save the

lives of their residents. With the new system, the call will be done by the home dispatcher, thus saving valuable time and resources. The new system will have a host site in Butler County and a disaster recovery site in Lawrence County. This will enable all four counties to be able to operate on a regular basis and in disaster recovery mode should a problem occur.

Health and Wellness Initiatives

Bethlehem City, Easton City, and Northampton County

Northampton County has partnered with the cities of Bethlehem and Easton, their respective health agencies, and the medical and education communities to form a coalition to tackle the public health effects of lead-based paint on young children. The coalition launched a campaign to reach out to low-income families using various means of communication, including brochures in several languages and having medical providers directly refer affected individuals to the coalition's resources for lead abatement. The coalition has developed certified contractors for lead hazard removal and has garnered national attention for how it has developed partnerships that involve all aspects of the community. Elements of this program are being used throughout the nation as a model showing how truly vested partners can improve the overall health of a community.

The Governor's Center for Local Government Services sponsors Local Government Day annually to honor local governments and officials who serve their communities and improve their quality of life. For more information about the Governor's Center for Local Government Services or the Department of Community and Economic Development, visit the [DCED website](#), and be sure to stay up-to-date with all of our agency news on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#). ♦

Media Contacts:

[Michael Gerber](#), DCED, 717.783.1132



Central Section Update

By *Rachelle Abbott, AICP*

The APA-PA Central Section Professional Development Scholarship deadline is August 1, 2019. The scholarship can support a variety of professional development activities, including conference registration fees, AICP testing fees, workshop registrations, and other activities to advance planners through their careers. To access the rather simple application for the APA-PA Central Section Professional Development Scholarship, please check the APA-PA Chapter website at www.planningpa.org and upcoming communications from the section.

The APA-PA Central Section continues to support entities that host PMPEI training courses for citizen planners. To request support for an upcoming workshop in 2019, please send a letter with the details about the meeting, including location and date and time to Rachelle Abbott, AICP at raabbott@stepcorp.org. In 2018, four entities were each provided a \$400 sponsorship to assist with the cost of hosting PMPEI training courses.

As always, the APA-PA Central Section welcomes guests to our upcoming meetings. If you are interested in attending or have information to provide, please email the APA-PA Central Section Chair, Rachelle Abbott, AICP at raabbott@stepcorp.org.

Northeast Section Update

By *Peter Wulfhorst, AICP*

Holiday Luncheon Meeting

The PA-APA Northeast Section will be having a Holiday Luncheon Meeting on Friday, December 7 from 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. at Marzoni's 26 Montage Mountain Rd, Moosic, PA 18507.

There will be a presentation on Short-term Rentals by Judy Acosta, Zoning Administrator, Middle Smithfield Township, Monroe County Pennsylvania.

The cost of the Holiday Luncheon is \$20 and reservations can be made by contacting Northeast Section Secretary Victor Rodite at victor.rodite@gmail.com by November 30.

Southeast Section Update

By *Kiersten Mailler*



On Thursday June 6th, the Southeast Section hosted a Planning Professionals' (and adjacent professions) happy hour and networking event. A high turnout meant lots of new connections, and plenty of patrons for La Peg's gorgeous outdoor beer garden. After a little over an hour of socializing, the group headed across Christopher Columbus Boulevard to Race Street Pier. As the sun set over the city, a large yoga class practiced at the end of the pier, and several cyclists took in the busy scene.



The happy hour group settled in on the wooden steps of Race Street Pier and looked toward a bustling Cherry Street Pier, while speakers Chris Puchalsky of Philadel-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



Southeast Section, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

phia's Office of Transportation Infrastructure and Sustainability (OTIS) and Chris Dougherty of the Delaware River Watershed Corporation (DRWC) spoke about their work in transportation and the waterfront, and upcoming projects planned for the city. Chris Puchalsky discussed the city's efforts to connect many of Philly's neighborhoods through multiple types of transit in order to move away from the car-centric nature of the streets. He briefly addressed issues of scooter trends that are present around the country, and Philly's stance based on safety and infrastructure concerns. Chris Dougherty discussed the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation's plans for the many properties along the waterfront. DRWC has an aggressive strategy for renovating some large spaces along the Delaware, including Graffiti Pier, and a plan to open it to the public in the next year.

Multi-transit and waterway-connectivity projects are at the forefront of many Philadelphian's minds as the city continues to support public works projects that connect citizens to their built environment in new and exciting ways. ♦

Southwest Section Update

By Laura Ludwig, AICP



The PA-APA Southwest Section hosted its first workshop of the year on April 10th at Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, PA. The topic of the workshop was the importance of community planning for energy—making informed decisions about local energy, consumption, conser-

vation, and energy efficiency. Featured speakers included Joel Morrison from the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, Chris Velasco from PLACE, Alanna Colvin from Pen-TAP, and Issac Smith from the Green Building Alliance. The Section also hosted a post-event networking happy hour at the Union Grill in downtown Washington, PA.

The Southwest Section will be launching a mentorship program, Mentor Telemachus, later this year and is seeking feedback on the draft guidelines for the program. The draft mentorship program information is available for review on the Section website: <https://www.planswpa.com/>. In addition, if you are interested in serving as a mentor or a mentee, please reach out to us via email at planswpa@gmail.com.

Another workshop is being planned for September and will cover the topic of Tiny Homes, including how to regulate tiny homes in zoning ordinances, what building codes apply to tiny homes, and real-life examples of tiny home developments. Please stay tuned as more information will be forthcoming on this workshop in the months ahead.

The Southwest Section is always looking to hear from members and planners in the Southwest region regarding ideas and suggestions on programs and events. If you have ideas or suggestions, please email them to Laura Ludwig, Section Chair, at laura.l.ludwig@gmail.com. ♦

