



THE VANTAGE POINT



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Come to the 2012 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



charting a new course –
balancing opportunity and environment

Erie, PA
Sunday, October 14 to
Tuesday, October 16, 2012

Introducing “IN MOTION” and

DEEP TRAVEL

by Tony Hiss

Where will the Pennsylvania Planners Meet in 2012?

- On the Waterfront!
- At the Heart of a Downtown!
- Within walking distance from restaurants, museums, and other attractions!
- Near 7 miles of beaches and year-round recreation!
- Within 100 miles of Pittsburgh!

A Message From the Conference Co-Chairs

Amy McKinney and Jake Welsb, AICP

As our nation struggles to recover from the economic recession, the planning profession has never been more important. As planners, we play a leading role in helping our clients and communities explore new ideas and opportunities to meet current and future challenges, and to obtain a better quality of life and more desirable future. The 2012 Annual Conference Planning Committee is proud to present a conference that will address many of today’s most significant challenges and opportunities.

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Have you had a chance to visit New York in the last three years and seen the High Line?

It’s a spectacularly designed, unique, mile-long park, the city’s newest, that’s partly a forest in the sky and partly a once-despised and suddenly cherished industrial relic – and, to my way of thinking, presents a



great opportunity for **Deep Travel**. Which is my term for a different way of using our minds, one that opens us up to everything going on around us, and it’s the subject of my new book, *In Motion: The Experience of Travel*.*



DEEP TRAVEL, an ability built into everyone, is the wide-angle refocusing of all of our senses that we almost automatically step into whenever we’re in an unfamiliar setting. At those moments we’re bombarded by sensations, and everything seems fresh, vivid and memorable, a potential source of new information. It’s an effect that tends to subside once we know our way around (turn right at that corner,

and it’s three blocks to the hotel), but it’s often the “second destination of travel,” one of the reasons we prize vacations and seek out exotic, hard-to-get-to spots.

In some locations, however, such as the High Line, **Deep Travel** doesn’t fade and reappears with the same intensity whenever you go there. Why is that? For one thing, there’s a lot to see that’s beautiful and unexpected, all of which holds your interest. Then, too, there are vantage points that offer such unusual insights into how New York is put together that you keep

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*published in paperback last summer by Planners Press

DEEP TRAVEL

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coming back to find out more. Every visit is a further exploration.

Before it became a park, the High Line was a West Side freight railroad from the 1930s. It's an elevated and long-abandoned right-of-way that ignores Manhattan's famous right-angle street grid, veering and snaking through blocks and behind buildings and across intersections at a height of about 30 feet

above the street. The grid offers long views, but only in narrow slices, and up on the High Line, away from the canyons below, the city as a whole is on display; the hitherto-hidden Hudson River reemerges; you're enveloped by a wide-open sky, and you're no longer blocked from brisk river breezes.

New York's a noisy place, but up on the High Line you realize that much of the noise runs in channels along the street, and above it what you often hear is – silence, and the rustling of the long grasses planted along the paths. The quiet seems to extend itself: looking at buildings and people and cars and trucks from 30 feet up, you realize that the noise below can mask a force that keeps the city pulled together, a calmness, cooperation, and accommodation in the midst of what can seem frantic on the streets.

The final piece of the High Line's magic is its greenery, 210 species of carefully planted trees, perennials and tall grasses. During the park's uncared-for years – the decades of neglect after the trains stopped running – nature returned in profusion, in the form of a self-seeded wilderness. The current plantings, even more lush, add yet another perspective. Reassembling the components of the unbroken forests and open

meadows that grew on the island before the Dutch arrived in 1609, the High Line brings you back to another great force in the city, a stunning underlying landscape that, though hidden from view by 400 years of almost continuous development, still anchors the city and persists with undiminished resiliency.

Deep Travel cuts across long-held assumptions the way the park cuts across the grid, and invites us to suspend judgment until we've explored further. The High Line shows that if we want to make places and trips memorable, we have to make them **Deep Travel**-worthy, so they will effortlessly evoke this state of mind. But that's only half of the equation. The other half is what we can do ourselves no matter what our surroundings, switch over to **Deep Travel** whenever we have a mind to, as a way of noticing and reconnecting to patterns in places we might otherwise overlook.

Deep Travel can help us ground ourselves in a larger sense of "here" and a longer sense of "now," making it, as Bob Yaro, president of New York's Regional Plan Association, says in his introduction to the new paperback edition of *IN MOTION*, "the best friend of anyone in the design community – planners, landscape architects, engineers, and everyone who helps change the face of the earth." I look forward to meeting with you in Pennsylvania this October, to talk about *IN MOTION* and then, after lunch, to set off on our own **Deep Travel** exploration through downtown Erie. ♦

IN MEMORIAM OF *Larry S. Waetzman*

We're sad to report on the passing of Larry S. Waetzman, AICP, PP, in late April. His experience and credentials include: four decades of responsible professional planning, charter member of American Institute of Certified Planners, New Jersey licensed Professional Planner, Master's degree from University of Wisconsin at Madison, Bachelor's degree from Franklin and Marshall College, faculty member at continuing professional education seminars and invited as a speaker at national and regional planning conference; and was a member of the American Planning Association, American Society of Consulting Planners, Urban Land Institute, Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association and New Jersey Planning Officials. ♦

Grants & Awards

Richard P. Byler Charitable Fund

A Grant was received from the Richard P. Byler Charitable Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation in the amount of \$645.62. Grants from the Fund are used to support organizations that are conducting environmental and urban planning activities. The PA Chapter of APA supports the Pitkin scholarship awards with these funds.

The Irving Hand Excellence in Planning Professional Development Award Deadline Approaches – August 24, 2012

The PA Chapter of APA is pleased to accept award nominations from planners interested in applying for the 2012 Irving Hand Excellence in Professional Development Award. This award, worth up to \$2,500.00, is funded through a generous donation by Delta Development Group in honor of Professor Irving Hand, FAICP.

The award is intended for a planner with professional experience, perhaps in mid-career, who has identified an opportunity for professional growth and development, and whose employer lacks the means to support this plan for professional development. Opportunities could include anything from graduate-level courses to study trips to specialized training or certification. Past winners have used the award for graduate courses and specialized charrette training.

The recipient of the award will be announced at the 2012 Annual Conference. The award is made in early 2013.

Deadline for award nominations is **Friday, August 24, 2012**. For additional information please contact the PA Chapter office at sshermer@shermer-assoc.com. **Click [HERE](#) for an application that can be downloaded** ♦



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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Please help us close the loop and recycle this newsletter.

Come to the 2012 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



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We are confident that you will enjoy your experience in Erie, and hope that you will take the opportunity to explore the Erie area and all that northwest Pennsylvania has to offer. The conference venue, the **Bayfront Convention Center**, is located on the shores of Lake Erie overlooking beautiful Presque Isle Bay. Downtown Erie, the Erie Maritime Museum, home of the **Flagship Niagara**, and the **Great Lakes Seaway Trail** are in close proximity, and **Presque Isle State Park**, **Presque Isle Downs & Casino**, the vineyards and wineries of the **Lake Erie grape belt**, and many other attractions are located within a short drive.

The Erie region is the recipient of one of only two **HUD Regional Planning Grants** awarded in Pennsylvania. Building on landmark plans by

renowned planners **John Nolan** in 1913 and **Maurice Rotival** in 1963 that helped shape modern Erie, our region has already started to “chart a new course” to a sustainable future. We hope you will join us to share new ideas, best practices and good times, and to develop and strengthen new and existing professional relationships. By working and learning together, we can all make a difference.



Will we see YOU at Pennsylvania's Largest Annual Planning Gathering?

New for 2012! Revised Registration Pricing!

In response to your feedback we're pleased to introduce a new registration fee structure for 2012. **Simple, daily pricing will help you pay for only the events you plan to attend.**

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ERIE 2012



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



Hello Fellow Planners. In June, the Chapter Board met to discuss our goals and key focus areas for the next two years. We had a great discussion about the Chapter, and the Board is clearly an enthusiastic and knowledgeable bunch.

Everyone has compelling thoughts about our goals, which we narrowed down to four priorities:

Make PA APA the “place to go” for questions about planning in PA

The chapter and its members should be a better resource for both citizen and professional planners. We're thinking of accomplishing this by populating our new website with best practices, local examples, and links to more information about planning in Pennsylvania. We'll come up with a list of planning topics, probably from APA, and then will ask planners around the state to submit information and links that address these topics. We'll need a lot of help from everyone, including a gatekeeper volunteer for each subject area. Martha Cross and I will be heading up this effort, and we can be reached at

boleary@montcopa.org and cross@groupmelvindesign.com.

Advocate for the “profession of planning”

These are tough economic times for everyone, including planners, particularly with the slow real estate market and government cutbacks. Too often, planning is considered a luxury and doesn't get the support it deserves. To help professional planners, we will be creating a brochure that highlights the important skills and services planners offer local communities. Once completed, this brochure will be distributed to the Commonwealth's municipalities and organizations and put on our website. Jim Segedy will be leading this effort, and he can be reached at jimboseg@yahoo.com.

Strengthen “our links” with other organizations

People working together

accomplish more than those working alone. We think this applies to organizations as well, including our Chapter, and we want to strengthen our links with allied organizations, such as PSATS, the County Planning Directors, with universities and colleges, and with state agencies and departments. James Cowhey and Sara Pandl will be working on this effort, and they can be contacted at cowhey@co.lancaster.pa.us and spandl@lowermac.com.

On a related note, Pam Shellenberger and I attended a Department of Environmental Protection meeting hosted by Secretary Krancer and many of his deputies. This productive meeting between DEP and various statewide organizations, such as the Borough Association, gave us an opportunity to express our views about DEP and planning. DEP welcomed us as a new participant at the table and also asked that we look at their various advisory boards and committees to see if there are any the Chapter would like to join. So, if you're interested, check out the DEP website to see if there are any boards or committees you would like to join as a PA APA representative and let us know about your interest.

“Engage” students, emerging professionals, and retired planners

With Indiana University of

PA and Temple University joining University of Pennsylvania as accredited planning programs, and with the many other planning programs around the state, students should be heavily involved with the Chapter. Sometimes they are, but not enough. We'd like to make better connections with the state's planning students, and, once students graduate, to them as emerging professionals. The Southeast Section has created an active emerging professionals group, and this model could be replicated around the state. Our retired planners, who are less constrained in what they can say than others, could be a great resource for the Chapter too, particularly for advocacy, as is done in California. Jim Segedy will be looking into these outreach efforts, and he can be reached at jimboseg@yahoo.com.

Hopefully, these four priorities meet some of your expectations for the Chapter. It would be great if you could get involved in one of these efforts or in some other way, perhaps by joining the Development and Membership committees we'll be creating. All of these efforts are just the beginning, and we plan on tackling other goals and priorities as these are completed. *Keep up the great planning work and advocating for a better future. Hope to see you in Erie in the fall.* ♦

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Also New for 2012!

- More **CM education** with the addition of a Closing Plenary Session at the Tuesday lunch
- **Monday night reception** with the exhibitors

All the Details and Registration Available Late July!

Ready to check it all out? All details will be available in late July! Are you a PA Chapter member? Watch your mail for the Conference Announcement, also available online. Stay tuned at www.planningpa.org!

Come for the Main Speakers!

*Opening Keynote Session,
Monday Morning*
TONY HISS

We're pleased to announce that **Tony Hiss**, award-winning author of *The Experience of Place*, and author of *In Motion: The Experience of Travel*, newly released by APA Planners Press will be our keynote speaker. Tony Hiss, author of 13 books, was a staff writer at *The New Yorker* for more than 30 years. He is currently a visiting scholar at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. The National Recreation and Park Association's National Literary Award praised Hiss for a lifetime of "spellbinding and poignant" writing about "how our environments, modes of travel, and other aspects of the American landscape affect our lives."

Like his new book, *In Motion: The Experience of Travel*, Tony Hiss's keynote talk will invite us to get in touch with a state of mind and way of thinking



already being hailed as "the best friend anyone in the design community can have." Solving our problems by using more of our minds is a theme that has fascinated Tony Hiss for years. He calls this wide-angle, all-senses-on-deck ability to refocus the mind "**Deep Travel**," a name that expands on "simultaneous perception," the term he used earlier in his award-winning book, *The Experience of Place*. Deep Travel refers to the fact that most of us use our minds this way when visiting new places, when everything suddenly seems fresh, new, vivid and memorable. In his talk, as in his book, Hiss explores where Deep Travel came from and how it is ideally suited to help us handle the kind of the wide-ranging, long-lasting problems the 21st Century is bringing our way. With a wealth of pictures and examples, Hiss shows us how big issues like the explosive growth of metropolitan areas, or the need to find room on earth for nine billion people in only a few decades, seem less confusing when we can see how our own communities are connected to "larger heres" and "longer nows." In addition to which, Deep Travel stretches and refreshes the mind at a time when, more than ever, we'll need all our wits about us.

A book signing with Mr. Hiss follows the keynote. The Monday conference schedule will also feature a mobile workshop with Mr.

Hiss where attendees can put the concepts presented in the keynote address into practice.

Pitkin Lecture, Monday Lunch
STEVE CRAIG, AICP, Lawrence County Commissioner
JACK LYNCH, Crawford County Commissioner

Steve Craig is serving his third term as a Commissioner in Lawrence County. He is active in many regional organizations and has the distinction of being on the executive board of two regional planning and development bodies. He is the Chairman of the Northwest PA Regional Planning and Development Commission, an eight County region headquartered in Oil City. He is also Vice Chairman of the Southwest PA Commission, a ten county region headquartered in Pittsburgh. Craig is also one of the founding members of the Oh-Penn Interstate Region, the nation's first two-state workforce development collaborative. He is a graduate of John Carroll University and received his Masters of Urban and Regional Planning degree from The George Washington University.

Jack Lynch is currently a Commissioner for Crawford County, an elected post that he assumed in 2012. In this role he serves as Vice-Chairman. Prior to his transition to elected office, Lynch served as the Planning Director for the Crawford County Planning Commission from 1994 to 2011. During that time he also served as Airport Manager for the Port Meadville Airport (2004 - 2011). During his tenure as Planning Director, Jack redesigned a proactive approach to community planning while restructuring the planning staff to include a full time Grants Administrator to oversee and direct all county grant initiatives while adding two Planning Assistants to better serve the municipal planning and community development needs of Crawford County. During that time, the existing (circa 1974) Comprehensive Plan for Crawford County was updated

in 2000 and 2008 with a wholesale update initiated in 2011 which will be completed in 2013. Also, the Port Meadville Airport was strategically repositioned with capacity building and capital projects to meet the needs of both corporate and general aviation while offering the airport a stronger more viable financial platform to continue to grow to meet an emerging need in NW PA in small corporate traffic, and serve as a hub for general aviation.

Prior to these positions he also gained experience as a Design Engineer with American Handling in Cleveland, OH and in the financial field with Riggs National Bank in Washington, DC. Lynch received his Bachelor of Science in Applied Science for Civil Engineering Technology from Youngstown State University. He holds a Masters in Urban Planning and Design from Cleveland State University where he was a teaching assistant at The Levin School of Urban Affairs.

Plenary Session, Tuesday Morning
JOHN ELLIOTT, MS, PE

John Elliott is the President and CEO of the Economic Development Corporation of Erie County (EDC) and its six affiliates. The EDC serves as the lead economic development agency for the County for programs and services including real estate development, infrastructure development, brownfield recycling, and financial assistance to small businesses. Under Mr. Elliott's leadership, the EDC has launched a comprehensive effort to grow the region's logistics and shipping industry known as the Erie Inland Port Initiative. Prior to the EDC, Mr. Elliott served as the Executive Director at the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie which, under his leadership, earned the Governor's Award for excellence in 2007. Mr. Elliott is a licensed professional engineer in PA and earned his Master of Science in Civil Engineering with a concentration in Transportation Planning at Michigan State University.

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NEW FOR 2012!

*Closing Plenary Session,
Tuesday Lunch*

MITCHELL SILVER, AICP



Mitchell Silver, AICP is president of the American Planning Association (APA) where he is leading the effort to

make planning one of the most relevant professions in the 21st Century. He's also the Chief Planning & Development Officer and Planning Director for Raleigh, North Carolina and an award-winning planner with over 25 years of experience in the public and private sectors. Silver is nationally recognized for his leadership in the planning profession and his contributions to contemporary planning issues. Known by his colleagues as a creative thinker, problem-solver and visionary leader, Mitchell has been at the center of many cutting edge trends, innovative solutions and visionary plans. As planning director in Raleigh, he has led the comprehensive plan update process to create a vibrant 21st century city with a modern transit system, great streets, great places and great neighborhoods. Currently he is overseeing a rewrite of the City's Development Code.

Come for the Education!

This year's program is PACKED with the content Pennsylvania planners are looking for. Kudos to a hard-working program committee that has worked diligently and carefully to craft what is one

of the best conference programs in years!

The Conference will feature a balance of core topics and sessions geared to small towns, rural communities and cities.

Key topics to be addressed include:

- Shale gas track
- Technology
- Transportation
- Disaster planning
- Zoning
- Comprehensive Plans
- Working with the Public
- Environment, LEED, Solar, and Conservation
- Regional focus sessions with knowledge you can transfer to use in your community
- Law and Ethics CM
- Young planners session
- How to Become an AICP
And much more!

The program features 40+ classroom sessions and 4 mobile workshops in addition to the main sessions. Earn up to 13.5 CM!

Come for the Venues!

Located on the shores of Lake Erie's Presque Isle Bay and featuring breathtaking views in every direction, Erie's **Bayfront Convention Center** is a world-class facility. The Bayfront will be home to most of the conference activities, including the main sessions and exhibit hall. The state-of-the-art facilities are complemented by the superb cuisine that draws its inspiration from the regional flavors and local food. See more photos at www.bayfrontconventioncenter.com.

The **Sheraton Erie Bayfront**

Hotel – Official Hotel of the Conference is a spectacular waterfront hotel located just next to the Bayfront Convention Center. Connected to the Convention Center by a **sky bridge**, this stylish hotel offers sweeping views of Lake Erie's Presque Isle Bay to one side and the Marina District and Downtown to the other. The hotel recently won #1 in Guest Satisfaction for ALL hotels in the Starwood brand, which includes Sheratons, Westins, and the upscale lines St. Regis and W.

In keeping with the chapter's focus on green meetings and eco-friendly initiatives, PA APA attendees will find plenty of **green features** at the Sheraton. The north and south facing building makes use of **passive solar** benefits through the in-room blinds. Guest rooms also include **low-flow toilets** and **CFL's** plus **sensors that turn off room cooling/heating** when the room is unoccupied.

The conference presents an opportunity to relax and enjoy a small trip away from home and the Sheraton will help you do that with its comfortable rooms. Enjoy The Sheraton Sweet Sleeper™ Bed, flat screen TV, free wired and wireless High Speed Internet Access, complimentary Starbucks coffee and Tazo hot tea, an oversized work station, soft leather chairs, and much more. There's also a 24-hour business center on the first floor and complimentary lobby stations for checking the internet, email and printing boarding passes.

For dinner dining you can feast on regionally fresh cuisine and breathtaking waterside views at The Bayfront Grille. There's also room service and the Bayfront Lounge. Other hotel amenities include the 24-hour "Core Performance" Fitness Center with treadmills, yoga mats, balls, and free weights. Plus there's a heated pool and whirlpool with views of the bay.

Come for the Welcome Reception!

Please join us at the **Tom Ridge Environmental Center** on Sunday, October 14. Located at the entrance to Presque Isle State Park, the Tom Ridge Environmental Center – more commonly known as TREC – features 7,000 square feet of interactive and whimsical exhibits that highlight Presque Isle's natural and cultural history. The full center will be available to you during the reception, which will feature food stations, hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, and will be suitable for dinner. Wine and beer will be available for purchase.

Key Experiences Waiting for You include:

- The view from the 75-foot tower that emulates a light house and sports spectacular views of Lake Erie
- Bring your wallets so you can shop for souvenirs at the Nature Shop. This is one of those gift shops you don't want to miss and offers gift items, apparel, nature books, chil-



dren's items, beach glass jewelry, local artisans' work, t-shirts and more.

- The hallway next to the Nature Shop features a rotating art show.

TREC is an eco-friendly structure and everything about the building is designed to complement the surrounding environment. The building opens its long dimension to the sun. Operable windows help to naturally ventilate the space. The inverted roof collects rainwater, significantly reducing overall water use. Building materials used throughout are made from highly recycled content. The landscape protects existing natural amenities, avoids the need for irrigation, and employs native plants to reinforce the local ecology. The building is designed to achieve a LEED Silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Come to be seen!

Will Your Company Be at PA's Largest Planning Event?

The PA Chapter 2012 Annual Conference offers excellent opportunities to sponsors, exhibitors and advertisers. Be a part of the largest annual gathering of Pennsylvania's professional planners and planning officials by sponsoring, exhibiting or advertising at the event. The Conference Announcement, distributed in July, is expected to reach 5,000 members of Pennsylvania's planning community. This detailed booklet includes all sponsors, exhibitors, and advertisers who have confirmed their support by June 29, 2012, together with detailed information about the full conference program.

Maximize the benefit of these opportunities — confirm your arrangements now!

Details available at www.planningpa.org. Click on "Annual Conference."

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



Come for one of the best PA Chapter Conferences ever!

- 550 Pennsylvania Planners Expected!
- **40+** Classroom Sessions
- **4** Mobile Workshops
- Up to **13.5 CM Credits**, including **Law** and **Ethics**
- Welcome Reception at the **Tom Ridge Environmental Center**
- Opening Keynote with **Tony Hiss**, author of *In Motion: The Experience of Travel*
- Pitkin Lecture and Tuesday Plenary Sessions
- Monday Evening Reception with the Exhibitors
- Tuesday Closing Plenary with **APA President Mitchell Silver**
- Tuesday Afternoon Dessert Reception with the Exhibitors
- The Famous PA APA Scholarship Fundraising Raffle
- Erie, The Flagship City!

Come for the golf!

This is a golf outing you want to attend! Sunday morning PA APA golfers will head out to the **Lawrence Park Golf Club**, an 18-hole regulation course that features gorgeous views of Lake Erie. From the longest tees it presents 6,494 yards of golf for a par of 72. The course was designed by Alfred H. Tull, ASGCA, and opened in 1921. The course rating is 71.0 with a slope rating of 129. The outing kicks off with tee times at 10:30 a.m. and will cost \$65.00 per golfer including greens fees and cart. See photos and learn more about the course at www.lawrenceparkgc.com.

Come for the raffle!

The PA APA Conference means its time again for the Chapter's Famous Fundraising Raffle — with all proceeds going to the Scholarship Fund which benefits students studying the field of planning. Come ready with some cash, checks, or credit cards for raffle tickets. The raffle will boast more than 40 baskets featuring the best the regions of PA have to offer. Will you go home with one of the prizes?! Be sure to stick around for the announcement of winners, Tuesday afternoon at the dessert reception with the Exhibitors.

Come with the family!

Erie presents the perfect opportunity to bring your family, extend your stay, and blend some vacation time with business time.

- Like the sun?** Presque Isle has seven miles of sandy beaches.
- Like sports?** Erie has semi-professional baseball, football, basketball and hockey leagues.
- Have kids?** Take them to the beach, the amusement park, the zoo and the indoor water park.
- Like theater?** Erie has one of the oldest and largest community theaters in the nation.
- Like to shop?** Erie's downtown business district has many unique shops and boutiques.
- Like dining out?** Erie has a diverse offering of fantastic restaurants — from family-owned Italian, French and American restaurants to fine dining.
- Like culture?** Erie's historic Warner Theater is a national landmark where the Erie Broadway Series and the Erie Philharmonic performs.

A special regional attraction is the **Lake Erie Wine Country**, a strip of 45 miles from Chautauqua County in Silver Creek, New York to Erie County in Northeast Pennsylvania. This is the largest grape-growing region east of the Rockies and it's home to over 23 commercial and estate wineries. Learn more at www.lakeeriewinecountry.org. The conference also features a Sunday afternoon mobile workshop exploring the wine region.

Last, but certainly not least, if you have kids you'll want to check the **Splash Lagoon Indoor Water Park**, one of the largest indoor water parks in the U.S. It's 365 days of 84-degree temperatures with rides, pools, and other attractions to enjoy. ♦

Learn more about everything Erie has to offer at www.VisitErie.com.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

PENNDOT'S REVISED HIGHWAY PERMITTING PROCESS INVITES TOWNSHIPS TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

PennDOT's new transportation impact study guidelines and procedures, which the department introduced a few years ago to complement its "smart transportation" approach, are making it easier for townships to have a say in how traffic is handled in their community. The recent changes represent a dramatic shift in the department's highway occupancy permitting process — one that puts an emphasis on communication that happens early and often. Skeptical? No need to be. Townships are among those who say the system is working.

by Jill Ercolino, Managing Editor, PA Township News

CHERI GRUMBINE doesn't have a crystal ball, but what she does have is a developing industrial park — and the potential for a traffic nightmare.

As new businesses move into the complex, near an already busy and complicated intersection in North Lebanon Township, Lebanon County, the potential for heavy truck traffic is growing along with it. Couple that with the 13,000 other vehicles that shuttle through the area every day, and you can see why Grumbine, the township's manager, is concerned about congestion spiraling out of control.

"Traffic is traffic, and you never know what is going to happen," she says. "Experts and engineers can make projections, but until we know exactly what's going into that industrial park, that's all those projections are: a guess."

Rather than wait for an anticipated headache to turn into a real one at the site, located near the intersection of a state road and several local ones, township offi-

cials decided to be involved in the industrial park's development from the start.

Their motivation was driven in part by their budget. "We didn't want a nightmare intersection, and the costs that go with it," Grumbine says.

PennDOT's new transportation impact study guidelines and procedures made it easy for the township to get involved. As part of the solution, Grumbine says, township officials studied the industrial park's plans and the projected vehicle counts and made suggestions about managing traffic there and nearby.

"We have had a seat at the table, and it's been fabulous," Grumbine says. "We told PennDOT and the developer our concerns, and they listened."

A change for the better

PennDOT requires transportation impact studies before developers of a large project, such as an industrial park or shopping center, are granted a highway occupancy permit, or HOP, which provides

access to a state road. This multi-level process outlines everything from the type and amount of traffic to the improvements the developers will make, such as installing new traffic signals, turning lanes, and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The recent changes represent a dramatic shift in the department's permitting process and focus on two goals: requiring developers to involve the municipality in the transportation decision making from the beginning and ensuring that PennDOT's decisions are also compatible with what is happening on the ground and with the community's vision.

"Now, it's all about communicating early and often," says Larry Bankert, the transportation division manager for Pennoni Associates Inc. "The process has evolved, and PennDOT is making a concerted effort to include municipalities."

That's been evident to Terrance Grove, founder and president of Grove Miller Engineering Inc., too. "A commonly

occurring traffic study review comment from PennDOT [to developers] has been 'address all municipal comments to their satisfaction,' " he says.

North Lebanon Township officials, for instance, wanted a traffic signal installed near the industrial park. They got it. They also wanted the developer to conduct additional transportation impact studies as the industrial park adds tenants to ensure that traffic estimates and improvements accurately reflect reality at the intersection. The township is getting that, too.

"All of this, especially the follow-up traffic studies, is important to us because right now, everything is a guess that's based on future development," Grumbine says. "We wanted to protect our township and our neighbors from the traffic."

Glenn Rowe, chief of traffic engineering and permits for PennDOT, is pleased that the new permitting process is working as the department envisioned. "We have more of a listening ear now," he says.

And many agree it's a refreshing shift from the past.

"We now have clear and fair guidelines from PennDOT to help us work through the HOP process," says Tom Austin, president of the Transportation Resource Group Inc. in York, who has developed a number of transportation impact studies for developers over the past two decades. "The framework is there for everyone to work together, and that's how it should be."

"Land use and traffic planning are now linked at the hip," says Tom Kotay, a transportation planning consultant for Lebanon County. "Coordination is taking place, and no one is ahead of anyone else. Everyone is on the same page."

The permitting process, however, hasn't always worked so well.

Disconnecting the disconnect

Community planners here and elsewhere have long understood the delicate interplay between land use and transportation planning. Land use decisions impact what happens on roads and bridges. Likewise, transportation decisions, whether they involve building new roads or widening old ones, affect the land.

The smart thing to do then is coordinate the two, right?

Well, yes, but this hasn't always happened in Pennsylvania, and there is a perfectly good reason why: The commonwealth just wasn't set up that way.

Under state law, townships oversee much of the land and are responsible for making decisions that are in their community's best interest. Meanwhile, PennDOT is responsible for a chunk of the commonwealth's transportation network and for moving people from one place to another quickly and efficiently.

And that's the way it was in Pennsylvania for many years: Townships and PennDOT each went about their business, and neither communicated as much as it should have. Yet, both were making decisions — one on the land, the other on the roads — that impacted the other, shaped the commonwealth, and influenced how Pennsylvanians lived.

"There was a disconnect before," Austin says, "and it led to a lot of frustration."

This was especially evident when it came time for a developer who was planning a major project in a township that also required access to a state road to get approvals from the municipality and PennDOT.

Under the old piecemeal way of doing things, the developer would often present his land development plans to the township first. Then, after those reviews and approvals were complete, the developer would move on to PennDOT, which would

study the project's impact on traffic and possibly require such things as traffic signals and new turning lanes.

The trouble is, all of this took time, and that didn't always sit well with developers. On top of that, Austin says, the lack of coordination between municipalities and PennDOT meant a lot of mixed messages were being sent. At times, the developer would hear one thing from the township and something completely different from PennDOT.

"The developers didn't know who to listen to," Austin says.

In addition to confusion, the

old process led to contention between PennDOT and municipalities, Glenn Rowe says. "Some developers would see this and take the divide-and-conquer approach," he says.

Realizing that the highway occupancy permit process was broken and local and state decision making had to be more unified, the department revamped its transportation impact study guidelines. The change fell under the umbrella of "smart transportation," a new way of doing business that PennDOT adopted in 2009.

At its core, smart transportation links land use and traffic planning. Partnerships, particularly those with townships, are an important component, too.

Townships: Take your seat at the table

Under the new TIS/HOP process, for instance, state and local officials now review transportation and land development plans simultaneously. They also talk more as the plans move through the various approval phases, which also have been streamlined — turn-around times have been shortened, too — thanks to PennDOT's new e-permitting system. (*Note: To learn more about the HOP process, see the sidebar at left.*)

For instance, long before any ground is broken along a state road, developers are now required to submit a "TIS scoping application" and convene a meeting, where the project is discussed in depth. Township officials must be invited. Others are involved, too, including PennDOT and county officials.

"The meeting gives a big picture of the potential development and transportation issues," Penoni's Larry Bankert says. "It's an opportunity for everyone to express their individual concerns."

Although township attendance isn't mandatory at the scoping meeting, it is necessary, Lebanon County's Tom Kotay says. These gatherings lay the groundwork for the upcoming project, he says, and at the very least, one township representative should be present.

And when you do attend a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

PennDOT HOP Permit System

by Stu Phillips, AICP, PTOE, PE, Parsons Brinkerhoff

The overhaul of the PennDOT HOP permit system focused on three major areas of concern: Mitigation, Local Inclusiveness, and Timely Delivery.

The revisions are meant to create a positive effect on communities and development by encouraging other modes of transportation, providing flexibility in design, encouraging redevelopment, enhancing local communities and linking the land development process to the HOP Program, as well as providing consistency throughout the Commonwealth. Multi-modal incentives are offered to developers through the revised HOP process by offering automobile trip generation rate reductions for residential and business land uses. The inclusion of pedestrian facilities can offer 2 percent to 4 percent reduction of trips, bicycle accommodations can offer 1 percent trip reduction, and transit can provide up to 3 percent trip reduction.

Source: PennDOT Publication "Policies and Procedures for Transportation Impact Studies," January 28, 2009.

Trip Reduction Available to Residential and Business Land uses

PEDESTRIAN

Pedestrian facilities on more than 95% of roadways... **4%**
Pedestrian facilities on 91 to 95% of roadways... **3%**
Pedestrian facilities on 80 to 90% of roadways... **2%**

BICYCLE

Bicycle accommodation on 50% or greater of roadways... **1%**

TRANSIT

Route has frequency of more than 6 buses per hour, and operates 19-24 hours per day... **3%**
Route has frequency of 5 to 6 buses per hour, and operates 17-18 hours per day... **2%**
Route has frequency of 3 to 4 buses per hour, and operates 14-16 hours per day... **1%**

Trip Reduction Available to Business Land Uses Only

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

TDM plan includes at least 4 strategies... **2%**
TDM plan includes at least 3 strategies... **1%**

NOTE: To qualify for the trip reduction, the land use must also meet all of the conditions specified in the text
SOURCE: PennDOT Publication "Policies and Procedures for Transportation Impact Studies," January 28, 2009.



Welcome New PA Chapter Members!

We welcome the following new members who joined the PA Chapter over the past few months. The PA Chapter membership includes nearly 3,000 planning officials, professional planners, and others who care about how Pennsylvania continues to grow the places where we live, work, and enjoy recreation. The board and staff are available to answer any questions. Feel free to contact the Chapter Office at 717-671-4510. Board member contact information is available at www.planningpa.org under **About Us**.

Individual Members:

Brian Seemann, student, *Southeast Section*
Greg Johnson, professional individual, *Northwest Section*
James Spinola, citizen, *Northeast Section*

Organizational Members:

Media Borough, *Southeast Section* ♦

Central Section Updates

by *Tara Hitchens, AICP,*
outgoing Section Chair

Municipal Impacts of Oil and Gas Development Workshop

The section hosted a workshop on the Municipal Impacts of Oil and Gas Development. Approximately 38 people were present for the workshop at Bucknell University on May 24, 2012. The first panel of speakers Dr. Kathryn Brassier of PSU, Dr. Jonathan Williamson of Lycoming College and Mark Murawski Transportation Planner for Lycoming County were very well received by the audience as they covered the social, housing and transportation impacts of oil and gas development. This portion of the workshop received 2.75 CM credits. The afternoon session consisted of Charles Courtney, Esq. and Stan Lembeck, AICP reviewing the legal issues pertaining to Act 13. This portion of the workshop earned a total of 2.75 CM credits with 1.5 being law credits. The Central Section was very pleased with the workshop turnout and with the presentations by the speakers.

All presentations can be found on the PA Chapter website under Events & Training at the top of the website.

Election Results:

The Central Section election results were announced at the May 24, 2012 workshop described above. The new leadership took office June 1, 2012 and will serve a three year term.

Rachelle Abbott, AICP, Chair
Andrew Stern, AICP, Vice-Chair
Pam Shellenberger, AICP,
Secretary/Treasurer
Michelle Brummer, AICP, Prof.
Planner at-large member
Tara Hitchens, AICP, Prof.
Planner at-large member
Bill Brobst, Citizen Planner at-
large member
Scott Haverstick, Citizen Planner
at-large member

We welcome anyone that wishes to attend the next meeting of the Central Section which is scheduled for September 14, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at the Ranch House in Watts, PA. At this meeting, the section will be discussing the fall workshop and the 2013 budget.

Lehigh Valley Updates

by *Sara Pandl, AICP/RLA,*
Section Chair

Lehigh Valley Section held an election for officers May 31, 2012 with the following results:

Sara Pandl, AICP/RLA,
Chair
Anthony Toth, AICP,
Secretary/Treasurer

Section Council at-large members
Becky Bradley, AICP
Thomas Edinger, AICP
Tina Fackler, AICP
Brian Gish, AICP
Darlene Heller, AICP
Owen O'Neil
Charlie Schmebl

Future events include **Planners Night at the Iron Pigs**. The Lehigh Valley IronPigs are a minor league baseball team that is the Triple-A affiliate of the

Director of Transportation Chester County Planning Commission

The Chester County Planning Commission is seeking a Director of Transportation Services. This position reports to the Executive Director and will be responsible for the administration and management of the Transportation and Information Services Division. Essential duties will include but are not limited to managing the transportation program and supervising division staff. The ideal candidate must have excellent organization, program and project administration, budget management, intermediate computer skills; and demonstrated experience with transportation planning in the public sector.

Qualifications include a Bachelors degree in Planning or a related field with five years of job-related transportation experience, excellent written and verbal communication skills, the ability to interface effectively with our MPO, PennDOT, SEPTA, local TMA's, and all levels of county management, the ability to remain flexible and establish priorities for the Division.

Salary is commensurate with experience from \$61,000. Applications should be filed through the Chester County Human Resources Department at www.chesco.org. Search words; Job Opportunities. ♦

Philadelphia Phillies. Please join the Lehigh Valley Section on **August 29** to watch the Iron Pigs in a reserved luxury suite. The game will be preceded by an educational presentation on the **Economic Impact of the Stadium Development on the Lehigh Valley for 1.0 CM**. Registration details are listed on the PA-APA

website or by contacting Tina Fackler at: tina.fackler@ssmgroup.com.

The Lehigh Valley Section is also planning a seminar on the evening of **October 10, 2012** on the topic of Right To Know/Open Records, which would provide the participants with legal CEUs. ♦

Congrats!

Congratulations to the latest group of planners to join the ranks of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

AICP is the American Planning Association's professional institute, providing recognized leadership nationwide in the certification of professional planners, ethics, professional development, planning education, and the standards of planning practice. AICP certified planners carry a high mark of distinction because they are required to meet rigorous standards, maintain their expertise through continuing education, and serve community interests.

The following Pennsylvania planners passed their AICP exam in May of 2012. *Welcome to AICP!*

Benjamin Bryant, AICP
Thomas Colleran, AICP
Paula Conolly, AICP
Matthew Edmond, AICP
Joelle Greenland, AICP
Ashton Jones, AICP
Hilary Kendro, AICP
Geoffrey Knight, AICP
Kevin Kunak, AICP
Brian Temple, AICP
Brandon Williams, AICP

If you are interested in pursuing membership in AICP, please visit the following links for information and resources: The PA Chapter website www.planningpa.org/career_aicp.shtml APA's website www.planning.org/certification/index.htm ♦

A SEAT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

scoping meeting, do your homework, engineer Tom Austin advises. "Take this initial step seriously," he says. "Come to the table prepared and be sure to put everything — all your expectations — out on the table."

Cheri Grumbine of North Lebanon Township rarely misses these meetings and often brings the township supervisors. "The

PDOcorner

by Susan Elks, AICP, Professional Development Officer

Many thanks to...

Tracy Zinn, AICP of T&B Planning and **Jason Kambitsis, AICP** of the Economic Development for the Mount Washington Community Development Corporation for leading our recent training, **Design Matters: Using Design Guidelines to Shape a Community**. Attendance at the five sessions offered statewide was good, and feedback from attendees was very positive. The Chapter appreciates the funding support of the PA Local Government Training Partnership for this series of training. If you weren't able to make one of the sessions, there will be one last presentation at the conference in Erie in October.

Chapter's Sections

While the statewide training series noted above was organized by the Chapter, the Chapter's Sections have been busy with their own training efforts. Recent sessions have covered the topics of **comprehensive plan implementation, green building, oil and gas development, and regional planning**. If you haven't had the opportunity to take advantage of a training session developed by a Section, you're missing out. Many of these sessions are a detailed and focused examination of an issue or project. Keep an eye on the Chapter's Calendar of Events page for upcoming sessions or contact your Section's leadership for more information.

Exam Prep

If you will be taking the AICP exam in November of 2012, remember to visit the Chapter website for a variety of exam preparation resources. The Chapter has copies of APA's AICP Exam Prep Guide to loan out, and the website includes study notes, presentation materials, and links to other resources. A new resource for those preparing for the AICP exam is a series of prep sessions held in February and March of 2012 as part of the webcast series sponsored by chapters, divisions, and universities. Participating chapters included Pennsylvania, Maryland, Illinois, and North Carolina. Most of the sessions were recorded and are available on the archived webcast page of the Utah Chapter website: <http://www.utah-apa.org/webcasts>. ♦

beginning is where everything really happens, and that's your time to voice your opinion," she says. "It does work, and PennDOT does listen."

Springfield Township in Mercer County is another municipality that understands the value of working with developers and addressing transportation concerns in a project's early stages.

The township is the site of the nation's third largest outlet shopping complex, which attracts 3 million visitors a year, and the board of supervisors wants to be certain that traffic flows smoothly along the corridor despite the fact that it's a state road.

That why in 2007, a few years before PennDOT's smart transportation ideology emerged, the township supervisors incorporated access management guidelines for the busy commercial sector into their subdivision and land development ordinance, administrator Barb Brown says.

"Even in those circumstances where PennDOT doesn't require a transportation impact study, we do," Brown says. "We want to ensure that all the developers in that corridor are responsible for managing the traffic they create."

In fact, much like PennDOT,

Springfield Township requires developers to participate in a pre-application meeting and develop a plan for transportation improvements.

"We have the meeting before everyone gets too deep into their plans," she says, "and we give the developers and their consultants an overview of our procedures and guidelines. We tell them who their township contacts are, and we get to know them.

"It's just made things better all the way around."

The payoff

Although many of the kinks have been worked out of PennDOT's highway permitting process, that's not to say there aren't bumps in the road. Personalities and politics sometimes get in the way. The new approach has also created more work for everyone involved.

"It is time-consuming, and we do spend a lot of time working through the issues," Lebanon County's Tom Kotay says, "but the process is much more inclusive now and generates useable traffic data that is helping us make better informed decisions."

PennDOT's Glenn Rowe also believes that the extra time, effort,

PA Chapter Represented at the 2012 PSATS Annual Convention

Thank you to the following PA Chapter members for volunteering to staff the PA Chapter booth at this year's PSATS Convention.

Christina Arlt, AICP
Charlie Guttenplan, AICP
& Pattie Guttenplan, AICP
Stefan Klosowski, AICP
Charlie Schmehl
Pam Shellenberger, AICP
Mark Stivers, AICP
Kirk Stoner, AICP

Volunteers are the backbone of a strong association. We really appreciate their help! ♦

and meetings are an investment with a big payoff.

"We've found that when all the key players are at the table — the department, the municipality, the county, and the developer — the project goes that much better and smoother," he says. "When you talk about business, three things are important: location, location, location. For permitting, it's communication, communication, communication, and that's what we're trying to achieve." ♦



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Help Wanted

PA Chapter of APA Seeks Volunteer for Board Position

It's not every day that the PA Chapter
of the APA puts out a help wanted ad!
Are you the one for the job?

help!

Planning Officials Development Officer

Shirley Yannich, PP, AICP served as the Chapter's PODO the last few years. She is focusing her energies in new directions and stepped down in the fall 2011. Shirley was instrumental in generating newsletter articles of interest to the chapter's citizen planner members.

The PODO's roles and responsibilities include the following. The new PODO is welcome to explore additional opportunities.

- The PODO serves on the PA APA Board which consists of elected members from the PA Chapter, with the addition of the PODO, the Professional Development Officer, and the Student Representative (appointed members).
- The PODO is appointed by the PA APA President and is also a member of the Chapter's Education Committee.
- The PODO oversees the Planning Officials Development Committee and serves as the official chapter contact for questions on planning official topics. The new PODO will work with Section Chairs to select committee members from around the state. The committee can choose its focus areas and can choose to meet in person or by conference call. Within the chapter structure, each section has an elected planning official member and these individuals may provide helpful assistance in building the Planning Officials Development Committee.
- The PODO should be an individual who serves on the planning commission or Zoning Hearing Board in a local community. The individual may be a professional planner as well.

If you are interested in pursuing this opportunity to support the efforts of planning in Pennsylvania, please contact Chapter President Brian O'Leary for more details. ♦