

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Working Together for a Better Tomorrow

51 years of Serving Greene County

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

2008

GREENE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Pam Snyder - Chairman

Dave Coder

Archie Trader

Gene Lee - Chief Clerk

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Donald P. Boord - Chairman

Chuck Morris, Esquire - Vice-Chairman

Suzanne Swinchock - Secretary

Shirl Barnhart

Alfred Burns

Francis Minor

John Stewart (resigned) – (replaced by) John Kendralla

Steve Stuck (resigned) – (replaced by) Mark Fox

Gene Yost (resigned) – VACANT NINTH MEMBER

GREENE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Robbie M. Matesic, Executive Director

MISSION STATEMENT

The Greene County Planning Commission strives to comply with all the procedures and processes outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).

VISION

The Greene County Planning Commission is focused on promoting the safety and security of its community by following smart growth practices, enforcing the Greene County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), and by using the MPC as the main planning tool.

GREENE COUNTY GENERAL INFORMATION

LOCATION: Greene County is in the southwestern corner of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is bounded on the north by Washington County, on the east by the Monongahela River that separates it from Fayette County, on the south by the Mason-Dixon Line at West Virginia and on the west by the West Virginia Panhandle. Greene County contains 577 square miles and has a population of 40,672 in its six boroughs and twenty townships.

HISTORY: The County was formed by an act of Legislature on February 9, 1796 in honor of General Nathaniel Greene. Colonel John Minor, sponsor of the bill, is called the Father of Greene County. A board of trustees was authorized to buy a tract of land near the center of the county to build a courthouse, county jail, etc. According to a deed dated October 28, 1796, the trustees brought 150.5 acres of land called "Eden" from Thomas & Eleanor Slater for \$2,376. They named it Waynesburg after General Anthony Wayne because he led the army that successfully defeated the Indians in the Northwest (Ohio) Territory in 1794. On September 29, 1797, they offered 201 lots for sale at prices ranging from \$5 to \$145. They erected a log courthouse and jail. The courthouse still stands but is not recognizable due to extensive remodeling. The first store was established by William Crawford who purchased a "load" of goods from a settlement along the Monongahela River in the early 1800's and began trading. There were 80 dwellings in Waynesburg in 1843. By 1906 it had reached 350.

POPULATION: Greene County's population and economy have always been strongly related to the County's natural features. The hilly topography, the Monongahela River, and abundant subsurface coal reserves have dominated the County's settlement patterns and its livelihood, concentrating population in the eastern portion of the County and focusing employment (in the 20th Century) on bituminous coal mining. Since the turn of the century, mining has replaced agriculture as the leading industry. As coal related activities expanded in the 1920's and demand for coal slackened in the 1960's, the County's population contracted, and working age families migrated out of the County. In 1960 the population was 39,424; by 1970 it dropped to 36,090. When the energy crisis had reestablished the demand for coal, the 1980 census showed an increase of population to 40,476. Since then, the population has stabilized to 40,672, with 6,049 individuals in the six (6) boroughs and 34,623 in the twenty (20) townships.

TOPOGRAPHY: Greene County is located in the Central Unglaciaded Allegheny Plateau as characterized by rugged and irregular topography consisting of narrow valleys sloping steeply to narrow ridge tops. This area is heavily forested and contains major bituminous coal deposits. Greene County contains some of the most difficult topography in the region and is one of the least developed areas. The Allegheny Plateau ranges from 750 feet above sea level at the Monongahela River to 1600 feet at its highest point.

LAND USE: Of the county's 577 square miles, approximately 3% is developed, primarily along the

Monongahela River on the high plains in the eastern portions of the county. There are small, unincorporated villages throughout the county and a considerable amount of residential development scattered along narrow bands of gently to moderately sloping land adjacent to County roads. Largely urbanized or developing areas include Waynesburg - Franklin Township area along Routes 21 and 188 and Interstate 79, the Carmichaels - Cumberland area, an area along Ten Mile Creek between Clarksville and Jefferson Borough, and an area extending from Dry Tavern to Crucible. These areas also tend to have most of the County's community facilities and services.

On August 14, 2008 the Greene County Commissioners adopted the Greene County Comprehensive Plan (A Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow) after it was recommended by the Greene County Planning Commission. One objective noted in the plan was to "utilize a comprehensive plan as the blueprint to move the county forward in a positive direction".

TRANSPORTATION: Interstate 79 runs north and south through Greene County. The County is also serviced by State Route 21 running east to west and Route 19 running south to north. There are 584 miles of state roads in the county and 935 miles of municipal roads. The railroads servicing the County are: Norfolk Southern and the Cumberland Mine Railroad. There is one (1) general aviation airport facility, owned and operated by the County and known as the Greene County Airport.

The Greene County Airport Master Plan and Airport Layout Plan were adopted by the County Commissioners in the summer of 2008. The plan looked at the existing airport inventory, activity forecasts, facility requirements, an environmental overview, airport plans, and a capital improvement plan.

In December 2008, the Chairman of the Planning Commission requested that the Infrastructure Committee reconvene to focus on road issues within the county. A point of emphasis for the committee will be to research the possibility that the Greene County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance is hindering development. A second point of emphasis will be on local paving specifications and how the local governing body and the Planning Commission differ. The committee start working on this topic in February 2009.

PUBLIC UTILITIES: Greene County receives utility services from many public and private entities. Allegheny Power Company (formerly West Penn Power Company) provides electric service to the county. Carnegie Natural Gas Co., Columbia Gas of PA, INC., Conklin Gas & Oil, Equitable Gas Co., Greenridge Oil, Inc. of PA, and Peoples Natural Gas Company provide Natural Gas to Greene County. Telephone Service is provided by Alltel of PA, Inc., AT&T Communications of PA, Inc., MCI Telecommunications Corp., Short Line Telephone Co., and West Side Telephone Company. Local municipalities, authorities and other private companies provide water and sewage services.

VOTING: Current statistics supplied by Elections show that there 25,308 registered voters in Greene County distributed among 44 voting precincts. Out of this total 17,018 are registered Democrats and 6,630 are registered Republicans. An additional 1,660 voters subscribe to other affiliations.

RECREATION: On August 14, 2008 the Greene County Commissioners adopted the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Trails/Greenways Plan after it was recommended by the Greene County Planning Commission. The mission statement for the document states, "The County

will implement practical strategies for the efficient allocation of resources by capitalizing upon public and private partnerships to develop a variety of recreational facilities that are available to all residents.” This plan is a thorough review of the County’s inventory of trails, parks and other recreational facilities and also notes recreational opportunities for future planning.

The County's many streams, wooded area, and open areas provide a variety of recreation opportunities. The County has more than 10,800 acres of parks, recreation and open public space serving both its own population and southwestern Pennsylvania. It also has 71 miles of hiking trails. Most of this land is in State Game Lands or other sites that are used primarily for passive recreation, water-related recreation such as boating and fishing, hunting and camping. There are also local pools and parks, the Greene River Trail and several golf courses. Finally, there are the Horse Shows, the Jacktown Fair and the Greene County Fair, as well as numerous community festivals and events.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: The 2000 census reported that the Median Household Income (MHI) or the middle figure of all incomes for Greene County was \$30,352. That amount was \$11,642 lower than the National Median Income of \$41,994. None of the Greene County’s municipalities had a higher figure than the national average. Washington Township, with a median household income of \$39,492, was the highest in the county.

EDUCATION: Education is provided in Greene County by five (5) public school districts, one (1) private schools, home-schooling, one (1) vocational technical school, one (1) community college, one (1) fully accredited four year university and numerous day care and nursery school facilities.

MEDIA: Greene County is served by two (2) Daily Newspapers, The Observer Reporter and The Herald Standard and one (1) weekly paper, The Greene County Messenger. There are also two (2) radio stations in the County, WANB Waynesburg and WCYJ Waynesburg College.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY: Statistics from 2006 show that of the 16,713 individuals in the civilian labor force in Greene County, there were 15,168 employed and 1,545 unemployed. This unemployment totals 4.7% of the County's population. Recent statistics from Pennsylvania Workforce note that the unemployment rate in August 2007 was 4.9% (only a slight change).

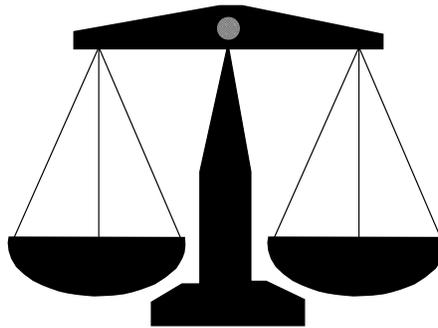
The average weekly wage in Greene County rose from \$669 in 2001 to \$765 in 2006 according to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Therefore, Greene County has seen a rise in average weekly wage of \$95 in the last 6 years.

COUNTY FACILITIES: The County owns the Greene County Office Building, Courthouse, Jail Facilities, Ben Franklin Building, Fort Jackson County Building, the Greene County Fairgrounds and Airport. In addition, the County owns the Eastern and Central Swimming pools and operates Mon View Park.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: The 911 offices are located in the Alltel Building on Greene Street in Waynesburg Borough. An enhanced 911-computer system and GIS mapping are tools used to provide efficient and effective services.

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Municipalities Planning Code



The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), originally enacted as Act 274 of 1968, establishes the basic authority for the exercise of municipal land use controls in Pennsylvania. It enables municipalities to plan for community development through preparation of a comprehensive development plan and to govern such development through zoning (with or without planned residential development procedures), subdivision and land development, and official map ordinances. The code provides for the establishment of planning commissions, planning departments, planning committees and zoning hearing boards and authorizes those bodies to charge fees, make inspections and hold public hearings. The code provides for appropriations, appeals and penalties for violations.

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning Commission Report



Organization

The Greene County Planning Commission was created by the act of the Board of Greene County Commissioners on May 29, 1956, as authorized by Section 2001 of Act No. 130 of the county code as amended.

The Planning Commission consists of nine members, the appointment and terms of which are provided for by the County Commissioners under the authority of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) Act 247 as amended and reenacted. The Commission has adopted its own by-laws that govern operations. Staff from the Greene County Department of Economic Development assists the Planning Commission in its duties.

The Planning Commission met monthly in 2008 at 7:00p.m. on the first Monday of each month in the second floor conference room in the Greene County Office Building at 93 East High Street in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania.

Purpose

The Function of the Greene County Planning Commission is to plan for the desirable growth and development of the county. The Planning Commission plans for solutions to countywide problems and for longer periods of time than is usually considered in public and private decision making. The Planning Commission seeks to coordinate public and private decisions which affect the future of the county, and identify and find solutions which affect the future of county development. The Planning function is to look to the future for the purpose of improving the well being of the community.

In carrying out these functions, the Planning Commission acts as an advisory group to county and local governments in matters concerning the physical growth and development of the county. The Planning Commission also provides coordinating and advisory services to local planning commissions and provides countywide planning information generally to interested groups and citizens.

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

2008 Meeting Summary



January 2008

- Commission review of the Agricultural Chapter of the Greene County Comprehensive Plan
- Reorganization of the Commission was tabled
- Land Development: Coal Gas Recovery received final approval

February 2008

- Scheduled a follow up meeting with constituents on local planning, regulation, and zoning
- Discussion on Waynesburg Borough's Historical Ordinance and Waynesburg University's plans to work on a downtown Master Plan
- Named a nominee for a position on the Greene County Conservation Board
- Two board positions were filled: Chairman and Secretary
- An Agricultural Security Zone was approved for Whiteley and Greene Townships (516 acres)
- Land Development: Carmichaels American Legion received plan acceptance and preliminary approval

March 2008

- Discussion on Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's approval of sewage components for lot splits
- Filled the position of Vice Chairman
- Presentation of the March Planning Department Report
- A fact sheet on an Agricultural Security Zone was created and given to all Commission members
- Public comment on gas permitting and coal mining activities in the West Greene area

April 2008

- Land Development: Consol – Crabapple Portal Repair Shop and Warehouse received

- final approval on change in an earlier submission
- Land Development- R.J. Lee Tire Depolymerization Facility received final approval with two conditions
- Land Development- Coal Gas Recovery, L.P. received plan acceptance, preliminary and final approval
- Announcing of a West Greene Planning Group that is focused on a multi-municipal plan
- Public comment on noise ordinances, a potential substation, the lighting of cell towers, and the conversion of farmland to industrial use

May 2008

- A presentation by the County Comprehensive Plan and County Recreation Plan by the consultant (Mackin Engineering)
- Planning Department overview on the recreation plan, priority recreation projects for the county, and the recreation zones that were created
- An informational sheet on the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index was created and submitted for Commission review
- An overview of the new Open Records Law that will take place on January 1, 2009
- Public comment regarding a substation, a potential portal, and how can state lawmakers be made aware of these issues

June 2008

- Comprehensive Plan and Recreation Plan comments were summarized and brought forth to the Commission
- Land Development- Virgin Storage Units received approval of two modification requests
- Land Development- AMD Reclamation received plan acceptance and preliminary approval
- Agreed to supply comments to the Federal Energy Regulation Commission on the Northern Bridge Project near Ryerson Station
- Public comment on the West Greene Planning Group, substation in West Greene, and an upcoming Public Utilities Commission meeting on the Pursley Line in Franklin and Center Townships

July 2008

- Discussion of rights of way for transmission projects
- Land Development- AMD Reclamation received plan acceptance, preliminary and final approval with conditions on Phase I
- The Planning Department issued some notes and handouts from the PUC Public Meeting in center Township
- The Planning Department overview the Southside Waynesburg Rising Project (Elm Street) and made a few comments for review
- The Planning Department announced that the West Greene Planning Group met recently and a guest speaker from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development spoke regarding plan formation and funding

- Discussion on the new Water Resources Program administered by the Department of Economic Development

August 2008

- The 2007 Planning Commission Annual Report was completed and submitted for review and comments
- Approval an Agricultural Security Zone in Center Township (1,676.56 acres)
- Public comment regarding concerns with the TrAILCo project – mostly the impacts on property owners and some trespassing and other incidents that occurred recently
- Discussion on the Southeastern Greene Multi-Municipal Plan and West Greene Planning Group

September 2008

- Discussion of a recent article published on opposition to AMD Reclamation
- Solicitation for volunteers to serve on a ordinance revision committee
- Discussion on the potential for submitting “requests to see site plans” for three projects in Greene County (Texas Eastern, Foundation Coal, and Vaughn Railroad Company)
- Public comment on TrAILCo and a recently completed “recommended decision” from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
- Land Development: Coal Gas Recovery (DD17 Gas Compressor) received plan acceptance, preliminary and final approval

October 2008

- Nomination submitted for Greene County Conservation District
- Discussion on some recent open houses for the Texas Eastern project
- Planning staff visited three recently developed sites and took notes – these notes were submitted for Commission review
- Land Development- TrAILCo 502 Junction Substation received plan acceptance
- Land Development- Chesapeake Energy received approval to go ahead with revisions to their previously submitted plan
- Land Development- Nemaquin Volunteer Fire Department received plan acceptance, preliminary and final approval
- Land Development- Rising Creek Bakery received plan acceptance, preliminary and final approval with conditions
- Land Development- Carmichaels American Legion received final approval with one condition
- Public comment discussion on a request for hearing through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection on the Foundation Coal 138 kV transmission project
- Reconvened an earlier meeting to review the plans of the TrAILCo 502 Junction Substation

November 2008

- Adoption of the 2007 Planning Commission Annual Report

- A fee schedule submission by Mackin Engineering for storm water review on selected land development projects
- Land Development- 502 Junction Substation received preliminary and final approval with five conditions
- Land Development – 4 Eisenhower West Shaft received plan acceptance and preliminary approval
- Public comment on the Commission’s recent visit to Foundation Coal’s Maple Run site

December 2008

- Discussion on creating three new committees: Infrastructure, Extractive Industries, and Ordinance Revision
- Land Development- 4 West Eisenhower Shaft received final approval with conditions
- Land Development – Coal Gas Recovery (DD7-8 Gas Compressor) received plan acceptance, preliminary and final approval
- Discussion on a new coal facility near the Greene River Trail
- Public comment focused on drilling on the Warrior Trail
- Public comment on the 138kV transmission station in Center Township

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

2009 AGENDA

The Planning Commission staff looks forward to working on projects that will be evolving in 2009. The Planning Commission is an integral part of the implementation of the Greene County Comprehensive Plan, Airport Master Plan, and Greene County Comprehensive Plan. The Commission will be challenged to look ahead at the future of the county and weigh how new development will impact this planning.

The following are important issues that the Planning Commission looks forward to discussing, debating, and dealing with in 2009:

- Water, sewer and other infrastructure improvements
- Continue the positive working relationship with our local elected officials
- Expand the Water Resources Plan to focus on flooding and storm water collection in the County
- Gas drilling and its impacts on property owners (Marcellus Shale)
- The road infrastructure within the County
- Agricultural security zones
- Updating or modifying the Greene County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
- Collaborating with the Greene County Conservation District and interfacing more efficiently and effectively
- Monitoring all environmental permits and public notices (possibly mapping them in a more organized way)
- Processing all “Right to Know Requests” in a timely manner

GREENE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2008



- ✓ Sixty-one (61) lot splits were approved
- ✓ Zero (0) Subdivisions were reviewed
- ✓ Thirteen (13) Land Developments were processed and approved
- ✓ One (1) Agricultural Security Zone approved
- ✓ Recommendation and Commissioner adoption of the County Comprehensive Plan (A Strategy for a Greene Tomorrow)
- ✓ Recommendation and Commissioner adoption of the County Comprehensive Recreation Plan