

2015

CLINTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The major Planning Commission undertaking of 2014 was a comprehensive update of the Clinton County Zoning Ordinance. CCPC has been working steadily on the rewrite, which is being done in house. The existing County Zoning Ordinance was originally adopted in 1994.

The shale gas industry continued in an idling mode in 2015. Employment in the Marcellus service and support industries held up well, with Clinton County workers traveling to work throughout the State. Construction of a compressor station and meter station on private property in Gallagher Township created some public opposition. Completed in November, it is now online and there are plans to drill additional wells to supply it.

First Quality constructed a new warehouse in McElhattan, and is planning a third paper machine at their facility in Castanea. Construction has not yet begun on a \$3,000,000 PennDOT multi-modal grant to SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority to improve truck access and rail service into the paper-making complex.

In cooperation with the PRR group of Renovo, various state agencies, SEDA-COG, the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, and representatives of Renovo, South Renovo, Chapman and Noyes Townships, the Planning Department staff and the County Commissioners attended and/or led a number of community development meetings aimed at tackling some of the quality of life issues existing in Western Clinton County. Construction is nearly complete on the Renovo Water Authority's \$4 million Pennvest grant to upgrade the water system. A CDBG competitive application for \$750,000 for a streetscape project to remediate Ontario Avenue was approved, as was a \$200,000 DCNR grant to improve the River front near Ontario Avenue. Both of these initiatives and a new emphasis on regional and municipal comprehensive planning will move forward in 2016.

We have worked all year with a group that is conducting due diligence for the construction of a large gas-fired electric power plant in Renovo. This process will continue through 2016 with a hoped-for ground breaking in 2017. In any case, 2016 will be a pivotal year for western Clinton County with all of the grant-funded improvements and a major power project in the works.

Tim Holladay, Planning Director

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTIVITIES

In 2014, various housing activities increased home ownership levels and preserved the quality of our housing stock, as follows:

WITH DCED (CDBG and Keystone Communities) and PHFA (PHARE) FUNDING: The County's housing rehabilitation provider, STEP, Inc., continued doing home rehabs on the countywide project launched early in 2013. As of year's end, 20 more homes had been rehabilitated. PHARE funds of \$50,000 still remain, though the CDBG funding is fully expended. We expect the final seven homes to be completed by mid-year 2016. A waiting list of 45 more eligible homeowners indicates that more funding for this initiative must be secured in 2016.

WITH COUNTY FUNDING: Using funds from our Act 137 Affordable Housing account: 1) We continued to administer a first-time homebuyers closing cost assistance program, and helped three families purchase homes. 2) In conjunction with a CDBG project in Avis, we repaired the defective sewer lateral for one homeowner. 2) We supplemented the PHARE home rehab grants by providing \$25,000 in operations funding to STEP.

A COMMITMENT TO COUNTY SENIORS: The Planning Department was closely involved, all year, with the development of a project to address the dire shortage of senior-only affordable housing. The Commissioners pledged \$200,000 of Affordable Housing and CDBG funds toward acquisition of a property in the Borough of Flemington to serve as the building site. SEDA-COG Housing Development Corporation will move forward on construction of a 34-unit facility of one- and two-bedroom units. The Clinton County Housing Authority will administer a rental subsidy to make the units affordable to seniors. This project should accommodate one quarter of the standing waiting list for senior apartments. It is targeted for completion in late 2018.

GREENWAY & OPEN SPACE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

RIVER TRAIL PROJECTS: For Woodward Township permits were obtained and construction documents were completed for the new boat launch in the River View Park, this access will provide a stopping point for future kayaking/canoeing from Renovo. The Planning Department has been providing technical services to DCNR for their access improvements along Pine Creek in Lycoming County.

OTHER WATERWAY ACCESSES: The Planning Department developed construction documents and obtained permits for a new ADA fishing pier located in the Nature Park in Wayne Township, and on Fishing Creek in Porter Township's Community Park. The Fishing pier in Wayne Township was completed in the fall while the Porter Township project is still pending. The Planning Department has also been providing technical services to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy for constructing a new ADA fishing pier in Clearfield County.

TRAIL PROJECTS: The Planning Department conducted Surveying, Engineering and created 35 construction documents for the latest phase of trail development, which will lead from the old

railroad station in Castanea Township to Wayne Township’s Community Park. Permits were obtained from DEP in the fall. Several bids associated with replacing the existing gates were obtained by local suppliers, ranging from \$900.00 to \$2,000.00, with the cost of installation from local contractors still pending.

COMMUNITY PARKS: In Woodward Township at the Riverview Park, a new 24 foot X 40 foot pavilion was started in the fall, but with a delay in the arrival of the pavilion kit from the supplier, the project is still under construction. In Wayne Township, construction documents were started for the new 250-foot baseball field along with a new ADA restroom.

TOURISM/RECREATION FUND

The County received 14 requests totaling \$66,054.35 for the \$24,000 available for award in 2015. Activities chosen for funding by the selection committee seemed most likely to have a major impact on County tourism as follows:

Clinton County Tourism/Recreation Fund - 2015			
Name	Project Summary	Funds Requested	Funds Awarded
City of Lock Haven	Concerts in Triangle Park/Floating Stage	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
Sugar Valley Lions	AYSO Soccer field improvements	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
Lock Haven Univ. Foundation	Baseball tournament/umpires & tee shirts	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
WCCRA *	Weight room construction	\$10,000.00	\$2,500.00
CMHS Soccer Boosters	Commissioners Cup Referees	????	\$1,000.00
Flaming Foliage	Natural gas connection at visitor ctr	\$1,596.00	\$1,596.00
LHU/River Town/SGP	Interactive River Trail Map	\$2,360.00	\$2,360.00
Clinton County Arts Council	Jazz Festival/hire musicians	\$4,851.50	\$1,081.50
Sentimental Journey	Fly in	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
PRR/ Renovo Fire Dept.	River access/benches, rain garden	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Renovo Borough	Zipline over river	\$2,746.85	\$0.00
Downtown Lock Haven	Support, promote community events	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Woodward Twp.	Kayak launch	\$5,000.00	\$3,400.00
Jaycees	Pizza oven	\$7,000.00	\$5,000.00
Jaycees	Fireworks	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Greater Renovo Heritage Park	Writers’ workshops in the WILD	\$4,500.00	\$0.00
Totals		\$66,054.35	\$23,937.50

* two year request

ACT 13 FUNDING

Clinton County Recreation Improvement Funding – 2015

				Balance of 2015	Funds Received 2016	Current Balance
				\$44,424.86		\$44,424.86
2014 - Projects	Project Summary	Funds Requested	Funds Awarded	Funds Paid Out	Funds Remaining	
Chestnut Park	Castanea Baseball Phase 1	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00		\$15,000.00	
Clinton County	ATV trail study	\$9,400.00	\$9,400.00	\$9,400.00	\$0.00	
Total-Funds		\$24,400.00	\$24,400.00	\$9,400.00		
				Total Funds in #23-4950-6000		\$35,024.86

SUBDIVISIONS AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

This year there were 62 subdivision plans reviewed or approved by the Planning staff and/or the Commission, which created 121 lots. All residential activities involved only one or two lots.

The County Planning Commission reviewed 5 commercial or industrial land development plans.

ZONING PERMITS

The County Zoning Ordinance is in effect in Colebrook, Gallagher, Grugan, East Keating, West Keating, Logan, and Noyes Townships. During 2015, we issued 30 permits with an improvement value of \$1,581,500. New construction included three new data cell towers, nine new homes/camps, at a total cost of \$970,000.

ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

All provisions of the 1994 ordinance, with its 1998, 2010 and 2014 amendments, were retained - but an entirely new ordinance structure was used to bring a level of ordinance standardization that has never before existed in Clinton County. Now all six members of the Central Clinton County Council of Governments, and all seven municipalities covered by County zoning, use the same template. The Planning Commission encourages other municipalities to adopt this format when they update their zoning ordinances.

HOMELESS SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

WITH DCED/ESG FUNDING. Clinton County's Emergency Solutions Grant homelessness prevention expenditures and efforts were managed by our shelter provider, the Clinton County Housing Coalition, operating out of its Life Center through mid-August. These consisted of operations support and rental assistance to eligible county residents.

WITH HAP FUNDING. The County's Homeless Assistance Program (HAP), a county entitlement from the state Department of Human Services, is allocated at a rate of \$28,500 per year. It is used for cash assistance to homeless persons for rent and utility payments, and also support operations at the Life Center.

WITH PHARE FUNDING. Through the course of 2015, the Planning Department deployed \$56,000 toward a rental assistance partnership involving the Housing Coalition, the Clinton County Women's Center, the Housing Authority, the Clinton County MH/ID Department, and the Clinton County Probation Department. The funding provides rental assistance to eligible clients of the above agencies.

WEBSITE UPDATE

A new Community Development Block Grant information page was added to the Planning Department’s website in 2015. It describes how to apply to the Commissioners for CDBG funding, and explains some of the requirements and eligibility factors for this federal funding source.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federally funded entitlement program intended to benefit low to moderate income residents. Federal regulations and program goals drive the funds to the neediest areas of the County (usually Western Clinton County) or projects that benefit handicapped or elderly residents. Street rehabilitation projects and water and sewer system repairs receive most of the funds. Often CDBG monies will be used as County match for very large grant and loan-financed infrastructure upgrades. In 2015, Fund Year 2012 was closed out, and all but two FY 2013 projects were completed. A 2014 competitive request for \$750,000 for the Borough of Renovo to demolish some blighted structures and rehabilitate Ontario Avenue was successful. The FY 2015 entitlement application to DCED, submitted in November, included the above-described senior housing project.

FY	Project Name	Funded Amount	Project Completed?
2013	STEP Home Rehabs Part 3	\$57,601.00	Yes
	Renovo – Erie Avenue Street Rehabilitation	\$35,221.00	Yes
	GRAPH Accessibility/Remodel	\$34,735.00	Underway
	Tylersville Mutual Water Association – Main Replacement	\$59,443.00	Bid awarded: construction slated to begin 3-1-16
TOTAL		\$187,000.00	
2014	Tylersville Mutual Water Association – Main Replacement	\$119,676.00	Bid awarded: construction slated to begin 3-1-16
	Renovo – Erie Avenue Street Rehabilitation	\$66,779.00	Yes
2014C	Renovo – Ontario Avenue Reconstruction with blight demolition	\$750,000.00	In preparation for bid
TOTAL		\$936,455.00	
2015	SEDA-COG HDC – Senior Housing Development	\$184,950	Awaiting DCED approval
TOTAL		\$184,950	

REPRESENTING THE COUNTY

Staff represents the County on various boards and committees including: Clinton County Economic Partnership Operating Committee, Facilities Committee, Tourism Committee, and

Transportation Committee; Clinton County Enterprise Zone; SEDA-COG Transportation Committee; PA Wilds Planning Team; Lumber Heritage Region; Clinton County Sewer Authority; Clinton County Safety Committee; Clinton County Natural Gas Task Force; North Central PA Regional Housing Advisory Board, and FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Board.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning Commission members represent different regions of the county and make recommendations to the Commissioners, local municipal officials, and staff on land use policies and programs. The group meets the third Tuesday of each month in the Garden Building.

In 2015, long-time member Dave Glessner announced his retirement from the Commission. His 50 years of public service to the county were acknowledged by the Commissioners at one of their public meetings in November. Another member, Doug Byerly, resigned to accept a position in Centre County. The Commissioners appointed two new members, Larry Sheats of Greene Township and Reza Lotfi of Lock Haven, to fill their places.

Clinton County Planning Commission Attendance-2015													P = Present
													A = Absent
													E = Excused
	Jan	Feb	March	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Terry Murty	P	P	P	E	NA	P	P	E	E	P	P		7
Doug Byerly	P	P	P	P	NA								4
Dave Calhoun	P	P	P	E	NA	P	P	P	E	P	P		8
Roger Hoy	P	E	P	E	NA	P	E	P	P	P	E		6
Larry Sheats							P	P	P	P	P		5
Tom Campbell	E	P	P	P	NA	P	P	P	P	P	E		8
John Dotterer	P	P	P	P	NA	P	P	P	E	E	P		8
David Glessner	P	P	P	P	NA	P	P	P	P	P	P		10
Richard Bowman	P	P	P	P	NA	P	P	P	P	E	P		9
Melvin Coakley	E	P	P	P	NA	P	E	P	P	P	E		7