



NEWS

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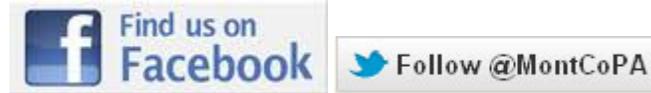
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Montgomery County Planning Commission Continues to Assist Communities

Norristown, PA (October 27, 2014) – Five municipalities and regional planning organizations have renewed their contracts for professional planning assistance from the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC). The contracts, part of the Montgomery County Community Planning Assistance Program, provide professional planning services that achieve a municipality’s vision for an exceptional community. The work accomplished typically focuses on smart growth, economic development, the environment, sustainability, and parks and recreation.

“I am pleased these municipalities and organizations renewed their contracts to continue making great projects happen in their communities and in the county. Planning is the cornerstone of great communities. It preserves our high quality of life and positions our communities for improvements and grant funding,” said Jody Holton, AICP, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

West Pottsgrove Township’s contract involves the development of a municipal trail network with connections to adjoining municipalities in Montgomery and Berks Counties and continued assistance for the redevelopment of Keystone Boulevard, now called the Keystone Employment Economic Plan (KEEP). Previous work included the codification of the township’s codes and regulations, which had never been done before.

The Worcester Township contract includes a zoning ordinance for the Village of Center Point, an historic preservation ordinance, and a parks and recreation plan. Previously completed projects included a land use and zoning ordinance for the Village of Cedars and a master plan of development for the Village of Center Point.

The Upper Perkiomen Valley Regional Planning Commission has renewed its contract to complete a multi-regional greenway plan that will inventory and assess the value of the natural corridors that run through the 24 municipalities of the four regional planning organizations: Central Perkiomen Valley Region, Indian Valley Region, Pottstown Metropolitan Region, and Upper Perkiomen Valley Region. This effort will result in a strategy for the long-term protection of the greenway. Previous work included development of a regional planning commission website and assistance in the multi-municipal “Wayfinding and Identity Project,” a collaborative effort with the Perkiomen Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Western Montgomery County Career and Technology Center, whose students built, painted, and lettered various sign prototypes.

The Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Planning Commission renewed its contract for continued assistance on the promotion of economic development with a focus on uniting the school district, Ursinus College, the regional planning commission, and the chamber of commerce to discuss and address issues of common interest and the multi-regional greenway plan. Previous work included development of a regional planning commission website and the completion and adoption of the *Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan*, which has a new focus on economic development.

The Pottstown Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Committee renewed its contract for the development of a complete regional comprehensive plan update, continuation of technical support for the “mini-grant” and circuit rider programs, and the multi-regional greenway plan. Previous work involved development of a regional planning committee website and the development and implementation of a \$200,000 parks and recreation “mini-grants” program (the first and only program of its kind in the county) for the region’s municipalities. The program received 50 percent funding from the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation and 50 percent from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The mini-grants program funded 10 municipal projects in 2014. Completed contract work also included the development and implementation of the “Parks and Recreation Circuit Rider” program. Funding was provided by the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation, DCNR, and municipal contributions, making it the only program of its kind in Montgomery County.

The Montgomery County Community Planning Assistance Program was established in 1950 by the county commissioners. Today, MCPC services 30 contracts including nine boroughs, 20 townships, and one municipality (Norristown). Municipalities are asked to make a three-year commitment. The three-year contracts are on a fee-for-service basis. The county subsidizes the program 50 percent to ensure good planning is within financial reach of all county municipalities. After the 50 percent

subsidy, the program generates \$1.2 million in total revenue over three years. In 2014 the program generated \$400,000.

While contracts are worked on by specific staff planners, MCPC uses a comprehensive approach that utilizes the extensive expertise of its team of professionals. Typical contract work includes economic development assistance (plans, studies, grant writing), land use planning (comprehensive plans, zoning codes, subdivision and land development regulations), environmental protection (flood plan and storm water regulations), sustainability planning (sustainability plans, green building standards, alternative energy regulations), and open space and recreation planning (municipal recreation plans, trail planning, open space preservation plans).

For additional information on the program, visit www.montcopa.org/PlanningServices or contact John S. Cover at 610-278-3741.