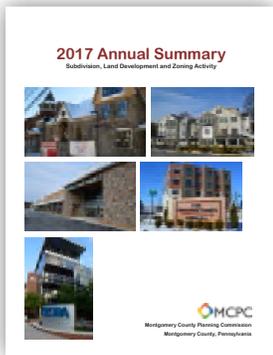


PLANNING PERSPECTIVES



Focusing on Planning in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

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Annual Summary Shows 2017 as Strong Year for Development Proposals in County

MCPC's recently released [2017 Annual Summary of Subdivision, Land Development, and Zoning Activity](#) shows that submissions rose from last year, indicating another

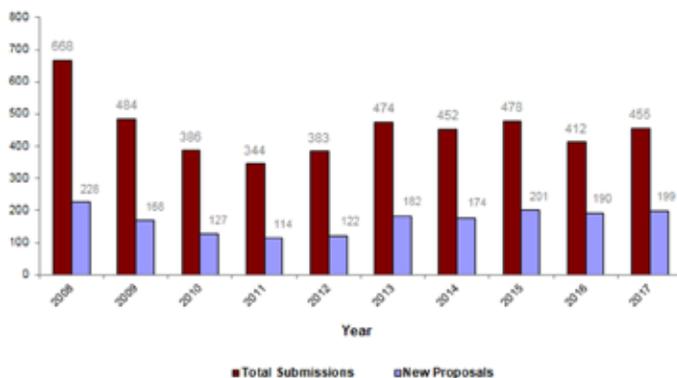
strong year for development proposals as the county's private development activity continued to remain solid. The summary looks at the number of residential and nonresidential proposals submitted to MCPC for review, the acreage of the submissions, and zoning activity. Information is listed for each municipality in the county.

Nonresidential

The total nonresidential development square footage proposed was well above the amount proposed in 2016. Industrial development comprised the largest share of nonresidential development proposed, though commercial, office, and institutional square footage did not lag far behind. Of particular note is the 110 percent growth in industrial square footage from 2016. The 1,414,217 square feet of industrial space proposed was the highest amount since 2002.

Zoning Activity

In 2017, 127 zoning revisions were submitted for review. These consisted of changes to zoning maps, comprehensive changes to local zoning ordinances, and minor amendments to existing ordinances.



Total Annual Submissions, 2008 - 2017

Residential

Apartment proposals continued to boost the total number of proposed residential units even though the total amount proposed was less than last year. A total of 2,046 of the 3,594 housing units proposed in 2017 were multifamily structures—most of which were located in large apartment projects. Single-family attached units (primarily townhouses) declined by 3 percent from 2016, while single-family detached units increased nearly 40 percent from 2016.

Submit a Nomination for a 2018 Montgomery Award



We are looking for the best in planning, design, and advocacy in Montgomery County. The Montgomery Awards, a prestigious annual program, promotes awareness of outstanding design and innovative planning in our communities by awarding successful land developments, revitalization efforts, open space enhancements, environmental sustainability, and transportation improvements. It also recognizes citizens and organizations that have made significant and sustained contributions to planning in Montgomery County through a Planning Advocate Award. In 2017, the 50th anniversary of the program, MCPC partnered with the Montgomery County Conservation District to add an Environmental Stewardship Award as part of the awards program. Since 1967, the program has presented 203 awards that acknowledge the outstanding efforts and commitment of communities, organizations, and professionals in achieving excellence. Eligibility criteria, nomination requirements, and online entry forms are available at www.montcopa.org/MontgomeryAwards. The deadline for nominations is May 1.



Register for Our Planning Smarter Montco 2018 Courses and Events!

Planning Smarter Montco 2018 offers interesting planning education events throughout the year. The program provides relevant information about planning that enables local leaders and citizens to better plan for the future of their communities. Our 2018 program offers three popular courses in community planning, subdivision and land development review, and zoning. It also includes an MCPC meet-and-greet to share all of our resources and services and to get to know new elected and appointed officials, an event focused on local water resource success stories in the county including stormwater management and water quality restoration efforts, a Bike Montco event that discusses how to build a bike-friendly community and county, an interesting look at how communities can accommodate smaller scale manufacturing that provides excellent jobs and creates economic benefits, and the Montgomery Awards celebration, which acknowledges the best in planning and design and advocacy in the county. All Planning Smarter events are free of charge, unless otherwise noted, and are open to the general public. Many of the events correspond to the themes of [Montco 2040: A Shared Vision](#), Montgomery County's award-winning comprehensive plan. Participants who attend all three of our planning courses will be recognized with a certificate at our 2018 Montgomery Awards celebration. More information and online registration are available at www.montcopa.org/PlanningSmarter.



Let's Connect — Meet the Planning Commission

Join us in our Norristown office for a meet-and-greet on March 7. This event is designed for new elected and appointed municipal officials, but everyone is welcome!

Come to one of two identical sessions (3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. or 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.) to hear about how planning can help you work with your constituents to set and achieve goals and how good information can help you make the best decisions for your community. We'll show you our resources, including model ordinances, Montco 2040, design guidebooks, and data reports. Our planning board members and staff will be on hand to answer any questions you have throughout the event. This informative event will be a fun opportunity to get to know each other better. [Click here](#) to register.



Register for The Course in Community Planning

MCPC is sponsoring *The Course in Community Planning* in three consecutive Thursday sessions—April 12, 19, 26, 2018—in the Towamencin Township Building Meeting Hall from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Designed for both new and experienced participants, the course covers the fundamental information that municipal officials and planning commission members need to carry out their responsibilities and do an effective job. It addresses the role of planning in local government and how planning commissions relate to the governing body, zoning hearing board, and zoning officer. Specific topics include basic knowledge of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (MPC), comprehensive planning, plan implementation including zoning, subdivision, and land development regulation, official mapping, and how effective planning commissions approach their responsibilities. This popular course is limited to 25 participants and pre-registration is required. The registration fee is \$110. [Municipalities](#) with a current planning assistance contract with MCPC are eligible for a discounted rate of \$90. [Click here to register](#).



Open House Focuses on Lafayette Street Reconstruction in Norristown

MCPC and Norristown municipal officials hosted an open house on January 17 in the Norristown municipal building to discuss construction plans and impacts as the [Lafayette Street Expansion Project](#) moves through Norristown. This important project is an effort to improve highway access and mobility into downtown Norristown and Plymouth Township. It is being led by MCPC in association with PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the PA Turnpike Commission.

Working with Communities to Plan the Future

One of the services MCPC offers under the [Montgomery County Community Planning Assistance Program](#) is the development of municipal comprehensive plans, which serve as a framework for the future. Creating these important plans involves vision and input from the community. The Boroughs of Hatboro and Lansdale have contracted with MCPC to help create a comprehensive plan for their municipality. As part of the outreach efforts for these plans, a public workshop and open house were recently offered:



Hatboro 2040

Over 80 people attended a public workshop in Hatboro to give input on [Hatboro 2040](#), the borough's new

comprehensive plan, as well as the new parks, recreation, and open space plan, which are in the process of being prepared by MCPC with guidance from a steering committee. The workshop, which took place at Pennypack Elementary School, gathered participants in small groups to discuss what they love about Hatboro, what needs improvement, what should completely change, and their vision for Hatboro's future. They also talked about transportation goals and focused on the appearance of Main Street and its businesses. For the parks, recreation, and open space plan, participants could write or draw on maps to indicate what amenities they would like to see in existing parks as well as any priority areas for open space preservation outside of the parks.

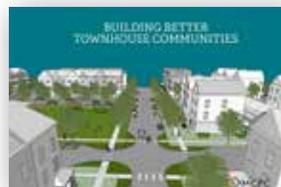


Lansdale 2040

Over 100 people attended a public open house to discuss the borough's growth, revitalization, and long-term planning goals. Their input will be used to help write [Lansdale 2040](#), the borough's comprehensive plan. The open house, which took place at North Penn Commons in Lansdale, gave participants an opportunity to help prioritize goals for parks, historic preservation, diversity, and other themes. The diverse group of attendees, ranging in age from children to senior citizens, were invited to participate in two exercises. One involved sticker voting to rank goals by theme; the second asked them to rate the design of buildings and sites to help develop design standards for an important part of Main Street.

Invite Us to Present Our Guidebooks in Your Community

MCPC is always looking for opportunities to visit communities and organizations to present our three newest guidebooks. We recently gave a presentation on [Building Better Townhouse Communities](#) to the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities. Townhouse communities are continuing to gain popularity



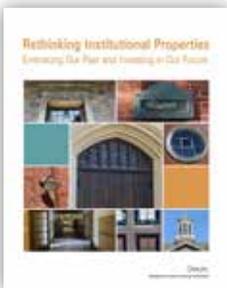
and represent a growing share of the built housing in Montgomery County, both as infill developments and large-scale new development. This design guidebook identifies the primary design elements of townhouse communities which contribute to their overall form and function and provides recommendations for best practices to make these communities desirable places to live. Contact Maggie Dobbs, Senior Planner, at 610-292-4917 or mdobbs@montcopa.org if you would like a presentation on the guidebook. We also have available presentations on two other recent guidebooks:



[Sustainable Green Parking Lots](#)

This guidebook includes detailed information and guidelines on how to green parking lots, the benefits of green parking lots, parking demand management, and

recommended plant lists. Contact Pattie E. B. Guttenplan, RLA, AICP, Section Chief: Design Planning & Graphic Design, at 610-278-3972 or pguttenplan@montcopa.org to schedule a presentation.



[Rethinking Institutional Properties: Embracing Our Past and Investing in Our Future](#)

This guidebook demonstrates how institutional buildings and grounds, when no longer needed, can be successfully transformed into residences and businesses that enliven the surrounding community while preserving the

architectural character and heritage of landmark places in our neighborhoods. Contact Brian Olszak, Senior Planner, at 610-278-3737 or bolszak@montcopa.org to schedule a presentation.

Join the
MCPC
team!



We're looking for exceptional candidates for three available positions at MCPC. Join the dynamic staff of our award-winning agency. MCPC is a leader in land use and zoning, transportation, natural resource protection, revitalization, economic development, site design, and trail planning. [Click here](#) for detailed information and an online application.

Senior Transportation Planner

This position involves specialized transportation analysis, assistance with the Montgomery County Transportation Authority, internal coordination on County Assets and

Infrastructure projects, and external coordination with agencies and municipalities on various projects and regional transportation programs and policies. This position also will have oversight of and advocacy for planning and implementation related to various bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and multimodal initiatives.

Urban Design Planner

This position involves performing various professional planning and urban design tasks for municipalities including conceptual site plans, renderings, plans, design guidelines, and ordinances; review of land development or subdivision plans; and research into various planning topics.

Senior Open Space Planner

This position involves preparing open space plans and greenway studies, managing trail or park acquisitions, working on design and development projects, coordinating the activities of the Montgomery County Open Space Board, writing trail and open space grant proposals, and providing technical assistance to the Montgomery County Parks Division staff.



MCPC Board Chair Steven Kline presenting a resolution of appreciation to Michael Stokes

Michael Stokes Retires After 33 Years at MCPC

MCPC Assistant Director Michael Stokes retired on February 2, 2018. Mike, who dedicated nearly 34 years of exceptional service to Montgomery County, has had a remarkable history of outstanding achievements and contributions to the county and its citizens. At MCPC, Mike set a standard of professionalism few could match but all could admire. His limitless capacity for hard work, combined with his intellectual curiosity, made him the go-to in-house expert on all types of projects, plans, and studies and on topics including recycling, stormwater management, open space preservation, hazard mitigation, trail planning, household hazardous waste collection, and many others.

Mike deserves the very best, and we enjoyed celebrating his retirement in several ways. The MCPC Board presented him with a resolution of appreciation, and our staff presented a cake (decorated with an image of Mike on



Bike-to-Work Day) at his very last staff meeting. We also had a retirement happy hour celebration with over 75 friends, family members, and colleagues attending. The happy hour featured presentations, a “Happy Trails” tribute song by MCPC members of the county choir, and the presentation of gifts including a \$200 donation to the George Washington Carver Community Center in Norristown and a bronze

dedication plaque, which will be placed on the Schuylkill River Tow Path over the spillway in Port Providence. For his very last day at MCPC, our staff had a “Souper Bowl” party in Mike’s honor.



Michael's happy hour retirement celebration

We will miss Mike greatly, but we will continue to make him proud by carrying on his enthusiasm, hard work, and dedication to the county and its residents. Congratulations on your retirement Mike! We wish you great happiness, good health, and much success in your new ventures!



Donna Fabry Joins Environmental Planning Section

Donna Fabry has transitioned from the Community Planning Section to the Environmental Planning Section. Donna brings

with her extensive experience with floodplain management and recently has helped in the completion of the county’s hazard mitigation plan. She will be working primarily with sewage facilities and sustainability planning.



Seated (L-R) are Troy Woodyard, MCPC Executive Director Jody Holton, and Brian Olszak. Standing (L-R) are Rita McKelvey, Eric Jarrell, Henry Stroud, Marley Bice, and Maggie Dobbs.

Staff Promotions

MCPC is pleased to announce recent staff promotions. All of these staff members have demonstrated their expertise, ability to work hard, and dedication to their profession and our commission. The promoted staff members, along with their new titles, are Marley Bice, Principal Planner I; Maggie Dobbs, Senior Planner; Eric Jarrell, Section Chief: Community Planning; Rita McKelvey, Principal Communications Manager; Brian Olszak, Senior Planner; Henry Stroud, Principal Planner II; and Troy Woodyard, Principal Designer. Congratulations everyone!



Montgomery County Planning Commission
P.O. Box 311, Norristown, PA 19404-0311

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