

2014 Annual Report

Monroe County Planning Commission



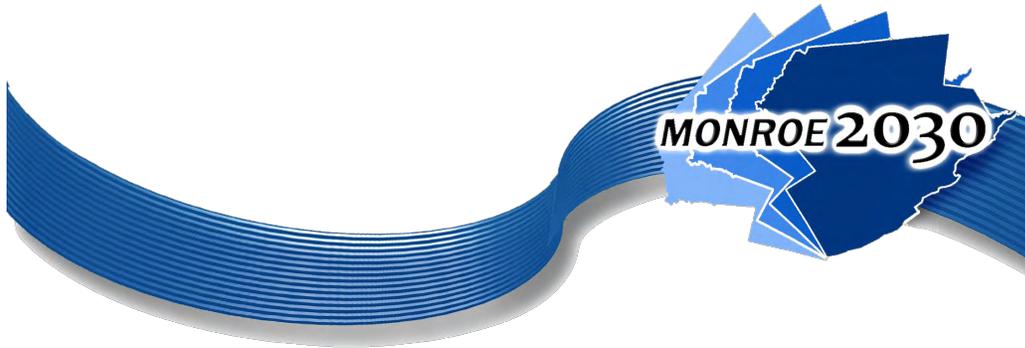
MONROE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

John R. Moyer, Chairman
Charles A. Garris, Vice-Chairman
Suzanne F. McCool, Commissioner

MCPC STAFF

Christine Meinhart-Fritz, Director
George Basila
Kim Borger
Eric Koopman
Evan Makuvek
Steven Rinker
Nathaniel Staruch

The following is a list of changes in the MCPC Staff during 2014:
Christine Dettore resigned from the Director position in April. Sean Anlauf resigned from the Environmental Planner position in October. Evan Makuvek was appointed to the Environmental Planner position in December.



MCPC BOARD (1/13/15)

Martha Loomis, Chairman
Brian Barrett, Vice-Chairman
Merlyn Clarke
Annie Lamberton
Roger McFadden
Rich Schlameuss
Sharon Solt
Alan Price Young

The following is a list of changes in the MCPC Board during 2014:
Meg Dilger resigned from her position in December.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The year of 2014 was one of transition. The successful open space program has reached the limit of available funding for acquisition of new lands. The new focus will be on establishing linkages and accessibility of preserved lands. The Economic Development Implementation Plan, a new component of the county's comprehensive plan will afford the opportunity to discuss and improve economic infrastructure throughout the county. A number of staff changes including my appointment as Director, have changed the makeup of the Planning Commission. The staff has been charged with new goals, and all seem eager to move forward. Perhaps the most important transition is that the Monroe 2020 Comprehensive Plan has also come to the end of its intended lifespan.

In April of 2014, the Monroe County Commissioners unveiled the Monroe 2030 Comprehensive Plan for public review. The Monroe County Planning Commission staff traveled throughout the county presenting the plan and its recommendations to numerous municipalities and civic groups. Repeatedly, the staff received the same question; "How will the Monroe County Planning Commission Staff accomplish all of these goals?" The answer was provided during the many Task Force meetings held to provide recommendations for the comprehensive plan update. No single county office, municipality, industry, or civic organization will be able to complete all the plan recommendations on their own. Partnerships and communication between all of these organizations will be instrumental in moving Monroe County forward.

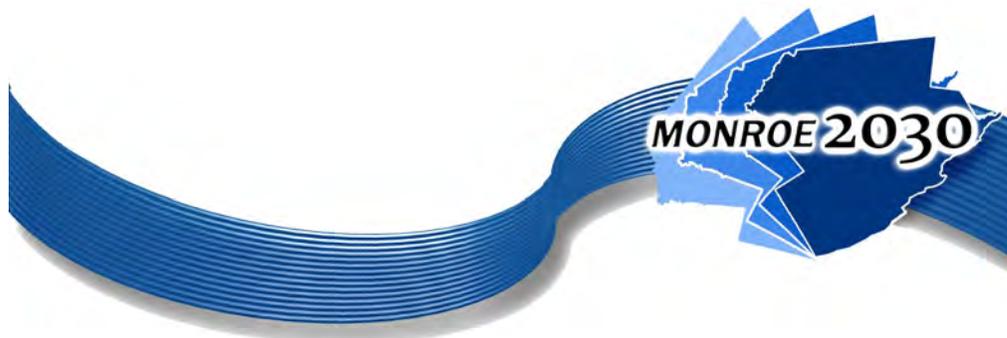
As we begin with the implementation of the comprehensive plan and its components, the need for communication and innovative partnerships will be at the forefront, and the vision statement is more important than ever: "The citizens of Monroe County will continue working together to sustain and improve our quality of life by insuring that the county's environmental economic and cultural assets are within reach of all its people."

The staff of the Monroe County Planning Commission looks forward to developing and fostering partnerships with the community as we begin the implementation process of the comprehensive plan, "*Monroe 2030: The Challenge Continues.*"



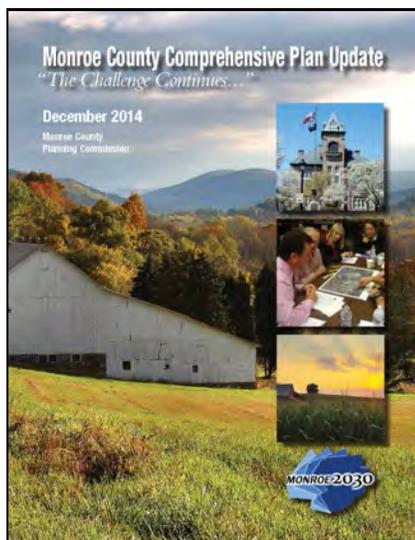
Christine Meinhart-Fritz

Director



MONROE 2030 - THE CHALLENGE CONTINUES

The original Monroe 2020 Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted in 1999, was the culmination of a three year planning process. The process worked to achieve broad consensus on a wide variety of goals and objectives, with the emphasis of the plan being placed on implementation. The current update which we refer to “Monroe 2030, the Challenge Continues” incorporates many concepts from the original plan, again placing emphasis on implementation. This update began with a 40 member Task Force that was charged with providing guidance and ideas that would form the basis of the document.



*Cover of the Monroe 2030
Comprehensive Plan*

In the several years since the first Task Force Meetings, the comprehensive plan update has since been completed and put into final draft format. Throughout 2014, comments and feedback from numerous agencies further refined the draft Monroe 2030 Comprehensive Plan and its components. The documents were presented for review and eventual adoption by the County Commissioners in early 2015.

As with the original plan, implementation will require coordination with a number of agencies and especially the municipalities themselves. These relationships will provide the fundamental basis for positive change and will be the key to the success of the plan.

The Monroe 2030 Vision Statement:

“The citizens of Monroe County will continue working together to sustain and improve our quality of life by insuring that the County’s environmental, economic, and cultural assets are within reach of all its people.”

The other two components to the Comprehensive Plan are the Economic Development Implementation Plan (EDIP), and the Open Space, Greenway, & Recreation Plan. The EDIP was originally prepared by Vantage Point Development Advisors while the Open Space Plan was prepared by Simone Collins Landscape Architecture. Both component documents underwent revisions and adjustments based on the input of the Monroe County Commissioners, the municipalities, and key local agencies.

As the documents have been formally adopted, the implementation process begins once more. This process will utilize the documents as the basis for guiding and managing growth within the County for the future. Together, these plans outline the goals and implementation strategies for promoting the vision for Monroe County.

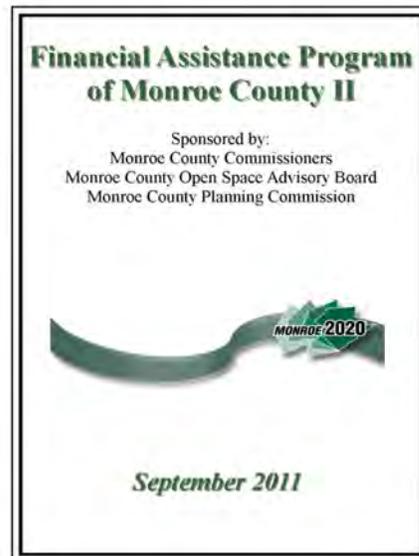
The Comprehensive Plan Update, Economic Development Implementation Plan, and the Open Space, Greenway, & Recreation Plan are available on the County website at www.monroecountypa.gov.



*Logo for the
Comprehensive Plan Update*

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM II - FAP II

The Financial Assistance Program II (FAP II) has been established to provide partial reimbursement to municipalities for developing and adopting specific zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances and special projects such as village studies and trail master plans. FAP II also provides financial incentives for municipalities to work together and apply for projects that will benefit a region. The Open Space Advisory Board and the Commissioners, through the original Open Space Bond, Planning Education and Promotion line item, allocated \$150,000 for the FAP II program. This funding, which is on a first come, first served basis, provides all municipalities in the county an opportunity to move forward with revisions to ordinances that will help to accomplish their future goals.



CJER Representatives Discussing the Adoption of Regional Land Use Sharing Ordinance Provisions

In 2014, Chestnuthill, Jackson, Eldred, and Ross Townships adopted ordinances in which the sharing of land uses is provided for. The sharing of uses across multiple municipalities is permitted under the Municipalities Planning Code, as these townships have signed an intergovernmental agreement. 75% of funding for this project came from the Financial Assistance Program II.

AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

In 2014, the County Commissioners certified \$82,136 to the State Department of Agriculture to be used as matching funds for the purchase of conservation easements. Funding for the Monroe County Agricultural Land Preservation Program was provided by the County Commissioners through the Act 13 Marcellus Legacy funds. Combined with state funding, the total amount available for purchasing easements was \$532,094. During 2014 six applications were accepted for review. The Board was able to offer easements to two of those applicants.



Pohopoco Creek Alpaca Farm in Chestnuthill Township

OPEN SPACE PROGRAM

During the early spring of 2014, the Open Space Advisory Board (OSAB), with the consulting firm of Simone Collins finalized the Update to the Open Space Plan. This was funded by a portion of the Open Space Funding as well as a matching grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). In January of this year, the plan was formally adopted by the County Commissioners. The plan acknowledges that many elements of the original Open Space plan remain relevant and builds upon original conservation visions and goals, including:



The Updated Open Space Plan

**Improving the local “quality of life” by protecting the natural environment.*

**Encouraging sustainable development, both economically and environmentally.*

**Enforcing the Pennsylvania Constitution’s guarantees of rights to “clean air” and “clean water.”*

More information on the plan can be found on the county website.

ACT 13 MARCELLUS LEGACY FUND

Act 13 of 2012 established the Marcellus Legacy Fund. The fund allocated a portion of the funds received from Impact Fees related to natural gas drilling to each county for the purpose of planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation of greenways, recreation trails, open space, and beautification projects.

Monroe County, through recommendations by the Open Space Advisory Board, has developed a mini-grant program which will accept applications for development grants for the funds it received from impact fees. In 2014, fifteen projects throughout the county were deemed eligible for development, and the following are several examples of completed projects:



View of the Delaware Water Gap from Rehabilitated Trails in the Chestnut Mountain Preserve

West End Park & Open Space Commission - *Dave Fleetwood Memorial Trail*

Buck Hill Conservation Fund - *Chestnut Mountain Preserve Trail Rehabilitation*

Wildlands Conservancy - *Stony Hollow Public Access*

Price Township - *Orchard Park Improvements*

Ross Township - *Park Pavilion*

Pocono Heritage Land Trust - *Fieldstone Farm Access Project*

THE UNIFORM SIGN PROGRAM

In 2014 The Uniform Sign Design and Guidelines of the Monroe County Open Space Program was launched to provide an architectural model, funding assistance, and specifications for signs on lands acquired with county open space bond funds. Although adherence to uniform guidelines for design is voluntary, consistency in signage for our natural heritage is strongly encouraged as a benefit to the image of Monroe County and its citizens. The purposes and objectives of the Uniform Sign Program are:



Example of Signage Provided through the Program

Identifying and promoting the open space lands acquired with county open space bond funds.

Establishing quality standards and design uniformity for all signs associated with the Open Space Program.

Creating a sign and landscaping sponsorship program to recognize citizens and groups who donate towards the cost of a sign and/or its landscaping.

Continuing the cooperative effort by the community to achieve the open space goals and county and regional open space plans.

The program will also fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Initiatives Manual and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to identify open space acquired by a county and/or state grant, respectively.

Monroe County will be providing the funding in the following manner: \$1,250.00 to each of the 20 municipalities for sign cost and \$2,000 to Land Trusts for actual sign cost.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP WITH BWA

Subsequent to water quality testing in 2012 and 2013, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) determined that the lower Brodhead and the lower McMichael creeks are not safe for recreational use.



MCPC Staff on a Creek Walk along the Brodhead Creek

The Brodhead Watershed Association has been awarded a grant by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to address water quality problems in the lower Brodhead watershed.

The funding will allow for more testing of the streams and their tributaries to attempt to find the source, or sources, of contamination in the streams as they flow through Stroudsburg, East Stroudsburg, and the developed areas of Stroud Township.

The MCPC provided in-kind services to BWA in support of this grant, providing staff to walk approximately 15 miles of stream banks to locate pipes, ditches or small tributaries that may be carrying pollutants into the creeks. Staff also provided GIS technical assistance by capturing data points on the creek walks using mapping-grade GPS instruments.

MOSIER'S DAIRY/MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

In late 2014, Smithfield Township contacted the MCPC concerning potential development of the Mosier's Dairy property along State Route 447 and State Route 209. The development includes significant commercial space as well as a large residential section. As this area is one of the last remaining prime sites for commercial development in the County, it is important to ensure the best possible outcome.

Because a zoning amendment would need to be made for the development to occur as originally envisioned, Natural Lands Trust was contacted and provided input through the Municipal Partnership Program (MPP). The amendments proposed are currently in development and being refined in a manner to preserve the integrity of the Township's zoning ordinance and to produce the best possible development. Hopefully, this gateway area will become a valued asset for the local community and the county as a whole.



Conceptual Design for the Mosier's Dairy Property

2014 MCPC ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS AND REVIEWS

Municipality	Zoning	SALDO
Barrett	2	1
Chestnuthill	3	3
Coolbaugh	2	1
Delaware Water Gap	0	0
East Stroudsburg	4	0
Eldred	2	2
Hamilton	0	0
Jackson	2	2
Middle Smithfield	0	0
Mount Pocono	3	1
Paradise	5	0
Pocono	0	1
Polk	1	0
Price	0	0
Ross	2	2
Smithfield	3	0
Stroud	2	0
Stroudsburg	1	0
Tobyhanna	2	0
Tunkhannock	1	0
TOTAL	35	13

As required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PMPC), municipalities shall submit proposed zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO) amendments to the county planning agency for recommendations. This chart is a breakdown of proposed ordinance amendments the MCPC reviewed in 2014.

PARTNERSHIP WITH NATURAL LANDS TRUST

In 2012, the MCPC renewed its contract with the Natural Lands Trust (NLT). Partnership with NLT has been funded through the Planning, Education, and Promotion (PEP) category of the original Open Space Bond.

The MCPC continued promoting design guidelines and standards for commercial/village corridors in 2014. A model ordinance for these standards has been developed by NLT staff. Along with promoting and establishing Growing Greener techniques, the Planning Commission will also pursue the same initiative with the commercial/village corridor concept. These model ordinances include lighting and signage standards that can be adopted by any municipality within Monroe County.



The Workshop for Re-Inventing Commercial Strips

MCPC welcomed NLT and Randall Arendt back for a workshop concerning this topic in Tobyhanna Township with funding provided by the William Penn Foundation as part of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative. The presentation by Mr. Arendt included a slideshow illustrating innovative approaches that emphasize shade tree planting design standards, signage, parking lot orientation and improved circulation patterns that have facilitated economic development in other parts of Pennsylvania and surrounding states. Mr. Arendt and Ann Hutchinson were able to offer advice to Tobyhanna Township staff on the commercial corridor on Route 940. NLT and MCPC staff are currently working together to develop a ‘Visual Preference Survey’ that incorporates the techniques described in this workshop to be made available to all municipalities.

CAREER DAY AT BLOOMSBURG UNIVERSITY

In the fall of 2014, the Monroe County Planning Commission was invited to be a part of Bloomsburg University’s College of Science and Technology Career Day. The career networking event was held at Bloomsburg University Campus within the Kerr Union Building on Friday, October 10, 2014. Students participating in Career Day activities were exposed to many different career, internship, and research opportunities available upon graduation from the University.

The MCPC sent two staff members to represent the County’s planning efforts, create a relationship with the University, and to distribute information regarding potential internship and employment opportunities within the County. MCPC staff spent the day engaging students at an informational booth by distributing informational materials and answering questions about Monroe County and its planning efforts.



The MCPC staff members also participated in a Professional Panel Discussion, which allowed the staff the opportunity to answer student questions which pertained to planning and life following graduation. The Career Day networking experience proved to be very beneficial for all parties involved. Over 200 Bloomsburg University students, alumni, and staff participated in the event, and the MCPC received numerous résumés. This led to several interviews and the eventual hiring of a Bloomsburg University graduate as our new Environmental Planner.

BUILDING PERMITS AND REVIEWS

During 2014, the municipalities in Monroe County issued a total of 152 permits for new single family homes. The average price in 2014 for homes sold was \$225,167, a slight increase from 2013 when the average price was \$223,793.

2014 MCPC REVIEW INFORMATION

Major Subdivisions	2
Minor Subdivisions	62
Land Development Plans	25
All other Reviews*	176
TOTAL	265

*Please note "all other reviews" include ordinance amendments, planning modules, general permits etc.



Monroe County Courthouse

2014 SINGLE FAMILY BUILDING PERMITS

MUNICIPALITY	TOTAL
BARRETT	0
CHESTNUTHILL	6
COOLBAUGH	27
DELAWARE WATER GAP	0
EAST STROUDSBURG	0
ELDRED	3
HAMILTON	3
JACKSON	3
MIDDLE SMITHFIELD	13
MOUNT POCONO	1
PARADISE	1
POCONO	6
POLK	3
PRICE	5
ROSS	5
SMITHFIELD	24
STROUD	25
STROUDSBURG	2
TOBYHANNA	15
TUNKHANNOCK	7
TOTAL	152

BUILDING PERMITS OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

YEAR	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
PERMITS ISSUED	1,514	1,372	855	451	230	232	195	145	175	152



Monroe County Administrative Offices

2014 TRAFFIC COUNTS

The MCPC provides traffic count services in response to municipal requests. Traffic information consists of a 7-day count which measures the speed, interval and classification for each count performed. The table below shows the data for traffic counts conducted during the past year. It should be noted that the traffic count information is also located on the MCPC website, www.monroecountypa.gov.

MCPC OVERALL TRAFFIC COUNTS 2014

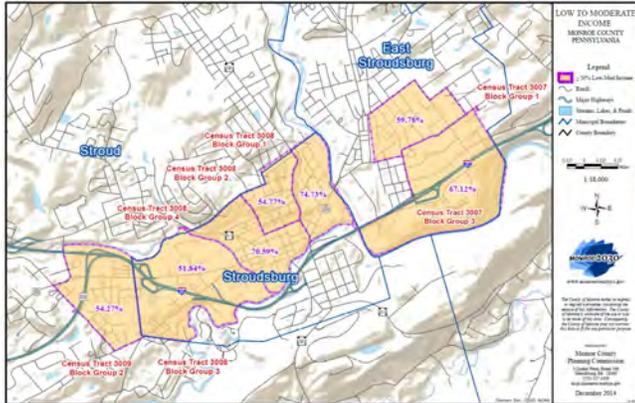
Start Date	Municipality	Road Name	Total Number of Vehicles	ADT
7/16/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Evergreen Hollow Road: Site A	5,031	719
7/16/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Evergreen Hollow Road: Site B	4,169	596
9/18/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Jonas Road: Site A	21,350	3,050
9/18/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Jonas Road: Site B	31,006	4,429
9/18/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Merwinesburg Road	38,265	5,466
9/18/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Toll Road	20,045	2,864
6/9/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Majestic Drive	1,444	206
7/16/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Old Stagecoach Road: Site A	2,531	362
7/16/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Old Stagecoach Road: Site B	2,531	362
7/31/2014	Chestnuthill Twp.	Rushmore Road	157	22
5/5/2014	Middle Smithfield Twp.	Calvary Court	1,572	225
5/15/2014	Middle Smithfield Twp.	Coolbaugh Road: Site A	9,603	1,372
5/5/2014	Middle Smithfield Twp.	Oak Grove Road	18,069	2,581
5/30/2014	Middle Smithfield Twp.	Sellersville Drive	18,523	2,647
5/5/2014	Middle Smithfield Twp.	State Route 402: Site A	47,608	6,802
5/5/2014	Middle Smithfield Twp.	State Route 402: Site B	Counter Malfunction	No Data
10/3/2014	Stroud Twp.	Ramblebush Road: Site A	5,031	719
10/3/2014	Stroud Twp.	Ramblebush Road: Site B	Damaged Tubes	No Data
10/3/2014	Stroud Twp.	Ramblebush Road: Site C	Damaged Tubes	No Data
8/21/2014	Stroud Twp.	White Blossom Lane	1,801	257
6/19/2014	Stroudsburg Bor.	Ann Street	23,257	3,322
6/19/2014	Stroudsburg Bor.	Collins Street	826	118
6/19/2014	Tobyhanna Twp.	Firehouse Road	1,663	333
6/10/2014	Tobyhanna Twp.	Stoney Hollow Road	3,378	483
6/19/2014	Tobyhanna Twp.	Old Toute 940: Site A	5,034	719
6/10/2014	Tobyhanna Twp.	Old Toute 940: Site B	4,943	706
6/10/2014	Tobyhanna Twp.	Old Toute 940: Site C	4,046	578

FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

2014 represents the twentieth year in which the Fiscal Impact Analysis and Model of Future Growth in Monroe County was utilized in the review of development proposals. The Fiscal Impact Analysis is a computer program and associated text which enables the Staff to estimate the potential net fiscal impact (public revenues vs. public expenditures) of any proposed development at build-out on a municipal, county and school district basis. The results are used to help the municipalities evaluate the potential impact that a particular development may have on not only their community, but also on the County and school district. The accompanying chart shows the data for projects submitted during the past year. It should be noted that the MCPC completed the process of updating the 1994 model and started using the updated model in 2006.

ESTIMATED NET FISCAL IMPACT (\$) OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLANS MONROE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA 2014			
Municipality	Residential	Non-Residential	Total
Barrett	\$77.00	\$0.00	\$77.00
Chestnuthill	\$0.00	\$4,640.00	\$4,640.00
Coolbaugh	\$0.00	\$199,709.00	\$199,709.00
Delaware Water Gap	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
East Stroudsburg	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Eldred	-\$359.00	\$0.00	-\$359.00
Hamilton	\$0.00	\$15,030.00	\$15,030.00
Jackson	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Middle Smithfield	-\$314.00	\$0.00	-\$314.00
Mount Pocono	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Paradise	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Pocono	-\$359.00	\$0.00	-\$359.00
Polk	\$788.00	\$0.00	\$788.00
Price	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Ross	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Smithfield	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Stroud	\$0.00	\$29,941.00	\$29,941.00
Stroudsburg	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Tobyhanna	\$0.00	\$5,362.00	\$5,362.00
Tunkhannock	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
School District			
East Stroudsburg	-\$37,837.00	\$0.00	-\$37,837.00
Pleasant Valley	-\$28,892.00	\$129,650.00	\$100,758.00
Pocono Mountain	-\$31,604.00	\$2,434,011.00	\$2,402,407.00
Stroudsburg	\$0.00	\$411,517.00	\$411,517.00
County			
Monroe	\$1,228.00	\$397,559.00	\$398,787.00
Totals	-\$97,272.00	\$3,627,419.00	\$3,530,147.00

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY CENSUS MAPPING



Mapping Provided for the RACM

Funding has been provided to the County of Monroe through several programs which include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME Partnership Program (HOME). One activity which has had a far reaching effect and is a key component for both programs is the County’s “Owner-occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program.”

The program’s purpose is to improve the health and safety of the living conditions of homes owned and occupied by low- and moderate-income persons county-wide. 2010 Census data has been able to provide an updated picture of Monroe County which has allowed the Redevelopment

Authority of Monroe County (RAMC) to use this data to play a role of how to address the housing challenges in our community. The data needs to show that the eligible activity is parallel and consistent with the county’s vision and local objectives based on the County’s Comprehensive Plan

In 2014, the MCPC provided the RAMC with maps displaying census data in order to create a clearer picture of targeted geographic areas of low/moderate income concentration. The maps have allowed the county to gain a better understanding of how to allocate funds within these communities. The maps provided by the MCPC will help facilitate the decision-making process of awarding these program funds to residents of Monroe County.

EAST STROUDSBURG DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

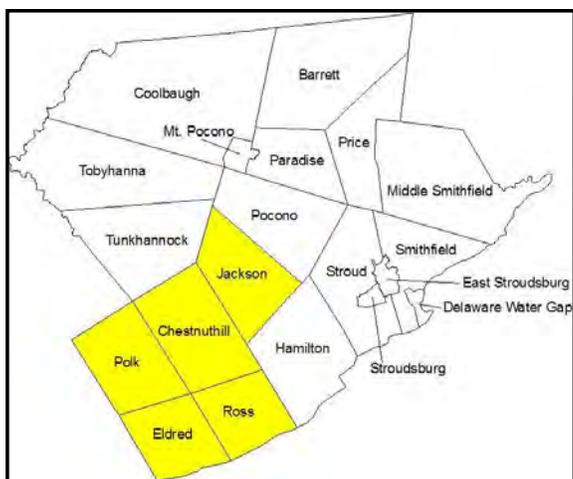
The Eastburg Community Alliance is a 501C3 non-profit, designated "Main Street" organization dedicated to the revitalization of downtown East Stroudsburg. The ECA office is housed in the recently restored 1860's era train station, the Historic Dansbury Depot. Recently, their efforts have been focused on engaging the community in Economic Revitalization which included an assessment by Teresa Lynch, Commercial

Revitalization Specialist, all possible because of a grant from the National Association of Realtors. They have been reviewing the final recommendations of the assessment at a number of different



venues and plan to invite the community at large in the early spring. The goals of this outreach include infrastructure improvements, event coordination, and façade grants awarded to local businesses. They are organized and guided by a volunteer board made up of residents, business owners, and other community stakeholders. Three of the guiding pillars for Main Street organizations are Economic Revitalization; Design; and Marketing and Promotion, all of which community members are invited to join in the initiatives. The MCPC intends to continue attending ECA meetings and supporting their efforts to improve the local community. More information can be found at www.eastburgalliance.com

REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING



In May 2014 the CJER Planning Region, consisting of Chestnuthill, Jackson, Eldred, and Ross Townships all adopted Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances that are generally consistent with each other. These ordinances also provide for sharing of land uses throughout the region, and provisions for reviewing projects of regional significance, a first for Monroe County.

Some of those uses include: adult businesses, kennels, CAFO's and solid waste landfills.

Funding for this project was provided by the Monroe County Planning Commission through the Financial Assistance Program II.

As previously reported, in 2013 the CJER regional planning group invited Polk Township to join them, and Polk accepted the offer. After adoption of the four township ordinance's, the group continued to prepare the amended comprehensive plan for the five municipalities as well as to continue discussion involving the shared use provisions for all members. It is anticipated that the new regional planning group will adopt an amended comprehensive plan and amended ordinances providing for shared uses and projects of regional significance in the spring of 2015.

2014 CJER Regional Planning Committee: Chuck Gould, Chairman (Chestnuthill Township); Jack Rader Jr., Vice-Chairman (Jackson Township); Sharon Solt, Secretary (Eldred Township); Howard Beers (Ross Township); Nicholas Caprioli (Chestnuthill Township); Roger Christman (Ross Township); William Solt (Eldred Township); and Jeff Thomas (Jackson Township)



CJER Officials Accepting FAP II Reimbursement

CONTINUING EDUCATION WORKSHOP

On December 15, the Monroe County Planning Commission provided municipal officials the opportunity to re-familiarize themselves with the subjects of zoning and land development ordinances. Peter Wulforst, AICP, and Carson Helfrich, from Community Planning and Management, LLC, led the discussion on the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and how it relates to municipalities' authority to zone for land use. This course is part of a continuing education program that has the goal of furthering the knowledge and expertise of municipal officials to aid in the implementation process of the Monroe 2030 Comprehensive Plan.



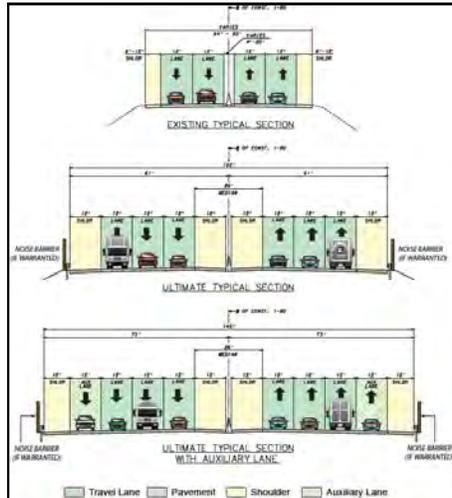
Fundamentals of Planning Workshop

I-80 CORRIDOR WIDENING PROJECT

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), in cooperation with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is moving forward with the preliminary studies and design for the Interstate 80 (I-80) Reconstruction Project in eastern Monroe County. The project includes 3.5 miles of roadway reconstruction, widening, and interchange reconfiguration.

I-80 serves as a major carrier of local and regional commuter traffic, freight, and tourism. First constructed in the 1960s, the roadway has suffered significant deterioration and no longer meets multiple design criteria and carries substantially higher traffic volumes than originally designed.

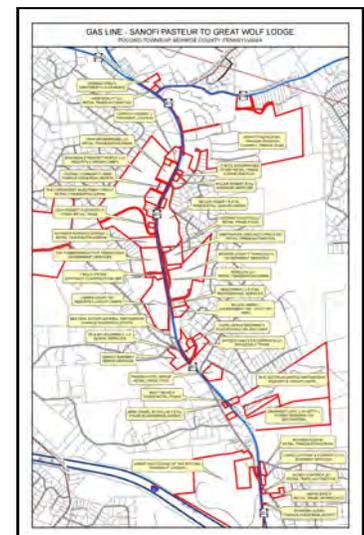
The I-80 Reconstruction Project corridor passes through three municipalities within Monroe County: Stroud Township and the Boroughs of Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg. The project area includes the 303, 304, 305, 306 and 307 interchanges. I-80 is defined as an urban interstate and serves as a major east/west limited-access highway. The MCPC produced a technical review of the conceptual options which were provided by PennDOT, making note of the comments, concerns, and questions raised by the County Commissioners, MCPC Board and Staff, local elected officials, and the community.



Conceptual Map of the I-80 Corridor Widening Project

COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS

A \$2,000,000 grant was recently awarded to the Monroe County Transit Authority (MCTA) by the Governor's Office for the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) for the extension of a Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) line to their offices in Swiftwater. The MCTA hopes to have to the existing line ending at sanofi pasteur ultimately extend down to Great Wolf Lodge, serving residences and business alike along the route. In late 2014, the MCTA approached to the MCPC to assist in building consensus and interest from commercial property owners, and eventually a stakeholder's meeting was held that had large attendance from both business owners and elected representatives. This project is specifically mentioned in the recently adopted County Comprehensive Plan, and with continued support from area business leaders and elected representatives, the project will ultimately allow access to cheaper and cleaner energy sources along the Route 611 corridor.



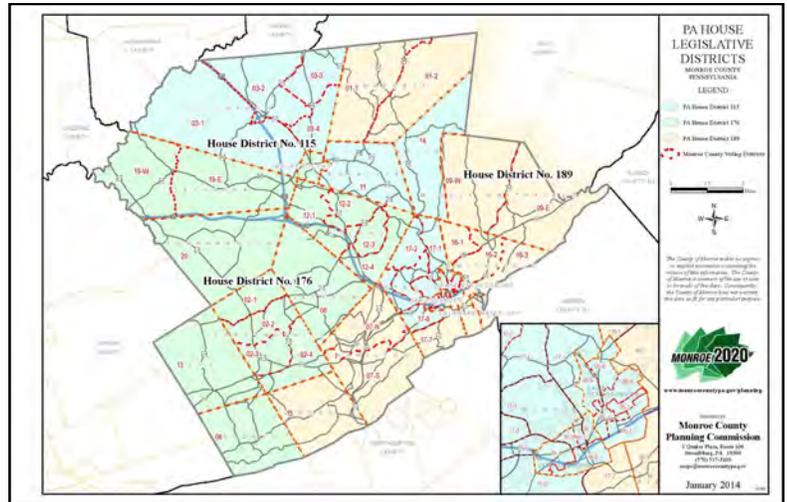
Mapping Provided to the MCTA

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

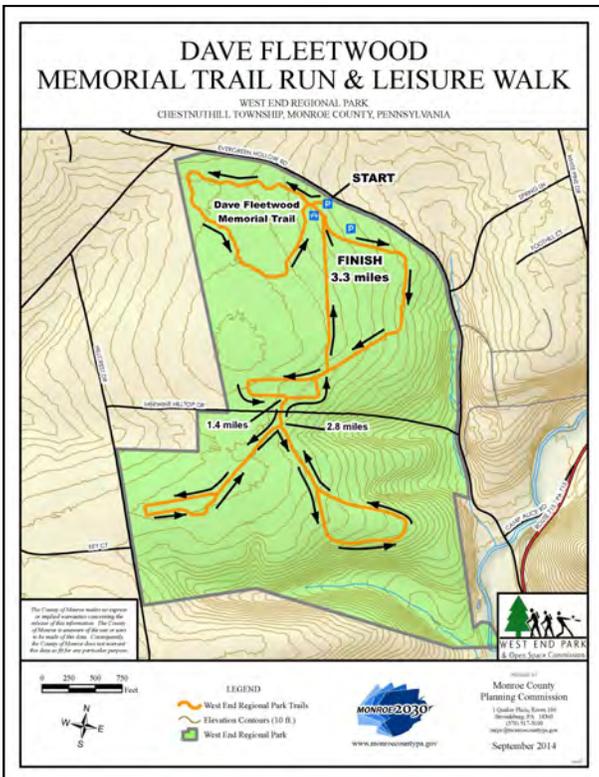
In December, the County signed a contract with Pictometry International Corporation of Rochester, New York to provide both orthophotography and oblique photography from flights scheduled in Spring 2105 and Spring 2018. These flights are being conducted on a regional level, as the County has partnered with Lehigh and Northampton counties. Orthophotography can be described as aerial photography with the distortion corrected. This serves as a base layer for accurate mapping. The oblique photos provide a “birds-eye view” of the County and will be particularly useful in Tax Assessment and Emergency Operations. In addition to the photography, Pictometry will develop a building footprint map layer. It is anticipated that delivery of the first data will occur sometime during the summer of 2015.

In addition to securing updated ortho-photography, the Planning Commission is currently expanding data layers to delineate trail networks throughout the County. Using GPS technology to accurately map these natural amenities will provide a comprehensive inventory of trails that may be accessed by residents or tourists.

2014 also marked the first full year of operation for the County’s WebGIS program. Users can access data, perform searches, measure distances and areas and print maps without the need for costly GIS software. Available data includes Property Information (Owner, Billing Address,



Map Created Using GIS Software



Trail Mapping Provided for the Dave Fleetwood Memorial Trail

Situs Address, PIN Number, Parcel Number, Deed Book & Page, Acreage, Assessed Values and Land Use), Road Centerlines with Address Ranges, Address Points, Zoning, Voting Districts, Floodplains, Soils, Elevation Data (2’ and 10’ Contours), Google Street View (where available) and current Aerial Imagery. Several enhancements and new datasets are planned for the upcoming year.

This site is available to all County and municipal employees, as well as to members of cooperating agencies and governmental entities by request. Subscriptions to the site for the public are offered at 3 month (\$150) and Annual (\$550) intervals. There is a basic free version of the site, as well as information on subscribing, available via a link on the Monroe County Website (www.monroecountypa.gov).

Interested parties can also contact monroegis@monroecountypa.gov or (570) 517-3100 for details.

PROPOSED NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR 2014

In 2014, the MCPC reviewed 25 land development plans (LDPs). It should be noted that the LDPs are proposals and do not reflect municipal approval or non-approval status. It should also be noted that proposed additions to existing buildings are included in the overall list. The following is the distribution of non-residential projects for 2014:

Type of Non-Residential Development	Square Footage
Retail	89,221
Office	41,444
Industrial	142,614
Warehousing	1,092,720
Religious	21,300
Storage	73,000
Restaurant	11,143
Total	1,471,442

LIBERTY WATER GAP TRAIL EXTENSION

The MCPC participates in the Portland to Delaware Water Gap Trail Committee, which is tasked with the completion of a trail connection between these two boroughs. Several multi-state initiatives are providing impetus to these efforts. The Liberty Water Gap Trail is composed of a series of six interlinked trails stretching over 130 miles, from Liberty State Park in Jersey City, NJ to, eventually, the Delaware Water Gap.

The final section of this trail is incomplete, however, as it currently ends in the Borough of Portland. In 2013, a feasibility study was completed to determine how to complete this final stretch to the Delaware Water Gap. Efforts are underway to merge the goals of the trail’s final stretch with the planned reconstruction of PA 611 and the roadway’s century old retaining wall on the steep western slope of the Delaware River. Depending on the topography at any particular point, the trail would be beside or below the highway between the villages of Delaware Water Gap and Slateford. From Slateford, the trail would use part of the former state highway towards Portland. The last section of trail would be a separated multi-use pathway along the river side of SR 611 created by eliminating an underutilized third lane of the highway. Once the trail is completed it would provide access to the town’s business center, and connect with the currently open portion of the Liberty-Water Gap Trail at the Portland-Columbia footbridge.

Concurrent to these efforts, the 9/11 National Memorial Trail is envisioned as a linkage between the 3 major sites of the 9/11 tragedy, New York City’s Freedom Tower, the Pentagon, and the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shenksville, PA. Currently there are existing trail connections between NYC and Washington DC, and Washington DC to the vicinity of Shenksville. The 9/11 Trail Committee is in the process of conducting a feasibility study to connect these two areas. Our proposals for the feasibility study are to advocate for the 9/11 trail to use the Liberty Water Gap Trail, then on locating connections from Delaware Water Gap to Wind Gap through Monroe County.



NEW HEALTHCARE DEVELOPMENT

Monroe County is home to Pocono Medical Center, which is a mid-sized, not for profit community hospital. As the county's sole hospital, the services provided include direct patient care, as well as community wellness programs. A country wide trend in healthcare has begun to develop in Monroe County where residents are able to access health care at walk-in clinics or urgent care centers for issues such as sprains and strains, common cold and flu, and simple wounds and minor bone fractures.

Pocono Medical Center has now opened two additional locations: The PMC Bartonsville Healthcare Center, located off State Route 611 in Stroud Township and the PMC West End Healthcare Center off State Route 209, in Chestnuthill Township.

These new facilities offer convenient access to medical testing, analysis, and care for non-life threatening injuries and ailments. These sites also offer a variety of other healthcare services including physicals, immunizations, colds/flu treatment, EKGs, and digital x-rays. St. Luke's has also proposed a 190,344 square foot hospital facility in Bartonsville off State Route 611, in Stroud Township. This development is to include hospital and medical office facilities, as well as emergency room accommodations and an on-site helipad. Intersection improvements and the realignment of Wigwam Park Road on State Route 611 will accompany the development of the site.



Pocono Medical Center in Bartonsville

2014 ECONOMIC SUMMIT

On September 5th, the second annual Economic Summit was held at ESU's Innovation Center in Smithfield Township. The purpose of the summit was to engage participants in discussion focused on improving and enhancing these current economic conditions. Speakers and attendees included local business leaders and representatives from the county's larger employers. The keynote speakers were David Rusk, former mayor of Albuquerque and David Kolzow, who was head of a consulting firm based in Nashville. The keynote speakers provided insight into their respective experience in facing and overcoming economic challenges.



Panel Discussion at the Economic Summit

The 2014 Economic Summit was also the first in which an 'economic scorecard' was prepared by ESU to compare the situations between Monroe, Pike, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northampton and Lehigh Counties. The scorecard focused on five topics; employment, education, housing, incomes, and health care. Monroe was found to be third in education, fourth in employment and health care, fifth in housing, and sixth in incomes. While this was only the first economic scorecard and it will need to be refined and adjusted, it offers a benchmark in which to more accurately measure economic development within the County.

Commissioner John Moyer also spoke at the conference, offering a local overview of the current situation in the county. A major topic included the development and expansion of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and its versatility as a significant tool for development and measuring and monitoring economic trends.



Monroe 2030 Goals for Economic Development

- Attract environmentally friendly enterprises to Monroe County
- Conserve the environmental quality that is the County’s principal attraction for visitors and residents alike
- Pursue as a priority the retention and expansion of existing Monroe County companies
- Help balance the tax base to ease the heavy burden on residential properties for balancing public works and services
- Recycle vacant and under-utilized buildings and sites with access to infrastructure whose current uses may be obsolete

2014 Financial Support PMEDC Secured for Monroe County Projects

- Nine new Local Share Account Projects approved by the Commonwealth Financing Authority - \$1,958,897
- Closed on TIF Loan for Tobyhanna Township/Kalahari Project - \$26,000,000
- Four new Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Grants funded: Route 611 Corridor Gas Line Project, Penn Regional Business Center, Coolbaugh Tobyhanna Natural Gas Line Extension and Pocono Raceway
- PIDA Loan closed for Summit Aerospace - \$720,000 – 9 new jobs, 13 retained jobs
- 38 Payment Requests submitted for LSA, PennWorks and RACP

PMEDC’s 2014 Highlights

- Interstate 80 Exits 298/299 road improvements – In design
- Extension of natural gas line along Route 611 – 1st segment complete. Next segment in process.
- Smithfield Township-Phase II Sewer Project complete & Stormwater Project on Rt. 447 permitting
- Three Local Share Account projects completed and audited
- Ongoing administration of 14 Local Share Account projects
- Video project completed highlighting three Monroe County manufacturers
- 26 new Local Share Account Monroe County applications submitted by September 30, 2014
- CARE/PARR Achievements: Passage of HB 1565 – Riparian buffers
- Participated in group convened to address local businesses impacted by the Frein Manhunt
- Special Events and Trade Shows:
 - TCI Mobility, Summit Aerospace & PMC Bartonsville Grand Openings
 - ESU Economic Outlook Summit
 - Governor’s Impact Awards- Vigon International, winner
 - Hosted 4th PMEDC Annual Meeting and 3 Membership Luncheons
 - PA Economic Development Association awarded Chuck Leonard, Economic Developer of the Year for the Commonwealth of PA
 - Penn’s Northeast Fall Festival
 - MD&M East
 - SIOR Industrial Property Summit

Visit www.pmedc.com for more information or on any smart phone at mobile.pmedc.com

2015 OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD

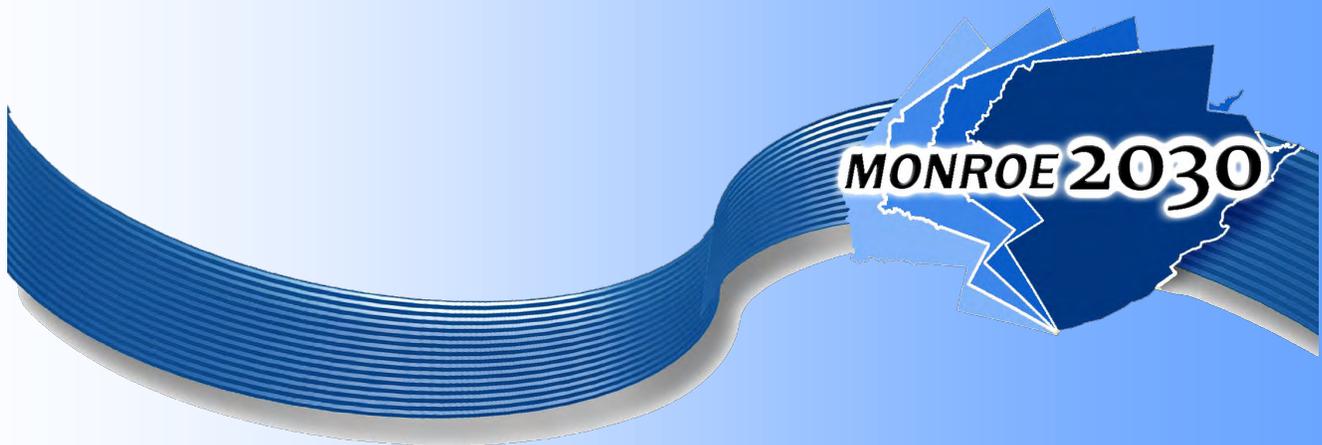
Anne Sincavage
Nancy Abbott Amici
Susan Cooper
Dominick DiPaolo
John Ferro
Pauline Fox
Don Miller
Ann Pilcher
Dr. Elaine Rogers
Frank Allen
Mark Sowers

**Daryl Eppley resigned as Chairman in December
Paul Snyder retired from the Board in September

2015 AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION BOARD

Glenn Beers, Chairman
Richard Snyder, Vice-Chairman
Alan Everett
Mark Green
Russell Gould
Mark Heckman
Robert Serfass

Advisors:
Matthew Giambra, M CCD
Penn State Cooperative Extension



MCPC

Serving local government through:

Municipal Partnership Program (MPP)
Financial Assistance Program (FAP II)
Open Space Program
Geographic Information System (GIS)
Annual Water Quality Study
Agricultural Land Preservation Program
Traffic Counts
Professional Planning Assistance

For further information, please contact the
Monroe County Planning Commission
1 Quaker Plaza, Room 106
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
Phone (570) 517-3100
Fax (570) 517-3858
mcpc@monroecountypa.gov
www.monroecountypa.gov

The continued participation of our municipal partners is appreciated.