

WYOMING COUNTY

Office of Community Planning

2013 Annual Report



Planning Commission Members

Walter Derhammer, Chairman

Jim Cappucci, Vice Chairman

Randy Ehrenzeller, Secretary

Glenn Shupp

Jon Howard

Dale Brown

Thomas Davis

Richard Fitzsimmons

Marta Kovacs Ruiz

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This report is submitted as per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code – Article II – Planning Agencies
– Section 207 Conduct of Business – 2013 Annual Report



WYOMING COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In February 2013, Nicole Wootten took over as the new Planning Director for Wyoming County. After over 20 years of dedicated service to the County, Paul Weilage retired.

I look forward to the coming year as the Planning Director and want to note how much I appreciate the hard work and commitment from the Planning Commission.

The Wyoming County Office of Community Planning submits an annual report to the Wyoming County Board of Commissioners to report the activities of the office throughout the past year. This requirement is outlined in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) under Article II: Planning Agencies Conduct of Business. This report is required to be submitted by March 1st of each year of its activities.

The Wyoming County Planning Commission was created by the Wyoming County Commissioners and held its first organization meeting on June 19, 1965. The Planning Commission consists of nine members, the appointment and terms of which are provided for by the County Commissioners under authority of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) Act 247, as amended.

The Commission has adopted its own by-laws that govern operations. The Wyoming County Office of Community Planning assists the Planning Commission in its duties as the duly created planning agency.

The Commission meets at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month (except September, which is held on the fourth Wednesday) at the Wyoming County Emergency Operations Center, 455 US Route 6 East, Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The Planning Office received and reviewed a total of 47 subdivision and land development proposals during 2013. This was a significant drop from the total of 70 subdivisions and land developments processed in 2012. There were a total of 11 local municipal reviews completed which is comparable to activity in the past.

Subdivision and Land Development Activity by Municipality:

Municipality	Number of Subdivisions/Land Developments
Braintrim Township	1
Clinton Township*	1
Eaton Township	5
Exeter Township	0
Factoryville Borough*	0
Falls Township*	5
Forkston Township	1
Laceyville Borough	0
Lemon Township	5
Mehoopany Township	0
Meshoppen Borough	2
Meshoppen Township	0
Monroe Township	0
Nicholson Borough	0
Nicholson Township	2
North Branch Township	1
Northmoreland Township	2
Noxen Township	0
Overfield Township*	1
Tunkhannock Borough	3
Tunkhannock Township	10
Washington Township*	5
Windham Township	3
TOTAL	47

* - Review of Subdivision/Land Development for the Municipality

LOCAL BUILDING PERMITS AND C.O.G. ISSUED BUILDING PERMITS

The trend in building permits has been rising in recent years. Although the number of permits were not tallied in 2011 and 2012 due to storm events, the Office of Community Planning has been working on collecting more up-to-date information on this topic. A memo with the information will be provided when compiled. The findings are listed below:

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
187	464	496	486	566	487	511	Not Tallied	Not Tallied	In Process

Trend from the last 10 years – permits were not tallied in 2011 and 2012 due to storm events.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITY

The Planning Commission met every month except for March 2013 due to a lack of agenda items. There were a total of 11 Planning Commission meetings in 2013. The Commission members accumulated a total of **119.25** hours at the Planning Commission meetings [*a meeting attendance chart is attached to the following page*].

Commissioner Tom Henry attended the Planning Commission meetings in February, April, May, June, August, September, October, November, and December during 2013.

Commissioner Ron Williams attended in October 2013. The Planning Commission is grateful for the dedication and commitment from the County Commissioners to attending the monthly Planning Commission meetings.

UPDATE TO THE WYOMING COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Starting in May 2013, the planning office began the first stages of correspondence regarding the update to the Wyoming County Comprehensive Plan. Meetings were set up with individuals from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Northern Tier, and the Chamber of Commerce to gain a better idea of the process we needed to follow in order to hire a consultant and apply for funding. The Planning Commission was supportive in this endeavor and stressed how important it was to accomplish. This update will help Wyoming County move forward in a positive way in relation to planning and development.

Following the initial meetings, the planning office prepared a “Request for Proposals” document to advertise in order to gather a response from potential consultants that were

2013 Planning Commission Attendance

Name	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	TOTALS
Walt Derhammer	X	X	No Meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11
Glenn Shupp	X	X	No Meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11
Randy Ehrenzeller	X		No Meeting	X	X	X			X	X	X		7
Richard Fitzsimmons	X	X	No Meeting	X	X		X	X	X		X		8
Thomas Davis			No Meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Jim Cappucci	X	X	No Meeting	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Dale Brown	X	X	No Meeting	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	10
Marta Kovacs Ruiz	X	X	No Meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		10
Jon Howard	X		No Meeting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Length of Meeting	1.75	0.25	0.00	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	2.00	2.25	1.25	13.25
Public Attendance	4	4	0	3	5	7	4	6	10	27	12	6	88
Sub/Land Dev Reviewed	1	2	0	0	1	3	3	2	4	0	3	2	21

willing to complete the update. The proposal deadline was October 31, 2013 and the following several weeks were spent reading over the submitted proposals and narrowing down the selections. After the Planning Commission meeting in November 2013, the planning office contacted the final two candidates for an interview with the nomination committee. In December 2013, Urban Research and Development Corporation was selected by the Board of Commissioners to complete the Wyoming County Comprehensive Plan update.

To date, the grant application has been submitted to DCED. Once we hear about the grant funding – the work will begin.

UPDATED APPLICATION PACKET AND OTHER RESOURCES

In May 2013, the planning office updated the Subdivision and Land Development Application for clarification purposes. The new application packet includes three (3) pages of questions related to the site development, one (1) page of contact information, and one (1) page for signatures. Included with the application packet is a fee schedule, checklist, and standard procedures to clarify the review process for the applicant. With the assistance of the Wyoming County IT Director, the Wyoming County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, application packet, and other resources were posted on the website to ensure that materials were easily accessible for residents, surveyors, and developers.

CHRONOLOGICAL REPORT

The Chronological Report was completed for every month in 2013, except January. The Planner created a new design to lay out the daily correspondence that is received by the planning office. This will continue to be on the agenda each month at the Planning Commission meeting.

“2013 MEETING CHRONOLOGY”

January 2013

- ❖ Reorganization for the 2013 Officers
- ❖ Talarico Land Development was tabled
- ❖ Peoples State Bank
 - Subdivision: Granted Preliminary/Final Approval

- Land Development: Granted Final Approval

February 2013

- ❖ Talarico Land Development was given Preliminary Approval contingent upon updated plans received by the planning office
- ❖ Robert Ferguson Jr. Subdivision was granted Preliminary and Final Approval

March 2013

- ❖ Meeting Canceled

April 2013

- ❖ No major subdivisions or land developments on the agenda for review

May 2013

- ❖ “We-R-Wireless” Verizon Retail Complex Land Development was granted Preliminary Approval contingent upon CECO’s stormwater review

June 2013

- ❖ Williams ABA Office Building was granted Preliminary Approval
- ❖ S2W Contracting LLC Land Development was tabled
- ❖ Eaton Hills Lots 107, 108, and 109 was tabled due to a correction needed on the plans

July 2013

- ❖ S2W Contracting LLC Land Development was granted Preliminary Approval contingent upon approval of the E&S Plan from the Conservation District and written consent from the adjacent property owner regarding point source discharge onto the property.
- ❖ Schoolhouse Hill Apartments Final Approval was tabled
- ❖ Eaton Hills Lots 107, 108, and 109 were granted final approval

August 2013

- ❖ Schoolhouse Hill Apartments Final Approval was tabled
- ❖ Dymond Subdivision was granted preliminary approval and would be granted final approval when a letter was received from Northmoreland Township agreeing to take over Butternut Lane

September 2013

- ❖ Dymond Subdivision was granted final approval
- ❖ Schoolhouse Hill Apartments land development was granted final approval
- ❖ Eaton Hills Lots 110, 111, and 112 were granted final approval
- ❖ Sherwood Chevrolet Land Development was granted preliminary approval contingent upon stormwater and zoning

October 2013

- ❖ Eaton Hills Lots 113, 114, and 115 were granted final approval
- ❖ CVS Preliminary Plan Minor Revision was accepted – the two drive thru lanes will be decreased to one drive thru lane
- ❖ A presentation was given by Emily Krafjack and Kristin Landon regarding oil and gas activity in Wyoming County

November 2013

- ❖ A presentation was given on the proposed “Hayduk RV/Mobile Home Park – no official submission has been received at this time
- ❖ Cavany 1-Lot Subdivision was granted preliminary and final approval
- ❖ Jack Williams Land Development was granted final approval

December 2013

- ❖ D&I Silica Transload Facility Land Development proposal was tabled
- ❖ Fritz 3-Lot Subdivision was granted preliminary and final approval contingent upon a note added to the plan stating that the proposed and existing right-of-ways would not be offered to Braintrim Township in the future.

SPREADSHEET TO TRACK PROCESS OF SUBDIVISIONS & LAND DEVELOPMENTS

At the beginning of 2013, the planning office began tracking the process of subdivisions and land developments with a spreadsheet. Each file is added to the spreadsheet when the application is filed and all documentation is accounted for until the map is recorded. This has been an incredible asset to the planning office in order to ensure that each application is processed in accordance with the Wyoming County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. A copy of the spreadsheet is attached to the annual report for review **[Appendix 1]**.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

The GIS software that is utilized by the Planning Office has been instrumental in developing maps of various locations and features in Wyoming County. To date, the Planning Office has continuously mapped pipeline development, gas wells, and the pooling units associated with the natural gas development. As the pooling units are recorded in the Recorder of Deeds Office, they are added into the GIS to track the development in the County. There are approximately 107 pooling units that have been established in Wyoming County. A map is attached showing the most current gas related information the Planning Office has in the GIS *[Appendix 2]*.

The Planning Office also continues to work with local municipalities on their mapping needs. For example, our GIS database has helped with tax parcel information, floodplain questions, and a visual of the natural gas development.

LOCAL PLANNING & PLANNING ASSISTANCE

The Planning Office continued to regularly communicate with local municipalities on subdivisions and land development applications that were filed. The Planning Office was able to provide answers to questions on various developments and ensure that local planning issues were adequately addressed.

Local officials continued to look at local planning to protect our natural resources and quality of life in Wyoming County. The Planning Office reviewed a zoning amendment for Washington Township in December 2013 which consisted of improvements to sections related to oil and gas development. The Southeastern Joint Planning Commission continued to enforce their joint zoning ordinance with the amendments that were adopted in March 2013. Exeter Township began an update to their zoning ordinance in 2013 which was last updated in 1974. This process will continue into 2014.

The Tunkhannock and Lemon Township proposed “Joint Act 537 Plan” continued to move forward in 2013 and is currently in the review stages and waiting for comment from Department of Environment Protection.

The Planning Director became a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) through the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) in May 2013. The Planning Office continued to assist residents and local municipalities on floodplain management and guidance by providing instructions and access to basic forms needed for flood insurance purposes. The Planning Director joined the

Pennsylvania Association of Floodplain Managers (PAFPM) to gather additional information and knowledge in the field of floodplain management.

The Planning Director is working towards becoming a certified planner through the American Planning Association's professional institute – the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). The eligibility requirements will be fulfilled in 2016.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The new Planning Director attended an educational training course in April 2013 pertaining to Subdivision and Land Development Review. This training was offered through the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) in Nanticoke, PA.

The Planning Office contacted the Penn State Extension Office to express interest in holding a training on "Community Planning" in Wyoming County during the spring of 2014. It would be beneficial for the Planning Commission members and other local officials to attend this type of training. In January 2014, this idea was brought to the attention of the Planning Commission members. They were in agreement that this is important for Wyoming County. The dates are scheduled for April 10th, 24th, and May 1st 2014. A flyer will be created and distributed to all municipalities.

2014 PLANNING OFFICE GOALS

The Planning Office has outlined a number of goals to be achieved by the end of 2014:

- ☐ Enhance GIS Database – continue mapping features of Wyoming County and adding information to the database
- ☐ Continue working towards a comprehensive approach to stormwater and floodplain management (Acts 167 & 166)
- ☐ Create resources to help aid floodplain management for local officials and residents
- ☐ Create a municipal resources handbook – information on the planning process
- ☐ Finish creating a Planning Commission Newsletter – distribute twice a year

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Planning Office is currently affiliated with the following professional organizations and committees:

- ☐ Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (**NTRPDC**)
 - Transportation Committee
 - Economic Development Committee
- ☐ County Planning Directors Association of PA (**CPDAP**)
- ☐ Association of State Floodplain Managers (**ASFPM**)
- ☐ PA Association of Floodplain Managers (**PAFPM**)
- ☐ American Planning Association (**APA**)
 - Pennsylvania Chapter of APA
 - Northeast Section of APA-PA