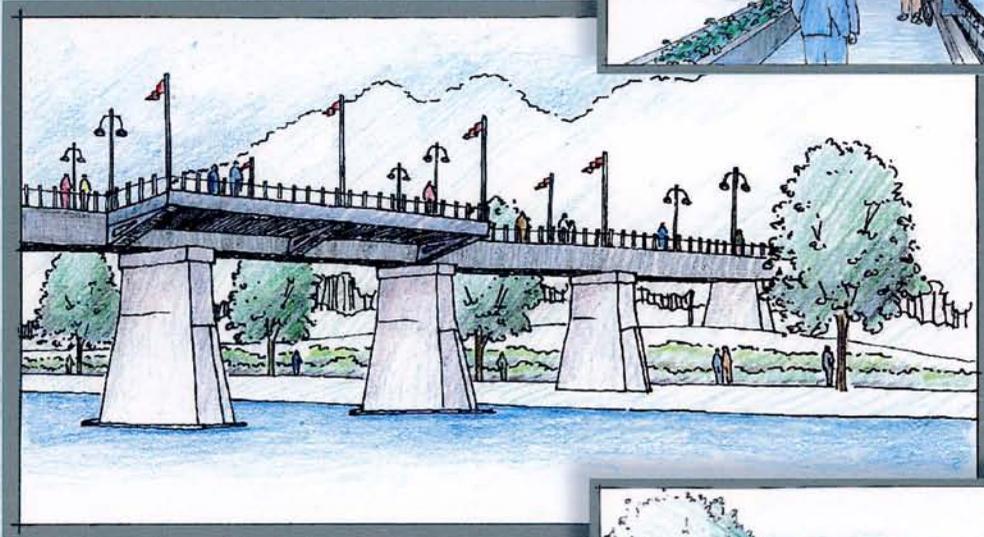
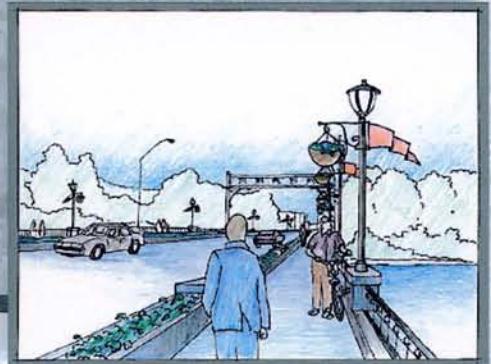


RECONNECTIONS:

"Reconnecting the people of North Coventry Township and Pottstown Borough with each other and their Schuylkill River Heritage"

Master Plan



Prepared by:
Simone Jaffe Collins, Inc.
Landscape Architecture
With: Urban Partners, Inc.

Reconnections:
*“Reconnecting the people of North Coventry
Township and Pottstown Borough with each other and
their Schuylkill River Heritage”*

July 2004

Prepared for:

**Borough of Pottstown, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania
North Coventry Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania**

Steering Committee Members:

Lynn Benensky, Staff, Pottstown Borough
Judy Comishock, Pottstown Downtown Improvement District Authority
Ronald Downie, Pottstown Borough Council
David Downs, Schuylkill River Greenway Association
Jay Erb, Chairman, Parks and Recreation, North Coventry Township
Jim Fairchild, Director Economic Development, Pottstown Borough
Art Green, Pottstown Borough Council
Kevin Hennessey, Manager, North Coventry Township
Tom Hylton, Chairman, Planning Commission, Pottstown Borough
Rob Ihlein, Assistant Manager, Pottstown Borough
Bud Jenschke, Supervisor, North Coventry Township
Jack Layne, Manager, Pottstown Borough
Ginamarie Mangano, Planner, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Andy Paravis, Supervisor, North Coventry Township
John Wofington, Developer, Mrs. Smith Site

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John Wofington, Developer
North Coventry Township
Borough of Pottstown

This study was prepared by:



**SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**

511 OLD LANCASTER ROAD • BERWYN, PA 19312
610-889-0348 • FAX 610-889-7521
www.simonejaffecollins.com

With:

Urban Partners, Inc.
829 Spruce Street
Suite 204
Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-829-1906 FAX 215-829-1906

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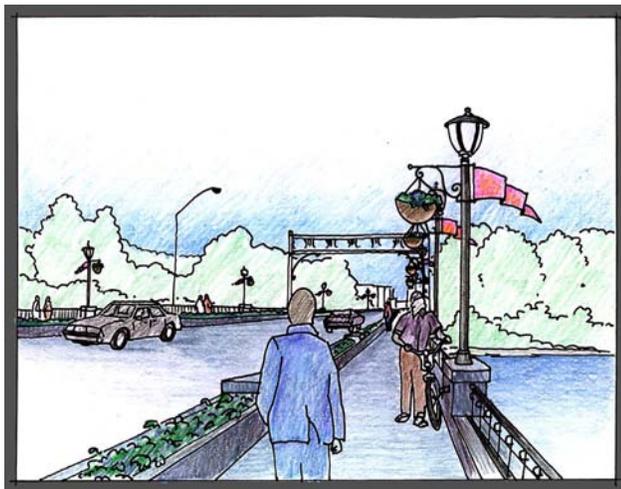
Reconnections: “Reconnecting the people of North Coventry Township and Pottstown Borough with each other and their Schuylkill River Heritage”.

Executive Summary

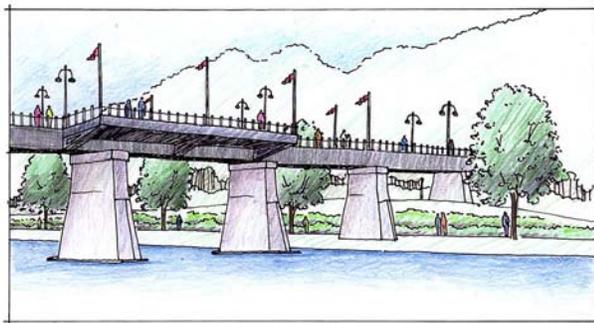
The Reconnections project examines the potential physical, economic, social, heritage and aesthetic connections between Pottstown and North Coventry. The plan focuses on the Schuylkill River as the “heart” of each community’s shared history.

The two municipalities formed a joint committee, obtained state and local funding, and retained a consultant team to assist them to identify obstacles in reconnecting the communities and to find solutions toward achieving the study’s goals.

The planning process and resultant plan and recommendations indicate many shared concerns that point to the advantages of continuing the dialogue and cooperation fostered by this effort.



Hanover Street Sketch.



Railroad Trestle Pedestrian Bridge.

Major physical improvement recommendations include:

- Enhancements to the Hanover Street Bridge to create a functional and symbolic link and gateway for both communities;
- Establishment of the River Road Trail from the Hanover Street Bridge to River Park in North Coventry;
- Other improvements along Hanover Street, Laurelwood Road and Rt. 724 to create more attractive and walkable links between the Borough and the Coventry Mall;
- Conversion of the existing unused railroad trestle into a pedestrian bridge across the river to connect River Park and Riverfront Park;

Executive Summary

- Creation of additional pathways along the south bank of the Schuylkill River; and
- Plan for and advocate the replacement of the Keim Street Bridge.

Other recommendations include:

- Visual enhancements including the creation of a scenic protection overlay district along the Schuylkill River and selective clearing to expose views into the “Hidden River”;
- Improved communications between the two communities including comprehensive signage and community information kiosks, electronic kiosks and shared events and recreational programming; and
- Involve local schools in the “Reconnections” process and philosophy through the shared history and heritage of the Schuylkill River. Opportunities include hands-on environmental learning, local history curriculum and community participation on park and open space initiatives.



Proposed River Road Trail.

Opportunities for successfully implementing study recommendations are many. Projects that involve both counties, two municipalities, and the Schuylkill River Federal and State Heritage Area will present many prospects to leverage funding and move study recommendations forward.

Introduction

1. Study Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

In January 2003, the Borough of Pottstown, Montgomery County, and North Coventry Township, Chester County formed an inter-municipal committee to examine methods to physically, economically, socially, and aesthetically reconnect their two communities using a shared Schuylkill River Heritage as a focus.

In the spring of 2003, the committee applied for and received a grant from the Schuylkill River State Heritage Area to fund a study to examine these concepts. Heritage Area funding is from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). State funding was matched by each municipality and by developer John Wolfington, who has purchased and is redeveloping the Mrs. Smith's Pie site, located along the river in Pottstown.



View of the Schuylkill River in Pottstown.

In the fall of 2003, a request for qualifications was issued for a consultant to complete the study. Three consultant teams were selected to submit proposals and were interviewed. The team of Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture in association with Urban Partners was selected to work with the inter-municipal committee to complete the work.

Introduction

The study examines “reconnections” between the two communities through improved pedestrian and bicycle pathways, improved vehicular access, improved access to and use of the Schuylkill River, open space preservation, economic development, aesthetic improvements, and preservation of each community’s heritage - all geared toward enhancing the quality of life. The study will estimate costs for proposed improvements and identify possible sources of funding, and will create a strategy to fund and implement study recommendations. The study area is identified as the area contained within a two-mile radius of the Hanover Street Bridge, although it was agreed that the study should focus on areas closer to the river.



North Coventry Township streetscape.

(See Figure 1.2)

The Reconnections Committee identified the following goals for the study:

- Inventory the cultural, social, educational, historical, environmental and recreational resources in the study area;
- Identify the physical and psychological barriers that separate the two communities;
- Develop and implement a public education and participation process for the study;
- Propose ways and means to remove the barriers, improve existing linkages, and create new user-friendly linkages within and between the two communities;
- Propose ways and means to improve visual and aesthetic aspects of buildings, facilities and walkways within the study area that will help create a sense of connectedness;
- Propose ways and means to incorporate the river as a more dominant feature that connects, rather than divides, both communities;
- Help the communities choose a preferred alternative from a selection of possible alternatives;
- Draft a plan that is acceptable to both communities and that facilitates implementation;
- Integrate the recommendations with existing municipal comprehensive plans and revitalization strategies;
- Outline every potential “reconnection” between the two municipalities; and
- Identify potential funding sources for implementation.



Borough of Pottstown streetscape.

The study and the resultant recommendations will provide the Borough of Pottstown and North Coventry Township with a planning and guidance document for implementing improvements over a period of years.

The Study will provide municipal officials with recommendations for future community improvements and will be a valuable information source for other community initiatives and will form the basis for future funding requests. The Reconnections Study was designed to have maximum flexibility so that as new ideas surface, refinements to the plan can be made.

2. Regional Context and Municipal Background

North Coventry Township, Chester County, and the Borough of Pottstown, Montgomery County, are contiguous municipalities, separated by the Schuylkill River. The Borough of Pottstown is located in the northwest corner of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania along the Schuylkill River. (See Figure 1.1) The Borough comprises 4.89 square miles and is populated by 21,859 residents. The character of the Borough is primarily urban. Residential areas of low to medium-high density are the predominant active land use. Commercial uses are primarily located along the High Street corridor, the Borough's "main street". Borough industrial lands are primarily located in the eastern side of the Borough along the riverfront. These include the former site of Bethlehem Steel. Other Borough industry is located in its northwest corner, off the Rt. 100 corridor. Since the 1970's, the Borough witnessed a gradual decline in its role as a major industrial community, a trend consistent with the entire northeastern United States. Suburban land development has drawn away residents and businesses that were once located in Pottstown's thriving downtown business district.

The Borough has acquired a significant amount of riverfront property that forms an extensive greenway, with Memorial and Riverfront Parks as its centerpiece. The Pottstown Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains a total of sixteen (16) facilities including one community center. The parks throughout the borough encompass 108 acres, with Riverfront and Memorial Parks comprising 96 of those acres (89%).

North Coventry Township is located across the Schuylkill River in Chester County. The character of the Township is primarily agricultural and suburban residential, with areas of commercial development located primarily along Route 100, Route 724, and Hanover Street corridors. The Township is approximately 11 square miles in area and has a population of 7,381.

Introduction

Within North Coventry Township, there are several historic villages: Kenilworth; South Pottstown; Cedarville; and Pottstown Landing. Pottstown Landing was listed on the National Historic Register in 2001. Each village reflects a mix of architectural styles that gives each a unique identity. North Coventry Township has approximately 205 acres of public parks and open space. The parks include River Park and the Wampler Complex, both located on the river near the center of the study area. Kenilworth park is a 22-acre park located off of Route 724 near the eastern boundary of the Township.



Kenilworth Village - North Coventry Township.

The opening of the Pottstown Expressway, Rt. 422, in the spring of 1985, connected Pottstown and North Coventry with the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the Schuylkill Expressway (I-76), and later the Blue Route (I-476). This has created the Rt. 422 growth corridor, a corridor from King of Prussia to Pottstown, one of the most rapidly developing suburban areas in the region.

3. Description of the Study Area

The project study area is a defined 2-mile radius from the Hanover Street Bridge. The total study area is approximately 12.5 square miles. Within this area exists much of the physical, social, economic and cultural fabric of both municipalities and includes a variety of residential neighborhoods, retail shopping and commercial areas, the seats of both local governments, schools, a community college, historic districts and cultural resources, churches, businesses and industries, and municipal parks.

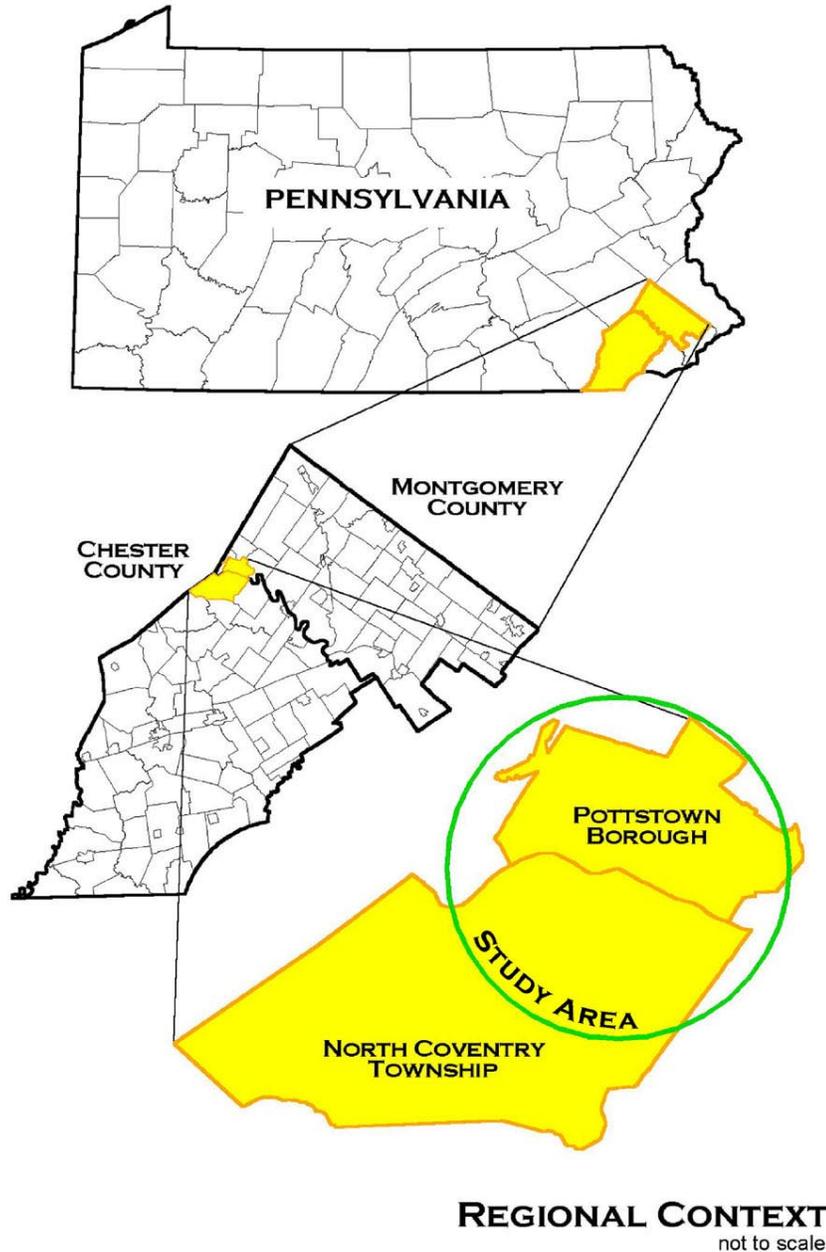


Figure 1.1: Regional Context Map.

4. Public Participation Summary

Public participation was a critical component of the Reconnections Study. The public participation process was designed to inform the public about the project, solicit suggestions from citizens, and address any questions, comments, or concerns about the study and its recommendations.

Reconnections Committee

A project committee was formed from officials and citizens from both municipalities. Reconnections committee meetings took place with the consultant on November 19, 2003, December 1, 2003, January 14, 2004, February 2, 2003, March 1, 2004, and April 5, 2004.

Public Meetings

Three public meetings were scheduled during the seven-month planning process. Public Meeting #1 was held on January 20, 2004 at the North Coventry Fire Hall, and focused on site analysis findings, reconnection goals, programming, and gathering initial ideas from the community. Meeting #2 was held at Montgomery County Community College in Pottstown on March 29, 2004 to present preliminary project recommendations and the draft report. Meeting #3 took place on May 17, 2004 at the North Coventry Fire Hall and included a presentation of the final master plan. Attendance records, agendas and notes from each of these meetings are included in the appendix of this report.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

1. Methodology

The consultant performed several initial site reconnaissance trips in the winter of 2004 to inventory, analyze, and document the physical conditions within project study area. Preliminary recommendations and linkages were further studied, photographed and verified. Available information was shown on geographic information systems (GIS) mapping data gathered through data compiled by the consultant. Throughout the course of the project, the consultants performed secondary site visits to field check and verify existing conditions relative to the proposed recommendations. In addition to the site visits, a series of public meetings as well as study committee meetings were held throughout the planning process. These meetings provided additional information and community feedback that contributed to the recommendations development of the Reconnections Study.

2. Data Collection

Year 2000 Aerial photography was acquired from the 2000 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) digital orthographic photography. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) site information was acquired from internet resources, the Chester County Planning Commission, the Montgomery County Planning Commission, and the DVRPC. The GIS data compiled includes environmental features such as waterways, and floodplain and floodway information. Other GIS information acquired includes: municipal boundaries, existing roadways, county and municipal parks, existing trails, and schools. Additionally, the existing Borough parcel boundary drawing file provided by the Borough of Pottstown was converted to a GIS format and used as an overlay on aerial photographs. Much of the aforementioned data is illustrated and can be found within the report exhibits.

3. Relevant Planning Documents / Planning Initiatives

Existing and on-going planning documents that served as background data for contributed to this report include:

Ordinances

- Borough of Pottstown Ordinances Governing Subdivision, Land Development and Zoning, adopted 2003;
- North Coventry Township Zoning Ordinance, September 1996, updated through July 2003; and
- North Coventry Township Subdivision and Land Development Plan, April 1999, updated through July 2003.

Other Plans and Initiatives

- North Coventry Township 2001 Comprehensive Plan;
- Montgomery County Open Space Plan;
- Montgomery County Trail Plan; and
- Montgomery County Pottstown Metropolitan Plan.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

Riverfront and Memorial Park Master Plan, 2003

Recommendations for Riverfront Park included:

- Renovate the Schuylkill River Center Building for additional uses and tenants;
- Expand parking at the Schuylkill River Center Building to accommodate Riverfront Park users;
- Further develop / enhance existing amphitheatre;
- Enhance existing River Walk leading to the Hanover Street Bridge; and
- Coordinate improvements with the Schuylkill River Trail and Schuylkill River Water Trail / Landing.

Recommendations for Memorial Park included:

- Enhance the King Street entrance;
- Implement drainage improvements at the ball fields;
- Expand playground and develop a water play area; and
- BMX track and skate park at the former pool location.

West Pottsgrove / Pottstown Inter-Municipal Open Space Plan, 1998

Recommendations included:

- Passive use of River(front) Park;
- Manatawny Creek Greenway and the Colebrookdale R.R. Spur Trail;
- High Street “ornamental” parks;
- Memorial Park as a regional park to serve more than one municipality;
- Establishment of the Schuylkill River Water Trail; and
- Expansion of Pottsgrove Manor lands.

Schuylkill Valley Metro Feasibility Study (June, 1998) and Major Investment Study – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (June, 2001)

Initial two phases of study to examine the feasibility of re-establishing passenger rail service between Philadelphia and Reading with a major station at Pottstown. Realization of this rail service will enhance the quality of life and attractiveness of Pottstown and North Coventry Township as places to live and work.

Specific recommendations that are relevant to the Reconnections Plan include: York Street underpass; an Intermodal bus and train station in Pottstown; and the implied need for structured parking in close proximity to the station to accommodate both commuter parking and to serve increased density of mixed-use near the train station.

John Potts County Park Concept Plan (1998)

Recommendations included:

- Manatawny Creek Greenway and the Colebrookdale R.R. Spur Trail;
- York Street underpass;
- College Drive extension and a High - King Street link;

- Linkage across the RR between Montgomery County Community College College and Nittany Warehouse / High Street site;
- Acquisition and adaptive reuse of lands between High / King Sts. and Manatawny;
- Expansion of Pottsgrove Manor Historic Site Lands Creek and Colebrookdale Spur;
- Expansion of Pottsgrove Manor lands;
- Re-establish Manatawny Creek Riparian Buffers;
- Better access to Riverfront Park; and
- Build Keystone Boulevard to access the Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) and link to West Pottsgrove lands. The Schuylkill River Trail will be built adjacent to the roadway.

Action Plan for College Park Revitalization (June, 1998)

Recommendations included:

- Expansion of Pottsgrove Manor lands;
- Promenade Link between the downtown and the Montgomery County Community College;
- Western gateway beautification.

Pottstown Community and Economic Development Action and Implementation Strategy (September, 2000)

Recommendations included:

- Promote Schuylkill Valley Metro;
- Implement John Potts Park;
- Create better access at Western Gateway;
- Facilitate Montgomery County Community College Expansion; and,
- Promote York Street Underpass.

Western Riverfront District Study of Existing Land Use and Conditions (December, 2000)

Identified properties in the study area that exhibited characteristics of blight as per the Urban Redevelopment Law Act of 1945, P.L. 991, No. 385.

Western Riverfront District Redevelopment Plan (August, 2001)

Recommendations include creation of a Riverfront Recreational Zoning District in the Riverfront Park area. This zoning district would allow park and recreation related uses and park user amenities services in addition to limited office and educational uses. The redevelopment plan also outlines creation of a Downtown Gateway District in the areas between College Drive and King Street, and Route 100 and the Mrs. Smith's property. This gateway district would permit a variety of mixed uses that are compatible with Borough redevelopment goals. (These recommendations were subsequently implemented in the 2003 revised Borough ordinances).

Physical Inventory and Analysis

Building a Greenway Community: A Schuylkill River Greenway Stewardship Study for Montgomery County, Pennsylvania (March 2001)

A regional greenway plan that examined the concept of “Greenway as Community” along 42 miles of the Schuylkill River in Montgomery County. Recommendations included: Relocate rail siding that presently runs along College Drive so that this alignment may become a section of the Schuylkill River Trail; implement John Potts Park; establish Manatawny Creek Greenway and Colebrookdale R.R. Spur Trail; promote development of Pottstown KOZ; develop riverfront lands in West Pottsgrove Township as parklands; and build College Drive Extension, Keystone Boulevard, and related greenway linkages.

Pottstown Promenade - was conceived as a pedestrian and bicycle link between Downtown Pottstown and the Montgomery County Community College. The promenade is expected to be constructed in 2005, and will connect Hanover Street to the bus stop facility adjacent to the community college with a link to Riverfront Park and the River Center at Pottstown.

Keystone Boulevard - is an improved roadway that begins at College Drive and provides access and utilities to properties in the Keystone Opportunity Zone, west of Rt. 100. A trail segment that will become part of the Schuylkill River Trail will be constructed with the road. This portion of the trail, roadway, and associated utilities was constructed in 2003.

Pottstown Town Square - was completed in summer 2002 and followed the successful completion of a new town hall. Located on High Street, the facility has created a new civic focus in the Borough. This space will relate and complement a soon to be restored railroad canopy and the future passenger rail station for the Schuylkill Valley Metro.

Railroad Station Canopy Restoration - has been designed and will restore a roof with lighting to the existing canopy frame. The canopy is intended as the site for the Borough’s farmer’s market and may eventually be the station for the Schuylkill Valley Metro passenger rail service – a passenger line planned to run from Philadelphia to Reading.

Schuylkill River Center at Pottstown - was acquired by the Borough as part of its purchase of Riverfront Park. Once a power station, the building was renovated and the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area became its first tenant on January 1, 2002. There is significant additional space in the building that can accommodate a variety of uses. The Borough is actively seeking additional tenants.

Mrs. Smith’s Property, Pottstown - The development rights for the former Mrs. Smith’s Pies Factory were acquired in 2000 by developer John Wolfington. The site is a key redevelopment parcel in the Borough, located at the north end of the Hanover Street bridge at the corner of Hanover Street and Industrial Boulevard. The southwest portion of the site is presently proposed for redevelopment with a mix of first-floor commercial and retail and two hundred residential units.

4. Study Area Inventories

a. Tax Parcels

The North Coventry Township provided GIS tax parcel information files that contain the township parcels as shown on the North Coventry Township Zoning Map. The drawing file also contains parcel identification numbers that allowed the consultant to research specific parcel ownership of parcels. The tax map parcels were imported into GIS as an overlay to the DVRPC aerial photographs.

b. Surface Hydrology

The Surface Hydrology figure illustrates the fact that almost the entire Study Area is located adjacent to the River and is within the floodplain (see Figure 2.1). This exhibit shows the locations of the Floodway, and 100 Year and 500 Year Floodplains as determined by FEMA's flood insurance safety maps.

The most limiting of these factors is the Floodway. The future development of buildings within this zone would require significant architectural safeguards and/or special permitting, if allowed at all. Generally, there should be no significant structures located in the floodway. Buildings or structures placed within the 100 Year Floodplain generally require the first floor elevation to be above the 100 year flood elevation as part of its construction (such as Montgomery County Community College). These factors should be considered if any new buildings are proposed within the Study Area. Portions of Memorial Park, Riverfront Park, and River Park are located within the Floodway, and the 100 Year Floodplain. Many existing buildings in South Pottstown and in the northern section of Pottstown Landing are located in the 100 Year Floodplain. These communities experience periodic flooding during major storms.

The watersheds in North Coventry Township and the Borough of Pottstown are located within the Schuylkill sub-basin which drains into the Delaware Estuary. The western and northern portions of North Coventry Township and the project study area drain directly into the Schuylkill River by the headwaters of Rock Run, Laurel Creek, Bickels Run, and several unnamed creeks. Other watersheds in North Coventry Township are Pigeon Creek and French Creek. The Manatawny Creek watershed drains into the Schuylkill River at Pottstown.

c. Slopes and Topography

Most of the study area contains areas of gently rolling terrain with steeper slopes located in western areas of North Coventry Township. There exist steep embankments in areas on both sides of the Schuylkill River. While most of the land located in the floodplain of the Schuylkill River is flat, there are areas of relief close to the river that provide limited views out over the river valley.

The steep slope areas in the Township are generally protected from development by the North Coventry Township Zoning Ordinance Natural Resource Conservation Overlay District provisions. The establishment of trails may be limited in certain areas of the township by slope constraints. The Borough, being fully developed, relies on land development controls for grading and slope standards.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

d. Land Use

The Land Use Map (Figure 2.2) illustrates the existing land use as derived for Year 2000 by the Montgomery County Planning Commission and Year 1995 DVRPC for Chester County by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission in 2000. The study area contains a variety of land uses.

Borough

The Borough of Pottstown contains many mixed uses typically found in urban centers. Such uses include high and low density residential (single family detached such as residential, multi-family, row homes) commercial and retail services along High Street and adjacent to Route 100, industrial manufacturing (light, heavy) open space, and community services.

Township

The North Coventry Township land use map still shows large amounts of farm and open land. A concentration of commercial/retail (the mall) exists in the northern portion of the township located along the Route 724 and Route 100 corridors. The major township residential areas are low density, single family with some apartments located along the Rt. 724 and Rt. 100 corridors.

e. Zoning

Pottstown Borough

Pottstown adopted its current zoning ordinance in 2003. The “*Reconnections*” study area is primarily located in the following zoning districts: Park, Downtown Gateway, Flex Office, Gateway West, Downtown and Traditional Town Neighborhood (See Figure 2.3).

Park – The purpose of the Park Zoning District is to “*preserve Pottstown’s last remaining natural areas, to promote active and passive recreation and to improve access to the Schuylkill River and Manatawny Creek.*” Uses permitted in this district include boat launches, parks, picnic areas, trails and water access areas.

Downtown Gateway – The purpose of the Downtown Gateway Zoning District is to “*promote the redevelopment of existing vacant industrial sites at the entryway to the downtown, creating a pleasant mixture of stores, homes and offices that will complement the downtown to the north, the historic neighborhood to the east and the Schuylkill River and Greenway to the south.*”

Flex Office – The purpose of the Flex Office Zoning District is to “*establish and improve areas for modern, efficient offices and industries that provide a wide variety of employment opportunities and enhance the community.*” Park use is also permitted in this district.

Gateway West – The purpose of the Gateway West Zoning District is to “*improve the aesthetics of the western commercial entryways to Pottstown, making them more attractive and compatible with the nearby historic and residential areas.*”

Downtown – The purpose of the Downtown Zoning District is to “*preserve and enhance Pottstown’s historic central business district with a wide range of retail, professional, governmental and urban residential uses.*”

Traditional Town Neighborhood – The purpose of the Traditional Town Neighborhood is to “*preserve and enhance historic neighborhoods that are predominately residential, but also have a small number of stores and offices mixed in with the housing.*”

North Coventry Township

North Coventry Township adopted their current zoning ordinance in 2003. The “*Reconnections*” study area is primarily located within the following zoning districts: Resource Conservation, Town Center Mixed Use, Town Center Residential, Village, Industrial and Commercial (See Figure 2.3).

Resource Conservation - The purpose of the Resource Conservation Zoning District is to protect and conserve sensitive environmental resources. Continued agricultural, open space, recreation and conservation uses are to be encouraged. Low density, residential development is allowed if it is consistent with the purposes of the district and compatible with existing land uses.

Town Center Mixed Use – This zoning district is found in South Pottstown and areas south of the Route 724 / Route 100 intersection. The purpose of the Town Center Mixed Use Zoning District is to provide an “*identifiable core area within the Township which contains community facilities and services vital to the local residents*”. Government and public service facilities are to be consolidated into a location, which promotes a mutually efficient operation. Vehicular and pedestrian concerns are to be addressed and mixed-use infill development is encouraged.

Town Center Residential – This zoning district is also found in the South Pottstown area. Its purpose is to “*maintain the character of the Township’s traditional older neighborhoods by allowing uses of a scale and type appropriate and compatible with existing residential character.*” Infill development and historic preservation through flexible standards are encouraged.

Village – This zoning district is found in the village of Kenilworth. The district seeks to “*preserve the character of Kenilworth Village by allowing future development that is compatible in scale, density and setbacks with current village uses.*” Limited expansion of the village is to be accommodated in the form of commercial, office and institutional use. Historic structures are preserved through the use of flexible standards.

Industrial – This zoning district is found along the Schuylkill River north of Route 422 in Pottstown Landing and south of the Route 422 Bridge in Kenilworth. Administrative and research offices are permitted, along with light industrial uses. Kenilworth’s industrial district allows manufacturing and bulk material processing.

Commercial – This zoning district is found along the Route 100 corridor. Its purpose is to provide a “*centralized area for retail and service uses that are accessible to the regional transportation system.*”

Physical Inventory and Analysis

f. Permanently and Temporarily Open Lands

Conservation Easements / Agricultural Easements:

Fifty-seven acres of Laurel Locks Farm in North Coventry Township were preserved through a conservation easement held by the Brandywine Conservancy. The land is situated along the Schuylkill River; the farm includes mature forests, streams and wetlands, and several historic structures associated with the Schuylkill River Canal system. The land owner has also submitted an application to Chester County to protect the rest of the property's farmland, totaling 173 acres, through an agricultural easement.

Additional parcels throughout the township contain conservation easements. The Township currently has 121 acres of land protected through conservation easements and 1,230 acres protected through agricultural easements (see Figure 2.4).

Act 319 Lands: Act 319, also known as the Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act of 1974 and often referred to as the Clean and Green Act, was established to preserve farmland, forest land and open space by taxing land according to its use rather than the prevailing market value. The program is administered by county assessment offices and is a voluntary program that generally requires a 10-acre minimum area to remain in a designated use (agricultural use, agricultural reserve and forest reserve). Parcels less than 10 acres and capable of producing \$2000 annually from the sale of agricultural products are also eligible for the agriculture use designation. When lands are removed from Act 319 protection they become subject to a rollback tax, imposed for up to seven years, and an interest penalty. Approximately 71 parcels within North Coventry Township are enrolled in the Act 319 Program. These parcels total approximately 1,500 acres of temporarily protected land (see Figure 2.4).

Cemeteries

Pottstown Borough contains three large cemeteries that constitute de-facto open space since they are green, park-like settings. Pottstown Cemetery straddles Hanover Street in the central portion of the Borough. Edgewood Cemetery is located in the eastern part of the Borough at the intersection of Beech Street and Keim Street. Highland Memorial Park is the largest cemetery in Pottstown and is located between Route 100 and Farmington Avenue in the northern part of the Borough.

Mount Zion Cemetery is the largest cemetery in North Coventry Township. It is situated on the east side of South Hanover Street - between Route 422 and Route 724.

Golf Courses

Bellwood Golf Club in North Coventry Township and Brookside Country Club in Pottstown are two large areas of temporarily protected open space that add to the appeal and quality of life in both communities.

g. Municipal Lands

Existing and Planned Parks

North Coventry Parks

River Park

River Park is a Township owned park and contains 10 acres of parkland located along the northern boundary of North Coventry Township adjacent to the Schuylkill River. The park provides for a variety of day uses including: picnicking, playfields, and passive recreation. River Park could be a major destination point and trailhead for greenway and trail alignments originating in North Coventry Township.

Kenilworth Park

Kenilworth Park is located south of Route 724 in the northeastern corner of North Coventry Township. The 22-acre park features amenities such as ball fields, tennis courts, a lake and a pavilion.



Wampler baseball field.

Wampler Complex

The area known as the Wampler Complex is located on the river in South Pottstown. It is approximately 15 acres and contains a playground, play courts and play fields, and a boat launch, which is a landing on the Schuylkill river Water Trail.

South Pottstown Green

South Pottstown Green is a 1.75 acre passive recreation area south of River Road and between Coyne Alley and York Street.

Schuylkill Avenue Park

Schuylkill Avenue Park is located near the Wampler Site. An open space area offers seating and horseshoe pits. Public tennis and basketball courts are available on an adjacent site across the street.

Pottstown Parks

Riverfront Park

Riverfront Park is approximately 39 acres in size and is bounded by the Schuylkill River on the south, College Drive / Keystone Boulevard (and OxyChem RR spur line) on the north, the Hanover Street Bridge on the east and extends west to the West Pottsgrove Township boundary. The site is largely wooded, but access via trails to the Schuylkill River is possible near the Schuylkill River Center Building and across from the community college.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

Memorial Park

Memorial Park is approximately 58 acres in size and is bounded by High Street on the south, Route 100 on the north, the Manatawny Creek, Manatawny Street and residences on the east and the existing Colebrookdale Spur railroad line on the west. Memorial Park features many active recreation opportunities, such as basketball courts, baseball fields and playgrounds. Many Borough events are held in Memorial Park.

h. Potential Conservation Areas

The Natural Lands Trust's *Multi-Municipal Conservation Planning Study* has identified potential conservation areas and open space networks within North Coventry Township. Stream valleys are identified as being of primary importance in terms of conservation. Other categories of land include protected lands, forest / woodland, pasture and row crops. Potential pedestrian connections are shown on the Conceptual Open Space Network Map (See Appendix). One of these connections, which runs from Cedarville Road to the Kenilworth Park area, mirrors North Coventry Township's planned "East Link" Trail (See Figure 2.5).

i. Schools and Churches

The Owen J. Roberts School District is comprised of seven Townships including North Coventry Township. North Coventry Elementary School is located at 475 Kemp Road. All other schools within the Owen J. Roberts School District are located outside of North Coventry Township.

Pottstown Schools:

There are nineteen schools located within the Borough. Figure 2.4 locates the schools in the Borough.

SCHOOL	NUMBER (Figure 2.4)
North Coventry Elementary School	1
Hill School	2
St. Peter's School	3
Rupert Elementary School	4
Wyndcroft School	5
Edgewood Elementary School	6
St. Pius X High School	7
Franklin Elementary School	8
Pottstown High School	9
Pottstown Middle School	10
Lincoln Elementary School	11
Barth Elementary School	12
West Pottsgrove Elementary School	13
St. Gabriel's Elementary School	14
Pottsgrove High School	15
Montgomery County Community College	16
Coventry Christian School	17
Westmont Christian School	18
St. Aloysius School	19

Churches: There are several churches within the project study area. See Figure 2.4. for general church locations.

Coventry Church of the Brethren
Holy Trinity
Hillside Gospel Chapel
St. Paul's Church
First Baptist Church
Grace Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church
Cedarville United Methodist
Bethel AME Church
Kingdom Hall
Calvary Christian Center
First Church of Brethren
St. John Lutheran Church
St. JAS Lutheran Church
Congregation Mercy & Truth

j. North Coventry Township Existing Ordinance Protection Summary

Floodplains, natural resource conservation areas, scenic preservation areas, and historic areas have distinct regulations under the North Coventry Township Zoning Ordinance Overlay Districts. These districts were developed to protect and conserve the natural and cultural resources that are an integral component of the Township's character. Below is a brief summary of each overlay district:

Floodplain Conservation Overlay District

- Classifies three sub-districts; Floodway, Flood Fringe and Approximated Floodplain, and specifies uses permitted within the Floodplain Overlay District;
- Uses are primarily limited to non-structural, non-residential uses. Provisions are included for alteration or expansion of existing non-conforming structures; and
- Provisions are consistent with FEMA requirements.

In addition to preserving floodplains for environment purposes, floodplains could serve for their potential in terms of help in the creation of trails and greenways in the Township.

Natural Resource Conservation Overlay District

- Defines protected resources for and provides maximum disturbance allowances as follows: floodplain - 0%, watercourses - 0%, wetlands - 0%, wetland margins - 20%, steep slopes of more than >25% - 15%, steep slopes 15 to -25% - 30%, and woodlands – 50%. In areas that resources overlap there are more stringent requirements;
- A minimum buildable area must be identified indicating compliance with maximum disturbance limits of the protected resources; and

Physical Inventory and Analysis

- A tree protection zone is required for existing trees to prevent injury to trees during construction.

Scenic Preservation Overlay District

- Identifies setbacks along scenic sections of Route 724, east and west of Route 100;
- Limits uses within those setbacks to those which will least detract from the scenic character of the area; and
- Allows adaptive re-use of existing structures and use of an area as open space for cluster development.

Historic Preservation Overlay District

- Identifies and classifies historic resources on the Historic Resource Map. Classifications include: Class I: Historic resources listed in or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or historic resources listed as contributing resource in a National Register historic district. This Map district is an overlay on all zoning districts. Class II: historic resources determined to be of significance to North Coventry Township as determined by the Historic Commission. Class III: All other historic districts; and
- Establishes guidelines by which proposed changes affecting historic resources are reviewed.

k. Historic Significance /Heritage

The Borough of Pottstown, one of the earliest industrial centers on the river, is intertwined with America's history of iron and steel production. The resources necessary to make iron were found in abundance in the Pottstown area. John Potts, the founder of Pottstown bought nearly 1000 acres in 1752 near the confluence of the Manatawny Creek and Schuylkill River. Pottsgrove Manor, the ancestral home John Potts, is a significant area historic resource. Sections of Memorial Park were included in John Potts' original land holdings and contained some of the town's first mills. Other historic artifacts and buildings exist in the park area.

Pottstown grew into a major industrial center in the late 19th century as is evidenced by its industrial history and by the number of National Register Historic Sites and Districts from this period. Pottstown has two historic districts, the Old Pottstown Historic District and the High Street Historic District, in the downtown area along High Street (See figure 2.4). Through the many fine examples of residential and commercial architecture, each district expresses the distinctive characteristics of Pottstown's historical and cultural heritage. Pottstown historic areas have distinct regulations that are administered by the Borough Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB).

As Pottstown grew as an industrial center, North Coventry developed as well. Two of the earliest rural developments in North Coventry Township included the villages of Pottstown Landing and South Pottstown. Their historical significance centered on their proximity to the Schuylkill Canal. Both communities were primarily residential with some commercial stores. The villages of Cedarville and Kenilworth grew as crossroad villages in the 1800's.

The villages of Pottstown Landing, South Pottstown, Cedarville and Kenilworth, each reflect a mix of architectural styles that give each neighborhood a unique identity. Many of the buildings located within these villages retain a high degree of architectural integrity. Pottstown Landing was designated a National Historic Register Site in 2001.

Perhaps the most important element of the town's heritage is its connection to the environment. Opportunities to allow people to reconnect to their environmental heritage are plentiful at the parks, and the Reconnections plan must take advantage of these opportunities.

Laurel Locks Canal is a significant historic artifact within North Coventry Township. The locks located on Laurel Locks Farm were constructed on the Schuylkill Canal by the Schuylkill Navigation Company in 1824. The owners of Laurel Locks Farm are committed to historic preservation. Public tours of the farm are by appointment.

I. Existing and Planned Trail and Bike Linkages

Within the study area, a variety of trails exist or are in the planning phase. The Schuylkill River Trail is planned to follow the riverfront through Pottstown Borough. In Pottstown's Keystone Opportunity Zone, a portion of the trail has been recently completed. Upon leaving Pottstown Borough, the Schuylkill River Trail is planned to cross to the Route 422 Bridge into North Coventry Township and continues eastward on the Chester County side of the Schuylkill River.

The Colebrookdale Spur Trail is planned to originate at Riverfront Park in Pottstown and follow the Manatawny Creek north into Berks County. The Riverfront Park Trail will provide access to Hanover Street and various promenades are planned to connect the park with downtown Pottstown and the Montgomery County Community College.

Montgomery County has designated a variety of roads within Pottstown as primary and secondary on-road bike routes. High Street and Charlotte Street are primary on-road bike routes through Pottstown. No state bike routes exist within the project study area.

Two completed trails exist in North Coventry Township. Hanover Trail connects Cedarville Road with South Hanover Street. The other completed trail is located within Kenilworth Park. An "East Link" trail alignment is proposed to connect the Kenilworth Park Trail to the Hanover Trail and provide Township residents with access to the Schuylkill River Trail.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

m. Existing Transportation Routes

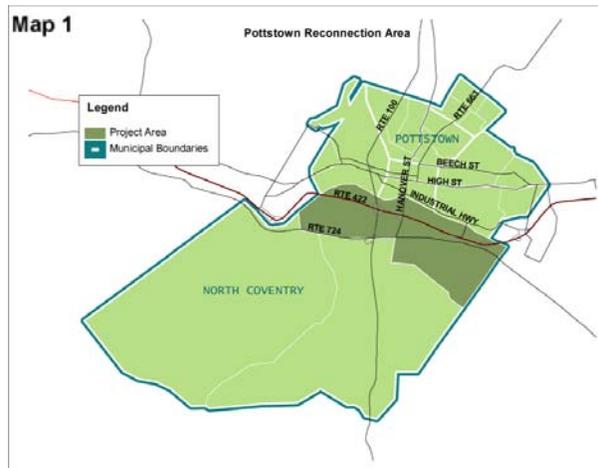
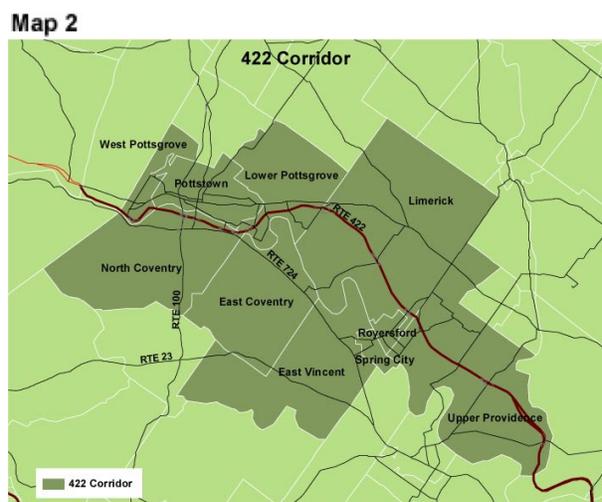
The project study area contains two major, limited-access highways – U.S. Route 422 and PA Route 100. High Street in Pottstown Borough and PA Route 724 in North Coventry Township are arterials that provide east-west mobility. Hanover Street provides north-south access through the study area. In North Coventry Township, Laurelwood Road and River Road connect the villages of Pottstown Landing and South Pottstown.

n. Transportation Service

SEPTA provides regional bus service to Pottstown Borough with its Route 93 bus line, which stops along High Street, downtown Pottstown and Montgomery County Community College. A local transportation service, Pottstown Urban Transit, provides bus service from downtown Pottstown to Coventry Mall and four other routes through Pottstown Borough, West Pottsgrove Township and Lower Pottsgrove Township (See Figure 2.6).



Route 422.

o. Economic Analysis**Pottstown Reconnections Area.****Route 422 Corridor.**Introduction

The project area is 12.5 square miles and straddles both sides of the Schuylkill River. Primary roads leading to the area include Route 422 and Route 100 (see Map 1). The area benefits from good access, planned existing waterfront parks, and an attractive supply of housing, but it also suffers from abandoned buildings and unattractive, inconvenient, and often unsafe pedestrian connections through large sections of the project area. Commercial and residential development strategies in combination with physical improvements area possible to more successfully link North Coventry and Pottstown. This section explores the economic opportunities that help reconnect the two towns as well as help better serve the businesses and residents within this area.

The project area is in the “growth path” of the rapidly expanding communities along Route 422, and given the right planning and marketing of the area, it could capture a portion of this growth. Both towns have developed plans that show future development concentrating along Hanover Street toward the river. Pending and on-going development projects include the redevelopment of the Mrs. Smith’s site, extension of College Drive into the KOZ area, expansion of the Montgomery County Community College, rehabilitation and tenancing of the First Fidelity Bank building and increased occupancy along High Street and at the Coventry Mall.

Recent trends in the immediate area of North Coventry and Pottstown were analyzed, as well as along the “growth path,” referred to in this report as the 422 Corridor. Trends in the census tract closest to the river on the North Coventry side were also reviewed to provide a clearer picture of conditions in the project area.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

Census Analysis

The growth path of the 422 Corridor includes 11 municipalities including Pottstown and North Coventry (see Map 2). Population in these municipalities soared by over 25% in the 1990s, bringing an additional 17,056 people to the area (see Table 1). The communities that led the boom are Limerick, Upper Providence, and Lower Pottsgrove, adding between 2,400 and 7,000 residents each. Four of the 11 communities declined modestly in population, including North Coventry, Spring City, Royersford, and West Pottsgrove.

Between Pottstown and North Coventry, the two municipalities lost almost 100 residents. While Pottstown's population increased by 28, North Coventry's population fell by 125. The project area experienced a high concentration of North Coventry's decline, losing 247 residents, while other areas of the Township increased in population in the 1990s.

The population forecast prepared by the DVRPC shows the 422 Corridor adding nearly 25,010 more residents by 2025 (see Table 2). Limerick and Upper Providence are projected to gain most significantly, adding 10,636 and 7,600, respectively. Lower Pottsgrove is forecasted to gain 4,327. While North Coventry's population declined in the 1990s, analysts project that the community will grow by 1,329 residents by 2025. Pottstown is expected to continue its decline, losing 1,289 residents over the twenty-five year time period.

With proper planning and supports, however, these two communities, and especially the project area and especially The Borough, which is actively seeking to add population, could capture a larger portion of the growth projected for the 422 Corridor, particularly in light of redevelopment plans for the Mrs. Smith's site, enhanced waterfront parks, and the future Schuylkill Valley metro-rail station stop in Pottstown.

New housing developments have also been growing rapidly along the 422 Corridor. There have been nearly 3,000 new housing units alone in Limerick and 2,000 in Upper Providence. Overall, the area added 7,670 housing units in the 1990s. Pottstown and North Coventry added nearly 500 housing units, and the study area added just 34 units. Overall, vacancy remained largely unchanged along the 422 Corridor between 1990

Table 1: Census Analysis

Project Area	1990	2000	Change
Population	2,952	2,705	-247
Housing Units	1,242	1,276	34
Occupied Units	1,183	1,221	38
Vacant Units	59	55	-4
Owner-Occupied	633	640	7
Renter-Occupied	550	581	31
Pottstown & North Coventry - Totals			
	1990	2000	Change
Population	29,337	29,240	-97
Housing Units	12,596	13,087	491
Occupied Units	11,859	12,158	299
Vacant Units	737	929	192
Owner-Occupied	7,310	7,312	2
Renter-Occupied	4,549	4,846	297
422 Corridor			
	1990	2000	Change
Population	76,964	94,020	17,056
Housing Units	30,679	38,349	7,670
Occupied Units	29,211	36,364	7,153
Vacant Units	1,468	1,985	517
Owner-Occupied	20,505	26,178	5,673
Renter-Occupied	8,706	10,186	1,480

Source: U.S. Census

Table 2: Municipal Population Forecasts

Municipality	Census					
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
East Coventry Township	4,566	5,070	5,080	5,270	5,270	5,340
East Vincent Township	5,493	6,250	6,430	6,530	6,770	6,900
North Coventry Township	7,381	7,770	8,240	8,540	8,640	8,710
Spring City Borough	3,305	3,310	3,410	3,410	3,460	3,460
Limerick Township	13,534	16,540	18,630	20,670	23,250	24,170
Lower Pottsgrove Township	11,213	12,710	13,880	14,540	15,140	15,540
Pottstown Borough	21,859	21,670	21,150	20,880	20,660	20,570
Royersford Borough	4,246	4,250	4,150	4,150	4,100	4,110
Trappe Borough	3,210	3,270	3,390	3,450	3,500	3,510
Upper Providence Township	15,398	16,550	18,410	20,450	22,820	23,000
West Pottsgrove Township	3,815	3,820	3,820	3,760	3,760	3,720
Forecasted County Total	94,020	101,210	106,590	111,650	117,370	119,030

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), February 2002
Compiled by: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

and 2000, meaning that household growth kept pace with new housing developments. However, North Coventry is the only community where the number of vacant units declined, despite a modest population decline and construction of 218 additional units built. The drop in vacancy is due to lower household size, which fell from 2.7 in 1990 to 2.4 in 2000.

Owner-Occupied Housing Units

Owner-occupied housing units among the 422 Corridor dominate the housing market, with 72% owner-occupancy. These units have a slightly higher share of the market since 1990—up almost 2%. East Coventry and Upper Providence have the highest rate of owner-occupied housing units (88% and 87%, respectively). Owner-occupancy in North Coventry is 72% and mirrors the 422 Corridor, but Pottstown's is just 56% (see Table 3).

Single-family homes along the 422 Corridor represent over 95% of the owner-occupied housing market, combining both the attached and detached homes. Single-family detached homes are just under 70% of the market, while single-family attached homes about 25% of the market. There was a 1.4% increase in the share of single-family homes in the owner-occupied housing market between 1990 and 2000. Higher-density condominiums (10 to 50 units) hold a small but increasing share of the market, up from 0.8% to 1.1%.

Single-family homes constituted 93% of the newly owner-occupied homes in North Coventry and 92% in Pottstown. In Pottstown, 60% of all owner-occupied homes were attached units, while only a third were attached in North Coventry. In the project area, 98% are single-family homes, of which 83% are detached units.

The greatest increase among the owner-occupied units along the 422 Corridor was in the three- and four-bedroom unit market (90% of newly occupied for sale units) (see Table 4). The market share of four-bedroom homes increased by 5%, while every other housing type declined. The picture is slightly different in North Coventry where 90% of the newly occupied for sale units were two- and three-bedrooms. In Pottstown, the group was concentrated heavily in the three-bedroom market (57%), but the remainder

Table 3: Owner-Occupied Housing Units by Type

	North Coventry				Pottstown				422 Total			
	1990	2000	Change	% of Owner-Occ. Units	1990	2000	Change	% of Owner-Occ. Units	1990	2000	Change	% of Owner-Occ. Units
Occupied Housing Units	2,773	3,012	239		9,086	9,154	68		29,302	36,385	7,083	
Owner-Occupied Housing Units*	1,970	2,168	198	72%	5,340	5,100	-240	56%	20,557	26,171	5,614	72%
Single-Family Detached	1,821	1,944	123	90%	3,104	3,152	48	62%	14,034	18,159	4,125	69%
Single-Family Attached	118	194	76	9%	2,042	1,729	-313	34%	5,216	6,730	1,514	26%
Multiple Units	10	24	14	1%	183	212	29	4%	663	748	85	3%

*This number includes RVs, which is not shown in detail in this table

Table 4: Owner-Occupied Housing by Bedrooms

	North Coventry				Pottstown				422 Total			
	1990	2000	Change	% of Owner-Occ. Units	1990	2000	Change	% of Owner-Occ. Units	1990	2000	Change	% of Owner-Occ. Units
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	1,970	2,168	198		5,340	5,100	-240		20,557	26,171	5,614	
Efficiency	0	0	0	0%	0	9	9	0%	0	16	16	0%
1 bedroom	12	23	11	1%	92	126	34	2%	337	370	33	1%
2 bedrooms	118	227	109	10%	830	818	-12	16%	3,106	3,654	548	14%
3 bedrooms	1,101	1,223	122	56%	3,023	3,000	-23	59%	11,376	13,771	2,395	53%
4 bedrooms	652	592	-60	27%	1,147	957	-190	19%	4,683	7,284	2,601	28%
5 or more bedrooms	87	103	16	5%	248	190	-58	4%	1,055	1,076	21	4%

Source: U.S. Census

Physical Inventory and Analysis

was spread evenly across the different sized units. In the project area, the owner-occupied houses are predominately three-bedroom units.

Renter-Occupied Housing Units

Renter-occupied housing units represent 28% of the housing market along the 422 Corridor, down over 2% since 1990. Pottstown and Spring City have the highest rate of renter-occupied housing units (48% and 47%, respectively). The primary study area has a 50% rental rate.

Single-family rentals along the 422 Corridor increased by 19% in the 1990s and represent a third of the rental market. A majority of these single-family rentals are in townhouses, but 46% of the single-family rentals are in detached units. Low-density rental structures (2 to 9 units) comprise almost 40% of the rental market, and high-density rental buildings (10+ units) comprise a quarter of the market. Rental buildings with 5 to 9 units jumped by 54.1%. In North Coventry and Pottstown, increases in rental units were seen almost exclusively in the low-density market. Over 50% of the primary study area rental market is in high-density structures.

Over half of the new rental units along the 422 Corridor were concentrated in the two-bedroom market, followed by 23% in the one-bedroom market. In North Coventry, virtually all of the new rental units were one-bedroom apartments. Pottstown nearly doubled its number of efficiencies, an increase that was half again as many as any other sized unit. In the primary study area, just under 90% of the rental units are one- and two-bedrooms apartments.

Sales Housing

The number of homes that sold along the 422 Corridor communities in 2002 was 2,142, an increase of 138 sales over 2000 (see Table 5). Most of these homes sold for between \$100,000 and \$199,999. Twenty-four percent sold for less than \$100,000 and 20% sold for between \$200,000 and \$299,999. Just 11% of the sales went for more than \$300,000—a 3% increase in the market share since 2000.

In North Coventry, the average sales price in the November 2002-2003 time period was \$217,806 (see Table 6). This reflects an 8.7% increase in sales prices since the same 1992-1993 period after adjusting for inflation. Pottstown experienced a decline in sales prices. In the 2002 period, homes sold for an average of \$89,074, down from \$95,388 in 1992 (adjusted for inflation). Home sales in the primary study area averaged \$147,743, up 16% since 1992.

Table 5: Residential Sales Distribution, 422 Corridor

Price Range	2000		2002	
	Number of Sales	Percent of Total Sales	Number of Sales	Percent of Total Sales
Less than \$100,000	511	25%	512	24%
\$100,000 to \$199,999	872	44%	935	44%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	461	23%	436	20%
\$300,000 to \$399,999	121	6%	190	9%
\$400,000 and greater	39	2%	69	3%
Total	2,004	100%	2,142	100%

Source: Win2data

Table 6: Residential Sales

Area	Homes Sold	Real Dollars Average	Adjusted for Inflation	% Increase after Inflation
Primary Study Area				
Nov 1992-93	12	\$101,150	\$127,496	15.9%
Nov 2002-03	14	\$147,743		
North Coventry				
Nov 1992-93	48	\$158,912	\$200,304	8.7%
Nov 2002-03	115	\$217,806		
Pottstown				
Nov 1992-93	190	\$75,677	\$95,388	-6.6%
Nov 2002-03	45	\$89,074		

Source: Win2Data

Reconnections: “Reconnecting the people of North Coventry Township and Pottstown Borough with each other and their Schuylkill River Heritage”

Real estate listings (Realtor.com) show 54 homes listed for sale as of February 16, 2004. Of these, 32 were in Pottstown and 22 were in North Coventry. Listings range from \$45,000 for a 924 SF house in Pottstown to \$1.5 million for an 8,200 SF home in North Coventry. Nine homes in Pottstown are listed for under \$100,000, 14 are listed between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and three are listed for over \$200,000. These three homes are considerable in size. For example, the house that is listed at \$675,000 is 6,357 square feet. Generally, homes in Pottstown are priced a little over \$100 a square foot. In North Coventry, no homes are listed for under \$100,000. Six homes are listed between \$200,000 and \$300,000, four homes are listed between \$300,000 and \$400,000, seven homes are listed between \$400,000 and \$600,000, and five homes are listed for above \$600,000. The average size of house on the market is 3,400 SF, with an average price per square foot of \$142.

Opportunities for Sales Housing

North Coventry is expected to grow by 1,329 residents by 2025. Given that the typical household size in North Coventry is 2.4 and along the 422 Corridor is 2.59, this growth likely will translate into demand for between 500 and 550 housing units—most of which will be for sales housing. Successful sales housing types in North Coventry will need to reflect the current home buying trends there and along 422 and will also need to achieve the density necessary to support an active, walkable community, linking residents to the parks, shopping areas, and future train station. This suggests that appropriate housing types will include primarily two-, three-, and some four-bedroom single-family townhouses and detached houses that are built on a compact scale. Current zoning will dictate that the denser developments will occur primarily in South Pottstown and in Pottstown's Landing, and that the largest concentration of detached single-family homes will be concentrated in Kenilworth.

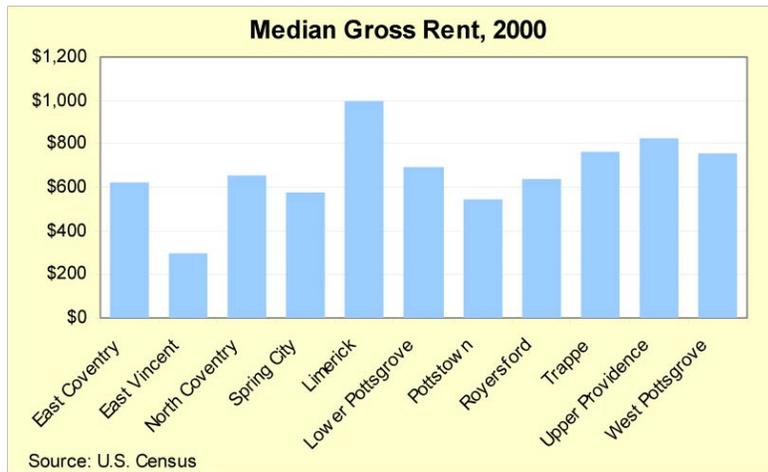
While Pottstown is not forecasted by DVRPC to increase in population, proper planning and supports will allow this community to capture a larger portion of the growth projected for the 422 Corridor. We anticipate that Pottstown will be successful in capturing 5% of the projected population growth along the 422 Corridor, gaining approximately 1,250 residents, or 500 households. Several opportunities for new housing units are planned for Pottstown, including the Mrs. Smith's site, which is central to the Reconnections process. Appropriate housing types for the Mrs. Smith's site will likely include rental apartments and possibly some for sale townhomes and/or condominium flats. We anticipate that the appropriate unit mix for sales housing in North Coventry will include 375 to 425 townhouses and detached single-family homes on small lots. The market for these homes is strongest in the two-, three-, and four-bedroom homes and range in size between 1,800 SF and 3,000 SF. At 2004 price levels, we anticipate that these homes will sell in the \$150 to \$175 per square foot range (sales price of \$270,000 to \$450,000). At the Mrs. Smith's site in Pottstown, we estimate that sales of townhomes and condominium flats, if offered, would be primarily two- and three-bedroom units. Typical units will be between 1,400 SF and 2,200 SF, and sales prices will range between \$115 and \$145 per square foot (sales prices of \$160,000 to \$280,000).

Physical Inventory and Analysis

Rental Housing

Rental housing represented 28% of the housing market along the 422 Corridor in 2000. Rental units are provided in low-rise garden apartment buildings, duplexes, and single-family homes. This report focuses on all but the single-family homes.

Rental rates vary by municipality along the 422 Corridor. The average rental rate among these towns is \$670. Limerick has the highest median gross rent of \$1,000 as reported by the Census in 2000, followed by Upper Providence at \$825, Trappe at \$760, and West Pottsgrove at \$755. East Vincent has the lowest rental rates in this region at just \$300. North Coventry's median rental rate is \$652 and Pottstown's is reported to be \$544. Median rent in the primary study area is \$629.



There are 4,486 renter-occupied units in North Coventry and Pottstown combined. Some of these apartments are in complexes in the two communities. The properties described below are representative of the types of units available in the area.

The Highland Manor Apartments on E. Schuylkill Road are located adjacent to the Bellewood Golf Club on the east side of the study area in North Coventry. This garden style apartment complex has a total of 106 apartments of studios, one- and two-bedroom units. Each unit has only one bathroom. Efficiencies range in size from 500 to 525 SF and rent for \$545. One bedroom apartments are approximately 600 SF and rent for \$650. Two-bedroom units range in size from 760 to 800 SF and rent for \$695. At the time this report was written, there were three one-bedroom units and two two-bedroom units available. The rental rates reflect a temporary special of an 8% discount off a one-year lease.

Hanover Gardens, also on E. Schuylkill Road, is located just south of the Coventry Mall. The garden style complex was built in 1969 with a total of 184 apartments, of which 105 are one-bedroom and 78 are two-bedroom units. The one-bedroom units are 717 SF and rent for \$605. The two-bedroom units have two bathrooms and are 810 SF and rent for \$720. At the time this report was written, there was one one-bedroom unit and two two-bedroom units available. Current specials include a \$100 security deposit and 6% off rent for a one-bedroom and 10% off rent for a two-bedroom.

Valley View is located on W. Schuylkill Road, west of Route 100. The complex has 176 apartments, 86 of which are one-bedroom units and 90 are two-bedroom units. Each unit has only one bathroom. The one-bedroom apartments are 715 SF and rent for \$675. The two-bedroom apartments are 815 SF and rent for \$799. The rental rates for both unit types reflect a special rate. At the time this report was written, there were four one-bedroom apartments and three two-bedroom apartments available.

Further down the 422 Corridor in Royersford and Limerick, there have been two large-scale apartment complexes developed within the last year. Lakeview Park is located in Royersford just off 422 and was built in 2003. The development has 80 units, three-quarters of which were leased up in 11 months. Twenty of the units are one-bedroom and range in size from 880 SF to 910 SF and rent from \$925. The 60 two-bedroom units also have two baths and range in size from 1,157 SF to 1,214 SF. Rent for a two-bedroom unit starts at \$1025. Tenants who sign a one-year lease get one additional month rent free.

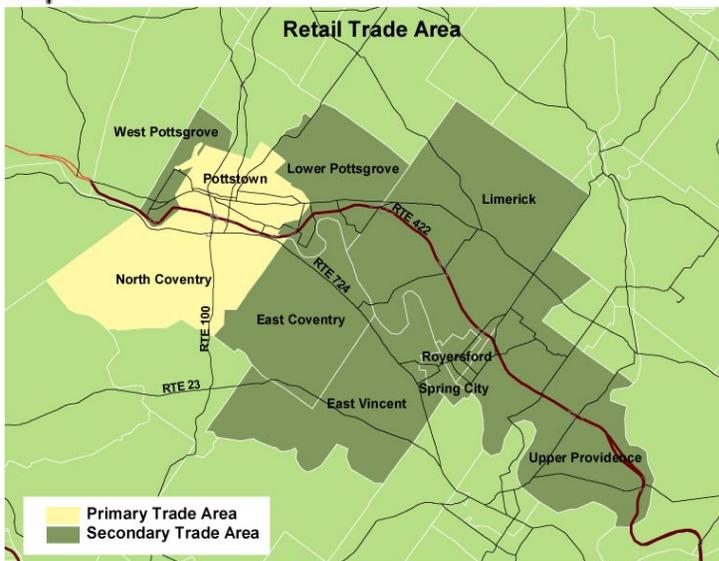
Fox Ridge at Lakeside is located on Four Maples Court in Limerick. Lakeside opened in 2002 and leased up in 12 months. There are 80 units at Fox Ridge and only three currently are vacant. The apartments are a mix of 873 SF one bedrooms that rent from \$875 and two-bedroom units that range in size from 1,140 SF to 1,225 SF and rent from \$975 to \$1,035. Tenants who sign a one year lease get \$400 of their first month's rent.

Opportunities for Rental Housing

The rental market in Pottstown and North Coventry is fairly strong, with few vacancies reported in any of the apartment complexes interviewed. Future development of rental housing will be focused in Pottstown with very few in North Coventry, given the current mix of housing there. As stated in the sales housing section, we anticipate that Pottstown will be able to capture 5% of the project population growth along the 422 Corridor, yielding 500 households. Half of that growth likely will translate into demand for rental housing. Current market trends show that demand for rental units is primarily for one- and two-bedroom units ranging in size from 800-900 SF for a one-bedroom and between 1,000-1,200 SF for a two-bedroom. Pricing at 2004 levels suggest that these units will rent for between \$.85 and \$1.00 per square foot per month.

Trade Area Retail Demand

Map 3



Retail Trade Area.

Based on 2000 Census data, the 422 Corridor, including North Coventry and Pottstown, has a population of 110,450. The 2003 per capita income for the area (using 2000 Census income data adjusted for inflation) is estimated at \$28,120, and the total income for the area is approximately \$3.1 billion (see Table 7). For this analysis, Pottstown and North Coventry are considered the primary trade area and the remaining communities along the 422 Corridor comprise the secondary trade area (see Map 3). The 2003 per capita income in Pottstown and North Coventry is \$25,960, and is \$28,900 in the 422 communities.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

Table 7
Current and Projected Retail Store Purchases
By Residents of Pottstown Trade Area

	2000 Census			2010 Forecasted			Change, 2000-2010		
	Primary Trade Area	Secondary Trade Area	2000 Total	Primary Trade Area	Secondary Trade Area	2010 Forecasted Total	Primary Trade Area	Secondary Trade Area	Total
TOTAL POPULATION	29,240	64,780	94,020	29,390	77,200	106,590			
TOTAL INCOME (\$000)	\$660,938	\$1,887,681	\$2,548,619	\$664,329	\$2,249,598	\$2,913,927			
TOTAL RETAIL PURCHASES (\$000)	\$317,473	\$906,724	\$1,224,197	\$319,102	\$1,080,566	\$1,399,668	\$1,629	\$173,842	\$175,471
CONVENIENCE GOODS	\$110,086	\$286,089	\$396,175	\$110,651	\$340,939	\$451,590	\$565	\$54,851	\$55,415
Supermarkets, Grocery Stores	\$44,245	\$98,024	\$142,269	\$44,472	\$116,817	\$161,290	\$227	\$18,794	\$19,021
Convenience Stores	\$8,050	\$17,835	\$25,886	\$8,092	\$21,255	\$29,347	\$41	\$3,420	\$3,461
Meat Stores	\$547	\$1,213	\$1,760	\$550	\$1,445	\$1,995	\$3	\$232	\$235
Fish Stores	\$131	\$290	\$420	\$131	\$345	\$476	\$1	\$56	\$56
Fruit & Vegetables	\$265	\$588	\$853	\$267	\$700	\$967	\$1	\$113	\$114
Bakeries	\$112	\$248	\$360	\$113	\$296	\$408	\$1	\$48	\$48
Candy & Nuts	\$155	\$343	\$497	\$155	\$408	\$564	\$1	\$66	\$66
Other Specialty Foods	\$154	\$340	\$494	\$154	\$406	\$560	\$1	\$65	\$66
Liquor & Beer Distributors	\$2,856	\$6,328	\$9,184	\$2,871	\$7,541	\$10,412	\$15	\$1,213	\$1,228
Drug Stores/Pharmacies	\$30,442	\$91,421	\$121,863	\$30,598	\$108,949	\$139,547	\$156	\$17,528	\$17,684
Cosmetics, Beauty Supplies, & Perfum e	\$1,364	\$4,096	\$5,460	\$1,371	\$4,881	\$6,252	\$7	\$785	\$792
Health Food Supplements	\$1,077	\$3,234	\$4,311	\$1,082	\$3,854	\$4,936	\$6	\$620	\$626
Other Health & Personal Care	\$1,460	\$4,384	\$5,844	\$1,467	\$5,225	\$6,692	\$7	\$841	\$848
Limited-Service Restaurants	\$17,259	\$51,833	\$69,092	\$17,348	\$61,770	\$79,118	\$89	\$9,938	\$10,026
Bars and Lounges	\$1,969	\$5,913	\$7,882	\$1,979	\$7,047	\$9,025	\$10	\$1,134	\$1,144
FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS	\$18,006	\$54,075	\$72,080	\$18,098	\$64,442	\$82,540	\$92	\$10,368	\$10,460
SHOPPING GOODS	\$130,283	\$391,261	\$521,543	\$130,951	\$466,275	\$597,226	\$668	\$75,015	\$75,683
Full-Service Department Stores	\$10,862	\$32,621	\$43,484	\$10,918	\$38,876	\$49,794	\$56	\$6,254	\$6,310
Discount Department Stores	\$14,666	\$44,045	\$58,711	\$14,741	\$52,490	\$67,231	\$75	\$8,445	\$8,520
Warehouse Clubs	\$9,365	\$28,124	\$37,489	\$9,413	\$33,517	\$42,929	\$48	\$5,392	\$5,440
Other General Merchandise Stores	\$3,249	\$9,756	\$13,005	\$3,265	\$11,627	\$14,892	\$17	\$1,871	\$1,887
Men's Clothing	\$3,045	\$9,144	\$12,189	\$3,060	\$10,897	\$13,957	\$16	\$1,753	\$1,769
Women's Clothing	\$8,413	\$25,265	\$33,678	\$8,456	\$30,109	\$38,566	\$43	\$4,844	\$4,887
Children's Clothing	\$1,431	\$4,299	\$5,730	\$1,439	\$5,123	\$6,562	\$7	\$824	\$832
Family Clothing	\$13,826	\$41,521	\$55,347	\$13,897	\$49,482	\$63,379	\$71	\$7,961	\$8,032
Clothing Accessories	\$658	\$1,976	\$2,634	\$661	\$2,355	\$3,016	\$3	\$379	\$382
Other Clothing	\$2,231	\$6,701	\$8,932	\$2,243	\$7,985	\$10,228	\$11	\$1,285	\$1,296
Shoe Stores	\$6,340	\$19,041	\$25,382	\$6,373	\$22,692	\$29,065	\$33	\$3,651	\$3,683
Jewelry Stores	\$5,713	\$17,158	\$22,871	\$5,743	\$20,447	\$26,190	\$29	\$3,290	\$3,319
Luggage & Leatherwork	\$440	\$1,321	\$1,761	\$442	\$1,574	\$2,016	\$2	\$253	\$255
Furniture	\$5,601	\$16,820	\$22,420	\$5,629	\$20,044	\$25,674	\$29	\$3,225	\$3,253
Floor Coverings	\$2,252	\$6,763	\$9,014	\$2,263	\$8,059	\$10,323	\$12	\$1,297	\$1,308
Window Treatments	\$125	\$376	\$501	\$126	\$448	\$573	\$1	\$72	\$73
Other Home Furnishings	\$1,823	\$5,475	\$7,298	\$1,832	\$6,524	\$8,357	\$9	\$1,050	\$1,059
Household Appliances	\$1,378	\$4,140	\$5,518	\$1,385	\$4,933	\$6,319	\$7	\$794	\$801
Radio/TV/Electronics	\$4,398	\$13,207	\$17,604	\$4,420	\$15,739	\$20,159	\$23	\$2,532	\$2,555
Computer & Software Stores	\$3,289	\$9,878	\$13,167	\$3,306	\$11,771	\$15,077	\$17	\$1,894	\$1,911
Camera, Photo Supply	\$308	\$925	\$1,232	\$309	\$1,102	\$1,411	\$2	\$177	\$179
Optical Stores	\$1,985	\$5,962	\$7,947	\$1,995	\$7,105	\$9,100	\$10	\$1,143	\$1,153
General-Line Sporting Goods	\$2,874	\$8,631	\$11,505	\$2,889	\$10,286	\$13,175	\$15	\$1,655	\$1,670
Specialty Sporting Goods	\$3,312	\$9,947	\$13,260	\$3,329	\$11,855	\$15,184	\$17	\$1,907	\$1,924
Toys & Hobbies	\$4,441	\$13,336	\$17,777	\$4,464	\$15,893	\$20,357	\$23	\$2,557	\$2,580
Sewing, Needlework	\$982	\$2,950	\$3,933	\$987	\$3,516	\$4,503	\$5	\$566	\$571
Music Stores	\$1,173	\$3,523	\$4,696	\$1,179	\$4,199	\$5,378	\$6	\$675	\$681
Book Stores	\$3,819	\$11,470	\$15,290	\$3,839	\$13,670	\$17,509	\$20	\$2,199	\$2,219
Newsstands	\$264	\$792	\$1,055	\$265	\$943	\$1,208	\$1	\$152	\$153
Record/CD/Tape Stores	\$2,065	\$6,201	\$8,266	\$2,075	\$7,390	\$9,465	\$11	\$1,189	\$1,199
Video Stores	\$209	\$628	\$836	\$210	\$748	\$958	\$1	\$120	\$121
Office Supply/Stationers	\$5,270	\$15,828	\$21,098	\$5,297	\$18,862	\$24,160	\$27	\$3,035	\$3,062
Gift, Novelty, Souvenir Stores	\$4,474	\$13,437	\$17,912	\$4,497	\$16,014	\$20,511	\$23	\$2,576	\$2,599
OTHER RETAIL STORES	\$56,326	\$169,157	\$225,483	\$56,615	\$201,589	\$258,204	\$289	\$32,432	\$32,721
Home Centers	\$15,935	\$47,854	\$63,789	\$16,016	\$57,029	\$73,045	\$82	\$9,175	\$9,257
Paint & Wallpaper Stores	\$2,452	\$7,362	\$9,814	\$2,464	\$8,774	\$11,238	\$13	\$1,412	\$1,424
Hardware Stores	\$4,199	\$12,610	\$16,810	\$4,221	\$15,028	\$19,249	\$22	\$2,418	\$2,439
Retail Lumber Yards	\$12,915	\$38,787	\$51,702	\$12,982	\$46,224	\$59,205	\$66	\$7,436	\$7,503
Nursery & Garden Centers	\$1,673	\$5,025	\$6,698	\$1,682	\$5,988	\$7,670	\$9	\$963	\$972
Auto Parts & Accessories Stores	\$8,909	\$26,756	\$35,666	\$8,955	\$31,886	\$40,841	\$46	\$5,130	\$5,176
Florists	\$2,023	\$6,076	\$8,099	\$2,034	\$7,241	\$9,274	\$10	\$1,165	\$1,175
Antique Stores	\$585	\$1,756	\$2,340	\$588	\$2,092	\$2,680	\$3	\$337	\$340
Other Used Merchandise	\$1,281	\$3,846	\$5,126	\$1,287	\$4,583	\$5,870	\$7	\$737	\$744
Pet Supply Stores	\$1,695	\$5,091	\$6,787	\$1,704	\$6,068	\$7,772	\$9	\$976	\$985
Art Dealers	\$926	\$2,782	\$3,708	\$931	\$3,315	\$4,246	\$5	\$533	\$538
Tobacco Stores	\$947	\$2,844	\$3,791	\$952	\$3,389	\$4,341	\$5	\$545	\$550
Collectors' Items & Supplies	\$379	\$1,139	\$1,518	\$381	\$1,358	\$1,739	\$2	\$218	\$220
Other Miscellaneous Retail Stores	\$2,407	\$7,229	\$9,636	\$2,419	\$8,615	\$11,034	\$12	\$1,386	\$1,398
SERVICES	\$2,773	\$6,143	\$8,916	\$2,787	\$7,321	\$10,108	\$14	\$1,178	\$1,192
Hair Salons	\$1,518	\$3,363	\$4,881	\$1,526	\$4,008	\$5,534	\$8	\$645	\$653
Laundries; Dry Cleaning	\$1,255	\$2,780	\$4,034	\$1,261	\$3,313	\$4,574	\$6	\$533	\$539

UrbanPartners 2/2004

Reconnections: "Reconnecting the people of North Coventry Township and Pottstown Borough with each other and their Schuylkill River Heritage"

In general, consumer shopping patterns vary depending on the types of goods being purchased. For convenience goods purchased frequently, such as groceries, drugs, and prepared foods, shoppers typically make purchases at stores close to their home or place of work. For larger-ticket, rarely purchased items—such as automobiles, electronics and large appliances—shoppers may travel anywhere within the metropolitan area or beyond to obtain the right item at the right price. For apparel, household furnishings, and other shopping goods, consumers generally establish shopping patterns between these two extremes, trading at a number of shopping areas within a 30 minute commute of their homes.

Using information about the retail spending behavior of Philadelphia metro-area residents as compiled by Sales and Marketing Management, we estimate that residents throughout this region spent \$1.2 billion in 2003 on retail goods and services overall, \$317.5 million of which is spent by primary trade area residents and \$906.7 million by secondary trade area residents. Residents of the primary trade area spend \$110.1 million for convenience goods and services. (Consumers residing in the secondary trade area are not likely to travel to the study area to purchase convenience goods and services, therefore, demand for these items was not included.) Combined, residents of the two trade areas spend \$360.1 million on apparel, \$81 million on full-service restaurants, \$71 million on home furnishings, \$154.7 million on other shopping goods and \$252.8 million on other retail goods. By 2010, retail purchases are projected to increase by \$175.5 million. Increased spending on convenience goods in the project area will be minimal, but spending on shopping goods and other retail goods will increase by \$108,400 and \$10,460 on restaurants.

North Coventry and Pottstown Area Plans

The North Coventry Comprehensive Plan has directed future growth primarily to the area east of Route 100 and around the major transportation interchanges of Route 724 and Route 100. Future infrastructure improvements will be focused within these areas. The Future Land Use Map shows a mixture of commercial, light industrial, residential, and open space dispersed in this area. Potential development is indicated for each use, including 18,513 SF at the site of the mall (referred to as “Major Commercial”), 143,748 SF of light industrial or office space, 503,111 SF of retail space and 66 to 264 residential units in the mixed-use areas, and 72 to 288 units in the residential areas.

Previous plans for the Borough of Pottstown include a Comprehensive Plan prepared in 1994 and the Community and Economic Development Action and Implementation Strategy, which reinforce the initiatives laid out in the Comprehensive Plan. Many of the initiatives have been implemented or are underway, including strengthening High Street as a retail shopping district through physical improvements and active tenancing of stores, establishing Downtown Pottstown as a mixed-use center through the reuse of the Mrs. Smith’s complex and the First Fidelity Bank Building, increasing land availability for future industrial and flex space development at the KOZ site, improving the supply of quality residential properties within the Downtown area, and enhancing the waterfront parks along the Schuylkill River and Manatawny Creek.

Physical Inventory and Analysis

Area Retail Activity

The Coventry Mall is located conveniently at the intersection of Routes 422, 100, and 724 in North Coventry. The mall has 600,000 SF of leasable space and claims just 3% of the space is vacant. A former Bradlees is now half occupied by Ross Dress For Less and another tenant for the remainder of the space has been identified. Other recent changes include a new 5,000 SF Dollar Store and a newly renovated and expanded Gap. Long-term plans include developing out parcels as pad sites and maintaining parking around the building. Parking requirements as stated in the zoning ordinance restrict any future development of additional retail space. The manager of the mall stated that they have no interest in selling any portion of the site.

There is a substantial amount of retail along High Street in Pottstown and at some key intersections on 724. Retail on High Street has begun to strengthen in recent months as vacant buildings are being filled with shops and restaurants. In North Coventry, a new 275,000 SF retail development anchored by Lowes is going up at Route 100 and Cedarville Road. Further down the 422 Corridor, the Lakeview Shopping Center was developed on the site that had once been an amusement park in Royersford. The center is anchored by an 86,584 SF Kohl's, a 54,332 SF Giant, and a 30,316 SF Marshall's. Lakeview was 100% leased up within four months. The smallest spaces rent for \$22 to \$26 a square foot.

Potential Commercial and Retail Development in the Reconnections Area

Key opportunities for retail and commercial development that will most significantly impact the reconnections process will be those uses that help connect Downtown Pottstown and Coventry Mall. Most of this activity is likely to occur along Hanover Street, particularly as part of the reuse of the Mrs. Smith's complex, the rehabilitation of the First Fidelity Bank Building, and the effective utilization of properties along Hanover Street in South Pottstown.

The first floor frontage of the Mrs. Smith's reuse along Hanover Street can be appropriately programmed for retail uses particularly emphasizing full-service restaurants and other destination retailers. Similarly, the provision of blocks of well-outfitted office space--both rehabilitated space in the First Fidelity Bank Building and a new space in the Mrs. Smith's reuse--can capture segments of the overall 422 Corridor office market.

Properties along Hanover Street in South Pottstown should be considered for either free-standing retail or independent office/business use as already envisioned in the existing zoning. Other areas in the South Pottstown area also likely to see increased commercial or higher density residential development, especially if the proposed metro-rail service from Reading to Philadelphia is realized.

Table 8
Selected New Retail Space Requirements
Pottstown Trade Area--2000-2010

RETAIL CATEGORY	New Supportable Retail Store Space in SF
TOTAL	433,000
FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS	35,000
SHOPPING GOODS	277,000
Full-Service Department Stores	25,000
Discount Department Stores	34,000
Warehouse Clubs	15,000
Other General Merchandise Stores	8,000
Men's Clothing	6,000
Women's Clothing	18,000
Children's Clothing	3,000
Family Clothing	30,000
Clothing Accesories	2,000
Other Clothing	5,000
Shoe Stores	13,000
Jewelry Stores	10,000
Luggage & Leatherwork	1,000
Furniture	18,000
Floor Coverings	7,000
Other Home Furnishings	4,000
Household Appliances	2,000
Radio/TV/Electronics	7,000
Computer & Software Stores	5,000
Optical Stores	4,000
General-Line Sporting Goods	6,000
Specialty Sporting Goods	7,000
Toys & Hobbies	9,000
Sewing, Needlework	3,000
Music Stores	3,000
Book Stores	9,000
Record/CD/Tape Stores	4,000
Office Supply/Stationers	9,000
Gift, Novelty, Souvenir Stores	10,000
OTHER RETAIL STORES	121,000
Home Centers	25,000
Paint & Wallpaper Stores	5,000
Hardware Stores	9,000
Retail Lumber Yards	32,000
Nursery & Garden Centers	4,000
Auto Parts & Accessories Stores	18,000
Florists	5,000
Antique Stores	2,000
Other Used Merchandise	7,000
Pet Supply Stores	3,000
Art Dealers	3,000
Tobacco Stores	2,000
Collectors' Items & Supplies	1,000
Other Miscellaneous Retail Stores	5,000

Opportunities for Retail Development

As previously stated, population growth in the primary trade area is projected to be minimal by 2010. Therefore, we do not anticipate an increase in demand for convenience goods in the project area. However, population gains along the 422 Corridor will increase demand for shopping and other retail goods. The increase in demand for retail will translate into approximately 433,000 SF of additional retail space, of which there likely will be 35,000 SF in new restaurant space, 277,000 SF in shopping goods, and 121,000 in other retail (see Table 8).

The Reconnections Area can expect to capture approximately 100,000 to 125,000 SF of the total new retail space likely to come on line by 2010, offering a mixture of shopping goods and eateries. Much of this space is already in the pipeline for sites within the project area, including 60,000 to 70,000 SF of retail proposed for the Mrs. Smith's site, the proposed reuse of the first floor of the First Fidelity Bank Building, and other retenanting along High Street. The remainder will likely be accommodated along Route 100 and at the site of the Coventry Mall. Additional retail space beyond what is already in the pipeline will likely only involve small properties in the Reconnections Area.

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Recommendations

The Reconnections Committee developed recommendations for the project area. These conceptual level recommendations, intended to be a guide for improvements developed over time, are described below:

Linkages

There are 11 linkages proposed by this study. They include primary physical connections and other recommendations intended to better connect the two communities.

Linkages will be primarily used by local residents, and occasionally by “regional” trail users entering or exiting from the regional Schuylkill River Land Trail or Schuylkill River Water Trail.

In addition to providing a means of connecting destinations within and between the Borough and the Township, the trails, sidewalks and other linkages also present opportunities for other forms of active and passive recreation. Walking, jogging, cycling, bird watching, fishing along the river or nature study are a few the activities that may be enhanced by the provision of these linkages.

Each of the proposed linkages is keyed to figure 3.10.



Figure 3.1: Proposed Hanover Street Improvements.

1. Hanover Street Bridge Improvements:

The existing box beam bridge is a bleak and sometimes unsettling pedestrian experience. Minimal 4 foot 6 inch wide walkways give little sense of protection and safety to pedestrians, especially when compared to the four-lane, 53 foot wide vehicular cartway. The bridge is the major connection between the two communities, and is a both a symbolic link and gateway to each municipality. Pedestrian use of the bridge should be encouraged by making it more pedestrian friendly by giving pedestrians at least equal priority to the motor vehicle.

Recommendations

Proposed improvements include a decrease in vehicle lanes to 10 feet each and an increase in the width of both walkways to 8 feet. Additionally, a 3-foot wide drip irrigated planter is planned on each side of the bridge, separating vehicles from pedestrians.

Other proposed enhancements to the bridge include:

- Ornamental, pedestrian scaled light pole fixtures, integral to the planter walls;
- A large-scale gateway arch or structure, located at the midpoint of the bridge. Recalling the historic steel industry of the region, this artful structure can be dramatically lit as it “announces” entry into each community; and
- A simple water cannon display that shoots a short burst of water across the river from both banks on the hour. As it announces the time, it will also celebrate the Schuylkill River and river heritage of the communities.



Figure 3.2: River Celebration - an example of water cannons.

2. River Road Trail

One of the primary routes for pedestrians traveling from downtown Pottstown to the Coventry Mall is via the Hanover Street Bridge and then along River Road to Laurelwood Road and the mall. Presently, this is a harrowing experience. There are no dedicated pedestrian walkways along River Road and none along Laurelwood Road until past the Rt. 422 highway underpass. Additionally, pedestrians traveling along River Road cannot enjoy the river views. Creating a safe pedestrian thoroughfare between the Coventry Mall and Pottstown is one of the primary goals of the Reconnections Study Committee. Accordingly, to facilitate this connection, the creation of the River Road Trail is proposed. Two viable options exist to create this link:

1. Maintain two 10-foot wide lanes of vehicular traffic and create a 5-foot wide green planted area with an 8-foot wide path or,
2. Eliminate one lane of vehicular traffic and make River Road to Hanover Street one-way westbound from the intersection of Laurelwood Road. This option will allow for a wider trail and green area within the 33-foot right-of-way.

Elements and advantages of the one-way vehicular option include:

- Motorists traveling from Pottstown to the Coventry Mall from Hanover Street will still be able to turn right (west) onto River Road to travel to the Mall;
- This option has minimal negative impact on the flow of vehicular traffic to the residents of the South Pottstown neighborhood. It should reduce the amount of traffic on this road and actually be a benefit to the residential area;

Either option includes the following benefits:

- The trail creates a greensward along the Schuylkill River;
- This option is the least costly of those considered to implement and can be “tested” on a trial basis with signage and lane barriers;
- Deciduous street trees and pedestrian lights are proposed along the trail. The trail is recommended to be an 8 to 10-foot wide multi-use asphalt path; and
- The River Road Trail will provide better access to River Park and to the proposed North Coventry River Trail (see # 6 below).



Figure 3.4: River Road Sketch showing one-way option.

Alternatives to the preferred River Road Trail concepts were explored. Two other options were developed, presented to the Reconnections Committee and discussed at length (see Figure 3.3).

Recommendations

River Road one-way eastbound from Laurelwood Road to Hanover Street and extend West Elm Street from its western terminus to River Road.

- This option was not recommended since it requires the removal of at least two structures on the west side of Elm Street and it would bring more traffic through the small residential streets of South Pottstown.

Create a new two-way road parallel and adjacent to Route 422 from Hanover Street at the 422 interchange. The new road would extend to River Road near Route 100 overpass. Make River Road one way west from Hanover to the intersection of this new road.

- This option was not recommended since it was the most expensive and construction intensive option and requires obtaining permits for construction through wetlands. It may be useful as a future circulation option as development patterns may change over time to more dense development, especially likely if the Schuylkill Valley Metro reestablishes passenger rail service to Pottstown.

3. Hanover Street Pedestrian Improvements

An alternate route between Pottstown and the Coventry Mall is via Hanover Street to Route 724 (Schuylkill Road). Presently, sidewalks exist on the west side of Hanover Street between River Road and north side of the 422 interchange, and between River Road and Rt. 724 on the east side of Hanover Street. These sidewalks and curbs are in a deteriorated condition and should be replaced soon. Overhead electric, telephone and cable lines are also located on the street and have been noted as unsightly by the committee.



Figure 3.5: Hanover Street Improvements.

The Committee has recommended that pedestrian enhancements be made along the entire length of the road to better serve pedestrians. These improvements include new and wider sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian scale lights, a safe and designated pedestrian way under Rt. 422, designated pedestrian crosswalks at the 422 / Hanover St. ramps and handicapped accessible curb cuts. There exists adequate cartway to reduce lane widths while still maintaining safe lane widths.

While the complete burying of utility lines is cost prohibitive (approximately \$1000 per linear foot), it may be possible to replace existing electric lines with a single “tree electric cable” that eliminates the necessity of the wooden “T” on the utility pole. Alternatively, utility lines might be run in the “alley” behind residences.

4. Pottstown Landing / Laurelwood Road Pedestrian Improvements



Figure 3.6: Laurelwood Road Underpass.

Presently, as pedestrians travel west along River Road and turn south onto Laurelwood Road toward the Coventry Mall, there are not sidewalks. Additionally, there is no designated pedestrian walkway under Route 422, making walking under this bridge with traffic harrowing. This study recommends creating a safe pedestrian walkway under the bridge and along the length of Laurelwood Road to Fisher Street to the Coventry Mall. Additional enhancements include street trees, pedestrian scale lights, and handicapped accessible curb cuts.

PennDOT is currently conducting an assessment of the structures along Rt. 422 in order to plan for their replacement. There is currently approximately 32 feet between the Laurelwood Road abutments, adequate width for two lanes of traffic and at least one generous pedestrian walkway. However, this report recommends that North Coventry Township formally request that PennDOT ensure that there are provisions for safe pedestrian access under this (and other underpasses in the township) as it plans to replace these structures.

As with other pedestrian enhancements, street trees and pedestrian lights are recommended.

Recommendations

5. Railroad Trestle Pedestrian Bridge

A former railroad siding bridge just north of the Route 100 bridge across the river has been abandoned for many years. Appearing to be structurally sound, the trestle superstructure could be adaptively reused for a pedestrian bridge. The pedestrian bridge can provide access to the Schuylkill River Trail on the north side of the river from River Park in North Coventry. Access easements may be needed to create the ramp down from the bridge to the park. Additionally, this connection will provide a short river “loop” to Hanover Street, and a longer “loop” to the Kiem Street Bridge and a third, even longer river loop to the Rt. 422 Bridge in Kenilworth, which is planned to carry the Schuylkill River Trail across the river. If this project is pursued by the municipalities, under water inspection of the abutments for scour should be one of the first inspections of the structure. In addition to being a link between the two communities, the bridge could become an important “place”, used by many residents to enjoy the river.

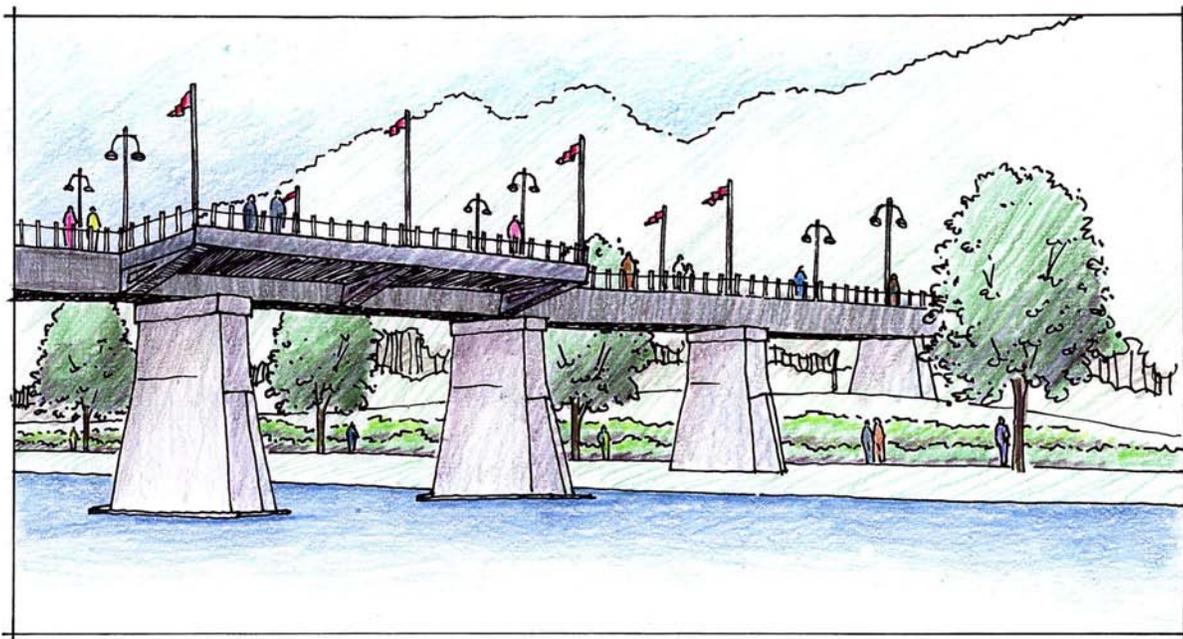


Figure 3.7: Railroad Trestle Pedestrian Bridge.

6. North Coventry River Trail

While access to River Park and the river will be improved by several of the above mentioned linkages, the lands farther upriver of the railroad trestle bridge are presently without pedestrian access. There exists the potential to create the North Coventry River Trail through the Morgan property and on to Laurel Locks Farm that contains an important intact remnant of the Schuylkill River Navigation System, a canal lock structure. The trail would be “two-way” and could continue north into Union Township and Berks County. The owner of Laurel Locks Farm presently offers tours to the public by appointment. Additionally, much of this property has been permanently preserved through conservation easements. This study recommends that the Township enter into discussions with the farm’s owners about the potential for a trail along the river to this historic property. Eventually, this trail could extend farther up the river into Berks County.



Figure 3.8: Rt. 724 On-Road bikeway and sidewalks.

7. PA Route 724 On-Road Bikeway and Sidewalk Improvements

Route 724 is a major arterial in North Coventry. As the road traverses the study area in North Coventry Township, it exhibits several personalities.

At its southern end, it is the Kenilworth neighborhood’s “Main Street”, lined with attractive and distinctive architecture. It also intersects with Keim Street, an existing bridge linking the two communities. Further north, it exhibits less of a village and more of a suburban character as it runs along the Bellwood Golf Club. At Hanover Street it is once again in a village location, on the southern edge of South Pottstown. Strip mixed commercial uses also occupy much of the road frontage and as the road reaches the Coventry Mall, the atmosphere is strictly suburban. However, just past the mall and Laurelwood Road,

Recommendations

Route 724 passes through Laurellocks Farm, a spectacular rural site that preserves what was once the typical agrarian landscape of the area.

The common element along the entire length of the road is that it presently lacks even the most basic of pedestrian or bicycle facilities. This report recommends that on-road bike lanes (both sides) and sidewalks (at least on one side of the road) be constructed along 724 from the Route 422 bridge to Laurelwood Road.

Presently, DVRPC is conducting a Route 724 corridor study which does not include provisions for the addition of pedestrian and bicycle facilities along the road. This study recommends to the township that it request DVRPC add the recommendations for pedestrian/bike facilities contained in this Reconnections Study to that report also. A brief summary of DVRPC's Route 724 study intent is contained in the appendix. Draft recommendations are expected in April or May, 2004.

8. Keim Street Bridge Improvements

The existing Keim Street Bridge provides a potentially important link over the river between the downriver limits of two communities. The Bridge (originally known as the Madison Bridge) was constructed in 1935 by Montgomery County. While it continues to be an important vehicular route, the sidewalk is in deteriorated condition. The Reconnections Committee recommends that a new bridge design be pursued perhaps in combination with a new alignment of both the bridge and Keim Street on the Pottstown side. A realignment of Keim Street on the north side of the river was suggested in the Pottstown Core Area Redevelopment Plan. The municipalities should jointly request to both counties and to PennDOT that a new bridge be made a part of the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) 12-year plan.

If the bridge is replaced, one suggestion from the public meetings that merits serious consideration is the retention of the old Madison Bridge as a pedestrian / bike only bridge. This would eliminate the need for pedestrian accommodations on the new bridge and the retention of a historically and aesthetically important structure.

In the meantime (which could be a few to many years) it is recommended that improvements be made to the bridge that will make pedestrian use of it safer and more attractive and to create more visibility of the bridge as a historic structure in the community. These improvements include:

- Install new concrete sidewalks and curbs;
- Add ornamental light pole fixtures with banners;
- Creatively illuminate the bridge truss;
- Open views to the bridge by selective clearing of vegetation along the river; and
- Paint the bridge.
-

9. Riverside Trail

The Reconnections Study proposes a new trail along the south side of the river from the Route 422 Bridge to South Pottstown. When the regional Schuylkill River Trail is constructed in Chester County to and over the Route 422 into Montgomery County, local links to that trail must be provided. The Riverside trail is proposed to begin at Route 724 and proceed north to the Route 422 river bridge and pass under Route 422 via an existing ramp underpass where there is adequate room for a trail. The trail is then proposed to continue to the eastern terminus of Riverside Drive and continue along the road to the Keim Street Bridge. Here the trail will go under the bridge and continue upstream. It should also continue along the Riverside Drive up to Keim Street to connect new sidewalks. Riverside Drive is a low volume road that serves approximately twenty-five residences.

From the Keim Street Bridge, the trail is proposed to proceed upstream through the large floodplain property presently owned by the Bellewood Golf Club. The trail should be located close to Route 422 for most of its length to avoid significant wet areas. The trail is proposed to connect to the western terminus of East Main Street in South Pottstown where it can connect via existing sidewalks and residential streets to the Wampler Park Complex and Hanover Street.

10. Utility Easement Right of Way - Extend NCT Trail

The existing electric line easement that runs in a roughly north-south orientation from Route 724, east of Route 100 to and just beyond South Keim Street in North Coventry Township presents an opportunity to easily create a new trail link to complement existing and planned trails in the Township.

Recommendations

11. Coventry Mall Promenade (via Fisher Ave.)

Currently, there are no designated pedestrian pathways into the Coventry Mall. While it is recognized that the majority of visits to the mall are via automobile, pedestrian and/or bike trips to the mall could be made more comfortable for those without access to cars or those who choose more primary means of travel.

Intended to link to the improved pedestrian accommodations proposed along Laurelwood Road (#4 above) this study recommends the addition of sidewalks along Fisher Avenue from Laurelwood to the mall property. Here, in combination with the vehicular entrance, a new pedestrian walkway could be added by the mall.



Figure 3.9: Coventry Mall Promenade.

The walkway is proposed to consist of re-aligning two or more rows of parking to create a 5 foot wide painted pathway, lined with trees every 50 feet on center and pedestrian lights on a similar spacing.

Wheel stops could also be added for parking spaces adjacent to the walkway. In addition to providing a pedestrian link, the addition of the trees and lights will enhance the otherwise bleak parking lot. The Reconnections Committee suggests that the mall consider similar link(s) from Route 724 to the mall.

Open Space Protection

12. Islands on Schuylkill River: Periodic flooding problems in the South Pottstown neighborhood of North Coventry Township and the status of existing islands above and below the Keim Street area.

During discussions about the river, two inter-related concerns surfaced from the Reconnections Committee and the public: 1. Occasional flooding in the part of South Pottstown and whether or not additional dredging of the river downstream in the area of the island might mitigate this flooding; and 2. Ownership of the islands that have formed in the river and their value as habitat.

Based on these concerns, inquiries were made with the PA Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (BAMR) as to the history of dredging on this section of the river and other jurisdictional issues. A summary of that information is as follows:

Schuylkill River Project:

- There was a contract as part of the Schuylkill River Project (the state work that dredges the river of accumulated coal silt) for a section of the Schuylkill River near Pottstown. The original Pottstown section of the project started in January of 1950 and ended in May of 1952;
- Dredging took place in selected areas. Temporary dams and pools were created for the Schuylkill River Project for dredging. Dredging also took place behind existing dams;
- There was a temporary dam built in the vicinity of Pottstown one mile or so downstream from the Madison Street (Keim Street) Bridge and upstream from the Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge;
- 18 miles of the Schuylkill River was dredged from the Pottstown temporary dam upstream to Big Reading Dam (this dam no longer exists). This section of the project was called River Section 3;
- The project included clearing shorelines, islands, and dredging of the Schuylkill River; and
- BAMR does not have any record of dredging in this section of the Schuylkill River since that time.

Keim Street Area Islands:

- BAMR does not have any specific records of ownership for these islands.
- Islands are not under jurisdiction of BAMR;
- “Ownership” of the islands would default to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania if no one could prove ownership of the islands. The islands are not listed on municipal tax parcel maps; and
- DGS keeps an inventory of all Commonwealth of PA owned parcels.

Additionally, inquiries were made to the US Army Corps of Engineers in regard to general policies in dredging rivers.

Typically, the Corps only considers river dredging for commercial navigation projects. This area of the river would not qualify for such a project. The Corps does get involved with aquatic restoration, environmental restoration, or flooding projects. An outline of information about these programs is contained in the appendix of this report.

If the either of both municipalities wishes the Corps to consider one of the above three project types, an informal request letter must be submitted to the Corps to begin the process. Sample letters to request Corps involvement are also included in the Corps information in the appendix.

It appears that the most relevant type of study would be a flooding mitigation project for South Pottstown. Corps guidelines state that the agency will undertake such studies only if they present a complete solution to the problem.

Recommendations

An alternative to a flood “control” project is to remove development from areas prone to serious flooding. This approach has been used more and more frequently when flood control is not possible. Additionally, new development (if necessary) in flood plain areas must be designed to remove property and life from harm. A good example of this approach is the Montgomery County Community College building located in the 100 year flood plain in Pottstown.

This study recommends that both communities continue the conversation about these issues and if interested in exploring them further, make contact with the Corps to determine if they can be of assistance.

13. Acquire Bellewood Golf Club Floodplain Site

Due to its location in the floodplain and floodway, the site cannot be developed. Additionally, it is isolated by both the river and Route 422. However, as wetlands and unencumbered flood plain, it plays an important role as habitat and as an area that cannot “absorb” periodic flooding without sustaining damage. It is an important “link” in maintaining green space along the river. Limited use for a trail, as noted above, is the only use recommended for the site. The recently completed revisions to the Township Comprehensive Recreation Plan also recommend acquisition of this parcel. Several years ago, the Township did pursue acquisition of this parcel; however, for several reasons, that effort did not reach fruition. Cost for acquisition of this parcel must be negotiated between the Township and the property owners.

Visual Enhancements

14. Extend / Create a scenic overlay district along Schuylkill River.

The existing North Coventry Township Scenic Preservation Overlay District identifies setbacks along scenic sections of Route 724 and east and west of Route 100. It limits uses within those setbacks to those which will least detract from the scenic character of the area and it allows the adaptive re-use of existing structures and uses of an area as open space for cluster development. This study recommends that similar protections be extended along both sides of the Schuylkill River bank to protect the scenic quality of the river while still allowing selective clearing to allow views to the river.

Recreation Improvement

15. Improve / Expand water trail landing at Wampler Recreation Site.

The current boat launch at the North Coventry Wampler Site is an important landing on the Schuylkill River Water Trail and, in concert with the landing at Pottstown’s Riverfront Park, allows for short trips across the river and joint landing “events” during the annual river sojourn. The Wampler landing is physically constrained, and it is recommended that this facility be expanded to allow better access to the water for pedestrians. A tiered seating area and/or a reduction in the steepness of the river embankment will visually and functionally expand the space and encourage more access to the water and make the river “feel” to be a more important component of the recreational site.

An estimate of probable costs for applicable linkage recommendations follows at the end of this chapter.

Other Recommendations

Additional recommendations include general approaches to several issues and actions to affect those issues.

Maintain Reconnections Committee

An important result of this project was that it created a dialogue between the two communities. Committee members and public meeting participants agreed that continued cooperation between the two communities is important. The Reconnections Committee should meet on a regular basis to continue the work recommended by the plan.

Communications

One of the comments from the public meetings was the need for better communications to advance some of this study's recommendations and to generally encourage more cooperation between Pottstown and North Coventry. Good communication is the most basic type of "Reconnection" and it is one that is so obvious that it is often overlooked in planning studies like "Reconnections." This study is an excellent step toward better and more frequent communication between Pottstown and North Coventry. The dialogue begun via this study should continue.

Additionally, communications in the study area can be enhanced in several ways:

Signage

Signs perform an important function to increase public awareness about heritage, natural features, unique structures, and many other unique characteristics of a place. Many times, these features are the things that make places like Pottstown and North Coventry different and make them desirable places to live, work and visit.

Most signs that we see everyday advertise place of business, stores, restaurants or products. All too often, these commercial signs are poorly conceived and executed and create visual confusion and when viewed in mass, create visual "pollution".

Conversely, our public sites, heritage resources and landscapes of natural interest are poorly marked and often go unnoticed by the people who live in and visit our communities. This is true in the Pottstown / North Coventry area, where few signs exist to identify, or offer direction to public resources and points of interest. A comprehensive system of signage is needed in both communities and it is recommended by this study to pursue development of a system of public signage as a joint project, as one means to continue the dialogue begun by this work.

Pottstown and North Coventry are in a unique position to take advantage of a soon-to-be-developed system of signage for the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. SRGA is currently in the process of developing a sign system that will create a format for identification, directional, interpretive and other signage for the entire five county Schuylkill River Heritage corridor. This sign system will be available for communities to utilize and show off the wonderful features of their place in the Heritage Region. SRGA plans call for this system to be available by the end of the summer of 2004.

Recommendations

A very brief summary of the directions, locations, and types of signs that could be developed for both communities include:

- Historic sites;
- Gateway signs;
- Parks;
- Bridge names / history;
- A wide variety of interpretive signs; and
- Walking tour “guideposts” keyed to printed information.

While funding partnerships for planning project are becoming more common, grant applications to develop a multi-community signage system are much less common. Pottstown and North Coventry should consider a joint application to an appropriate funding source to implement a joint municipal signage system. Using the format developed by SRGA, sign design costs should be minimal and each community can focus on content and fabrication and installation. Content writing for interpretive signs can be completed by local historic groups.

Community Bulletin Boards

As activities and program become focused around the river, opportunities for residents of each community to take advantage of the other’s events will increase. Bulletin boards can be placed in key locations announcing community activities and events. Parks, the High Street Business District, and the Coventry Mall are a few key locations where once there is a bulletin board available, the posting of relevant information might be able to be handled by volunteers from community service organizations. Similarly, these bulletin boards can be “virtual” or electronic, via township websites. Meetings, events, announcements and other community events can be maintained on the web.

It is recommended that this study be maintained on both the Township and Borough website to encourage review of the concepts and recommendations over a period of the next few years, as implementation begins.

Pottstown Borough maintains a web site that features detailed information about the Borough at <http://www.pottstown.org>

North Coventry Township’s website address is <http://www.northcoventry.us/index.html>

Historic Walking Tours Another method to communicate the information about these communities is through historic walking tours. Each community has environmental, heritage and architectural elements that would create interesting and exciting tours within and between the communities. Printed tour guides and pre-recorded audiotape narratives could also be developed and rented to guide visitors on the tours.

Involve local schools in “Reconnections” Communicating the history, environmental attributes and heritage of the region in area elementary and secondary schools could be a continuing focus of the “Reconnections” project. Just as the main emphasis of the project uses the river as the focus, school curricula or special projects could be molded

around heritage and environment, with short field trips to give students hands on knowledge about their own communities. Possibilities exist for cooperative programs with Montgomery County Community College.

Programming

During committee and public meetings, several ideas surfaced for programming ideas that could help establish stronger social ties between Pottstown and North Coventry. Some of these suggestions include:

- Joint holiday celebrations (4th of July, New Year Eve bonfire, etc.);
- Focus on activities and events along the river such as rubber ducky races, boat concession, fishing derbies, water front concerts that alternate between Riverfront Park and River Park, etc.;
- Additional inter-municipal sports team play (little league, soccer, etc.); and
- Joint promotion / information sharing by each community of the other's events, programs and activities.

Recommendations

1. Hanover Street Bridge Improvements

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Notes
Asphalt Removal for sidewalk (planters)	SY	680	\$ 8.00	\$ 5,440.00	
Curb Removal for sidewalk	LF	1,020	\$ 4.00	\$ 4,080.00	
Saw cut asphalt	LF	1,020	\$ 6.00	\$ 6,120.00	(510 LF length x 12 feet)
Sidewalk- new concrete (colored)	SF	7,650	\$ 7.00	\$ 53,550.00	
Colored Concrete Curb	LF	1,020	\$ 20.00	\$ 20,400.00	
Relocate Storm Drainage	LS			\$ 20,000.00	(510 LF)
Traffic Lane Pavement Markings	LF	510	\$ 2.50	\$ 1,275.00	
ADA Accessible Curb Cut	EA	4	\$ 300.00	\$ 1,200.00	
Ornamental Pedestrian Light Pole w/ banner & pillar -50' o.c.	EA	20	\$ 7,400.00	\$ 148,000.00	
Ornamental Metal Fence	LF	1,020	\$ 80.00	\$ 81,600.00	
Concrete Planter (2' height X 3'width)	LF	1,020	\$ 80.00	\$ 81,600.00	(18" of painting bed width x 1,020 LF bothsides)
Planting for concrete container (perennials / shrubs)	SF	1,530	\$ 10.00	\$ 15,300.00	
Ornamental Hanging Basket with annuals (on light poles)	EA	20	\$ 200.00	\$ 4,000.00	
Gateway Arch	LS	1		\$ 150,000.00	
Water Display	LS	1		\$ 100,000.00	
Soil Amendments (6,120 SF)	CY	225	\$ 40.00	\$ 9,000.00	
Mulch for planter bed (3" mulch)	CY	20	\$ 30.00	\$ 600.00	
Irrigation (Planter and Hanging Baskets)	LS	1		\$ 20,000.00	
Subtotal:				\$ 722,165	
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 72,217	
10% Contingency				\$72,216.50	
Total Hanover Street Bridge Improvements:				\$ 866,598	

Possible Funding Source: PennDOT / County / SAFE TEA

2. River Road Trail - Create River Promenade - Reduce Traffic Lane

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Notes
Create River Promenade - Reduce Traffic Lane					
Demolition of Asphalt (half of road)	SY	3,217	\$ 8.00	\$ 25,736.00	
Saw Cut Asphalt	LF	2,632	\$ 6.00	\$ 15,792.00	
Storm Drainage / Grading	LS	allow		\$ 40,000.00	(2,632 LF of road from hanover to laurelwood, assume 22' cartway)
Mill Existing Asphalt Pavement	SY	3,217	\$ 8.00	\$ 25,736.00	
New Asphalt Wearing Course	SY	3,217	\$ 5.00	\$ 16,085.00	
Relocate or remove signs / Misc. Removals	LS	allow		\$ 15,000.00	
Multi-Use Trail- Asphalt (10' wide)	SY	2,924	\$ 20.00	\$ 58,480.00	(2,632' x 13 wide)
Ornamental Pedestrian Street Lights (50' o.c.)	EA	52	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 260,000.00	(guiderail, trees, signs, etc)
Remove Soil Fill for planting strip - between road and trail	CY	945	\$ 15.00	\$ 14,175.00	
Soil Amendments	CY	945	\$ 30.00	\$ 28,350.00	(one side - between road and trail)
Street Tree (50' o.c.)	EA	52	\$ 600.00	\$ 31,200.00	(assume 10 foot wide x 1 ft depth)
Seed lawn strip between road and trail	SF	26,320	\$ 0.05	\$ 1,316.00	(assume 10 foot wide x 1 ft depth)
Subtotal:				531,870	(between road and trail)
10 % Design and Engineering				53,187	(assume 10 foot wide)
10% Contingency				53,187	
Total River Road Trail Improvements:				638,244	

Possible Funding Source: PennDOT / County / SAFE TEA

Reconnections: "Reconnecting the people of North Coventry Township and Pottstown Borough with each other and their Schuylkill River Heritage"

3. Hanover Street Pedestrian Improvements - from River Road to Route 724

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
Concrete Sidewalk (5 ft width)	SF	11,565	\$ 5.00	\$ 57,825.00	
Concrete Curb	LF	2,313	\$ 20.00	\$ 46,260.00	
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	540	\$ 2.50	\$ 1,350.00	
Relocate or Remove signs, poles, etc		allow		\$ 20,000.00	
ADA Accessible Curb Cut	EA	18	\$ 300.00	\$ 5,400.00	
Ornamental Pedestrian Light Pole 50' o.c..	EA	118	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 590,000.00	(west side of street - between 422 on ramp & Rt. 724)
Street Tree 50' o.c.	EA	118	\$ 600.00	\$ 70,800.00	(west side of street - between 422 on ramp & Rt. 724)
Seed lawn strip	SF	17,808	\$ 0.05	\$ 890.40	(30' wide x 18' curb cuts)
Subtotal:				\$ 792,525	
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 79,253	
10% Contingency				\$ 79,253	(both sides of road)
Total Hanover Street Pedestrian Improvements:				\$ 951,030	(both sides of road) (assume 3' wide strip both sides)

Possible Funding Sources: PennDOT / County / DCED

4. Pottstown Landing / Laurelwood Road Improvements - from River Road to Route 724

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
Repair Existing Sidewalk	SF	2,979	\$ 5.00	\$ 14,895.00	
Guiderail under 422 overpass	LF	70	\$ 100.00	\$ 7,000.00	
Concrete Sidewalk (3 ft width)	SF	15,900	\$ 5.00	\$ 79,500.00	
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	30	\$ 2.50	\$ 75.00	
Relocate or Remove signs, poles, etc	LS	allow		\$ 15,000.00	
ADA Accessible Curb Cut	EA	10	\$ 300.00	\$ 3,000.00	(assume 3' wide, (640 LF + 353))
Ornamental Pedestrian Light Pole 50' o.c..	EA	140	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 490,000.00	
Street Tree 50' o.c.	EA	140	\$ 600.00	\$ 84,000.00	(both sides of road from Union to 724=2,650)
Seed lawn strip	LS			\$ 1,200.00	
Subtotal:				\$ 694,670	
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 69,467	
10% Contingency				\$ 69,467	(both sides of road from Union to 724)
Total Pottstown Landing / Laurelwood Road Improvements:				\$ 833,604	(both sides of road from Union to 724)

Possible Funding Sources: County / DCED

Recommendations

5. Railroad Trestle Pedestrian Bridge Improvements

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
Multi - Use Trail(10' wide Asphalt)	SY	250	\$ 20.00	\$ 5,000.00	
Grading to Bridge	LS			\$ 100,000.00	
New Decking	SF			\$ 4,284.00	
Railing	LF	754	\$ 60.00	\$ 45,240.00	
Overlook Area	SF	400	\$ 35.00	\$ 14,000.00	(Trestle is 357 LF)
Ornamental Pedestrian Light Pole w/ banner -50' o.c..	EA	20	\$ 5,300.00	\$ 106,000.00	(*assume 250 feet NCT and Potts side up to bridge)
Subtotal:				\$ 274,524	(grading and earthwork ramps to bridge)
15 % Design and Engineering				\$ 41,179	(357' LF x 12' width)
10% Contingency				\$ 27,452	(357' + 357' + 40')
Total Railroad Trestle Pedestrian Improvements:				\$ 343,155	(10' X 40')

Possible Funding Sources: SAFETEA / Heritage Corridor / DCNR

6. North Coventry River Trail - River Park to Western Study Boundary

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
Multi - Use Trail (10' wide Aphalt)	SY	8,805	\$ 20.00	\$ 176,100.00	
Drainage (allowance)	LS			\$ 50,000.00	
Interpretive Signs	EA	3	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	
Subtotal:				\$ 241,100	
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 24,110	
10% Contingency				\$ 24,110	
Total NCT to Schuylkill River Trail:				\$ 289,320	

Possible Funding Sources: SAFETEA / DCNR / Heritage Corridor

7. PA Route 724 Improvements:

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
<i>a. Bike Lane / Shoulder: Both Sides of 724</i>					
Roadway / Shoulder Widening	SY	5,450	\$ 18.00	\$ 98,100.00	
Striping (Share the Road)	LF	39,300	\$ 1.00	\$ 39,300.00	
Traffic Control / Directional Signage	EA	24	\$ 500.00	\$ 12,000.00	
Subtotal Rt. 724 Bikeway Improvements:				\$ 149,400	
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 14,940	
10% Contingency				\$ 14,940	19650 LF (assume 1/2 1 side x 5')
				\$ 179,280	Both sides of 724

Possible Funding Sources: PennDOT Betterment Program

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
b. Laurelwood Rd. to Keim St. - Sidewalk and Trees				
Asphalt Path, 5' wide	SY	5,093	\$ 20.00	\$ 101,860.00
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	325	\$ 2.50	\$ 812.50
Relocate or Remove signs, poles, etc	allow			\$ 10,000.00
Trees (100' o.c.)	EA	180	\$ 600.00	\$ 108,000.00
Seed lawn strip	LS			\$ 1,500.00
Stormwater Drainage & Grading	allow			\$ 20,000.00
Subtotal Laurelwood to Keim Improvements:				\$ 242,173
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 24,217
10% Contingency				\$ 24,217
Total Laurelwood to Keim Improvements:				\$ 290,607

(9,168 LF)
13 crossings @ 25' w
(both sides of road)

Possible Funding Sources: SAFETEA / PennDOT / DCED

c. Keim Street to east of Rt. 422 ramp				
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	125	\$ 2.50	\$ 312.50
New Sidewalk - concrete, 5' wide	SF	11,515	\$ 5.00	\$ 57,575.00
Concrete Curb	LF	2,302	\$ 20.00	\$ 46,040.00
Relocate or Remove signs, poles, etc				\$ 10,000.00
ADA Accessible Curb Cut	EA	3	\$ 300.00	\$ 900.00
Seed lawn strip	SF	7,760	\$ 0.05	\$ 388.00
Stormwater Drainage & Grading	LS			\$ 20,000.00
Subtotal Keim to east of Rt. 422 Improvements:				\$ 135,215.50
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 13,522
10% Contingency				\$ 13,522
Total Keim to east of Rt. 422 Improvements:				\$ 162,258.60

5 crossings @ 25'
1151 LF

assume 4' w lawn strip, 7569 LF 1940 LF

Possible Funding Sources: SAFETEA / PennDOT / DCED

Grand Total PA 724 Improvements \$ **632,145.60**

Possible Funding Sources: County / DCNR

8. Keim Street Bridge Improvements: Improve Existing Bridge (see text)

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Repair Pedestrian Walk	LS			\$ 50,000.00
Ornamental Pedestrian Light Pole w/ banner -50' o.c..	EA	15	\$ 5,300.00	\$ 79,500.00
Concrete Sidewalk, 6' width	SF	4,416	\$ 8.00	\$ 35,328.00
Concrete Curb	LF	736	\$25.00	\$ 18,400
Illuminate Bridge Truss	LS			\$ 30,000.00
Re-Paint Bridge	LS			\$ 20,000.00
Subtotal:				\$ 233,228.00
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 23,323
10% Contingency				\$ 23,323
Total Keim Street Bridge Improvements:				\$ 279,873.60

Possible Funding Sources: PennDOT / Counties

Recommendations

9. Riverside Trail:

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<i>A) Route 724 to North Side of Route 422 Bridge</i>				
Clear Existing Vegetation	LF	288	\$4.00	\$ 1,152.00
Asphalt Path, 10' wide	SY	960	\$20.00	\$ 19,200.00
Interpretive Signage	EA	2	\$1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Subtotal Riverside Trail "A" Improvements:				\$ 22,352.00
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 2,235
10% Contingency				\$ 2,235
Total A Improvements:				\$ 26,822.40

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<i>B) North Side of Route 422 Bridge to Riverside Dr.</i>				
Design and Engineering?	LS			\$ -
Clear Existing Vegetation	LF	390	\$4.00	\$ 1,560.00
Asphalt Path, 10' wide	SY	1239	\$20.00	\$ 24,780.00
Subtotal Riverside Trail "B" Improvements:				\$ 26,340.00
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 2,634
10% Contingency				\$ 2,634
Total B Improvements:				\$ 31,608.00

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
<i>C) East End of Riverside Dr. to Keim Street (share the road)</i>					unit cost based on 14'w clearing
Line Striping (Share the Road)	LF	1,335	\$ 1.00	\$ 1,335.00	864 LF
Directional Signage	EA	6	\$ 500.00	\$ 3,000.00	
Subtotal Riverside Trail "C" Improvements:				\$ 4,335	
10% Contingency				\$ 434	
Total C Improvements:				\$ 4,769	

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
<i>D) Route 724 to South End of Keim Street Bridge</i>					unit cost based on 14'w clearing
Clear Existing Vegetation	LF	443	\$4.00	\$ 1,772.00	1115 LF
Asphalt Walk (4ft wide)	SY	316	\$20.00	\$ 6,320.00	
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	30	\$ 2.50	\$ 75.00	
Subtotal Riverside Trail "D" Improvements:				\$ 8,167	
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 817	
10% Contingency				\$ 817	
Total D Improvements:				\$ 9,800	

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	
<i>E) Keim Street Bridge to Wampler Complex</i>					unit cost based on 14'w clearing
Design and Engineering?	LS			\$ -	
Clear Existing Vegetation	LF	4355	\$4.00	\$ 17,420.00	
Asphalt Path, 10' wide	SY	5876	\$20.00	\$ 117,520.00	
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	30	\$ 2.50	\$ 75.00	
Subtotal Riverside Trail "E" Improvements:				\$ 135,015	
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 13,502	
10% Contingency				\$ 13,502	
Total E Improvements:				\$ 162,018	

Total Riverside Trail **\$ 235,017** 712 LF

Possible Funding Sources: DCNR / SAFETEA / County

10. Utility Easement Right of Way - Extend NCT Trail

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Mobilization - allow	LS	1	\$10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Stonedust Path, 10' wide	LF	7160	\$10.00	\$ 71,600.00
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	1,080	\$ 2.50	\$ 2,700.00
Crossing: Includes Gates & Bollards	EA	18	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Subtotal Utility Easement Trail Improvements:				\$ 134,300
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 13,430
10% Contingency				\$ 13,430
Total Utility Easement Trail Improvements:				\$ 161,160
Possible Funding Sources:	County / DCNR / Heritage Parks			

unit cost based on 14'w clearing
5288 LF

11. Coventry Mall Promenade

Item Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
<i>a. Fisher Avenue - from Laurelwood Road to Coventry Mall Entrance</i>				
Concrete Sidewalk (5 ft width)	SF	1,325	\$ 5.00	\$ 6,625.00
Crosswalk Pavement Markings	LF	60	\$ 2.50	\$ 150.00
Relocate or Remove signs, poles, etc	LS			\$ 10,000.00
Ornamental Pedestrian Light Pole 50' o.c..	EA	5	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 17,500.00
Street Tree 50' o.c.	EA	5	\$ 600.00	\$ 3,000.00
Seed lawn strip	LS		\$ 0.05	\$ 500.00
Subtotal:				\$ 37,775.00
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 3,778
10% Contingency				\$ 3,778
Subtotal Utility Easement Trail Improvements:				\$ 45,330

(30 wide x 18 curb cuts)

b. Promenade through Mall Parking Lot

Re-Strip Parking Lot	LS			\$ 10,000.00
Relocate or Remove signs, poles, etc		allow		\$ 15,000.00
Ornamental Pedestrian Light Pole 50' o.c..	EA		\$ 5,000.00	\$ -
Street Tree 50' o.c.	EA	26	\$ 600.00	\$ 15,600.00
Topsoil for Planting Pits	EA	26	\$ 500.00	\$ 13,000.00
Wheel Stops	EA	80	\$ 100.00	\$ 8,000.00
Subtotal:				\$ 61,600
10 % Design and Engineering				\$ 6,160
10% Contingency				\$ 6,160
Total Coventry Mall Promenade:				\$ 73,920

Possible Funding Sources: Township / Mall

(prices includes subbase / 2' depth by 5' width)

Reconnections Project Grand Total \$ 5,304,068 (2 foot depth by 5' square)

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Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

The implementation of proposed improvements will be largely contingent upon Pottstown Borough and North Coventry Township continuing, expanding and strengthening the partnership that they have initiated with this study. Funding agencies of all types value projects that involve multiple committed stakeholders. The following entities are likely local partners toward implementation of the recommended “Reconnections” improvements.

- Borough of Pottstown
- North Coventry Township
- Chester County
- Montgomery County
- PennDOT District 6-0
- SEPTA
- Pottstown Urban Transit
- Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area
- Montgomery County Community College
- Coventry Mall
- Developer John Wolfington
- Laurel Locks Farm & Brandywine Conservancy
- Bellwood Golf Club
- Pottstown and Owen Roberts School Districts
- Preservation Pottstown / Pottstown Historical Society
- Tri-County Chamber of Commerce
- Pottstown Downtown Improvement District Authority (PDIDA)
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

1. Phased Implementation Plan

Under the most favorable of conditions, it will require perseverance and time to accomplish the ambitious recommendations contained in this study. However, many of the plan’s recommendations can be pursued concurrently, since funding for various projects will be from different funding sources.

To enhance the planning basis for moving forward with the Reconnections recommendations both municipalities should adopt the final version of the plan and incorporate it into their respective comprehensive plans. While this is somewhat unusual (to adopt recommendations for an adjoining municipality), as the local area Council of Governments continues work on its joint comprehensive plan, the Reconnections Study will set a precedent for inter-municipal cooperation.

It is recommended that as one of the first priorities in moving ahead the Reconnections agenda forward, the two municipalities develop a three to five year funding plan for short term improvements that identifies potential sources, amounts, application deadlines, etc. This should be coordinated with Pottstown’s and North Coventry’s individual funding and grants program in order to avoid any conflicts in funding initiatives in each community.

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

a. Short Term Projects

The Reconnection Committee has established Short Term Priorities for a select number of recommended projects. The basis for selecting these short term project priorities include:

- Project size and cost
- Inter-municipal participation
- Likelihood of funding partners
- Relationship to interconnectivity between the two communities

Based on those and other criteria, the following recommendations were designated as Short Term Projects / Priorities:

Hanover Street Bridge Improvements – A highly visible and symbolic project, the bridge improvements can be accomplished in phases. As a gateway to both communities, the bridge presents the opportunity to celebrate the river and each community in a highly obvious and literal manner.

Potential Funding Partners:

- PennDOT
- Montgomery County
- Chester County
- DCED
- William Penn Foundation
- Schuylkill River Heritage Park (DCNR)

Railroad Trestle Pedestrian Bridge – A discreet connection that can be pursued as an important link to the Schuylkill River Trail and between local recreational resources.

Potential Funding Partners:

- Montgomery County
- Chester County
- Schuylkill River Heritage Park (DCNR)
- TEA-3 Enhancements (PennDOT)
- SRGA

River Road Trail – Creation of a waterfront trail will create an entirely new understanding of the riverfront in the Township. Initially this project can be implemented on a test basis to determine how the one way traffic system on River Road functions. This project can attract a variety of funding sources.

Potential Funding Partners:

- DEP Growing Greener
- Chester County
- Schuylkill River Heritage Park (DCNR)
- SRGA
- Coventry Mall

Laurelwood Road Improvements – Continuation of pedestrian access along River Road en route to the Coventry Mall.

Potential Funding Partners:

- DCED
- Chester County
- Coventry Mall

Hanover Street Streetscape Improvements – This large project can most likely be undertaken in phases. Street tree planting may be an initial phase. Create a much more attractive and pedestrian friendly roadway. Initial emphasis should be placed between River Road and the Rt. 422 Interchange.

Potential Funding Partners:

- PennDOT
- Chester County
- DCED

Rt. 724 Bikeway Improvements – A relatively simple project despite its length. Initial emphasis should be for roadway shoulder improvements and/or bike lanes through PennDOT's "Betterment" program which uses district maintenance funds. Later initiatives would be sidewalks and street trees.

Potential Funding Partners:

- PennDOT
- Chester County

Scenic Overlay Protection – A no cost to either municipality (except for consultant and staff time,) ordinance revision for both municipalities to afford areas along the river additional protection for the river areas scenic areas.

Acquire Bellwood Golf Club Floodplain Site – Afford permanent protection to the wetland habitat areas along the river. Opportunity for construction of the Riverside Trail.

Potential Funding Partners:

- DEP (Growing Greener)
- Chester County
- DCNR

b. Long Term Projects / Priorities are all other proposed improvements projects.

Some initial strategies for moving forward (now) with the long term projects (with the anticipation that these projects will take more time to fund), include the following actions:

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

Keim Street Bridge Replacement & Improvements - Initiate discussion with PennDOT, Montgomery County and Chester County and local and regional legislators now to position this project for placement on PennDOT's twelve year plan.

Periodic Flooding in South Pottstown – Initiate a dialogue with the US Army Corps of Engineers to determine if flooding along this section of the river can be mitigated.

Utility Easement Right of Way Trail – Make a formal contact with PECO to discuss the township's interest in utilizing this right of way for a trail connection. This will allow the township to ascertain issues and plan for trail implementation.

2. Potential Funding Sources

Schuylkill Heritage Area Grants

DCNR makes grants available to promote public-private partnerships that preserve and enhance natural, cultural, historic and recreation resources to stimulate economic development through heritage tourism. Grants are available to municipalities, nonprofit organizations or federally designated commissions acting on behalf of the municipalities in heritage park areas. Grants are awarded for a variety of purposes including feasibility studies; specialized studies; and implementation projects. Planning Grants require a 25 percent local match and Implementation Grants require a 50-50 or equal match. This program is administered through the Schuylkill River Greenway Association.

Urban and Community Forestry Grants

Can be used to encourage the planting of trees in Pennsylvania communities. Small municipal challenge grants provide 50 percent of the cost of the purchase and delivery of trees. Special grants are available for local volunteer groups, civic clubs, and municipalities to train and use volunteers for street tree inventories, and other projects in urban and community forestry. The Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council administers the program.

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/pucfc/grants.html>

Legislative Funding

State and federal elected officials can often include items into legislation for worthy projects in their districts. A conversation between county and municipal officials and legislators is the way to begin this process. This should be a well-coordinated effort between the Borough of Pottstown and North Coventry Township and their respective counties. This type of funding should be targeted toward capital improvement projects.

DCED Community Revitalization Funds

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Community Revitalization Fund is a state program that supports local initiatives that improve the stability of communities and enhance local economies. The grant program covers a wide range of eligible uses including: acquisition of land, buildings, and right-of-ways; recreation projects; programs and developments that build capacity of the local community and relevant local organizations to better serve the needs of the community, and other reasonable and necessary expenses related to community-based activities. Active support of the district's state senator and / or state representative is critical in a successful grant application. Each of DCED's funding programs is

listed and described below.

Community Revitalization Program

This funding source, which ranges from \$5,000 to \$50,000, supports local initiatives aimed at improving a community's quality of life and improving business conditions.

State Planning Assistance Grant

This program provides funding to municipalities for preparation and maintenance of community development plans, policies, and implementation measures. The grant requires a 50% match and priority is given to projects with regional participation.

Small Communities Planning Assistance

This grant is awarded to municipalities having a population of 10,000 people or less. The grant offers a no-match funding source that can be used to support neighborhood revitalization, economic development, community conservation and housing plans. Regardless of the project type, the grantee must demonstrate the project benefits for low to moderate-income residents.

Community Development Block Grants

This program provides financial and technical assistance to communities for infrastructure improvements, housing rehabilitation, public services, and community facilities. The program targets local governments and 70% of each grant must be used for activities or projects that benefit low to moderate-income people.

PennDOT

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation may provide assistance with any on-road cycling route that is proposed. PennDOT may provide signs and installation of "share the road" markings and, if any shoulder widening is necessary, the local district may provide these improvements through their "betterment" maintenance funds. This source might be applicable to the bike lanes proposed on Route 724.

Montgomery County

Montgomery County may be able to provide matching funds (50/50) to state, federal or local funds through the Municipal Open Space Grant Program. This program will fund both land acquisition and development of trail and park facilities. Eligible applicants are municipalities and non-profit organizations. The recently approved County Open Space Bond Issue will make Pottstown eligible for funding for park, open space, trail and historic sites funding. Many of the linkage components of the Reconnections plan may make good candidates for this funding.

Additionally, under the County's Urban Area Revitalization Program, Pottstown qualifies for annual funds for improvements and programs related to the redevelopment of its urban core. Most of the recommendations proposed in this study would qualify under this funding program.

Chester County

Text to be added in final report.

North Coventry Township / Borough of Pottstown

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

Regardless of how successful funding applications are for the Reconnections improvements, some amount of local matching funds will be required. Occasionally, local funding of design and engineering will be required to move a project to a point where it can be successfully funded by an agency for construction. These design costs can be counted as a match with many funding sources.

Often, grant sources allow services “in-kind” in place of cash to count as a match. It is strongly suggested that both municipalities immediately begin and keep a detailed inventory of municipal staff and/or official time spent on the reconnections project. Occasionally, grantors may allow time spent to date to count as part of the in-kind match for funds. This record will also demonstrate a continued commitment on the part of the municipality to the successful implementation of the master plan.

Local Schools

Local schools may also be of assistance in several ways. The student body might get involved with clubs, fundraising events, and trail / Schuylkill River cleanup days, and other community programming. The faculty could incorporate the trail into various curricula with students helping to develop and possibly maintain the trail or a section of river as part of a classroom assignment or after school club. While the amounts of funds raised may be relatively small, this process builds constituents and support that is critical to the long-term success of a project.

The following grant information was taken from: [Living with the River - Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, 2003.](#)

Cultural Resources

- Certified Local Government Funding

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Certified Local Government Grants requiring a 60/40 match are available to support projects in six categories: Cultural Resource Surveys, National Register Nominations, Technical and Planning Assistance, Educational and Interpretative Programs, Staffing and Training, and Pooling and Third Party Administration. The grants are administered on a competitive basis, and the awards are made annually based on a peer review process. Funding under this program is limited to Certified Local Governments.

- Keystone Historic Preservation Grants

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Keystone Historic Preservation Grants requiring a 50/50 cash match are available for

the preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation of historic resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The grants are administered on a competitive basis, and the awards are made annually based on a peer review process. Nonprofit organizations and public agencies that own or support a publicly accessible historic property listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places, or that own or support a contributing historic property in a National Register Historic District, may apply for grant assistance.

- PHMC Historic Preservation Grants

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

In 1999, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Preservation Pennsylvania launched a campaign to gather information as the first step in developing a five-year historic preservation plan for Pennsylvania. The plan focuses on (1) educating Pennsylvanians about our heritage and its value, (2) building better communities through preservation, and (3) providing strong leadership at the state level. Historic Preservation Grants are available in two different amounts to support projects in the categories of Cultural Resource Surveys, National Register Nominations, Planning and Development Assistance, Educational and Interpretive Programs, and Archaeology.

- Local History Grants

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Local History Grants are available in two different amounts to support projects in the categories of Public Programs, Research and Writing, and Educational Programs. The following are a few of the types of organizations that are eligible to apply: colleges and universities, community groups, heritage organizations, historical societies, libraries (public and private), local governments, museums, schools and school districts, etc. Grant amounts up to and including \$5,000 require no matching funds, and grants in amounts of \$5,001 and up to and including \$15,000 require 50/50 matching funds.

- Historical Marker Grants

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Grants requiring a cash match (generally 50/50) are available to support the manufacture of approved state historical markers. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission approves historical marker nominations annually based upon the review of an independent panel of experts. Any nonprofit organization or public agency that wishes to support a state historical marker previously approved by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and that meets the eligibility requirements may apply for funding. Grants are generally awarded on a 50/50 cash matching basis. Grant awards for city and roadside markers generally will not exceed \$550 and \$650, respectively.

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

- Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

Pennsylvania Rehabilitation investment tax credits are the most widely used historic preservation incentive program. Certain expenses incurred in connection with the rehabilitation of an old building are eligible for a tax credit. Rehabilitation investment tax credits are available to owners and certain long-term leases of income producing properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are two rates: 20% for historic buildings and 10% for non-residential, non-historic buildings built before 1936.

- Charitable Contribution Deduction

http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/phmc_frame.html

The Pennsylvania charitable contribution deduction is taken in the form of a conservation easement and enables the owner of a "certified historic structure" to receive a one-time tax deduction. A conservation easement usually involves the preservation of a building's façade by restricting the right to alter its appearance.

- Preservation Tax Incentives

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/tax/brochure2.htm#Preservation%20Tax%20Incentives>

The Federal government encourages the preservation of historic buildings through various means. One of these is the program of Federal tax incentives to support the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings. The Preservation Tax Incentives reward private investment in rehabilitating historic properties such as offices, rental housing, and retail stores. Current tax incentives for preservation, established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 (PL 99-514; Internal Revenue Code Section 47 [formerly Section 48(g)]) include: 1) a 20% tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures and 2) a 10% tax credit for the rehabilitation of non-historic, non-residential buildings built before 1936. For both credits, the rehabilitation must be a substantial one and must involve a depreciable building.

Economic Development and Community Revitalization

- Small Business First (SBF)

http://www.inventpa.com/docs/Business_Financing_Directory.pdf

Small Business First provides funding for small businesses, including: low-interest loan financing for land and building acquisition and construction; machinery and equipment purchases and working capital. Eligible small businesses (100 employees or less) may include: manufacturing, industrial, agricultural processors, mining enterprises, export-related, advanced technology and computer-related services, hotels, motels or restaurants, environmental compliance/pollution prevention, land and building acquisition and

construction, etc.

- Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority (PMBDA)

http://www.inventpa.com/docs/Business_Financing_Directory.pdf

The Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority provides low-interest loan financing to businesses owned and operated by ethnic minorities for land and building acquisition; building construction and renovation; machinery and equipment acquisition and installation; and working capital.

- Community Economic Development Loan Program (CED)

http://www.inventpa.com/docs/Business_Financing_Directory.pdf

The Community Economic Development Loan Program provides low-interest loans for projects in distressed communities, in an effort to stimulate self-help initiatives and help people build assets at the individual, family and community levels. Small businesses (100 employees or less) that are located in a DCED designated distressed community or Keystone Opportunity Zone are eligible to apply. Uses include: land and building acquisition; building, construction and renovation; machinery and equipment acquisition and installation, and working capital. Loans may be up to \$200,000 or 50% of total eligible project cost – whichever is less.

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

<http://www.hud.gov/progdesc/cdbgent.cfm>

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is federally funded through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The program awards grants in order to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services. CDBG funds are to be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons, carry out activities which aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight, or address existing conditions that pose a serious and immediate threat to the welfare of the community where other financial resources are not available to meet these needs. CDBG funds may be used for activities that include, but are not limited to: acquisition of real property; relocation and demolition; rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures; construction of public facilities and improvements, such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers; the conversion of schools for eligible purposes, as well as public services.

- Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/airwaste/wm/landrecy/default.htm>

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

The Pennsylvania Land Recycling Program's goal is to help transform vacant brown-fields into job-producing sites while protecting the environment. Grant and low-interest loan financing is provided to perform environmental site assessment and remediation work at former industrial sites. Public and private nonprofit economic development entities and companies involved in reuse of former industrial land are eligible for financial assistance, which includes grants and loans up to \$200,000 for environmental assessment and \$1 million for remediation.

Environmental Resources – Watershed Protection and Restoration

- Growing Greener

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/growgreen/>

Signed into law in 1999 and reauthorized in 2002, Growing Greener is the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address critical environmental concerns. Over the next 10 years, \$1.3 billion will be distributed among four state agencies to address a variety of projects. Included are funds available from the Department of Agriculture (farmland and open-space preservation), Department of Environmental Protection (watershed restoration & protection), and Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (water & sewer system upgrades).

- Environmental Stewardship And Watershed Protection Grants

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/growgreen/watershedprotection/default.htm>

The Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act authorizes the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to allocate nearly \$547 million in grants for acid mine drainage abatement, mine cleanup efforts, abandoned oil and gas well plugging and local watershed-based conservation projects. These projects can include watershed assessments and development of watershed restoration or protection plans; implementation of watershed restoration or protection projects; construction of mine drainage remediation systems; reclamation of previously mined lands; and demonstration/education projects and outreach activities. Eligible applicants include: counties, authorities and other municipalities; county conservation districts; watershed organizations; and other organizations involved in the restoration and protection of Pennsylvania's environment.

- PENNVEST

<http://www.pennvest.state.pa.us/pennvest/site/default.asp>

PENNVEST provides financial assistance and service to Pennsylvania communities and citizens by funding sewer, stormwater and water projects throughout the Commonwealth in an effort to improve Pennsylvania's environment and the health of its people. Its financial assistance program works to provide safe drinking water, restore and preserve the states rivers and streams, as well as protect natural resources while attempting to create new opportunities for economic development.

- The River Network

<http://www.rivernetwork.org/index.cfm>

The River Network's mission is to help people understand, protect and restore rivers and their watersheds. The River Network has a \$5-million budget, with 34 staff working in four offices across the United States, and provides personalized assistance, training, and information to more than 500 partner groups through its watershed programs. The River Network also makes grants available to local watershed partnerships to support their organizational development and long-term effectiveness.

Recreational Resources

- The Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program (PRTP)

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/recreation/grants/rectrails.htm>

The Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. Federal funding for the program is through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21). In Pennsylvania, the Recreational Trails Program is administered by the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Recreation & Conservation (BRC) in consultation with the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Advisory Board (PARTAB), which is composed of both motorized and non motorized recreational trail users.

- Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21)

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/index.htm>

On June 9, 1998, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) authorizing highway, highway safety, transit and other surface transportation programs for the next 6 years was signed into law. TEA-21 builds on the initiatives established in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). TEA-21 continues and expands provisions to improve facilities and safety for bicycles and pedestrians, as well as broaden and make eligible NHS funds to include pedestrian walkways, and safety and educational activities. Other changes ensure the consideration of bicyclists and pedestrians in the planning process and facility design. A total of \$270 million in contract authority was authorized for FYs 1998-2003 to provide and maintain recreational trails, while a total of \$148 million for technical assistance and grants has been allocated for the development of scenic byway programs and related projects along roads designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, or as State Scenic Byways.

- Growing Greener

<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/growgreen/>

Implementation and Potential Funding Sources

Signed into law in 1999 and reauthorized in 2002, Growing Greener is the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address critical environmental concerns. Over the next 10 years, \$1.3 billion will be distributed among four state agencies to address a variety of projects. Included are funds available from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for state park renovations & improvements.

- Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2)

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/recreation/grants/keygrants02-03.htm>

Sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society the Community Conservation Partnerships Program has developed four grants to meet local recreation and conservation needs. Grants for Planning and Technical Assistance, Acquisition Projects, Development Projects and Federally Funded Projects can be used on a range of projects from rehabilitating a community athletic field, building a safer playground, preparing a watershed or greenways plan to developing an abandoned rail corridor or protecting a critical natural or open space areas.

Private Foundations

Private foundations are a potential source of funding for heritage resource preservation and funding. The State of Pennsylvania is blessed with a number of foundations that support activities such as arts and education, historic preservation and community development, recreational resources management, and environmental planning and design. The following are a few of the major foundations that provide support for such activities in Pennsylvania.

- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation – Grants for Museums and Art Conservation
<http://www.mellon.org/museumsandconservation.html>
- Bayer Foundation - Grants for Civic and Community Programs, as well as Arts Education and Culture
<http://www.bayerus.com/about/community/index.html>
- Heinz Endowments - Funding for Education, Community Development, and Culture
<http://www.heinz.org/index.asp?loc=J,J2>
- Hershey Foods Corporation - Grants for Education, Civic and Community Initiatives, Arts and Culture, and Environment
<http://www.hersheys.com/about/contributions.shtml>
- Land O' Lakes Foundation - Community Grants: Grants for Quality Art Endeavors and to Solve Community Problems in Rural Areas
<http://www.foundation.landolakes.com/CommGrants/progdesc.htm>

- The Ford Foundation -
Grants for Community Development, Education, Arts, and Culture
<http://www.fordfound.org/>
- The Pew Charitable Trusts -
Grants for Culture, Education, and Environment
<http://www.pewtrusts.com/grants/index.cfm?image=img3>
- Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds –
Funding to advance Parkland and Community Engagement with Parks and Open-Space.
<http://www.wallacefunds.org/>
- William Penn Foundation –
Grants for Art and Culture, as well as Environment and Communities
<http://www.wpenncfdn.org/>

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APPENDIX

- **Committee Meetings: minutes & attendance list**
 - **Public Meetings: minutes & attendance list**
- **North Coventry Township Police Dept. Reconnections Memo**
 - **Route 724 Corridor Study Summary (DVRPC)**
 - **Route 422 Ramp Options**
- **Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Plan Working Draft Summary**
 - **NLT Open Space Map**
 - **US Army Corps of Engineers Information**
 - **PDIDD Strategic Plan Summary 2003**
 - **Relevant Newspaper Articles**
 - **References / Bibliography**



SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

January 27, 2004

Pottstown / North Coventry Reconnections Study

PUBLIC MEETING #1 MEETING MINUTES

North Coventry Township, Chester County and
Borough of Pottstown, Montgomery County, PA
SJC Project No. 03071.10

Meeting Date: January 20, 2004
Meeting Time: 7 PM
Location: North Coventry Township Fire House

Notes:

1. North Coventry Township Supervisor Bud Jenschke welcomed everyone to the meeting, gave a brief overview of the project, and introduced the study committee and consultant team.
2. Peter Simone of Simone Jaffe Collins (SJC) gave an overview of the project scope, schedule, intent, goals, and study process. Project goals include connecting North Coventry Township residents and Pottstown residents to each other and to the Schuylkill River; identifying and removing physical and psychological barriers that disconnect people from the Schuylkill River and from the two communities; creating a pedestrian friendly environment; reinforcing historic and heritage connections; and improving recreational opportunities. An aerial map was used to show the location of the project study area.
3. Peter Simone presented the existing site conditions and the site analysis information that included site photographs and GIS mapping of existing conditions and proposed planning documents. The site analysis process was discussed in relation to determining possible recommendations for the project.
4. Peter Simone discussed possible trail connections in addition to the existing planned trail connections in the study area. Possible recommendations include: widening the Hanover Street Bridge pedestrian sidewalk; creating a pedestrian connection between Pottstown and the Coventry Mall; creating a trail on the south side of the Schuylkill River from the Hanover Street bridge to Laurel Locks Farm and canal; using the abandoned railroad trestle as a possible link between the two communities; improving pedestrian links on the Keim Street Bridge; and creating pedestrian links to Pottstown Landing, Kennilworth, and South Pottstown.

5. Peter Simone moderated the public comment portion of the meeting and explained the 'card process' and how the audience and study committee members input is used to develop ideas and the program for the Reconnections Study. A list of goals, facts, and concept ideas were discussed during the interactive portion of the meeting and are included below.

Goals

- Connect
- ID and Remove Barriers
- Create Pedestrian Friendly Environment
- Improve Entry Points to Pottstown and North Coventry - Gateways

Facts

- 12.5 Square Mile Area
- Two Water Trail Landings
- Bridges: Hanover Street, Route 100, Keim Street
- Old Railroad Trestle
- Great Architecture
- No Sidewalks
- Village Atmosphere in Pottstown Landing and Kenilworth
- Existing Parks
- Old Railroad Trestle
- Pottstown & North Coventry Have New Zoning
- Mrs. Smith's
- Regional Planning Efforts
- Montgomery County Open Space Initiative
- Bypass Impedes Connection
- Highways are Barriers
- SRGA Signage Study
- What is River Gradient in Study Area?
- What Divided Towns?
- River Road Floods
- Underground Railroad at Bellewood Estate? – Cultural Resource

Concepts

- "It's the River Stupid"
- Clear Views to Connect
- Pedestrian Amenities
- Events & Programming
- Encourage Activity Along River
- Support Mrs. Smith's Development
- Make Pedestrian Experience Nice
- Adjust Zoning
- Nighttime Experience
- Keep Folks Out of their Cars
- Full Interchange at 422
- Hanover Street Bridge Improvements
- Old Keim Street Bridge Improvements – with new wide bridge
- Sidewalks in Kenilworth
- Keim Street Sidewalks Improvements in Pottstown
- River Road Trail Improvements & Safety
- River Road Closed to Cars

- River Road Traffic-One Way
 - Visual Connections to River & Communities
 - Loop Trail Connecting Pottstown & NCT
 - Create Gateways to Both Communities
 - Create “Places” Along River & Bridge
 - Create SAFE Area
 - Lighting Safety
 - History Trail
 - Bring Back Towpath Along River
 - Supply People with Livable Community
 - Create Alliances Between Two Communities
 - National Heritage Signage
 - Interpretive Signs
 - Pottstown Signage
 - Trail Near Rt. 422
 - Swim in River
 - Use Balloons at River
 - Reconnections Club for Kids
 - Old Keim Street Bridge Dedicate to Pedestrians – with New Vehicular Bridge
 - Use Islands
 - Add Boat Ramps
 - Hanover Street Bridge – Access to River Near Bridge
 - Dredge Islands
 - Audio Tour Tape Thru Study Area
 - Make People Aware of Reconnections Plan
 - Bring Kids Together to Bring Community Together
 - Post Notices for Community Meetings
 - Boats Create Noise
 - Trail Connection from River Park to Laurel Locks
 - Public Transportation Loop
 - East Main Street One-Way
 - Involve School System
6. A meeting attendee stated that there should be better sidewalk connections on Keim Street in Pottstown.
 7. Several people in the audience stated they would like see the study incorporate a trail connection on River Road that connects from Pottstown starting at the Hanover Street Bridge to Laurel Locks and the Mall in North Coventry Township.
 8. Several people stated that Pottstown residents currently walk on River and Laurelwood Roads to go to the Mall. This connection is unsafe for pedestrians and sidewalk improvements and / or trails should be provided.
 9. Additional River Road improvements include closing down River Road to vehicular traffic and making the roadway a pedestrian trail. The audience also discussed decreasing the vehicular lanes on River Road to one-way traffic to accommodate a pedestrian trail on the road.
 10. A suggestion to open up visual connections to the Schuylkill River and the two communities was discussed.

11. An audience member suggested creating a loop trail connecting Pottstown and North Coventry Township. Two types of loop trails were discussed a public transportation loop trail and a walking loop trail. The loop trail would connect people to major destination points in North Coventry and Pottstown.
12. A meeting attendee suggested creating an audio tour tape as a means of teaching people about the two communities and the Schuylkill River.
13. Developing a signage system for the two communities was discussed. Several people stated that interpretive signage could be incorporated in both communities and along the Schuylkill River. Some of the interpretive signage ideas included teaching trail users about the Pottstown and North Coventry local history, cultural heritage, architecture, and Schuylkill River environmental and historical heritage.
14. It was suggested that there could be informational signage placed throughout the study area where people could leave information about local events happening in the two communities.
15. A meeting attendee suggested incorporating gateway signs as a way to connect the two communities.
16. A meeting attendee noted that there is really no good signage in North Coventry that lets visitors know that they are in North Coventry, South Pottstown, Pottstown landing, or Kennilworth.
17. Creating interactive places and / or seating areas along the Schuylkill River and the bridges were discussed. These areas would allow opportunities for residents from both communities to interact with one another.
18. The audiences discussed creating a safe environment on the proposed trails for people. One possibility is to incorporate nighttime lighting.
19. A meeting attendee noted that there are remnants of a towpath that follows the Schuylkill River. This would be an interesting path to re-establish and interpret.
20. Several meeting attendees suggested it is important to create alliances between the two communities. This could be done through the local schools, through community events, better signage, and websites.
21. David Downs of the Schuylkill River Greenway Association noted that SRGA is conducting a signage study along the Schuylkill River.
22. A meeting attendee questioned whether it is feasible for people to swim in the Schuylkill River.
23. Jack Lane from Pottstown Borough suggested using balloons along the river. The use of hot air balloons as well as tethered balloons was discussed.
24. A meeting attendee suggested creating a "Reconnections" club for kids. This club would help connect the two communities.
25. Several meeting attendees stated that River Road and South Pottstown flood during large rain storms. The Reconnections Study should take this fact into consideration in the study analyses and recommendations.

26. A meeting attendee suggested dedicating the Keim Street Bridge to pedestrians. PennDOT could then build a new vehicular bridge.
27. A meeting attendee suggested using islands located along the Schuylkill River as a possible open space gathering area should be explored. Peter Simone stated that SJC is in the process of contacting the PA Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation to determine who owns the islands. Another suggestion is to either clean the islands of debris or dredge the islands to allow canoeing along this portion of the river.
28. A meeting attendee noted that it is important to have access to the river near the Hanover and Keim Street Bridges.
29. Several meeting attendees stated that it is important to make people aware of the Reconnections Study and to better notify community members of the public meetings. A meeting attendee suggested sending notes home to schoolchildren to notify parents of the meetings.

Twenty-five (25) people signed the attendance sheet (Attached).

Please let us know if you should have any questions, additions, or revisions to these notes on or before February 9, 2004.

Respectfully Submitted,

SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



Nicole Keegan, RLA

cc: Committee Members

Reconnections – Pottstown / North Coventry
 Public Meeting #1 January 20, 2004
 @ North Coventry Fire Hall

NAME	Address	PHONE NO.
P. Hardesty	8430 Schuylkill Rd Kearsburg	610-310-6552
Ron Downie	754 Evans St. Pottstown	610-326-0614
CA Haberzettl	1988 Coventryville Rd Pottstown (North Coventry)	329-8022
JOHN MURRAY	1252 SHENKEL RD NORTH COVENTRY	327-2465
Kathy Taylor	1426 Temple Rd. North Coventry	610-323-7174
Jack Long	100 East High St Pottstown	610-970-6510
Rob Morgan	850 N Charlotte St Pottstown	610-327-3100
ART GELWICKS	312 West King Street - Pottstown (P.D.I.D.A.)	484-433-4183
RUSSELL KAREN VANDEGRIFT	142 RIVER RD. - NORTH COVENTRY	610 526 9335
PAUL PRINCE	934 High St. P.O. Box 696 Pottstown Pa.	610 323 7700
Jim Fairchild	23 E. GYS A9 Pottstown PA	610 970-6508
Rob Ihlein	1031 Bellevue Ave. Pottstown 19464	610 705 3325
Joseph & Virginia FAY	562 E Cedarville Rd, Pottstown, 19445	610 323 4547
Dennis Loshnowski	472 S. HANOVER St " "	" 970-3873
Jim Polans	EDWARDS & KALCA 1247 WOODS AVE WEST COVENTRY PA.	610 701-7000
DAVID DOWNS	SRHA	484 945 0200
CHRIS JOHNSON	1138 QUEEN ST. POTTS TOWN	610.327.1961
Tom Hyllton	222 Chestnut St. Pottstown	610.323.6837
Spencer	1550 Temple Rd. "	" " 1645
Alice Boatwright	811 Willow St. Pottstown PA 19464	610 323 2687



SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

11/19/03

Pottstown / North Coventry Reconnections
SJC# 03071.0

COMMITTEE MEETING #1 - MINUTES

Date/Time: 11/17/03, 9:00 AM

Location: Pottstown Borough Hall

In Attendance: Lynn Benensky – Pottstown Borough
Carolyn Blackwell – Urban Partners
Wayne Bowen – SRGA
Ronald Downie – Pottstown Borough
David Downs – SRGA
Jim Fairchild – Pottstown Borough
Jim Hartling – Urban Partners
Tom Hylton – Pottstown Borough
Robert Ihlein – Pottstown Borough
Jack Layne – Pottstown Borough
Gina Mangano – Montgomery County Planning
Nicole Keegan - SJC
Peter Simone - SJC
Steve Sinclair – SJC
Brian Styche – SJC

Purpose of Meeting: To introduce the consultant team to the Reconnections Committee, review the scope of work, set project dates, and review project objectives.

Notes:

1. Peter S. opened the meeting a brief introduction of the project. Meeting list and agenda were distributed.

Goals, Facts, and Concepts Discussion:

2. A list Goals, Facts, and Concepts discussed during the interactive portion of the meeting is listed below:

Goals

- Connect
- ID and Remove Barriers
- Create Pedestrian Friendly Environment
- Improve Entry Points to Pottstown
- Enforce Historic / Heritage Connections
- Recreation

Facts

- 12.5 Square Mile Area
- Two Water Trail Landings
- Bridges: Hanover Street, Route 100, Keim Street, Old Railroad Trestle
- Great Architecture
- No Sidewalks
- Village Atmosphere in Pottstown Landing and Kenilworth
- Existing Parks
- Pottstown & North Coventry Have New Zoning
- Mrs. Smith's
- Regional Planning Efforts
- Inter-governmental Agreement
- Montgomery County Open Space Initiative
- Joint Agreement with West Pottsgrove / Borough on Recreation
- Bypass Impedes Connection
- Highways are Barriers

Concepts

- "It's the River Stupid"
- Clear Views to Connect
- Pedestrian Amenities
- Events & Programming
- Encourage Activity Along River
- Support Mrs. Smith's Development
- Make Pedestrian Experience Nice
- Adjust Zoning
- Nighttime Experience
- Keep Folks Out of their Cars
- Full Interchange at 422
- River as Connector
- Examples of Mixed-Use
- Joint Funding
- Economic Development for Boroughs
- SRGA to call North Coventry to help set next Committee Meeting
- "Highway World" vs. Existing Town
- How Does North Coventry view Barriers?
- Involve PDIDA
- Trail Near Route 724
- Contact Mall Representatives
- South Pottstown Isolated by Roads
- Future Metro Connection
- Connect Parks
- Merchants' Association
- Recreation / Service Enterprises on River
- On-road Trails
- Railroad Track on North Side of River
- Outdoor Recreation Business Study (with Kutztown University)

3. Peter S. outlined the project goals and asked attendees for additional comments. Topics discussed included the political and physical obstacles of reconnecting to the river, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment, beautifying gateways to Pottstown, highlighting the community's heritage, and including recreational components.
4. A discussion of project facts led to the topic of bridges over the Schuylkill River. The Route 100 bridge was cited as a potential platform for a pedestrian connection. Attendees thought the Keim Street bridge was slated for replacement by Montgomery

County. SJC will investigate the status. Ronald D. stated that the Route 422 bridge is to have a pedestrian component in the future as part of the main spine of the Schuylkill River Trail.

5. The old railroad trestle, possibly owned by Pottstown Iron Works, will be investigated by SJC to determine ownership and any potential adaptive reuse. One of the bridge abutments was removed by the Keystone Boulevard construction work.
6. The lack of sidewalks in North Coventry Township and around North Coventry Mall was noted. Currently, residents cannot easily walk from their neighborhoods to the mall. Robert I. and Lynn B. suggested that Mall representatives, including the Merchants' Association, should be involved in the project.
7. Attendees mentioned the many interesting architectural styles found in Pottstown and North Coventry Township.
8. Peter S. mentioned that there is a village-like atmosphere in North Coventry Township's Pottstown Landing and Kenilworth sections.
9. Both North Coventry and Pottstown have recently undergone changes to their zoning ordinances.
10. Tom H. began a discussion of the redevelopment plan for the Mrs. Smith property. A concern about the preliminary sketch plan showing parking along the riverfront was raised. Peter S. suggested the owner of the Mrs. Smith property be shown examples of existing pedestrian-friendly developments.
11. There was difficulty in finding a good date regarding North Coventry committee members. Wayne B. and Rob I. will contact North Coventry Township representatives to find a good date for continuation of this meeting. **This meeting should be held before December 15th.**
12. Gina M. explained that both Pottstown and North Coventry participate in the Pottstown Regional Planning Effort. Though the plan has not been approved, Jack L. and Gina M. offered to forward SJC a summary of the work for review.
13. Council members raised the topic of Montgomery County money for greenway projects and connecting 3 Borough parks with funding from the Montgomery County Park program. Peter S. suggested the Borough should apply for joint funding from the State, and both counties. Jack L. mentioned the State's new economic development program for boroughs.
14. Peter S. shifted discussion to project concepts. The need for visual connections to the river was noted.
15. Jim H. noted a conflict between the "highway world" (future development trends) and developing a sense of community. The disconnection of pedestrians between North Coventry Mall and the surrounding villages of Pottstown Landing and South Pottstown was discussed. A meeting attendee stated that Routes 100 and 422 are also barriers to pedestrians.
16. Events and programming were seen as a way to encourage activity along the trail and riverfront. These events would also support development on the Mrs. Smith property.
17. Peter S. stated that SJC would evaluate current zoning for both Pottstown Borough and North Coventry Township and suggest adjustments as it relates to the reconnections project, if appropriate.
18. Peter S. highlighted the importance of lighting and encouraging nighttime use of trails.

19. The notion of a full interchange at Hanover Street and Route 422 was discussed. Jim F. believed a full interchange was not possible due to its proximity to the Rt. 100 interchange.
20. Peter S. mentioned that SJC would examine connections between North Coventry parks, the river, and river trail at the 422 Bridge as part of reconnections study.
21. The downtown Pottstown group PDIDA was mentioned as a party that should be involved in this project. SJC is to contact PDIDA.
22. Jim H. suggested recreation and service enterprises along the river as a possible concept to reconnect the surrounding communities to the river.
23. An on-road trail along River Road would be helpful in connecting Pottstown residents to North Coventry Mall.
24. Ronald D. suggested the OxyChem railroad line, once abandoned, will become an important piece of the Schuylkill River Trail.
25. SRGA members explained that their group is working with Kutztown University on a recreation business study along the river. To be completed in June 2004, the study will determine the potential for start-up enterprises and outfitters along the river. Currently, there are no rental businesses in the area.

Scope of Work:

26. A discussion and review of the scope of work followed. In regard to Item 1.9, Jim H. notified attendees that Urban Partners would not perform a comprehensive retail analysis of North Coventry Mall. Gina M. stated that Montgomery County Planning Commission is examining the mall from a regional standpoint and will put James H. in touch with the project manager for the study.

Next Steps:

27. The possibility of involving West Pottsgrove Township was mentioned since they conducted a joint recreation project with the Borough. Attendees were interested in the status of the vacant Flagg property. The SJC team is to contact West Pottsgrove.
28. Discussion of the project schedule centered on accommodating the schedules North Coventry Township committee members. The schedule will not be moved forward until this is done.
29. Lynn B. suggested Montgomery County Community College as a possible location for the public meetings.
30. Attendees also encouraged the involvement of Chester County Planning Commission. SJC is to contact the Chester County Planning Commission.
31. Jim H. indicated he would like to schedule a meeting with the owner of the Mrs. Smith property. The consultants will review the preliminary plan of the Mrs. Smith's property submitted to the Pottstown Borough. Post meeting note: A meeting has been scheduled for November 20th.
32. Rob I. will contact North Coventry Township officials to get involved in the upcoming meetings.
33. Rob I. Is to forward SJC a complete list of committee contact information.
34. SJC has forwarded a contract to Pottstown Borough. Rob I. to advise SJC of minor revisions.

35. Next Meeting: Committee Meeting #2: date and location to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted,
SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Nicole Keegan
Project Manager
cc: Reconnections Committee Members

Reconnections – Pottstown / North Coventry
Committee meeting #1 November 17, 2003

NAME	Email	PHONE NO.
Ronald C. Downie	Pottstown Borough Hall -	610 970 6511
DAVID DOWNS	ddowns@schuylkillriver.org	484-945-0200
Wayne Bowen	wbowen@schuylkillriver.org	"
GINA MANGANO	gmangano@MAIL.MONTCOPA.ORG	610-218-3638
Lynn Benensky	lbenensky@pottstown.org	610 970-6512
ROBERT IHLEIN	RIHLEIN@POTTSTOWN.ORG	610-970-6515
TOM HYLTON	th thomashylton@comcast.net	610.323.6837
Carolyn Blackwell	cblackwell@urbanpartners.us	215-829-1906
James Hartling	jhartling@urbanpartners.us	215-829-1902
Jim Fairchild	jfairchild@pottstown.org	610-970-6508
Nicole Keegan		610-989-0348
Steve Sinclair		"
Peter Simone		"
Brian Styche		"
Jack Layno	jlayno@pottstown.org	610.970.6510



SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

12/2/03

Pottstown / North Coventry Reconnections Study
SJC# 03071.0

COMMITTEE MEETING #2 - MINUTES

Date/Time: 12/1/03, 9:00 AM

Location: North Coventry Township Municipal Building

In Attendance: Lynn Benensky – Pottstown Borough Staff
Kurt Zwinkl – Director, SRGA
David Downs – SRGA staff
Ronald Downie – Pottstown Borough Council
Bud Jenschke – North Coventry Township Supervisor (Jan)
Brian Mulchaney – North Coventry Mall Manager
Kevin Hennessey – Manager, North Coventry Township
Andy Paravis - North Coventry Township Supervisor
Jim Fairchild – Dir. Of Economic Development, Pottstown Bor.
Tom Hylton – Chair, Pottstown Borough Planning Commission
Robert Ihlein – Assistant Manager, Pottstown Borough
Gina Mangano – Montgomery County Planning Commission
Jim Hartling – Urban Partners
Nicole Keegan - SJC
Peter Simone - SJC

Purpose of Meeting: To introduce the consultant team to the Reconnections Committee, review the scope of work, set project dates, and review project objectives.

Notes:

1. Peter S. opened the meeting a brief introduction of the project. A preliminary project schedule, 11/17/03 meeting minutes, and agenda were distributed.
2. Peter S. reviewed the 11/17/03 meeting minutes. Peter S. suggested that economic development should be added to the project goal list developed at the 11/17/03 meeting.
3. A meeting attendee stated that the Keim Street Bridge is on the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's 12-year plan. Currently The County may be seeking proposals for the redesign of this bridge. **Gina M. will forward SJC a County contact for the Keim Street Bridge replacement.**

4. SJC and Urban Partners meet with the John Wolfington, the Mrs. Smith property owner, to review the preliminary sketch plan for that site. Peter S. stated that Wolfington would redesign the plan to conform closer to the Pottstown Borough ordinances. Peter S. stated that the new plan would show more mixed uses and would address the entire site. The commercial uses on the site would be convenience and “boutique” retail, not destination retail.
5. Kevin H. noted that North Coventry Township does not currently have any funding in place for open space acquisition. Most of the funding for the Township has been for preservation of agricultural land.
6. A meeting attendee stated the Chester County Planning Commission (CCPC) is currently working with North Coventry Township and seven other municipalities to identify existing resources including recreation / open space. CCPC is in the process of helping to fund the third phase of the improvements at Kenilworth Park. The contact at CCPC is David Ward. **SJC to contact David to inform him of the Reconnections Project and to share information.**
7. A meeting attendee noted that the residents on Riverside Drive (east of Keim Street) have expressed, in the past, that they do not want trails going through the backyard of their property along the river. One committee member suggested locating an on-road trail through this portion of the project to avoid conflicts with residents.
8. Andy P. suggested the possibility of a pedestrian trail crossing at the old railroad trestle located west (upstream) of the Route 100 Bridge.
9. Tom H. stated that this study in conjunction with the previous work done in Pottsgroves (John Potts Park Concept) would have a good potential for future funding by both Chester and Montgomery counties. There would be a continuous park / open space / trail system incorporating two counties and several municipalities.
10. Peter S. noted that having a joint county park could potentially take the burden off the municipalities for long-term maintenance of the park.
11. Bud J. noted that the Pottstown Area Council of Governments Agreement should be formalized within a year. This is the largest regional planning effort in the state. It was suggested that the potential for state funding is great. **Gina M. and Rob I. still need to forward to SJC basic info about the Council of Governments (promised at last meeting).**
12. Andy P. stated that the pedestrian / bike connection from downtown Pottstown to the North Coventry Mall should be an important component (objective) of this study.
13. Bud J. stated that North Coventry Township has been studying a pedestrian link from Hanover Street west to the old railroad trestle near the Schuylkill River. He noted that there are some alignment challenges along River Road.
14. Tom H. stated that there is the potential for an improved pedestrian link from downtown Pottstown to the Wal-Mart. In addition, there is a small public park behind the Wal-Mart.

15. Peter S. stated that portions of Route 724 appear to have large shoulders / Right-of-Way that could accommodate on-road trails. Andy P. stated that Route 724 near Kenilworth has limited space for on-road trails.
16. Ron D. noted that someone should contact the golf course on Route 724 to see if they have available land for open space / pedestrian link opportunities. **Kevin H. will get a contact at the golf course for SJC to contact so that SJC can walk the riverfront property owned by the golf course.**
17. Bud J. stated that **SJC should contact the North Coventry Township Open Space Review Board and Recreation Department** to coordinate their planning efforts with the Reconnections study. Contact names: Jay Erb and Chris ? **(Bud or Kevin please advise).**
18. Bud J. mentioned that the township Historical Commission has recommended that the (Pottstown Landing) Laurelwood Road residential structures should not be converted to sympathetic commercial uses (professional offices, etc.).
19. Laurelwood Road as it passes beneath Rt. 422 is vary narrow and may not present adequate room for pedestrians and vehicles. This link is a potentially very important link between Pottstown Landing and the North Coventry Mall. **SJC to assess.**
20. A meeting attendee noted that Pottstown Landing is on the National Historic Register. **SJC requests that Kevin H. forward to SJC a copy of National Register application which will indicate historic resources and basis for registry.**
21. Lynn B. stated that improved / clear signage is one way to promote pedestrian activity between the two communities.
22. Jim F. stated that PADIDA is focusing its efforts to facilitate development of businesses by creating / recruiting specific business to create a destination retail district. PADIDA concentrates its efforts on a 3-block area in the center of Pottstown. The boundaries are York / Evans to Hanover and Queen / King to Charlotte. **Jim F. – please forward contact name to SJC.**
23. Tom H. stated that it is very important to connect the two downtown areas of Pottstown and North Coventry to each other, the river, and parks.
24. Jim F. stated that local State Representatives should be informed of this study and included in the planning process. Everyone agreed they should be brought to the table once we have preliminary recommendations.
25. Brian M., manager of the North Coventry Mall stated that he is in favor of this study and would promote any type of improvements that would enhance the surrounding area. Pedestrian enhancements would promote mall business.
26. Andy P. stated that burying the utilities in North Coventry along Hanover Street would enhance the streetscape and overall appearance of the area.
27. Everyone agreed that the majority of the planning work would be completed on the North Coventry side of the river.

28. A meeting attendee mentioned the possibility of connecting to the Laurelwood canal located in North Coventry Township. Charlie Marshall is the owner of the Laurelwood canal property. This canal area is under an open space easement with Brandywine Conservancy. **Andy P. will speak with Mr. Marshall and advise him that SJC would like to visit the canal site and riverfront area of his property.**

Project Schedule:

29. The project schedule is as follows:

- a. Committee Meeting # 3:
Date / Location: 1/14/04, 7PM North Coventry Twp. Municipal Building
Purpose: Confirm goals and develop preliminary program-preview of agenda of Public Meeting #1.
- b. Public Meeting # 1:
Date / Location: 1/20/04, 7PM North Coventry Fire Hall
Purpose: Review project, discuss goals, develop / discuss program. Identify issues.
- c. Committee Meeting # 4:
Date / Location: 2/2/04, 7 PM North Coventry Twp. Municipal Building
Purpose: Review preliminary ideas and suggestions
- d. Committee Meeting # 5:
Date / Location: 3/1/04, 7PM North Coventry Twp. Mun Building
Purpose: Review refinements to concepts. Preview Public Meeting #2.
- e. Public Meeting #2:
Date and Location: 3/29/04, 7 PM Montgomery County Community College, Pottstown
Purpose: Present preliminary recommendations
- f. Committee Meeting # 6:
Date / Location: 4/5/04, 7PM North Coventry Twp. Municipal Building
Purpose: Review public meeting outcome. Discuss refinements to concepts.
- g. Public Meeting # 3:
Date and Location: Time and location to be determined (**week of April 19 or 26 suggested**)
Purpose: Present draft plan

30 day review period

30. Kevin H. is to verify if the North Coventry Fire Hall is available to hold the 1/20/04 public meeting. **Post Meeting Note: the Fire Hall location has been confirmed.**

31. Andy P. stated that a small group of citizens in South Pottstown has been previously formed for another project. He stated that he should be able to mobilize them again for this project.
32. Kevin H. stated that the area baseball leagues were seeking to expand and needed additional fields.
- 33. SJC will compose a draft press release prior to the 1st public meeting and circulate the press release (for comment and approval) to all committee members via email ASAP.**
- 34. Lynn will contact Montgomery County Community College to schedule the 2nd public meeting.**

Bold Items are action items. Please take action ASAP.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,
SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Nicole Keegan

cc: Reconnections Committee Members

Reconnections – Pottstown / North Coventry
 Committee meeting #2 December 1, 2003
 North Coventry Township Municipal Building

NAME	Email	PHONE NO.
RON DOWNIE	BOROUGH Pottstown 610 970-6509 FAX	610 970-6511
YVETTE SIMONE	STC	610 889-0348
NICOLE KIRKMAN	STC	" " "
Jim Hartling	Urban Partners	215-829-1902
Gina Mangano	North Coventry Township	610-278-3458
Lynn Benensky	lbenensky@pottstown.org	610 970 6512
ROB IHLEIN	RIHLEIN@POTTSTOWN.ORG	610.970.6515
TOM HYLTON	thomashylton@comcast.net	610.323.6837
BUD JENSCHKE	NORTH COVENTRY	610-323-1694
BRIAN MOLCHANI	COVENTRY MALL	610-327-0700
Kevin Hewness	Twipmgr@Northcoventry-us	610-323-1694
ANDY PARAVIS	APARAVIS@AOL.COM	610-327-8508
Kurt Zwick	kzwikl@schupkillriver.org	610-484-945-0210
DAVID DOWNS	SRHA	484-945-0200
Jim Fairchild	Boz of Pott	610-970-6508



SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

1/27/04

Pottstown / North Coventry Reconnections Study
SJC# 03071.0

COMMITTEE MEETING #3 - MINUTES

Date/Time: 1/14/03, 7:00 PM

Location: North Coventry Township Municipal Building

In Attendance: Ronald Downie – Pottstown Borough Council
Bud Jenschke – North Coventry Township Supervisor
Andy Paravis - North Coventry Township Supervisor
Robert Ihlein – Assistant Manager, Pottstown Borough
Kevin Hennessey –Manager, North Coventry Township
Tom Hylton – Chair, Pottstown Borough Planning Commission
Judy Comiskoik - PDIDA
Nicole Keegan - SJC
Peter Simone - SJC

Purpose of Meeting: Review project goals, site analysis findings, and review preliminary site recommendations.

Notes:

1. Peter S. opened the meeting with a brief introduction of the project. A meeting agenda, a draft agenda for public meeting # 1, and an outline list of site analysis findings and preliminary recommendations were distributed.
2. Peter S. reviewed the draft agenda for Public Meeting # 1. PS stated that Simone Jaffe Collins will review the project process, give a general overview of the project, and review project analysis findings. The remainder of the meeting will be an open discussion that allows the audience to comment on ideas and / or concerns they have with this project. SJC will use the “card-technique” to solicit ideas from the audience.
3. Bud J. will start the first public meeting and introduce the project and committee members.
4. Nicole K. stated that she is in contact with the Mercury Newspaper. The Mercury hopes to put an article in either the Sunday or Monday edition of the paper. The Mercury intends to have a reporter at the meeting. *Post Meeting Note: The Mercury ran an article and an editorial review in the Sunday, January 18, 2004 edition of the paper.*
5. **Rob I. suggested that Lynn B. contact the local cable network to see if they can broadcast the public meetings.**
6. Peter S. stated it SJC’s understanding that the Keim Street Bridge is not currently on PennDOT’s 12-year plan.

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Reconnections\meetings\040114_mtgmin_#3.doc

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(610) 889 0348 FAX (610) 889 7521
EMAIL • SJC@SIMONEJAFFECOLLINS.COM

7. A meeting attendee mentioned that Montgomery County is about to release their Transportation Plan. The first public meeting will be held on February 2, 2004 at Upper Merion Township.
8. Peter S. noted that SJC and Urban Partners met with the John Wolfington, the Mrs. Smith property owner, to review the preliminary sketch plan for that site. Revisions to the sketch plan have been made since that meeting.
9. **Andy P. will contact Robert Kerns, Montgomery County Planning Commission, and have Robert forward SJC the following information:**
 - a. **Electronic GIS format: 2003 Land Use data for the project area**
 - b. **Written documentation on the Council of Governments**
 - c. **Regional Planning Commission study information analysis findings and recommendations. (Preferable format: electronic GIS)**
 - d. **Current census information**
10. Ron D. suggested that the consultants address the islands located on the Schuylkill River in the vicinity of the Keim Street Bridge. Peter S. stated that he is in the process of contacting the PA Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation and the Army Corp of Engineers to see who owns the islands and if dredging in the vicinity of the islands might mitigate flooding.
11. A meeting attendee noted that the park located at W. Main Street, York Street, Coyne Alley, and River Road is called Badorf Field. North Coventry Township Committee member to verify.
12. Peter S. stated that creating a "mixed-use" zoning in Pottstown Landing might benefit this community. Bud J. stated that the North Coventry Township Historical Commission wanted to keep the Pottstown Landing area zoned residential. Bud agreed that including office use in this area could help this community succeed economically.
13. A meeting attendee noted the there is bike trail signage / designation in Pottstown on High Street for the Montgomery County Bike Trails. The other Montgomery County bike trails in the study area do not have signage.
14. Tom H. noted that the relocation of Industrial Boulevard on the SJC Existing and Planned Transportation Map should not be designated as a planned improvement; rather it should be listed as a possible improvement.
15. Peter S. mentioned that SJC spoke to PennDOT concerning the feasibility of decreasing the cartway widths of the vehicular lanes and increasing the size of the sidewalks. PennDOT stated that it could be feasible depending on the traffic for this bridge. Peter S. noted that increasing the pedestrian sidewalks on the bridge should be considered as a possible recommendation.
16. Tom H. stated that Borough has studied resizing the curb radii at the intersection of Hanover Street and Industrial Boulevard / College Drive.
17. Kevin H. stated that the North Coventry Township safety officer studied the possibility of creating one-way traffic in Pottstown Landing on West Main Street and on River Road. The safety officer also suggested creating a roadway that that parallels Route 422, starting at South Hanover Street directly across from the Route 422 westbound ramp and ending along River Road just east of the Route 100 overpass.
18. Peter S. stated that one trail recommendation might be to create a trail that follows the Schuylkill River following River Road in North Coventry Township. The trail could connect from the Hanover Street Bridge and follow the Schuylkill River to Laurel Locks Farm. In order to do this it might be necessary to decrease the cartway width of River Road and make it one-way to accommodate the proposed trail. In addition, the trail

would go through private property, so an easement would be necessary through this portion.

19. A meeting attendee suggested exploring the possibility of creating one-way traffic on River Road. In addition, the attendee suggested that the one-way traffic should be east bound.
20. A meeting attendee stated that motorists travel above the speed limit on River Road. Traffic calming devices should be recommended for this road.
21. Andy P. stated that one visual enhancement for the North Coventry side of Hanover Street should be to bury the underground utility poles. Peter S. stated burying utility poles is very expensive.
22. Judy C. stated the building located in South Pottstown on the east side of Hanover Street just before the Hanover Street Bridge is visually unattractive.
23. A few temporary recommendations for the Keim Street Bridge were discussed. Recommendations discussed included: re-painting the bridge, adding pedestrian lighting, lighting the bridge so that the bridge truss is illuminated, and opening views from the Schuylkill River to the bridge.
24. Peter S. stated that SJC is attempting to determine who owns the abandoned railroad trestle. The railroad trestle could be a pedestrian link between the two communities.
25. Nicole K. stated that SJC recommends two pedestrian trail connections to link Pottstown to the Coventry Mall. The first trail would use River Road and Laurelwood Road through Pottstown Landing. The second trail connection uses a Hanover Street and Route 724 through Pottstown Landing. A committee member thought that most people walking from Pottstown to the Mall would use the River Road trail connection.
26. PennDOT is currently studying Route 422 for highway improvements. SJC will consult with the PennDOT study to see if the improvements for 422 can be designed with consideration to the Reconnections trail improvements where Route 422 intersects with Laurelwood Road and Hanover Street in North Coventry Township. SJC will also contact PennDOT to verify the timeframe of this study.
27. DVRPC is conducting a transportation study for the Route 724 corridor. SJC will contact DVRPC concerning this study.

Next Committee Meeting: #4 –Monday, February 2, 7 PM @ North Coventry Township Municipal Building. The purpose of the meeting is to review preliminary recommendations and discuss the outcome of the first public meeting.

Bold Items are action items. Please take action ASAP.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,
SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



Nicole Keegan

cc: Reconnections Committee Members



SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

2/16/04

Pottstown / North Coventry Reconnections Study
SJC# 03071.0

COMMITTEE MEETING #4 - MINUTES

Date/Time: 2/2/04, 7:00 PM

Location: North Coventry Township Municipal Building

In Attendance: Gina Mangano – Montgomery County Planning Commission
Robert Ihlein – Assistant Manager, Pottstown Borough
Ronald Downie – Pottstown Borough Council
Bill Deegan – North Coventry Township
Kevin Hennessey – Manager, North Coventry Township
Jim Fairchild – Director of Economic Development, Pottstown Borough
Bud Jenschke – North Coventry Township Supervisor
Jack Bicher – North Coventry Township
Andy Paravis - North Coventry Township Supervisor
Tom Hylton – Chair, Pottstown Borough Planning Commission
Nicole Keegan - SJC
Peter Simone - SJC

Purpose of Meeting: Review preliminary site recommendations.

Notes:

1. Peter S. opened the meeting with a brief address and distributed the meeting agenda and preliminary recommendations handout.
2. Peter S. reviewed the 1/29/04 Public Meeting minutes. Peter S. stated the biggest challenge for the next public meeting is to make the community aware of the Reconnections project and to increase public attendance.
3. Bud J. suggested publicizing Reconnections recommendations prior to the next public meeting. This could be done through another article in the Mercury newspaper.
4. **SJC will create a public announcement flyer to announce the 3/29/04 public meeting for Reconnections Committee members to distribute to the community.**
5. A meeting attendee suggested that the Committee distribute the public meeting flyer to local schools. The flyers could be handed out to students for them to take home to their parents. This would be a good way to publicize the Reconnections project and generate increased public attendance. **Kevin H. will contact Barry Flicker the Owen J. Roberts grade school principal concerning disturbing flyers to Owen J, Roberts. SJC will contact Jim Fairchild concerning Pottstown School District contacts.**

6. Kevin. Hennessey stated that the Reconnections project public meetings are announced through the North Coventry Township's website. In addition, North Coventry Township is working on creating links to the Borough of Pottstown's website.
7. Peter S. reviewed the preliminary recommendations for the Reconnections Project (see attached handout for a detailed list of recommendations). The following discussion occurred:
8. Bud. J. suggested that in addition to the listed recommendations for the Hanover Street Bridge SJC should consider incorporating plantings on the Bridge. Peter S. stated that this was a good idea and recommended using drought tolerant, low maintenance plant material such as ornamental grasses, shrubs, and perennials, rather than trees. All plants would need irrigation. Trees might be difficult to include on a bridge due to their irrigation and maintenance requirements, and the freeze – thaw affects on the trees roots.
9. Ron D. stated that Pottstown investigated the idea of featuring fireworks on the Hanover Street Bridge for community special events. This idea was rejected once they discovered that there was a gas line connected to the bridge.
10. SJC presented three concept diagrams showing River Road trail options in North Coventry Township. The proposed trail would connect pedestrians from Hanover Street / South Pottstown area to River Park, Pottstown Landing, and the Coventry Mall. All three options use portions of the existing cartway of River Road for a pedestrian trail creating one-way vehicular traffic on River Road.
11. Bud J. stated that he prefers option no. 3. This option includes the addition of a new Road that runs parallel to Route 422, between Hanover Street and the Route 100 overpass.
12. A meeting attendee noted that River Road option no. 3 traverses through wetlands making it more difficult to build a road through this section of land.
13. Bud J. commented that he is hesitant to propose option no. 2 to the public since this option requires removing at least two houses that stand on the west side of Elm Street and at West Main Street.
14. Ron D. commented that the proposed one-way traffic for the River Road options would inconvenience some of the South Pottstown community motorists. He noted that westbound traffic on River Road is more heavily traveled and suggested that the eastbound one-way traffic proposed be changed to westbound one-way traffic. Pottstown motorists travel west on River Road to the Coventry Mall. Making traffic one-way westbound rather than one-way eastbound would eliminate bottleneck traffic that might occur at the southbound Hanover Street Bridge / River Road intersection if the right-hand turn lane onto River Road is eliminated. Hanover Street southbound bound traffic changes from two lanes to one lane after this intersection.
15. Kevin H. circulated an aerial map illustrating parcels owned by North Coventry Township. North Coventry Township owns a significant number of parcels on the western side of South Pottstown between Hanover Street and the Route 100 overpass.
16. Peter S. stated that option no. 1 would be the easiest and least expensive option to accomplish in the short term. The Township would have to write a letter to PennDOT advising them of this roadway change. Further study will have to be conducted to determine the traffic impacts on the Hanover Street Bridge and the Hanover Street / River Road intersection.
17. Ron D. suggested that in addition to the listed recommendations for the Laurelwood Road / Pottstown Landing improvements SJC should consider incorporating lighting under the Route 422 overpass on Laurelwood Road.

18. Andy P. suggested that SJC contact the Laurel Locks property owner concerning the proposed trail connection from River Park to Laurel Locks in North Coventry Township.
19. A meeting attendee stated that there is bus service from Pottstown to the Coventry Mall. **SJC stated that they would include existing bus service routes in their transportation analysis.**
20. The committee discussed paving options for proposed sidewalks. Tom H. stated that he has seen asphalt paved sidewalks used successful in other towns and villages. Bud J. stated that unit pavers should also be considered.
- 21. SJC will contact Chris Washburn concerning the NCT Open Space Network Plan.**
22. Peter stated that if material was dredged from the Schuylkill River islands it could be placed on the golf course property (the parcel located between Route 422 and the Schuylkill River) if the Township were to acquire this piece of land. This nearby site to store dredged materials will reduce costs.
23. The committee discussed economic development for the South Pottstown and Pottstown Landing. **SJC will contact Dick Frens at PDIDA concerning their program in Pottstown.** Jim F. mentioned that Phoenixville has the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act (LERTA) program. This program might be a possibility for Pottstown and North Coventry to consider.
24. Peter S. recommended considering South Pottstown for a revitalization zone. He believes this area is a good candidate for revitalization, and the Township already owns many of the parcels.
25. Jim F. stated that the streetscape improvements on Hanover Street in Pottstown should continue on Hanover Street in North Coventry Township.
26. Rob I. suggested including a cultural heritage museum to the Reconnections recommendations. Other possible museums mentioned at the meeting were Fire Fighter's museum, model train museum, and a vintage racing car museum.
27. A meeting attendee suggested restoring the canal and having a canal heritage walk.
28. Peter S. stated that SJC is considering extending the scenic overlay to include the Schuylkill River across North Coventry Township and Pottstown.
29. Peter S. stated that SRGA is pursuing adding a boat rental concession at the SRGA headquarters, so that visitors can take canoe trips on the Schuylkill River.
30. Rob I. suggested that one of the area parks in the study area should accommodate a large area for major special events, such as an outdoor concert. This would be a good revenue producer. This should be included as a recommendation.

Next Committee Meeting: #5 –Monday, March 1, 7 PM @ North Coventry Township Municipal Building. The purpose of the meeting is to review refinements to concepts / recommendations and preview public meeting 2.

Next Public Meeting: #2 –Monday, March 29, 7 PM @ Montgomery County Community College. The purpose of the meeting is to present preliminary recommendations.

Bold Items are action items. Please take action ASAP.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,
SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole Keegan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicole Keegan

cc: Reconnections Committee Members

encl: Recommendation Outline, 2/2/04
River Road Options, 2/2/04

Reconnections – Pottstown / North Coventry
 Committee Meeting #4 - February 2, 2004
 @ North Coventry Township Building

NAME	Address	PHONE NO.
Lina Margano	Montgomery County Planning Comm	610-278-3638
Robert Fhleim	Borough of Pottstown	610-970-6515
Ronald C. Wronnie	Borough of Pottstown / SRGA	610-326-0614
Bill Deegan	NORTH COVENTRY TWP.	610-323-1694
Kevin Penney	North Cov	
Jim Touchette	Boro of Pottstown	610-970-6508
Bud JENSCHKE	North Coventry	610-469-3819
Bill Deegan	North Coventry	
Pete Simon	SJC	
Nicole Keegan	SJC	610-389-0348
ANDY TARAU'S	North Coventry	610-327-8508
Jack Bicher	North Coventry	(610) 323-7733
Tom HYLTON	POTTSTOWN	610.323.6837



SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

3/8/04

Pottstown / North Coventry Reconnections Study
SJC# 03071.0

COMMITTEE MEETING #5 - MINUTES

Date/Time: 3/1/04, 7:00 PM

Location: North Coventry Township Municipal Building

In Attendance: Robert Ihlein – Assistant Manager, Pottstown Borough
Ronald Downie – Pottstown Borough Council
Jay Erb – North Coventry Township
Kevin Hennessey –Manager, North Coventry Township
Andy Paravis - North Coventry Township Supervisor
Tom Hylton – Chair, Pottstown Borough Planning Commission
Nicole Keegan - SJC
Peter Simone - SJC

Purpose of Meeting: Review site recommendations and prepare for Reconnections public meeting #2.

Notes:

1. Peter S. distributed the meeting agenda, draft public meeting #2 meeting agenda, project recommendations list, priorities list for proposed recommendations, draft press release for public meeting #2 and a preliminary recommendations estimate of probable costs.
2. Peter S. reviewed the draft agenda for Public Meeting # 2. Peter S. stated that Simone Jaffe Collins would review the project process, give a general overview of the project, briefly review project analysis findings, and present the project recommendations and associated costs. The remainder of the meeting will be an open discussion that allows the audience to comment on ideas and / or concerns they have with this project. A PowerPoint presentation will be used to for the site analysis findings and proposed recommendations.
3. Ron D. will start the first public meeting and introduce the project and committee members.
4. **Ron D. stated that PCTV will record the next public meeting for cable re-broadcast. Ron D. will verify this arrangement with PCTV.**
5. Nicole K. reported that both Owen J. Roberts and the Pottstown School District agreed to distribute public meeting #2 public announcement flyers to schools / school children. Both North Coventry Township and Pottstown will make copies of the flyers and forward them to the school district for circulation. **Nicole K. will forward Owen J. Roberts and Pottstown School District contact information to Pottstown Borough and North Coventry Township. The flyers are to be sent to schools by March 15th.**

SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS\ C:\Documents and Settings\Nicole S. Keegan\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\HAY3M2WL\040301_ComMtg#5_minutes.doc

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6. Everyone agreed that 3rd and final public meeting should be held at the North Coventry Fire Hall. **Kevin H. is to contact the North Coventry Fire Hall and make arrangements for this meeting. The meeting is tentatively set for May 17th at 7 PM. Kevin will verify this date with the Fire Hall.**
7. **SJC will forward a DRAFT press release via email to all committee members for review. Committee members will have until Monday March 8th to send in their comments on the press release. Once the press release is finalized Andy P. will contact the Mercury newspaper and forward the press release and a few sketches prepared by SJC of the proposed recommendations.**
8. Peter S. used a PowerPoint presentation to review the proposed linkage recommendation plan and sketches of some of the proposed reconnection recommendations (see attached handout for a detailed list of recommendations). The following discussion occurred:
9. Ron D. suggested removing lower branches and vines from the trees along the Chester County side of the Schuylkill River along River Road. This would allow clear views to the Schuylkill River from the proposed River Road Trail.
10. Andy P. agreed that SJC could present the North Coventry Township Open Space Network Plans at the next public meeting, but requested that we only show the areas in the reconnections project study area.
11. Tom H. requested that SJC space the proposed street trees on Hanover Street and Laurelwood Road closer than 50 feet on center as is indicated on the cost estimate.
12. Peter S. noted that it is very expensive to bury the utility poles underground. Ron D. suggested moving the utility poles to the alley behind Hanover Street.
13. Tom H. suggested using a "tree" cable for the utility pole wires. This combines the wires to one area rather than on two or more lines with a "T" on top of the pole. This create less power cable for branches to become entwined with. This idea in combination with street trees would help to hide the utility poles and wires along Hanover Street and is a less expensive option than burying the poles.
14. **SJC will revise the cost estimate on Hanover Street and list burying the utility and moving the utility poles behind Hanover Street as cost footnotes. Show from Hanover St. Bridge to Rt. 422 only.**
15. Ron D. recommended adding sidewalk to the south side Kenilworth, rather than the north side, since the north side has the Rt. 422 interchange and will be more difficult for pedestrian to cross.
16. **SJC will forward the committee via email the economic development recommendations prior to the next public meeting.**
17. Tom H. questioned whether or not there was enough space for a foot trail along the Pottstown side of the Schuylkill River. *Post Meeting Note: SJC verified that there is not enough space for a trail in this area and will remove this item as a recommendation.*
18. Ron D. suggested adding another Rt. 422 cloverleaf ramp to the northeastern corner of Hanover Street and Rt. 422. A few buildings might have to be removed for this interchange to be implemented. Andy P. thought that North Coventry Township might be opposed to this idea.
19. **SJC will contact Lee Whitmore at Chester County Planning Commission regarding the idea of adding an interchange to this area of Rt. 422 to get his feedback.**

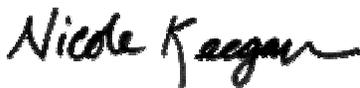
- 20. SJC will contact the Army Corp of Engineers concerning dredging around the islands located near the Keim Street Bridge along the Schuylkill River.**
21. Peter S. reviewed the short-term priorities for the Reconnections project (see attached handout).
22. Ron D. stated that the most important priorities from the onset of the project were Hanover Street in South Pottstown (Hanover Street between River Road and Rt. 422), Pottstown Landing / Laurelwood Road, and trail along River Road. These items should be listed first in the priorities list.
- 23. SJC will separate the South Pottstown Hanover Street Improvements into segments.**
24. Tom H. suggested breaking the project and cost estimate into phases with less expensive projects first.
- 25. Committee Meeting #5 is scheduled for April 5, 2004, 7PM @ North Coventry Township. SJC is suggesting rescheduling this meeting later in April so that there is adequate time to gather feedback from March 29th Public Meeting #2. We are suggesting rescheduling the meeting to either Monday, April 19th or Monday, April 26th at 7 PM. Please let us know if either of these dates work.**

Next Public Meeting: #2 –Monday, March 29, 7 PM @ Montgomery County Community College. The purpose of the meeting is to present draft plan recommendations.

Bold Items are action items. Please take action ASAP.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,
SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



Nicole Keegan

cc: Reconnections Committee Members

encl: DRAFT Public Meeting #2 Agenda, 3/1/04
Preliminary Estimate of Probable Costs, 3/1/04
Reconnections Recommendation Priorities List, REVISED 3/8/04

Reconnections - Pottstown / North Coventry
 Public Meeting #3 - May 17, 2004
 @ North Coventry Fire Station

NAME	Address / email
Dawn Royer	340 S. Hanover St. Pottstown, PA 19465
Shirley Rambo	340 S. Hanover St. Pottstown PA 19465 s.rambo@verizon.net
C.A. Haberzettl	1988 Coventryville Rd Pottstown PA 19465
LEN TRAUGER	1472 UNIONVILLE RD. POTTSTOWN PA 19465 ^{ST JOHN'S} LENFRDG@AOL.COM
WAYNE PASSE	18 E. MAIN ST. POTTSTOWN PA 19465 waynepasse@aol.com
DONNA HUNTINGER	316 S. HANOVER ST. POTTSTOWN DonnaLeck@aol.com
DOT LECK	196 E. Main St. Pottstown
Sharon Haring	130 West main st. Pottstown, Pa 19465
Bill Wierzbicki	837 TEMPLE RD. POTTSTOWN, PA
Ronald C. Downum	.100 E. HIGH ST. POTTSTOWN, Pa. 19464
Charlie & Ann Marshall	1040 W. Schuylkill Road, 19465
Tom Wylton	222 Chestnut St. Pottstown, PA 19464
Rebecca Porco-Shelly	33 Roland Ave Pottstown PA 19464
Ellen E. SAVAGE	1332 HAWK ST Pottstown PA. 19465
Kevin Hawmessey	845 S. Hanover St Pottstown Twpangr@northcoventry.us
BUD JENSCHKE	845 S. HANOVER ST POTTSTOWN PA 19465 BUDJENS@NORTHCOVENTRY.US
Jack Lagner	100 E. High St Pottstown 19464 / jlagner@pottstown.org
LINDA KULP	198 EAST MAIN ST, POTTSTOWN, PA 19465 KULPYA@AOL.COM
Michelle Zulker	153 West Main St Pottstown 19465 michelle_zulker@msn.com
STEVE STROM	323 S. HANOVER ST. POTTSTOWN Pa 19465
David Kiden	SIMONE JAFFE COLLINS • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE 318 511 OLD LANCASTER AVENUE • BERWYN, PENNSYLVANIA 19312 (610) 889 0348
Kathleen Whiteman	S. Hanover St Pottstown Pa 19465
Alfred Whiteman	341 S. HANOVER ST. POTTSTOWN 19465
CHRISTOPHER H. WASHBURN	910 MALVERN DRIVE, POTTSTOWN 19465

Paul + Christina Fry

Bob + Chris Metz

Ron + Mitzi Chusmian

96 W. Main St. Pottstown, Pa 19465

118 S Main St Pottstown, Pa 19465-

426 Klein Ave Pottstown, Pa. 19465

Rod Watson

225 S. Hanover St. Pottstown Pa. 19465

William Brogley

2348 Ming Dr. Pottstown 19464 610-369-9491

HARVEY B. PETERMAN

120 E. MAIN ST. POTTSTOWN, PA. 19465

Jim Marks

1161 Marcus Dr. Pottstown 19465

Reconnections – Pottstown / North Coventry
 Public Meeting #3 – May 17, 2004
 @ North Coventry Fire Station

NAME	Address / email
Barry Haring	437 Loop Road Pottstown kisha@netzero.net
Jack Bisher	1510 Chestnut Hill Road, Pottstown, PA 19465
Robert Ihlein	1031 Bellevue Ave. Pottstown 19464
DAVE STREET	334 S HANOVER ST 19465
Jay Erb	1153 Temple Rd Pottstown PA 19465 jayerb@yahoo.com
Jay KLINE	1174 S Hanover St
Mindy Ginter	2340 Jones Rd.
Jeremy Dalton	1400 S Keim St Pottstown, PA 19465
Cindy Fogle	345 S. Hanover St. Pottstown, Pa 19465
Ginny Wade	148 W Main St Pottstown PA 19465 eeyore962@aol.com
Brian Wade	148 W Main St. Pottstown PA 19465
Tina Hood + Bob RISKO	644 Kline Ave #6 Pottstown PA 19465
Christian Walters	339 South Hanover Street Pottstown Pa. 19465



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Township looks to shape its 'path of growth'

Michelle Karas , mkaras@pottsmmerc.com

04/07/2003

DOUGLASS (Mont.) -- Attractive to developers for rural character and proximity to routes 422 and 100, the township is one of eight municipalities that will benefit from a regional planning effort.

The question on the minds of 40 residents who attended a recent meeting regarding the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Plan was how soon can the township benefit from the plan.

Robert Kerns and James Levy, Montgomery County planners, discussed the plan concerning Douglass and the other municipalities in the Pottstown Metropolitan Region: New Hanover, West Pottsgrove, Upper Pottsgrove, Lower Pottsgrove, Pottstown, North Coventry and East Coventry.

Douglass is "in the path of growth," Kerns told the audience of about 40 people. As part of the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Plan, we "can shape it for the future," he said.

"Douglass Township is in an interesting position," Kerns said. "There's a balance of growth and rural preservation in the township."

Under current zoning the amount of housing that could be built in the region is excessive, he said. Thus, a regional planning effort is especially important in Douglass, where the population increased 30 percent from 1990 to 2000, and housing counts increased nearly 29 percent in the same time period, according to county data.

The county average increase in housing counts over that time was 11 percent, per the data. Of the municipalities participating in the regional planning effort, only Lower Pottsgrove saw a greater population increase -- 35 percent -- and a comparable increase in housing counts of 30 percent.

Under Douglass' current zoning, there is a potential for 1,632 new housing units. With rezoning proposed as part of the regional plan, that number can be reduced to 816, Kerns said. Douglass could reduce proposed high-density housing units from 500 to 272 units, thanks to an abundance of this type of housing in nearby Pottstown, according to the planners.

Nearly 900 Douglass residents responded to a recent survey conducted by the county planning commission and listed the rural character of the township as their No. 1 reason for choosing to live there. Other reasons included that they





were born and raised there, that they were near friends and work, and that they liked the suburban character of the area, Kerns said.

According to the survey, township residents' priorities were job opportunities, agricultural and open space preservation, improving sewer and water, and improving the traffic and the roads. The survey also showed that people want new development to go in already developed areas such as Pottstown, and in and around existing suburbs.

Because of commercial and residential developments in the works in the township, residents wanted to know how soon could the rezoning planned as part of the regional plan take effect.

"We have a current commercial proposal along Route 100. Should the township wait to see how it will fit?" asked Dale Buchanan, vice chairman of the township Board of Supervisors.

Although a draft of the regional plan will not be available for consideration until January 2004, the Montgomery County Planners will be conducting a review of commercial zoning in May that could be helpful to the township, Kerns said.

"What recourse does the township planning commission have to put something on hold until the regional plan is in line?" asked township resident Karen Keiser.

Kerns said moratoriums, although not supported in Pennsylvania, have been used as a tool in other states. Otherwise, townships may choose to change zoning laws now, he said.

A similar public meeting will be held at the township building in New Hanover at 6:30 p.m. April 14.

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Posted on Tue, Dec. 09, 2003

Chesco deal would boost preserved farmland

If the county approves buying development rights to 380 acres, that would push the amount of preserved farmland to more than 17,500 acres.

By Benjamin Y. Lowe
Inquirer Staff Writer

WEST CHESTER - Chester County officials are planning to announce today that they have preserved more than 10 percent of the county's farmland.

Before the county commissioners meeting is a measure to buy development rights to three northern Chester County farms. If approved, 380 acres will be added to the preservation rolls.

That would push the amount of preserved county agricultural land to more than 17,500 acres, which is 10 percent of the 1997 inventory, Kevin Baer, coordinator for the Chester County Agricultural Development Council and Agricultural Land Preservation Board, said yesterday.

Colin A. Hanna, the commissioners' chairman, said that surpassing the 10 percent threshold was a major achievement for Chester County, where farms have been converted into subdivisions at one of the fastest rates in the state.

"I think [the purchase] underscores the seriousness of Chester County's commitment to agricultural preservation," Hanna said.

Baer said two of the three farms are owned by Charles and Ann Marshall of North Coventry Township. The third is owned by Chris Uebelhoer of West Vincent Township.

Chester County's farmland preservation efforts have been coordinated through two programs that have spent \$76 million in state, county and local funds, Baer said.

One, the Commonwealth Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program, was launched by the state in 1989. It uses a combination of state and county funds.

The second, launched by the county two years ago, is the Northern Chester County Challenge Grant Program, which uses a combination of county and local funds.

The challenge grant program, designed to fill the gaps in the state program, has enabled the county to assist townships with their own land-preservation efforts. The state program, for example, does not include horse farms, Baer said, and the county program can help with that.

The county program calls on townships to pay for part of development rights costs. The program, however, ends this year.

Both incoming Republican Commissioners Donald A. Mancini and Carol Aichele, who have pledged to support open-space efforts, could not be reached for comment about the future of that program.

Andrew E. Dinniman, the lone Democratic commissioner, said the decision to extend the program would be "the first test as to whether the Republicans will keep their promise to continue . . . the landscapes program."

If the 380 acres are added, total preservation acres will be 17,860 of the 175,400 acres of available county farmland, as catalogued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Although surpassing the 10 percent threshold is good news for open-space advocates, a recent study by a Washington think tank found that far more Chester County land was developed than was saved over the last 15 years.

The Brookings Institution said in a report released this week that 29,400 acres of county farmland had been converted into housing since 1988. That is 12,400 more acres than the county preserved over roughly the same period, Baer said.

Statewide, Chester County has preserved the fourth-highest amount of land, state officials said. It is ahead of Lehigh County, but behind Lancaster, Berks and York Counties.

"The biggest problem is the land values are so much higher" than what the government can usually afford, said Edward M. Magargee, director of the Delaware County Conservation District. "Unless somebody really wants to save their land, it's an economic problem for them."

Purchasing development rights constrains the amount of building on a given piece of land, so that means counties often compete with developers for the remaining large parcels.

The competition for land is especially stiff in Chester County, where the population between 1990 and 2000 increased 15 percent to 433,500, according to census data.

"That's the race that we're in," said Ann Orth, director of land preservation for the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust in South Coventry Township.

"Developers are offering staggering amounts of money [for land], and people who may have been of modest means are suddenly becoming millionaires, but the land is being lost," she said. "Those people, if we are going to protect their land, need to be compensated. We have to make a tremendous effort to do that."

She said a Chester County landowner with a 20-acre farm easily could sell it to a developer for at least \$1 million.

Contact staff writer Benjamin Y. Lowe at 610-701-7615 or blowe@phillynews.com.

Posted on Wed, Dec. 10, 2003

Chesco OKs preservation deal for farms

By Benjamin Y. Lowe
Inquirer Staff Writer

WEST CHESTER - County officials approved the purchase of development rights yesterday for three farms in northern Chester County, bringing the total of preserved farmland to 17,900 acres, just more than 10 percent of its 1997 farmland inventory.

Two of the three farms are owned by Charles and Ann Marshall of North Coventry Township. The third farm is owned by Christopher A. Uebelhoer of West Vincent Township.

The Marshalls sold the development rights on 353 acres of their Laurel Locks farms. They donated development rights on another 125-acre parcel to the Brandywine Conservancy.

The county paid the Marshalls \$2.4 million for the rights. It paid Uebelhoer about \$148,000 for rights to his 25-acre tract.

Both purchases were made under the Northern Chester County Challenge Grant Program, which expires at the end of this year.

The vote was unanimous.

Contact staff writer Benjamin Y. Lowe at 610-701-7615 or blowe@phillynews.com.



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Top Stories

Several ideas presented to rekindle togetherness of Pottstown, Norco

Laura Catalano, Special to The Mercury

01/22/2004

NORTH COVENTRY -- At a public meeting on the Reconnections planning study, landscape architect Peter Simone displayed a photo of a man in an electric wheelchair.

The man was making his way from Pottstown to North Coventry along River Road, where no sidewalks exist.

"How can we make these routes safer for all of us?" asked Simone, a planner with Simone Jaffe Collins, the Berwyn firm conducting the study.

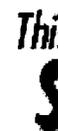
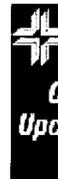
Creating a safe pedestrian thoroughfare between North Coventry and Pottstown is one primary goal of the Reconnections study. It is by no means the only goal.

About 40 people turned out at the Norco Fire House Tuesday night to bat around ideas aimed at re-establishing a feeling of connectedness between the two municipalities.

Some concepts introduced included transforming River Road in North Coventry into a one-way street with room for bikes and pedestrians, dredging the Schuylkill River to make it more appealing for water enthusiasts and improving signs for historic areas on both sides of the river.

Reconnections Committee members, planners, residents and public officials made those suggestions, and many more, in an effort to help guide the \$40,000 Reconnections planning study.

The study is being funded in part by the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area, through a \$25,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Heritage Parks Program. In addition, both





municipalities have contributed \$3,000, and developer John Wolfington, owner of the Mrs. Smith's complex, has put in \$9,000.

The meeting included a presentation by Simone, who explained that the study encompasses a 12.5-square-mile area in a two-mile radius from the Hanover Street Bridge. Primary focus is on the waterfront area of both municipalities, Simone said.

A main objective is to create walkways and bike paths between the communities, thereby bringing more people from Pottstown to the Coventry Mall, and more people from North Coventry to businesses in downtown Pottstown.

"We do not have opportunities to walk and bike close to home. Trails and greenways are the number one requested amenities all across the United States," Simone said.

Other goals of the study include improving entry points to the communities, creating more opportunities for recreation along the river and reinforcing the historic attributes of the area.

But when it came to making suggestions on specific methods of achieving those goals, Simone left the talking up to those attending the meeting.

River Road resident Russell Vandegrift recommended closing his street to traffic.

"It really could be an incredible walkway," Vandegrift observed.

Simone suggested instead making it into a one-way street to reduce traffic and create a walking trail.

Simone also recommended converting an abandoned railroad trestle bridge into a footbridge. North Coventry Township Manager Kevin Hennessey proposed developing a loop that took people from the Hanover Street Bridge, along River Road, across the trestle bridge and into Pottstown's Riverfront Park.

Pottstown business owner Denise Johnson liked the idea of improving the walkway on the Hanover Street Bridge, but she thought planners should go one step further.

"Why not make the Hanover Street Bridge a place to linger?" she asked.

Adding statues or a seating area could make the bridge itself an attraction, she said.

Pottstown lawyer Paul Prince suggested that the Keim Street Bridge, which the state Department of Transportation is expected to replace, be converted to a pedestrian bridge. He recommended constructing a stairway down to an island in the river, where a kiosk and boat launch could serve as attractions.

Prince also advocated dredging the river to improve boating in the area.

Pottstown school board member Rob Morgan agreed.

"If we could dredge the river, that would probably be a tremendous asset," said Morgan, who owns Morgan Moving and Storage in North Coventry.

FREE



Morgan, who owns Morgan Moving and Storage in North Coventry.

Pottstown Borough Councilman Ron Downie discussed the possibility of creating an audiotape to guide people through historic areas.

The meeting was the first public forum on the Reconnections study. A second meeting is scheduled for March 29 at Montgomery County Community College in Pottstown. A final meeting will be held in April to present the proposed plan, once it is drafted.

Once both municipalities approve a plan, officials will begin looking for funding for projects outlined.

First, the study must be conducted. And, in order for it to be successful, residents' ideas are needed.

"The more people we have participate in the study, the better the study will be," Simone said.

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Top Stories

Walkway proposed to connect downtown, mall

Laura Catalano , Special to The Mercury

05/22/2004

NORTH COVENTRY -- The final draft of the Reconnections plan sets as a top priority a roughly \$3 million project that would improve pedestrian access between High Street and the Coventry Mall.

The final plan also eliminates a controversial recommendation that called for constructing a cloverleaf interchange off Route 422 onto Hanover Street.

Planner Peter Simone presented the final draft Monday at the last public meeting on the matter. Simone is a landscape architect with Simone Jaffe Collins, the Berwyn firm that conducted the \$40,000 Reconnections study. About 45 residents and community leaders from Pottstown and North Coventry attended the meeting.

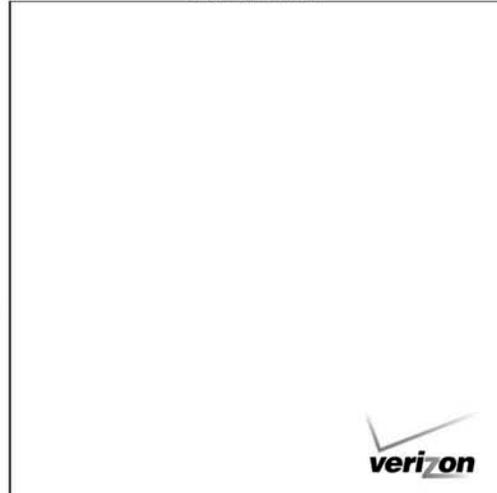
Many North Coventry residents came out to oppose the proposed changes to the Route 422 exit ramp. One of the 17 recommendations made in the plan suggested adding a westbound Route 422 on-ramp and an east bound off-ramp near the existing ramps on South Hanover Street. It was intended to improve access to Pottstown from Route 422.

Residents in that area had voiced worries at an earlier meeting that such a proposal would ruin their neighborhood, destroy property values and create unsafe traffic conditions.

Simone promised the residents that the recommendation had been eliminated from the plan.

"This is the one item in the study we couldn't come to a consensus on," said Simone, referring to the fact that Pottstown wanted the ramp changes while North Coventry officials did not. "We know it's controversial; we understand why. If I lived in one of those houses, I wouldn't want it either."

Advertisement






lived in one of those houses, I wouldn't want it either.

The final Reconnections Plan makes recommendations for 16 other projects, all aimed at reconnecting Pottstown and North Coventry. Of those recommendations, top priority will be given to establishing a better walking link between the commercial centers of the two communities --- High Street and the Coventry Mall.



"It could be a very beautiful place to walk along the river, but it's not a safe place right now," Simone noted.

The next step in the process will be to seek funding for the project. Simone estimated the entire project -- which would include adding sidewalks, widening walkways, building trails and beautifying the bridge -- could cost \$3 million.



Broken down, those costs, which are all rough estimates, encompass four different aspects of the project. Improving the Hanover Street Bridge by widening walking lanes and adding irrigated planters and other visually appealing amenities would cost about \$750,000. Another \$600,000 would go to improve pedestrian access to River Road. That could mean making the road into a one-way street. It could also mean building a walking trail along the existing roadway.



Improvements to Hanover Street, including adding sidewalks and pedestrian lighting, could cost \$850,000, and another \$800,000 would be needed to do the same along Laurelwood Road.

The project would likely be done in phases through grant money. The report also lists state and federal grants available for improving pedestrian and bike routes along major roads. Simone suggested seeking as much as \$1 million from both the Federal Highway Administration and the state Hometown Streets grant, among other agencies.

The Reconnections study will benefit the funding process, said Simone.

"You have two municipalities in two counties working together. That gives you additional points when you're looking for funding," he said.

While most people in the audience applauded the plan, some voiced concerns about maintenance, crime and funding. Several West Main Street residents worried that increased pedestrian traffic along River Road could translate into more crime.

"Do you have enough police to go back and forth along the walkways to make it safe for everybody?" asked resident Ginny Wade.

Simone suggested augmenting North Coventry's Town Watch program to assist police. He also insisted that making the area more attractive would reduce crime.

"The way you take communities back is to use them and to make them more accessible to people who want to go there to jog or play with their kids," Simone said. "Then, the people who go there for bad reasons aren't going to go there because there are people there."

Simone also observed that some of the 16 recommendations in the Reconnections Study might never come to pass. The ones that do will take time.

"Some of these things take many, many years to happen. That's the value of having these plans. It puts these things on record so we can begin working toward them," he said.

**NORTH COVENTRY
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Memo

To: Mr. Kevin Hennessey, Township Manager
From: Corporal Rob Malason
Date: December 4, 2003
Re: Reconnections project

As you requested, I took a look at the River Road and West Main Street area concerning the potential of implementing one way roadways. West Main Street will have sufficient width to handle the traffic as long as parking is restricted to one side of the street. The residents have vehicles parked on both sides of the street, and have done so for years, allowing enough room for only one vehicle to pass through. My concern is with getting this traffic back out onto River Road. If it is desired to have a portion of River Road blocked off and designated for pedestrian traffic, I would think that it would be that way from Hanover Street as far west as possible, even to the Route 100 overpass bridge.

Using one way roadways will require traffic to enter South Hanover Street at either River Road or West Main Street. Since a traffic signal already exists at River Road, it would make most sense to utilize the signal to control eastbound traffic on River Road accessing South Hanover Street. A concern arises then in that both southbound traffic lanes of Hanover Street that cross the Schuylkill River must now merge into one southbound lane, as no right turns would be permitted at River Road. This pinch point will likely create traffic conflicts.

Bringing traffic back onto River Road from Main Street at Elm Street would still leave a significant portion of River Road as two-way, and would require traffic that was westbound of West Main Street to make a left turn onto River Road, crossing the eastbound River Road traffic. The Elm Street area is not conducive to a significant traffic flow, with a sharp left curve in the road and a sight obstruction (hedges) at the intersection with River Road. A multi-way stop sign installation may be considered.

A consideration would be to extend West Main Street across Elm Street, bringing it out onto River Road between 234 and 258 River Road. This would require obtaining property and knocking down two houses that stand on the west side of Elm Street at West Main Street. This will involve legal expenses and other costs.

Extending Main Street or creating an access road that backs up against Route 422 and the interchange ramp with Route 100 northbound is a consideration, but the buildings at APR Supply, The Recycling Center and Hemmy's Auto Body are in that area, as well as houses further west along River Road. A consideration would be to create a roadway that parallel's Route 422, starting at South Hanover Street directly

across from the Route 422 westbound off ramp and ending along River Road just east of the Route 100 overpass. This will involve significant construction costs.

While tractor trailer traffic is already very limited on the roadway due to the 13'3" clearance of the Route 100 overpass bridge, there still will be some truck traffic that desires to use the area, especially trucks that service APR Supply. Adequate turning radius must be maintained to allow for this.

If barriers to separate pedestrian traffic and vehicular traffic on River Road are planned, the portions of River Road between Hanover Street and York Street where curbs are in place will create a cattle chute for traffic. If a vehicle breaks down in that portion, traffic will be log-jammed behind it because of a lack of a shoulder, being forced to travel back past the mall to circumvent the blockage.

An additional consideration for creating a pedestrian crossing between Pottstown Borough and North Coventry Township would be to look at the abandoned railroad trestle that crosses west of Route 100. A downside to this would be attempting to patrol this area and monitor foot traffic in that area, as it would be logistically difficult to monitor other than to commit a police officer to foot patrols in the area when needed. Another thing to consider would be to suspend some type of pedestrian crossing bridge on the underside of the Route 100 river bridge, linking the trails at Riverfront Park in Pottstown with River Road. Obviously, PENNDOT must be included in anything that deals with their bridge. Neither river crossing by the mentioned methods would be handicapped accessible.

There are no easy answers to the proposed project. Please let me know if I can offer any other assistance with this issue.

Respectfully submitted,



R. W. Malason
Corporal

Rt. 724 Corridor Study Summary

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

STUDY PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Improvements to PA 724 have not kept pace with increased land development and continuing population growth in this region of Chester County. Congestion along portions of PA 724 has forced many motorists onto alternative roads ill equipped to carry increased traffic. This has led to safety and capacity related problems in the corridor and surrounding road network.

Chester County's Transportation Improvements Inventory (TII) for 2003 put cost estimates for all county transit, highway and bridge needs at approximately \$1.5 billion. Limited public funds for major road improvements at all levels of government have curtailed their ability to respond appropriately to many of the current and future problems facing PA 724 and the surrounding road network. As such, better planning for and management of the existing facility is an important step towards finding suitable methods to mitigate these problems. Specific goals of this study include:

- Identifying cost effective solutions to existing traffic problems on the corridor.
- Identifying areas where better access management can yield results.
- Develop common theme for improvements to PA 724 (e.g. no major widening) to better streamline inter-municipal planning and road management activities.
- Building communication and consensus between the municipalities bordering the roadway.

PLANNING PROCESS

The study was guided by a PA 724 taskforce formed in July 2002. The following municipalities and regional organizations were represented on the task force:

- North Coventry Township
- East Coventry Township
- East Vincent Township
- East Pikeland Township
- Chester County Planning Commission
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)
- Tri-County Area Chamber of Commerce (TCACC)

Over several meetings held at the TCACC offices in Pottstown between 2002 and 2003, the task force worked to identify existing problems and areas for further study. Existing problems fell into five general categories:

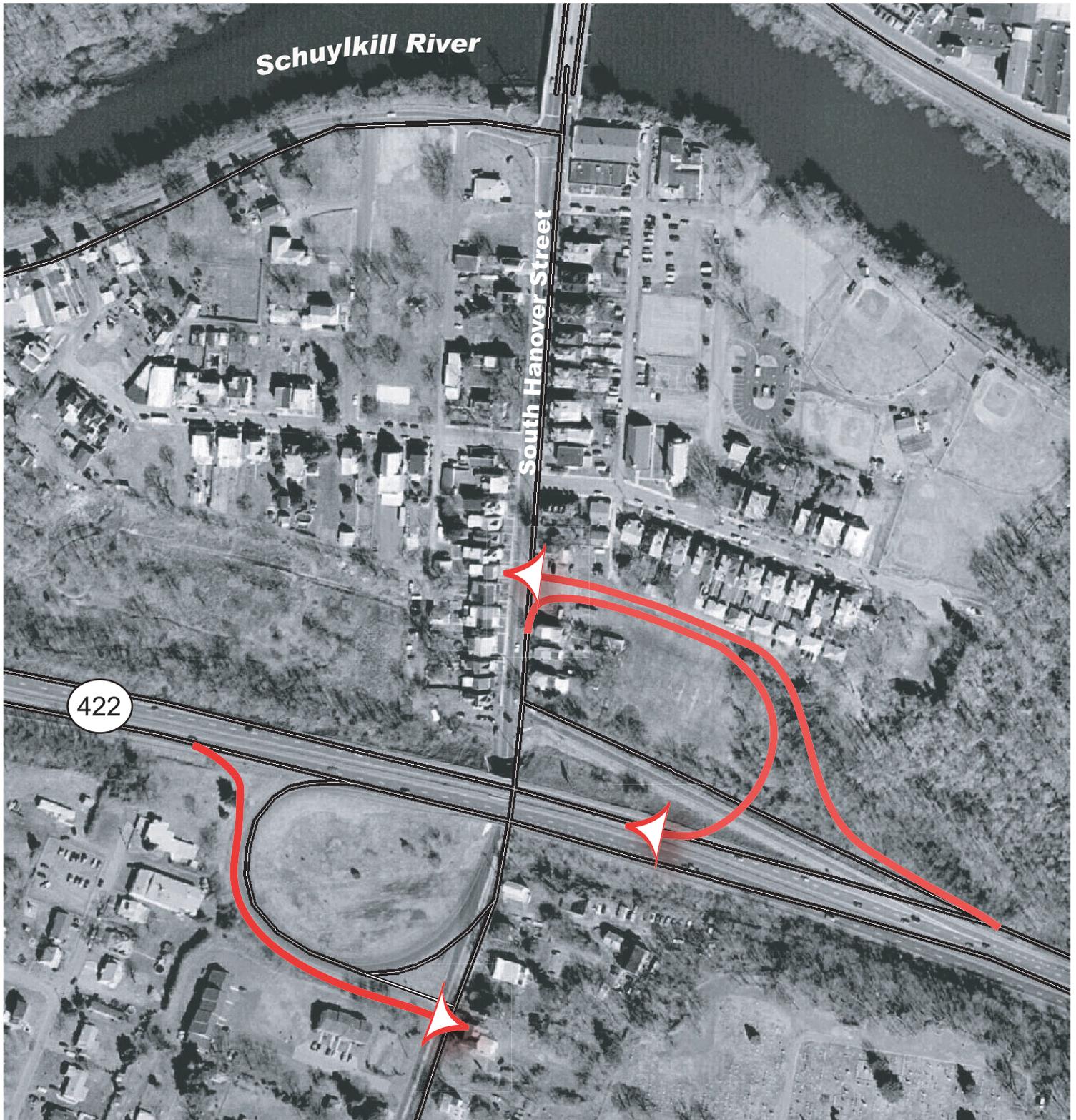
1. Physical deficiencies (sight distance, turning radii).
2. Congested intersections.
3. Local roads used as cut throughs.
4. Insufficient access controls.
5. Miscellaneous issues related to deficient signage, substandard pavement, overgrown roadside vegetation, and lack of street lighting.

The task force helped to recommend and prioritize measures to alleviate problems identified on PA 724. In addition, those roads in the surrounding road network requiring further study and/or future mitigation were identified.

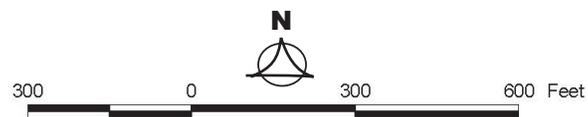
There was unanimous agreement by the task force members that no significant widening of PA 724 should occur outside of limited operational improvements such as additional turn lanes or intersection realignments. Consequently, where possible, use of existing shoulders on PA 724 for turn lanes was recommended as a low cost option with minimal impact to abutting properties. New traffic signals at certain intersections and better municipal coordination and enforcement of access controls were also recommended. In addition, the task force agreed that not every physical deficiency could or should be addressed. For example, any physical improvement to the PA 724 and Kiem Street intersection would result in severe impacts to land use, outweighing any benefits that might result.

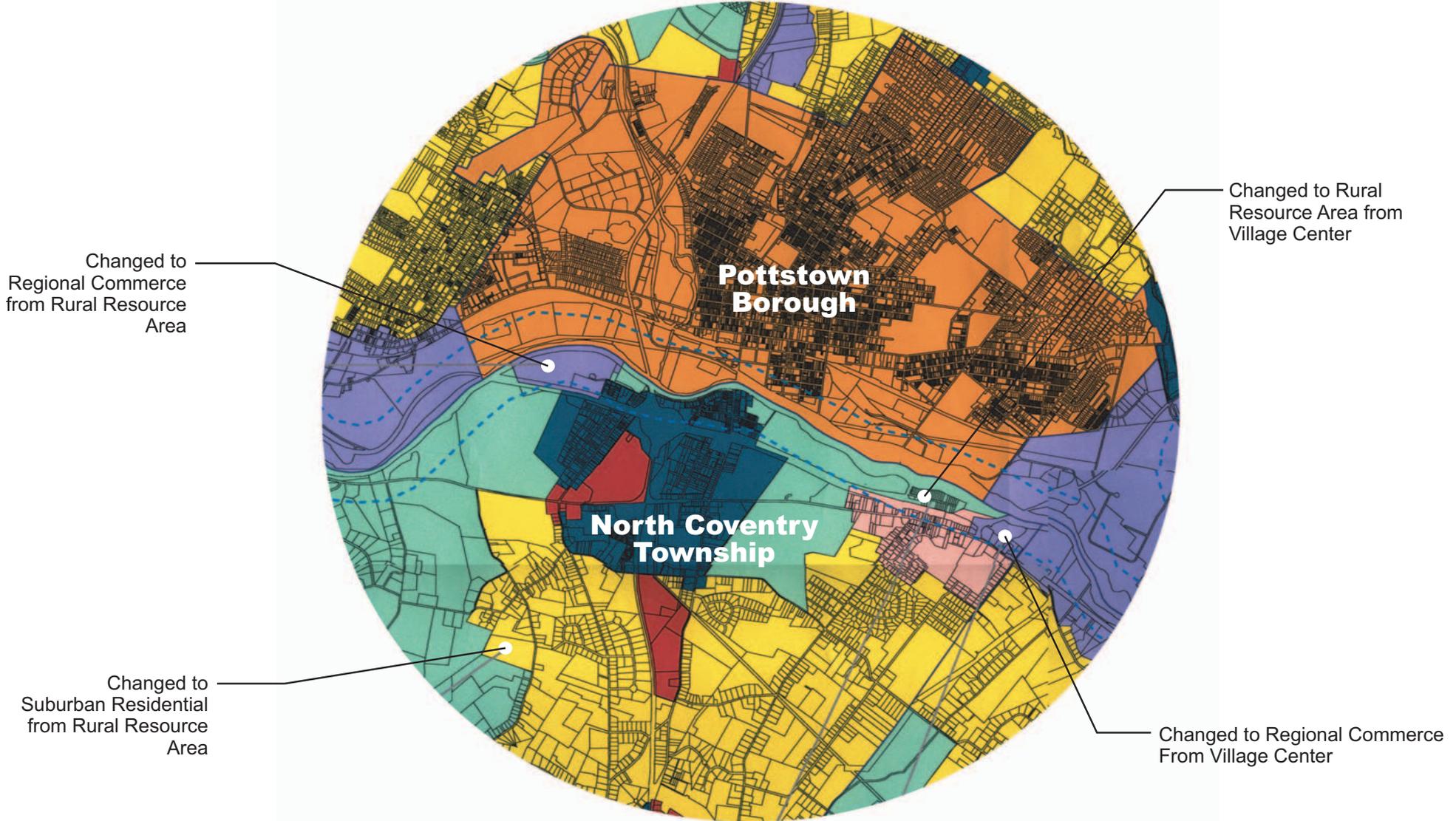
This report was prepared to provide a brief description of existing conditions on and around PA 724, the issues identified by the task force, and the resulting recommendations. This includes descriptions of the corridor, study area, land use, and current travel patterns. Each identified problem and recommended solution is then presented. Finally, general recommendations for improvements/further study to the surrounding critical road network are given.

Route 422 Access Ramp Options



New Access Ramp





Future Land Use Working Draft #2

Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission
 Regional Plan
 October 7, 2003



This map is based on 2000 aerial photographs, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals tax maps, Municipal Officials, and field surveys conducted by the Montgomery County Planning Commission. All attempts were made to maintain relative accuracy, however, this map should not be used for engineering purposes. Chester County data provided by Chester County.



2000 0 2000 4000 6000 8000 10000 12000 14000 16000 Feet

Property lines are a compilation of individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties.

Metropolitan Center

Metropolitan Ctr.

- Urban Mixed Use

Regional Commerce

Regional Commerce

- Office
 - Industrial
 - Limited Commercial

Village Centers

Fagleysville Vill Ctr.
 Halfway House Vill Ctr.
 Parker Ford Vill Ctr.
 Kenilworth Vill. Ctr.

- Mixed Use Village

Community Centers

Gilbertsville Ctr.
 Coventry Ctr.
 Sanatoga Vill Ctr.
 North End Vill. Ctr.
 New Hanover Ctr.

- Offices
 - Community Shopping Ctr.
 - Retail
 - High Density Residential

Rural Resource Area

Rural Preservation Residential

- Rural Residential
 - Village Commercial
 - Large-lot Industrial
 - Agriculture

Suburban Residential Area

Suburban Residential

- 5 DU/Acre to 1 DU/2 Acres to be served by public sewer and water.

Regional Retail

Regional Retail

- Larger Scale Retail Uses

Future Land Uses

Schuylkill River Overlay

Parcels

Municipal Border

	Rural Resource Area												
<i>Land Use Objective</i>	These designated areas are intended to protect the rural and agricultural nature of these parts of the Pottstown Metropolitan Region.												
<i>Use Options</i> <i>(See Footnote 1)</i>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Agriculture</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Animal Facilities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Residential Uses</td> <td>Utilities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rural Village Commercial</td> <td>Other Similar Uses</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Institutional Uses</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recreational Uses</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Large-lot Industrial Uses (Including Quarry & Landfills)</td> </tr> </table>	Agriculture	Animal Facilities	Residential Uses	Utilities	Rural Village Commercial	Other Similar Uses	Institutional Uses		Recreational Uses		Large-lot Industrial Uses (Including Quarry & Landfills)	
Agriculture	Animal Facilities												
Residential Uses	Utilities												
Rural Village Commercial	Other Similar Uses												
Institutional Uses													
Recreational Uses													
Large-lot Industrial Uses (Including Quarry & Landfills)													
<i>Density/ Intensity</i> <i>(See Footnote 2)</i>	<p><u>Residential Uses</u> Residential uses shall have a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres, except within the villages of the Rural Resource Area.</p> <p><u>Rural Village Commercial</u> Commercial uses in the existing villages of the Rural Resource Area shall be no greater than 5,000 s.f. in size.</p> <p><u>Large-lot Industrial</u> Industrial uses typically found in rural areas, including quarrying and landfills, are permitted on lots of 5 acres or greater in size.</p> <p><u>Other Uses</u> Uses not specifically detailed above will be determined by each municipality.</p>												
<i>Additional Development Standards</i>	<p><u>Required Policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New developments or subdivisions in the Rural Resource Area shall not be served by public sewer or water, except when necessary in existing rural villages or other locations requiring service for the health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding community. • All future development shall be designed, sized, and located in a manner which preserves the rural and village settings of the Rural Resource Area. 												
	<p><u>Recommended Techniques & Strategies</u></p> <p>To be added.</p>												

1. Municipalities are authorized to permit the uses within each identified land use category. Uses are not required to be permitted, except as identified within the Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement. Each municipality shall ultimately determine the uses to be permitted from the authorized land use categories and the locations where they are permitted via the municipal zoning ordinance.
2. The densities/intensities listed above serve as regional limits. While densities/intensities must not be inconsistent with the above limits, exact densities/intensities shall ultimately be defined by local zoning ordinances. It is not assured that the stated density/intensity limits of these land use categories will be an entitlement to landowners but is intended to recognize existing development patterns and provide flexibility for individual municipalities.

Suburban Residential Area	
<i>Land Use Objective</i>	These areas are intended to provide locations for new residential growth and nonresidential services for these new neighborhoods in the Pottstown Metropolitan Region.
<i>Use Options</i> <small>(See Footnote 1)</small>	Residential Uses Agriculture Commercial Uses Office Uses Institutional Uses Recreational Uses Utilities
<i>Density/ Intensity</i> <small>(See Footnote 2)</small>	<u>Residential Uses</u> Residential uses shall have a maximum density of 5 du/acre. <u>Commercial Uses</u> Commercial uses shall not exceed 15,000 square feet in size. <u>Office Uses</u> Office uses shall not exceed 15,000 square feet in size. <u>Other Uses</u> Uses not specifically detailed above will be determined by each municipality.
<i>Additional Development Standards</i>	<u>Required Policies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area is intended to be served by public sewer and water. • All future development should support and enhance the residential character of the Suburban Residential Area in its architecture, site design, and other development impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.
	<u>Recommended Techniques & Strategies</u> To be added.

1. Municipalities are authorized to permit the uses within each identified land use category. Uses are not required to be permitted, except as identified within the Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement. Each municipality shall ultimately determine the uses to be permitted from the authorized land use categories and the locations where they are permitted via the municipal zoning ordinance.
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	Village Center
<i>Land Use Objective</i>	These centers are existing villages along major roadways throughout the Pottstown Metropolitan Region that are intended to promote a mix of uses while preserving their unique village setting for the Region.
<i>Use Options</i> <i>(See Footnote 1)</i>	Residential Uses Commercial Uses Office Uses Institutional Uses Recreational Uses Utilities Other Similar Uses
<i>Density/ Intensity</i> <i>(See Footnote 2)</i>	<u>Residential Uses</u> Residential uses shall have a maximum density of 8 du/acre. <u>Commercial Uses</u> Commercial uses shall not exceed 15,000 square feet in size. <u>Office Uses</u> Office uses shall not exceed 15,000 square feet in size. <u>Other Uses</u> Uses not specifically detailed above will be determined by each municipality.
<i>Additional Development Standards</i>	<u>Required Policies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area is intended to be served by public water and sewer. • All uses within these village centers should be designed, sized, and located in a manner that preserves their village character.
	<u>Recommended Techniques & Strategies</u> To be added.

1. Municipalities are authorized to permit the uses within each identified land use category. Uses are not required to be permitted, except as identified within the Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement. Each municipality shall ultimately determine the uses to be permitted from the authorized land use categories and the locations where they are permitted via the municipal zoning ordinance.
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Community Mixed Use Center			
<i>Land Use Objective</i>	These centers are intended to be community-level focal points for the Pottstown Metropolitan Region; with shopping, services, and residential uses combined in a mixed use and pedestrian-oriented design.		
<i>Use Options</i> <i>(See Footnote 1)</i>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">Residential Uses Commercial Uses Office Uses Shopping Centers Institutional Uses</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">Recreational Uses Utilities Other Similar Uses</td> </tr> </table>	Residential Uses Commercial Uses Office Uses Shopping Centers Institutional Uses	Recreational Uses Utilities Other Similar Uses
Residential Uses Commercial Uses Office Uses Shopping Centers Institutional Uses	Recreational Uses Utilities Other Similar Uses		
<i>Density/ Intensity</i> <i>(See Footnote 2)</i>	<p><u>Residential Uses</u> Residential uses shall have a maximum density of 12 du/acre.</p> <p><u>Individual Commercial & Office Uses</u> Individual Commercial and Office buildings shall be no greater than 30,000 s.f. in size, unless architectural features that allow them to blend in with the surrounding Community Center’s character are utilized.</p> <p><u>Shopping Centers</u> Shopping centers up to 150,000 s.f. in size are permitted, with no individual use being greater than 80,000 s.f. in size.</p> <p><u>Other Uses</u> Uses not specifically detailed above will be determined by each municipality.</p>		
<i>Additional Development Standards</i>	<p><u>Required Policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area is intended to be served by public sewer and water. • All future uses within these Community Centers should be designed, sized and located in a manner that is pedestrian-oriented and promotes a town center character. • Interconnections of uses within and adjacent to the Community Center should be maximized to the greatest extent possible for pedestrian and vehicular circulation. 		
	<p><u>Recommended Techniques & Strategies</u></p> <p>To be added.</p>		

1. Municipalities are authorized to permit the uses within each identified land use category. Uses are not required to be permitted, except as identified within the Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement. Each municipality shall ultimately determine the uses to be permitted from the authorized land use categories and the locations where they are permitted via the municipal zoning ordinance.
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	Regional Retail
<i>Land Use Objective</i>	These areas are intended to provide the Pottstown Metropolitan Region with large-scale regional destination shopping areas.
<i>Use Options</i> <i>(See Footnote 1)</i>	Shopping Centers Individual Commercial & Office Uses Recreational Uses Utilities Other Similar Uses
<i>Density/ Intensity</i> <i>(See Footnote 2)</i>	<u>Shopping Centers</u> Shopping Centers up to 450,000 square feet in size are permitted. <u>Other Uses</u> Uses not specifically detailed above will be determined by each municipality.
<i>Additional Development Standards</i>	<u>Required Policies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area is intended to be served by public sewer and water. • Interconnections of uses within and adjacent to the Regional Retail area should be maximized to the greatest extent possible for pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
	<u>Recommended Techniques & Strategies</u> To be added.

1. Municipalities are authorized to permit the uses within each identified land use category. Uses are not required to be permitted, except as identified within the Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement. Each municipality shall ultimately determine the uses to be permitted from the authorized land use categories and the locations where they are permitted via the municipal zoning ordinance.
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	Regional Commerce
<i>Land Use Objective</i>	These areas are intended to provide larger-scale regional employment, manufacturing, and distribution uses for the Pottstown Metropolitan Region.
<i>Use Options</i> <i>(See Footnote 1)</i>	Office Uses Commercial Uses Industrial Uses (Including Storage Uses) Agriculture Recreational Uses Utilities
<i>Density/ Intensity</i> <i>(See Footnote 2)</i>	<u>Office Uses</u> These uses will be determined by each municipality. <u>Commercial Uses</u> Commercial uses are intended to provide local services for employees within the Regional Commerce area of the Region. No commercial use shall exceed 15,000 square feet in size, unless it is part of a mixed use development. Within a mixed use development, commercial uses shall be no greater than 20 percent of the total square footage of the project. <u>Industrial Uses</u> These uses will be determined by each municipality. <u>Other Uses</u> Uses not specifically detailed above will be determined by each municipality.
<i>Additional Development Standards</i>	<u>Required Policies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This area is intended to be served by public sewer and water. • Industrial Uses within the Regional Commerce area will be regulated by performance standards to protect adjacent uses from production, pollution, or other external impacts.
	<u>Recommended Techniques & Strategies</u> To be added.

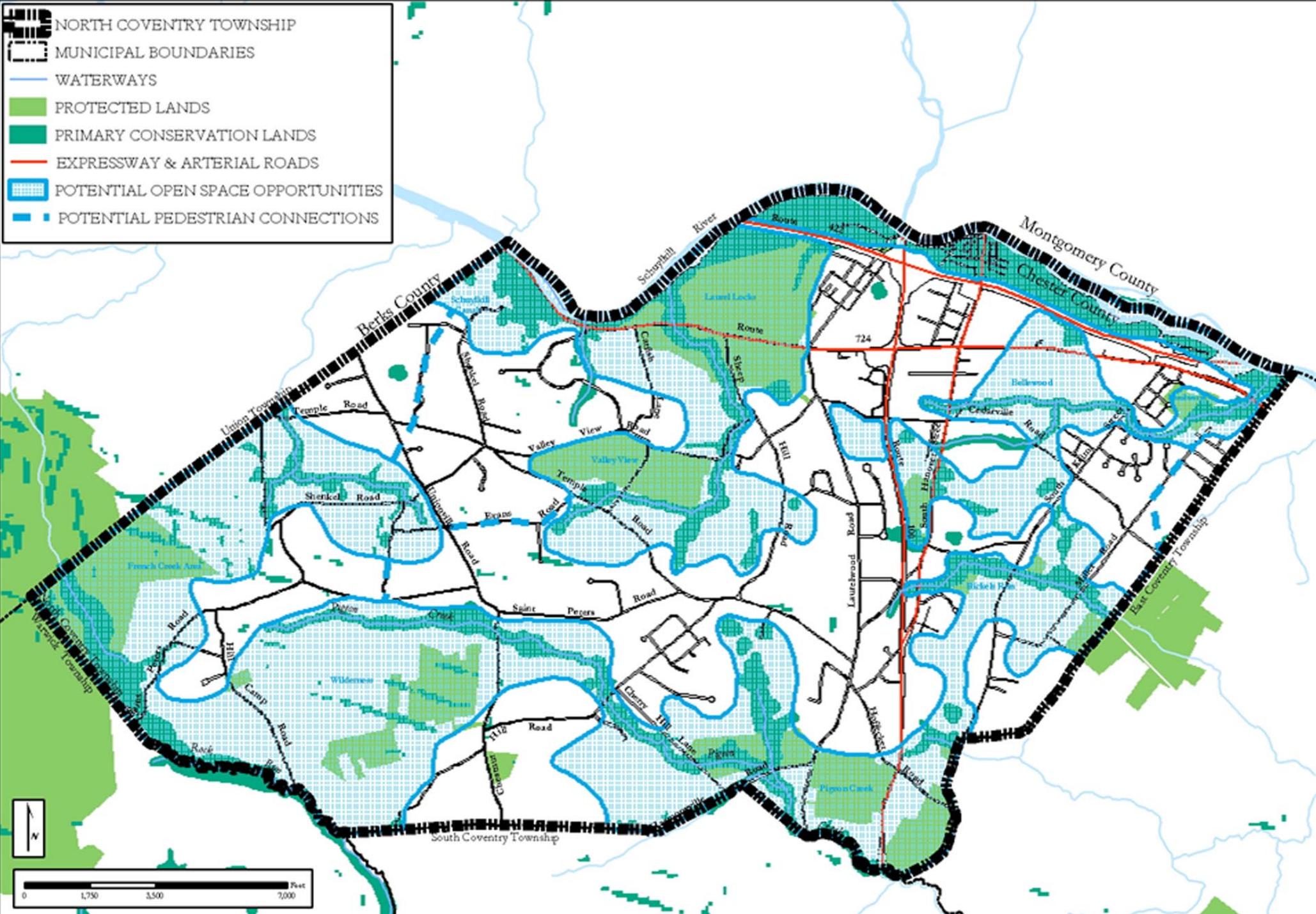
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	Metropolitan Center		
<i>Land Use Objective</i>	This center is intended to encourage the revitalization of the Borough of Pottstown as the historic, urban, mixed use core of the region.		
<i>Use Options</i> <small>(See Footnote 1)</small>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Residential Uses Commercial Uses Office Uses Industrial Uses Institutional Uses Shopping Centers </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Recreational Uses Utilities Airport Other Similar Uses </td> </tr> </table>	Residential Uses Commercial Uses Office Uses Industrial Uses Institutional Uses Shopping Centers	Recreational Uses Utilities Airport Other Similar Uses
Residential Uses Commercial Uses Office Uses Industrial Uses Institutional Uses Shopping Centers	Recreational Uses Utilities Airport Other Similar Uses		
<i>Density/ Intensity</i> <small>(See Footnote 2)</small>	Any mix of densities and uses shall be permitted that are compatible with and enhance the Borough of Pottstown’s historic, urban environment.		
<i>Additional Development Standards</i>	<p><u>Required Policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All development shall be consistent with the surrounding character of the neighborhood. • This area is intended to be served by public sewer and water. <hr/> <p><u>Recommended Techniques & Strategies</u></p> <p>To be added.</p>		

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-  NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP
-  MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
-  WATERWAYS
-  PROTECTED LANDS
-  PRIMARY CONSERVATION LANDS
-  EXPRESSWAY & ARTERIAL ROADS
-  POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES
-  POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS



North Coventry Township
 Multi-Municipal Conservation Planning
 Chester County, Pennsylvania

Conceptual Open Space Network

Compiled by: DCOR/AM Date: 11/20/19
 Scale: 1" = 1,000'
 This map was prepared for the North Coventry Township. It is not intended to be used for any other purpose. It is not a warranty, representation, or guarantee of any kind. It is not to be used for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared. It is not to be used for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared. It is not to be used for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Natural Lands Trust
 3550 Paxton
 301 Fallow Mill Road
 34th St., PA 19063
 610-255-2587
 www.natural-lands.org

**PROJECT MODIFICATIONS FOR
THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**
Section 1135(b) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986



Habitat Restoration along the back bays of the New Jersey Intracoastal Waterway are possible under this authority.

Authority and Scope. Section 1135 (b) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended, provides authority for the Corps of Engineers to investigate, study, modify, and construct projects for the restoration of fish and wildlife habitats where degradation is attributable to water resource projects previously constructed by the Corps of Engineers. Project modifications are limited to a Federal cost of \$5 million per project.

How to Request Assistance. The Corps will initiate a preliminary investigation of a potential project after a letter from a prospective sponsoring agency is received. The sponsor must be fully empowered under State law to provide the required local cooperation. A sample letter of request is shown on the reverse side of this paper.

Funding. The sponsor is required to contribute 25 percent of the total project costs. All lands, easements, rights of way, relocations and dredged material placement areas (LERRD) necessary for construction of the project are the responsibility of the local sponsor. The value of LERRD may be credited towards the sponsor's share of project costs; however, the sponsor must contribute a minimum of 5 percent of the total project costs in cash.

Local Cooperation. Formal assurance of local cooperation must be furnished by a local sponsoring agency, as defined in the letter of request. During the planning phase, the sponsor will be required to demonstrate financial capability to fulfill all items of local cooperation.

SMALL FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

Section 205, Flood Control Act of 1948, as amended



A stream improvement project was constructed along the Aquashicola Creek in Palmerton, Carbon County, Pa. under this authority.

Authority and Scope. Section 205 of the Flood Control Act of 1948, as amended, provides authority for the Corps of Engineers to develop and construct small flood control projects. Each project is limited to a Federal cost of not more than \$7 million, which includes all project-related costs for feasibility studies, planning, engineering and design, and construction. Federal flood control projects are designed to alleviate major flooding problems by means of reservoirs, local protection works, or by combinations of both. A local protection project may consist of structural solutions such as channel enlargement, realignment, or paving; obstruction removal; levee and wall construction; and bank stabilization; and/or non-structural solutions such as a flood warning system.

How to Request Assistance. The Corps will initiate a preliminary investigation of a potential project after a letter from a prospective sponsoring agency is received. The sponsor must be fully empowered under State law to provide the required local cooperation. A sample letter of request is shown on the reverse side of this paper.

Funding. The sponsor is required to contribute 35 percent of the total project costs. All lands, easements, rights of way, relocations, and dredged material placement areas (LERRD) necessary for construction of the project are the responsibility of the local sponsor. The value of LERRD may be credited towards the sponsor's share of project costs; however, the sponsor must contribute in cash a minimum of 5 percent of the total project costs for structural solutions.

Local Cooperation. Formal assurance of local cooperation must be furnished by a local sponsoring agency, as defined in the letter of request. During the planning phase, the sponsor will be required to demonstrate financial capability to fulfill all items of local cooperation.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS CONTINUING AUTHORITIES PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) establishes a process for quick response to a variety of water resource problems without the need to obtain specific congressional authorization for each project. This decreases the amount of time required to budget, develop, and approve a potential project for construction. Philadelphia District has constructed numerous such projects, and has developed a wide diversity of technical experience in solving problems associated with shoreline and streambank erosion, navigation, flood control, and environmental restoration.

Under the CAP, the Corps is authorized to construct small projects within specific Federal funding limits. The total cost of a project is shared between the Federal government and a non-Federal sponsor(s). The limits for the Federal share of these costs are shown in the following table:

AUTHORITY	TYPE OF PROJECT	FEDERAL COST LIMIT PER PROJECT
Section 14	Emergency Streambank and Shoreline Protection for Public Facilities	\$1,000,000
Section 103	Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction (Beach Erosion Control)	\$2,000,000
Section 107	Navigation	\$4,000,000
Section 111	Mitigation of Shoreline Damage Due to Federal Navigation Projects	\$5,000,000 (or specific authorization)
Section 205	Flood Damage Reduction (Flood Control)	\$7,000,000
Section 206	Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration	\$5,000,000
Section 208	Snagging and Clearing for Flood Control	\$500,000
Section 1135	Project Modifications for Improvement of the Environment	\$5,000,000

The following is a brief description of each program:

EMERGENCY STREAMBANK AND SHORELINE PROTECTION FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES (Section 14, Flood Control Act of 1946, as amended). Work conducted under this

authority serves to prevent erosion damages to endangered highways, bridge approaches, and similar essential and important public works (for example, municipal water supply and wastewater treatment systems and plants), or non-profit public facilities (churches, hospitals, and schools), by the construction or repair of streambank and shoreline protection works. Also eligible are known cultural resources whose significance has been demonstrated by a determination of eligibility for listing on, or actual listing on, the National Register of Historic Places and/or equivalent state register.

HURRICANE AND STORM DAMAGE REDUCTION (BEACH EROSION CONTROL) (Section 103, River and Harbor Act of 1962, as amended). The Corps of Engineers may construct small beach restoration and protection projects not specifically authorized by Congress. The intent of work conducted under this authority is to prevent or control shore erosion, and reduce damage to upland development caused by wind- and tidal-generated waves and currents along coasts and shores, and lakes, estuaries, and bays directly connected therewith. Projects must not be dependent on additional improvements for successful operation.

NAVIGATION (Section 107, River and Harbor Act of 1960, as amended). The Corps of Engineers may construct small river and harbor improvement projects not specifically authorized by Congress when they will result in substantial benefits to navigation. Navigation improvements may include providing waterway channels, anchorages, turning basins, harbor areas, and protective jetties and breakwaters for safe and efficient movement of vessels. Each project must be complete and not commit the United States to any additional improvement to insure successful operation.

MITIGATION OF SHORELINE DAMAGE DUE TO FEDERAL NAVIGATION PROJECTS (Section 111, River and Harbor Act of 1968, as amended). This authority provides for the study, design, and construction of work for prevention or mitigation of damages to both non-Federal public and privately owned shores to the extent that such damages can be directly identified and attributed to Federal navigation works. Normally, the degree of mitigation is the reduction of erosion or accretion to the level that would have existed without the influence of navigation works at the time the works were accepted as a Federal responsibility.

FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION (FLOOD CONTROL) (Section 205, Flood Control Act of 1948, as amended). Small flood control projects may be constructed without specific authorization by Congress, when the Chief of Engineers determines that such work is advisable for the purpose of reducing the susceptibility of property to flood damage and relieving human and financial losses. The project must be a complete solution to the flood problem involved, and not require subsequent improvements to insure effective operation.

AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION (Section 206, Water Resources Development Act of 1996). The Corps of Engineers is authorized to investigate, study, modify, and construct projects for the restoration and protection of aquatic ecosystems provided that projects will improve the quality of the environment, are in the public interest, and are cost-effective. Work conducted under this authority is intended to restore structure and function to degraded ecosystems. Degradation need not be attributable to an existing Federal water resource project.

SNAGGING AND CLEARING FOR FLOOD CONTROL (Section 208, Flood Control Act of 1954, as amended). Work under this authority is limited to clearing and snagging of accumulated debris from a specific event or channel excavation and improvement with limited embankment construction by use of materials from the channel excavation.

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT (Section 1135, Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended). The Corps of Engineers is authorized to review water resources projects constructed by the Corps to determine the need for modifications in the structures and/or operations of such projects for the purpose of improving the quality of the environment in the public interest, and to determine if the operation of such projects has contributed to the degradation of the quality of the environment. Work under this authority is meant to restore or enhance environmental quality through modifications either at the project site or at other locations that have been affected by the construction or operation of the project, so long as such measures do not conflict with the authorized project purposes.

PROJECT CRITERIA

Each project constructed by the Corps of Engineers to solve a water resource problem must meet certain criteria, which are described below:

a. The project must be complete in itself and not commit the Corps of Engineers to further construction. This means that the project must solve a specific problem and not require a subsequent project to complete the solution.

b. The project must be economically or environmentally justified. That is, the benefits from the project must exceed the cost of the project, including project operation and maintenance costs. Economic benefits and costs are usually expressed on an average annual basis reflected in a benefit-to-cost ratio (BCR). Environmental projects must produce ecosystem restoration benefits considered to be justifiable for the costs. This does not involve development of a traditional BCR, since the environmental quality benefits associated with such projects can rarely be quantified in dollars, but may require an incremental analysis of restoration benefits realized versus costs.

c. The project must be environmentally acceptable. Consideration of the environment is an integral part of the planning of the project. In all cases, the Corps prepares environmental assessments, which are coordinated with Federal, state, and local agencies, as well as the general public. When there are significant environmental impacts anticipated, the Corps prepares an environmental impact statement.

d. The sponsor of the project must be willing to assist with the project. This usually involves providing cost-sharing as well as lands, easements, rights-of-way, relocations, and dredged material placement areas (LERRD), which is a non-Federal responsibility and may be necessary for construction and maintenance of the project. In addition, projects must be operated

and maintained by the local sponsor following construction.

PLANNING PROCESS

The process employed by the Corps of Engineers for studying, developing, and implementing projects under the CAP is described below:

a. A non-Federal government unit such as a state, county, or municipality submits a written request to the Philadelphia District for an investigation of a water resource problem. In addition, for Sections 206 and 1135 the non-Federal interest may also be a non-profit entity the consent of the affected local government is necessary.

b. After receiving a request from the local sponsor, the District will conduct an initial evaluation of the problem. This includes a site visit with the requester to determine the extent and nature of the problem and whether a solution to the problem is both viable and in the interest of the Federal government. If adequate Federal interest exists, the planning process will proceed and the District may undertake studies upon approval of the North Atlantic Division. Studies are initiated subject to the availability of funds and staff. If there is not adequate Federal interest, the Corps will notify the requester that Federal assistance cannot be provided.

c. Project planning is initially funded to a certain limit solely by the Corps of Engineers, but often requires a non-Federal contribution to complete further feasibility studies. This initial effort determines whether the project is in the Federal interest and develops a Project Study Plan (PSP) to detail the cost and duration of remaining studies. The duration of these studies varies depending on the scope of the problem. For a the feasibility study, the scope and cost is negotiated between the Corps and the sponsor. The sponsor is generally responsible for 50 percent of the costs of the feasibility study, and studies with a Feasibility Cost sharing agreement signed after September 2001 may provide the entire local share, as in-kind services. All in-kind services must be determined integral to the Feasibility Study.

d. Following completion of a feasibility study, preparation of project plans and specifications is initiated. This includes developing a solicitation package based on the recommended plan. Following approval of project implementation and funding, the non-Federal sponsor and the Federal Government sign a Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA). The project is then advertised to prospective contractors and awarded to the lowest bidder. The local sponsor is required to provide the non-Federal share of project funds as well as any necessary LERRD at this time. Construction of the project is usually completed within one year of award.

e. For certain, smaller efforts, the Feasibility and Plans & Specifications Phases are combined into a single Planning and Design Analysis Phase.

INITIAL STUDY FUNDING

Initial study funding varies by authority...

a. For Section 103, 107, 111, and 205 studies, the first \$100,000 is at Federal expense. All additional feasibility study costs are shared 50/50 with the non-Federal sponsor.

b. For Section 14 and 208 projects, a single phase Planning and Design Analysis (PDA) is accomplished. PDA costs are at Federal expense up to \$40,000. Costs in excess of \$40,000 are cost shared with the non-Federal sponsor during construction.

c. For Section 206 and 1135 projects, the first \$10,000 is at Federal expense for preparation of a Preliminary Restoration Plan (PRP). Depending upon the estimated Federal cost of project implementation, subsequent studies will either be conducted as feasibility studies (Federal share of project > \$1,000,000) or combined planning and design phase (Federal share of project < \$1,000,000). Feasibility studies and combined planning and design phases are initially fully funded by the Federal Government. Subsequent to project approval, plans and specification costs are initially fully funded by the Government. For approved restoration projects, the feasibility phase, plans and specification, or combined planning and design phase costs are included as part of the total project costs to be shared with the non-Federal sponsor.

d. These different patterns have evolved since each authority was based upon different legislation enacted at different times with different intentions. The following table provides a breakdown of both Feasibility and Construction cost sharing for each authority.

Type of Project	Feasibility Study Cost Share	Feasibility Study Cost Paid When	Construction Cost Share
Streambank and Shoreline Protection for Public Facilities	None- PDA instead	N/A	35%
Small Beach Erosion Control Projects	50%	As Study Progresses	35%
Small Navigation Projects	50%	As Study Progresses	10-35%
Small Flood Control Projects	50%	As Study Progresses	35%
Snagging and Clearing for Flood Control	None- PDA instead	Time of Construction	35%
Project Modifications for the Improvement of the Environment	25%	Time of Construction	25%
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration	35%	Time of Construction	35%

SAMPLE LETTER OF REQUEST

District Engineer
U.S. Army Engineer District, Philadelphia
Wanamaker Building
100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3390

(DATE)

Dear Sir:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 1135 (b) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended, which authorizes the Federal government to review the water resources projects constructed by the Army Corps of Engineer to determine the need for modifications in the interests of improving the quality of the environment, the *[cooperating agency]* makes formal application for a study of *[waterway or locality, County, State]*.

[Insert paragraph giving a brief description of problem].

The *[cooperating agency]* understand(s) that **a fully Federally funded Preliminary Restoration Plan will first need to be prepared that determines Federal interest and defines the overall project. Subsequent investigations which could include a Ecosystem Restoration Report, development of a design and preparation of plans and specifications will follow.** The cost of which will be shared between the *[cooperating agency]* and the Corps of Engineers **with the local shared deferred until the construction phase.** The *[cooperating agency]* must **then** provide 25 percent of the project cost. Of this 25 percent share, the *[cooperating agency]* may provide up to 80 percent in in-kind services.

The *[cooperating agency]* can provide the following local cooperation **and participation needed for construction:**

1. Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, rights-of-way, and relocations, including suitable borrow and dredged material placement areas (LERRD), as determined by the Federal government to be necessary for the construction of the project. The value of LERRD will be included in the total project costs and credited towards the sponsor's share of project costs, **as defined in the project cooperation agreement.**

2. Hold and save the United States free from claims for damages that may result from the construction and subsequent maintenance of the project, except damages due to the fault or negligence of the United States or its contractors.

3. Assume responsibility for all costs in excess of the Federal cost limitation of \$5 million.

4. Ensure maintenance and repair of the project during the useful life of the works as required to serve the project's intended purpose, with no additional cost to the Federal government.

5. Provide a cash contribution of 5 percent of the project cost.

6. If the value of the sponsor's contribution above does not exceed 25 percent of the project cost, provide a cash contribution to make the sponsor's total contributions equal to 25 percent.

7. **The *[cooperating agency]* also understands that until it signs the project cooperation agreement or similar legal agreement it has the ability to withdraw as a cooperating agency without financial obligation. It also understands that it's continued cooperation is subject to review and approval of both the concept plan as defined in the preliminary restoration plan and the subsequent more detailed plan developed as part of plans and specifications.**

SIGNATURE OF COOPERATING AGENCY

Revised September 2000