



American Planning Association  
**Pennsylvania Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

OCTOBER 18, 2011

HARRISBURG, PA – Today the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association (PA Chapter of APA) held its Annual Awards Luncheon in Scranton, PA where almost 300 attendees celebrated the esteemed award winners of this year's highly competitive program.

The following awards were presented:

**Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan**

***Allegheny Places: The Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan***

*Allegheny County Department of Economic Development*

Uniting a place with 130 different municipalities, each with its own strong identity, is a true challenge. Allegheny County has clearly met this challenge with its first comprehensive plan, a dynamic document and web site guided by extensive public outreach, including a highly-successful "What's Your Favorite Place" campaign. Allegheny Places is an impressive plan covering a wide range of topics while reaching an extremely diverse audience.

**Planning Excellence Award for Best Practice**

***An Industrial Land and Market Strategy for the City of Philadelphia***

*Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation and Philadelphia City Planning Commission*

In older post-industrial cities, it is often assumed that industrial zoning and uses are passé, that they should be eliminated over time. Recognizing that industrial uses play a critical role in a well-functioning city, acknowledging that industrial employment remains important, and realizing that industrial land was under pressure to be rezoned, the City of Philadelphia conducted a comprehensive and innovative study of its industrial land to determine the role of this land in the city's future. This excellent study of an overlooked land use provides a useful and imaginative guide for city decision makers.

**Planning Excellence Award for Implementation**

***Historic Souderton Downtown Revitalization***

*Souderton Borough*

Sometimes, in older developed communities, it's difficult to get traction on planning initiatives and revitalization efforts. That has not been the case in Souderton. In less than a decade and as a follow-up to its 2001 Revitalization Plan, the borough has revamped its downtown zoning, improved its sign ordinance, updated its maintenance code, created a joint Main Street program with a neighbor, improved marketing, installed streetscaping, built a new parking lot, installed a plaza and public art, supported the expansion of a performing arts theater, helped property owners rehabilitate old mill buildings, and cooperated on the redevelopment of an old movie house. Souderton is clearly a community on the move.

**Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach**  
***Renewable Energy Series***

*Montgomery County Planning Commission*

In planning, it's often necessary to respond to new land uses and new ideas, but it can take a long time for local communities to respond. Montgomery County's flyers on renewable energy, which implement the county's 2005 comprehensive plan and 2007 GreenPrint Plan, provide excellent information on solar energy, small wind turbines, geothermal energy, outdoor hydronic heaters, and energy-aware site design to local communities. These flyers, which could be helpful to any municipality in the state, describe basic aspects of the technology while highlighting regulatory issues and additional resources.

**Planning Excellence Award for Innovation in Best Practices for Sustainability**  
***Eating Here: Greater Philadelphia's Food System Plan***

*Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission*

There are many factors that make a place sustainable, including one factor often overlooked by planners - the food system. Recognizing that all the various elements of the food system - growing food, transporting food, and selling food - are critical for sustainability, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission prepared a Food System Plan, bringing together many diverse stakeholders who often have little contact with the planning world. This excellent and innovative plan expands the role of planning into a new and exciting area.

**Student Project Award**

***Pittsburgh in the 21st Century: A Decade of Difference***

*University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs*

At times, it's very useful to look backwards and say "How did we do? Were our ideas correct?" This probably happens less frequently than it should, but a group of students from the University of Pittsburgh has taken on this task, looking back at Richard Florida's research report, *Competing in the Age of Talent*, and using this as a template to analyze data on education, diversity, social networking, outdoor amenities, and migration patterns in the Pittsburgh area. This fun report provides an insightful look at the changing nature of Pittsburgh and its people.

**Planning Leadership Award for Professional Planner**

***Cindy L. Davis***

Planning is a tough profession in Pennsylvania, and it becomes even harder when multiple municipalities are involved. Undaunted by these realities, Cindy Davis, the zoning officer for Butler Township, successfully led efforts to create a very successful Butler-area comprehensive plan that includes five municipalities. Her energy, dedication, and leadership have raised the profile of planning and planners in Butler County.

The PA Chapter of APA is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization for the promotion of planning, and for professional planners and planning officials in the Commonwealth. The organization provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning through education, empowerment, partnership, and public policy. One of 47 chapters of the American Planning Association (APA) and approximately 3,000 members strong the PA APA works to promote planning at all levels of the Commonwealth through trainings, the annual conference, legislative monitoring, and public awareness efforts. PA APA members participate with various statewide and regional groups with shared values and goals.

For more information about the PA Chapter of APA, or to obtain contact information for local award winners, please contact Sarah Galbraith Laucks, CMP at 717-671-4510 or [sgalbraith@shermer-assoc.com](mailto:sgalbraith@shermer-assoc.com). The website address is [www.planningpa.org](http://www.planningpa.org).

# # #

**Media Contact:**

Sarah Galbraith Laucks, CMP  
Chapter Administrator, PA Chapter of APA  
717-671-4510 or 717-497-4305  
[sgalbraith@shermer-assoc.com](mailto:sgalbraith@shermer-assoc.com)