

# **LOCAL TOPICS**

# Dreher Township Zoning Ordinance Amendments

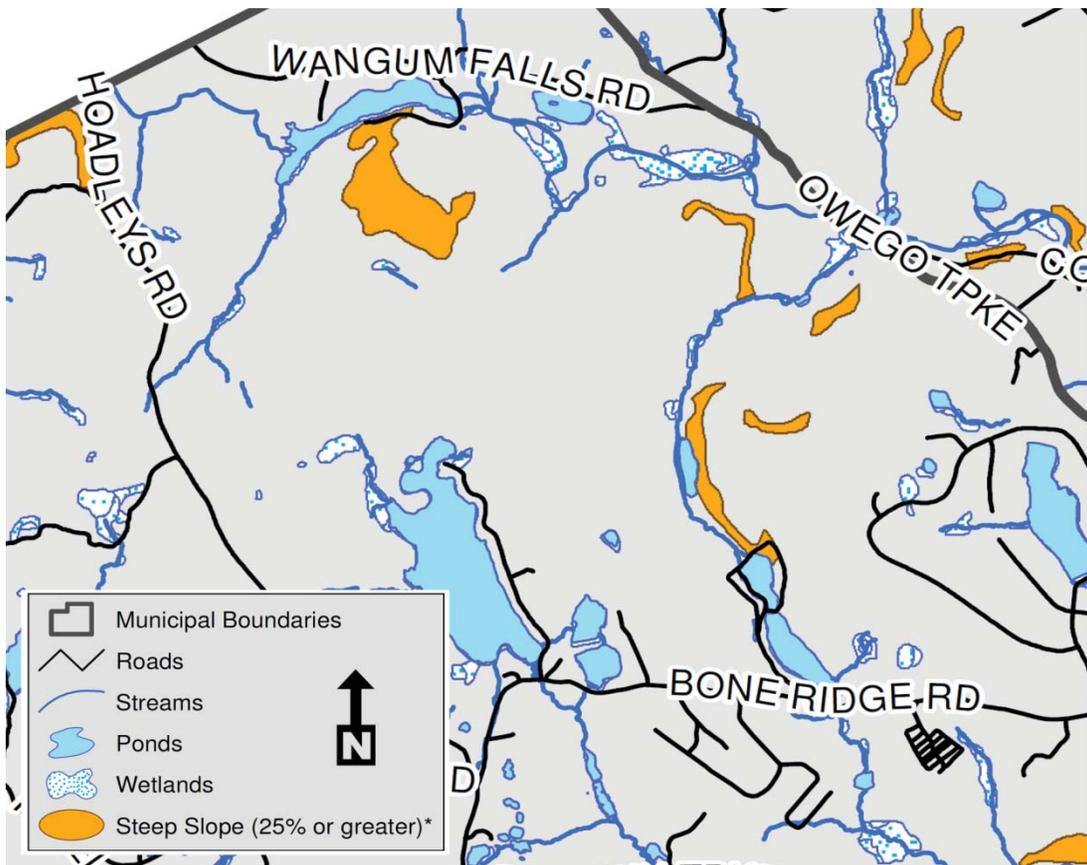
Our office reviewed amendments to the Dreher Township Zoning Ordinance in May, 2018. These amendments related to definitions and schedule of uses for agritourism and short term rentals and we had no comments. The Dreher Township Supervisors did not adopt these amendments as of the date of this report.

# Honesdale Borough Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Honesdale Borough proposed amendments to their zoning ordinance to address advertising signage. Our comments were minimal and an initial review took place in October, 2018. Revised amendments were returned to our office and reviewed with no additional comments in November. These amendments became effective on January 15, 2019.

# Lake Region Comprehensive Plan Update

Planning for the Lake Region Comprehensive Plan Update continued in 2018. The Lake Region includes Hawley Borough, Palmyra Township, and Paupack Township. The Planning/GIS Staff have been attending the Steering Committee meetings and training sessions for this update as well as supporting the Lake Region with information and mapping. Mr. Thomas Shepstone is the consultant for the project. It is anticipated that the plan update will be adopted in 2019.



*Portion of the Lake Region Conservation Areas Map*

# East Central Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Update

In 2018, the East Central Wayne County municipalities of Damascus, Oregon and Manchester Townships began the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan. These three municipalities originally joined together in 2008 to create a joint municipal Comprehensive Plan. The 2018 effort, which was guided by consultant Carson Helfrich of Community Planning and Management, LLC, is an update of the adopted 2008 plan. Mr. Helfrich was also the author of the 2008 joint Comprehensive Plan.

Our office assisted this effort by providing some background data, which also included updated land use/land cover figures for the multi-municipal region. We also provided this information, which consisted of raw numbers and maps for the original plan. By using our most recent

aerial photography from 2017, we were able to provide an updated snapshot of how the current land is being used and, therefore, how it may have changed. We delivered both maps of the individual municipalities involved for both the periods of 2008 and 2017, as well as composite maps of the three municipalities for these years. In addition to the maps, we also provided the raw numbers, calculated in acres, for each of the land use types. These land use/land cover categories were the basis for the Wayne County Agricultural Land Use/Land Cover Study that initially compared changes in land use and land cover between the period 1959 to 2002 for the entire County. In *Figure 1* above is a sample of the raw data provided to the East Central Wayne County multi-municipal planning group. This data was also provided for the year 2008. Through a comparison of data and visual mapping from different periods, the municipalities are then able to identify both changes and potential future trends, which is essential for the sound management of future land use.

In late 2018 our office reviewed a draft of the proposed East Central Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Update. It is anticipated that municipal adoption will occur in 2019.

|                              | Damascus Township | Oregon Township | Manchester Township |       |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------|
| Commercial                   | 201.8             | 41.9            | 168.3               | acres |
| Cropland                     | 5,865.2           | 2,187.9         | 1,788.6             | acres |
| Farmsteads                   | 359.2             | 113.9           | 94.6                | acres |
| Forest                       | 31,116.0          | 6,604.2         | 22,113.0            | acres |
| Industrial                   | 8.5               | 0.0             | 7.7                 | acres |
| Government/<br>Institutional | 32.2              | 0.3             | 10.9                | acres |
| Mining/Extraction            | 74.5              | 3.0             | 46.3                | acres |
| Pasture/Brush                | 8,480.6           | 1,536.8         | 2,738.6             | acres |
| Recreational                 | 13.4              | 0.0             | 119.2               | acres |
| Religious                    | 31.7              | 3.0             | 11.0                | acres |
| Residential                  | 3,582.6           | 771.1           | 1,042.0             | acres |
| Transportation               | 3.4               | 0.0             | 0.0                 | acres |
| Utilities                    | 4.0               | 0.4             | 11.8                | acres |
| Water                        | 1,608.4           | 238.5           | 688.3               | acres |
|                              | 51,381.5          | 11,501.0        | 28,840.3            |       |

*Figure 1 - 2017 ECWC Land Use / Land Cover*

# **Wayne County and Municipal Comprehensive Plan Consistency Reviews**

## **Central Wayne Regional Authority – Delaware Street & Lackawaxen River Interceptor Rehabilitation Projects**

A letter of support was provided to the Central Wayne Regional Authority for the sanitary sewer rehabilitation project located within the Borough of Honesdale and Texas Township. The upgrade to the sanitary sewer will provide the residents in this area who are connected to the system with more reliable service. This upgrade will also help to reduce the amount of wet weather storm water flows at the wastewater treatment plant. The PA Small Water and Sewer Grant Application is funded through the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA). The identified projects are consistent with the Central Wayne Regional Comprehensive Plan.

## **Central Wayne Regional Authority - Sewer Main Replacement Projects 2018-2020 – Honesdale Borough**

The Central Wayne Regional Authority has requested and was provided a letter of support for an application to PennVEST for funding that will help defray the costs involved in their sewer main replacement projects for 2018-2020. The upgrades will benefit the residents of the Borough by providing a more reliable sewage system and also help to maintain structural integrity to the Authority's treatment plant located off of Bucks Cove Road within the Borough of Honesdale. These identified projects were found to be consistent with the Borough's Comprehensive Plan as well as the Community Facilities section of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

## **Damascus Township Recreation Park – Phase II**

Damascus Township is applying to the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Local Share Account (LSA) for funding to be used to construct a new children's playground and a community amphitheater as part of the second phase of this municipal recreational project. The playground will have areas suitable for 2-5 and 5-12 year age ranges. The amphitheater will be used as an additional gathering area for community events. A letter of support was provided to Damascus Township as this project was found to be consistent with the East Central Wayne County Comprehensive Plan and the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

## **Delaware & Hudson Canal Park @ Lock 31**

The Wayne County Historical Society is applying to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for funds to be used to further the development of the sixteen acre Canal Park located along Route 6 in Palmyra Township. The funds will support access improvements to the pedestrian walkways and the construction of a full size canal boat replica. A letter of support was provided to the Historical Society for this project to further preserve the past history of Wayne County as referenced within the Historic Resources section of the County Comprehensive Plan.

## **Hawley Borough - Bingham Park Tennis/Pickle Ball Court**

Hawley Borough has requested a letter of support to apply for a grant through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) that will assist them in replacing the existing tennis courts located at Bingham Park. Bingham Park is an important recreational facility utilized by the local residents as well as visitors to Hawley Borough. The new double play tennis court will also include a pickle ball court. This request for funding was found to be consistent with both the Lake Region Comprehensive Plan and the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan. A letter of support was forwarded to Hawley Borough Council for this recreational improvement project.

## **Hawley Area Authority – Pump Stations Emergency Generators**

The Hawley Area Authority is pursuing a PA Small Water and Sewer grant application through the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) for sanitary sewer back-up generators that will benefit the residents of the area who are connected to the system. The proposed generators will provide reliable service during a power outage and eliminate potential negative impacts to environmental and public health caused by central sewer overflows at each of the four pump stations located near Middle Creek and the Lackawaxen River. The Lake Region Comprehensive Plan and the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan recommends that municipalities upgrade and extend sewage collection facilities and identify sewer and water needs of wastewater facilities. A letter of support for this back-up infrastructure was provided to the Hawley Area Authority.

## **Honesdale Borough - Blake's Creek Project Phase III**

The Borough of Honesdale is requesting funds through the Local Share Account to continue their work on the stormwater management project in the residential hill section of the Borough. Based on a study done in 2008 by Spotts, Stevens and McCoy, the existing problems along Blake's Creek include erosion, lack of pipe capacity and lack of inlet and swale capacity. Phase III will continue the work on this project on various streets within the Borough. Reducing repetitive storm damage to both business and residential properties and Borough streets is consistent with the County and Borough Comprehensive Plans as well as the County Act 167 Lackawaxen Stormwater Management Plan. A letter of support was provided to Honesdale Borough Council.

## **Human Resources Foundation (HRF)**

The Human Resources Foundation is applying for funding through the Local Share Account of Monroe County and requested a letter of support to accompany the application. The funding will be used to renovate an unoccupied dwelling that the Foundation has purchased at 1006 Church Street. The Foundation plans to use this former residence for consumers as well as HRC staff and office space. The reuse of existing structures within the Borough of Honesdale is consistent with the Central Wayne Regional Comprehensive Plan. A letter supporting this effort was written and provided to the PA Department of Community & Economic Development Center for Community Enhancement.

## **Northeast PA Sno-Trails, Inc. (NEPAST)**

A letter of support was provided to the Northeast PA Sno-Trails organization to assist in funding through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to be used to aid in the purchase of trail maintenance equipment through the C2P2 Trail Program. The Club maintains walking, ATV and snowmobile trails, which consist of the former D&H and O&W railroad beds. The purchase of more modern equipment will allow the Club to work on projects such as resurfacing the trails, tilling ditches to remove storm water runoff, repairing bridge crossings and trimming trees and brush. This will allow for a safer and more secure trail system for public use. This project was found to be consistent with the Recreation section of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

## **Price Pond/Lenape Lake – Manchester Township**

An application to change the name of Price Pond to Lenape Lake is being submitted to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names by Camp IHC. This body of water with a surface area of 19 acres is located within Manchester Township and was named after a family that no longer has any living descendants in the area. Camp IHC desires to have a name with a more authentic relationship to the Native-American and, specifically, the Lenni Lenape heritage of the area. The County reviewed the application and verified no conflict within the GIS database with any other water body name within the County. A letter was provided acknowledging no topographical existing water body identifications of this proposed name change of Price Pond to Lenape Lake.

## **Sterling Township Park**

Sterling Township is applying for funding through the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Greenways, Trails and Recreation grant program that will allow the township to make improvements to this community park, which will provide local and regional residents of all age ranges and abilities more passive and active recreational opportunities, as well. The Township has plans to redesign the existing baseball field facility into an updated multi-purpose field that would be open year round. Also, the construction of an ADA accessible wellness trail and the enlargement of the parking lot area are being proposed. This project was found to be consistent with the County's Recreation section of the Comprehensive Plan. A letter supporting this project was forwarded to Sterling Township.

## **Waymart Borough Sports Complex**

Waymart Borough is seeking grant funding through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) that will aid in planned improvements to Wilson Field located within the Borough. The project includes installation of field lighting for evening games to be played, the addition of water and sewer facilities to the existing concession stand, installation of ADA compliant walkway, parking and spectator facilities, the addition of field maintenance equipment sheds and the reconstruction of the baseball field playing surface. A letter of support for this project was forwarded to Waymart Borough Council as it was found to be consistent with the Waymart Borough Comprehensive Plan and the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

## **Wayne County Area Agency on Aging – Food Pantry Building Expansion**

The Wayne County Area Agency on Aging is applying for funding through the Department of Community and Economic Development - Monroe Local Share Account to assist in a 1,480 square foot addition to the existing Dreher Township Building. This addition will be used for the distribution and proper storage of community food pantry items in the southern Wayne County area. At present the pantry operates out of the basement of a small church that does not have sufficient storage and shelving areas for fresh and canned food items. A letter of support was provided for these necessary County community facilities nutritional outreach programs.

## **Wayne County Commissioners – Recreation/Trail Plan**

A letter of support for a grant application to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) was provided to the Wayne County Commissioners for funding to be used for consulting services for the preparation of a Recreation, Trails and Natural Areas Plan. This plan would assist in identifying potential linkages to existing recreational sites in local communities as well as aid in supporting the volunteer efforts of connecting trails within Wayne and Pike Counties. This project is consistent with an objective of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan in that the County continues the development and implementation of the Master Site Plan for the Recreational Complex located in Berlin Township.

## **Wayne Memorial Health Foundation – Geriatric Psychiatry Program**

Wayne Memorial Health Foundation is proposing the creation of a geriatric psychiatry program to be located within the Wayne Memorial Hospital. This program will be a 14-bed inpatient program for elderly patients in need of these services. There is only one other such program located within the northeast PA area. A grant through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) is being applied for and a letter of support for this project has been requested. As this hospital project is consistent with Community Facilities section of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan, a letter supporting this health related project was provided to the Wayne Memorial Health Foundation.

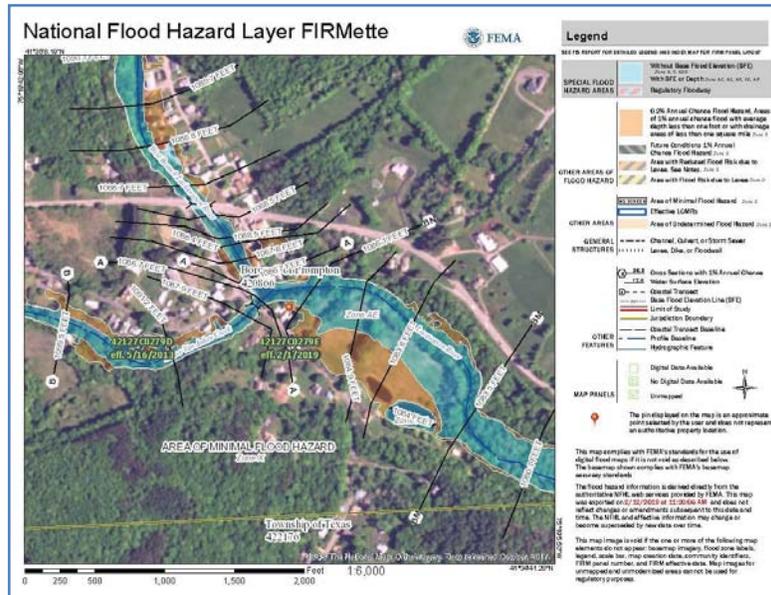
## **WEDCO – Wayne County Revolving Loan Fund**

A letter was written for the Wayne Economic Development Corporation supporting their grant application to the Local Share Account (LSA) to secure funding that will be used to develop a local revolving loan fund to support agri-business, manufacturing and other entrepreneurial activities that meet the identified goals and objectives of the updated Wayne County Comprehensive Plan. This revolving loan fund would assist with technical help in securing and training workers, obtaining financial assistance for expansions and improvements to existing businesses and interfacing with government.

# FEMA Municipal Floodplain Workshops

With the scheduled release of the revision to the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Wayne County, two informational workshops were provided to the local municipalities on November 20, 2018 at the County's Emergency Operations Center to assist them through the floodplain ordinance update process.

Pennsylvania has been in the process of having all FIRMs digitized and/or updated. The maps for Wayne County are currently in preliminary format, and once the maps are finalized an official Letter of Final Determination (LFD) will be issued, notifying the local communities that the new maps will become effective six months following the issuance of the LFD. Before a map becomes effective, each



municipal government is required to submit an adopted, compliant floodplain ordinance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Failure to adopt and submit a compliant floodplain ordinance to FEMA results in suspension from the National Flood Insurance Program, with the following consequences:

- *Lapse of flood insurance coverage for current policy holders when they go to renew under suspension*
- *Inability to issue new policies in the community, which means any property located within a floodplain area will not be able to be bought or sold using a federally backed mortgage*
- *No Federal Grants of Loans for structures in these areas*
- *No Federal disaster assistance*
- *Possible liability issues due to denying the ability of local citizens to purchase flood insurance or protect life and property in those areas*

Wayne County's Letter of Final Determination (LFD) was released August 1, 2018, which requires all local municipalities to have a compliant floodplain ordinance adopted before the new maps become effective, which was scheduled for February 1, 2019.

Based on these FEMA requirements and the established six month compliance timeline allowed, these local workshops provided a better understanding of what is required by the local governments prior to the anticipated effective date of the new FIRMs. The point of contact established to assist the local governments through this floodplain ordinance update process is Ms. Leslie Rhoads, CFM Independent Contractor, PA Municipal League. The Wayne Conservation District and County Planning /GIS Department also provided County assistance to support the local governments through this process.

## The Course in Community Planning

On three consecutive Tuesdays during September of 2018, the Wayne County Planning Department hosted the municipal training entitled “*The Course in Community Planning*”. It was an in-depth three session course designed for planning commissioners and local elected officials in how to carry out their responsibilities under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, commonly referred to as Act 247. The course instructors were Peter Wulfhorst, Penn State Extension Economic & Community Development Educator and Ed Knittel, Educator for the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs.

Over the three-week course, topics covered included comprehensive planning, multi-municipal planning, plan implementation, the roles and responsibilities of planning commissioners and elected officials and how to develop an effective local planning commission. More specific discussions centered on the municipal “police power”, subdivision and land development ordinances and zoning ordinances.

The Wayne County Commissioners and the Northeast Section of the PA Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) sponsored the ten-hour course and provided financial assistance.

The Wayne County Department of Planning will continue to host courses on various topics related to land use planning, which is one of the educational goals of the County’s Comprehensive Plan. The courses provide an important educational service to both local government officials and members of the public. Each session was a mix of lectures, discussions and hands-on exercises.



*Course in Community Planning – Wayne County Park Street Complex*

For those students who were unable to attend all three nights at the County Park Street Complex, an additional opportunity was provided to the participants to attend the session missed at the Lackawanna County Center for Public Safety in Jessup, PA the following month free of charge to receive their course certificate. We encourage municipal officials and their local planning commission members to take advantage of these locally held PMPEI courses to assist with their community land use decisions and responsibilities.