

LOCAL TOPICS

East Central Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Update

With the help of Planning Consultant Carson Helfrich, Damascus, Oregon and Manchester Townships began a joint Comprehensive Planning effort to update their existing multi-municipal plan. The goal of this process, which began in 2018, sought to build upon the existing East Central Wayne County Comprehensive Plan, which the municipalities adopted in 2008. Mr. Helfrich also consulted on that original plan.

In addition to other information, our office provided updated land use/land cover information to support the plan. The provided information consisted of both raw acreage numbers for each municipality and for the region as a whole. In addition, we also provided individual municipal land use/land cover maps and a region wide map. The map sets were designed after similar mapping provided for the original 2008 multi-municipal planning effort. The information provided

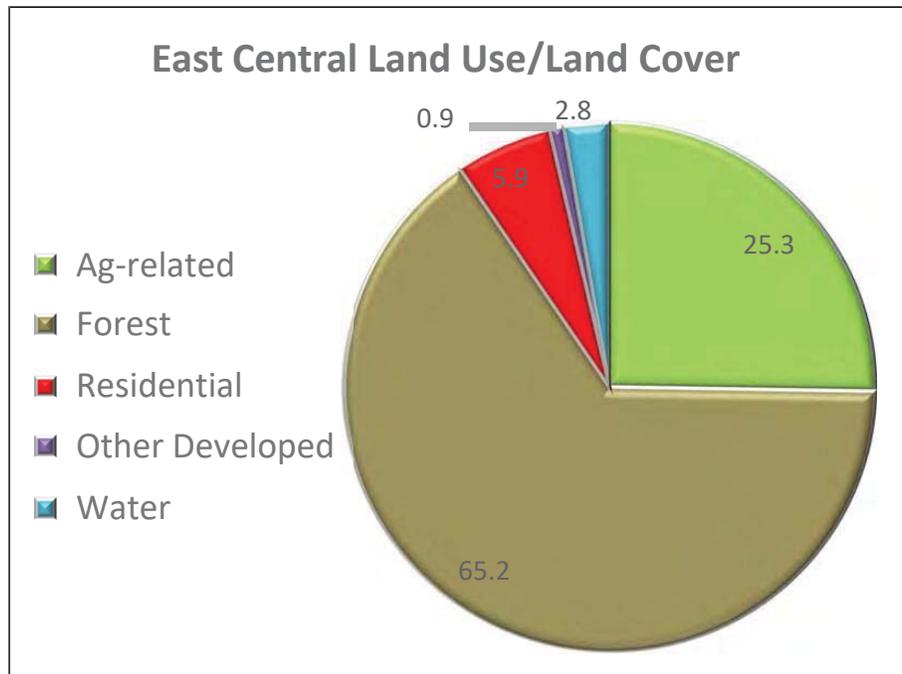


Figure 1 - 2017 ECWC Land Use / Land Cover Chart

Excerpt from the 2019 adopted plan

an updated view of how the current land is being used and, therefore, how it may have changed over the past decade. Additionally, by comparing 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. The chart above (*Figure 1*) is an excerpt from the resulting East Central Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Update. This categorical percentage breakdown is a product of the information provided for the planning effort by our office. The chart illustrates the existing land use/land cover in the Damascus/Oregon/Manchester planning area for the year 2017. As illustrated above, more than 90% of the planning area is represented by natural or agricultural related land use/land cover.

Our office reviewed a draft of the plan in January of this past year and provided our comments to the municipalities and the consultant. The plan was adopted by all three municipalities on an individual basis at their respective municipal meetings by mid-summer.

Honesdale Borough Zoning Ordinance Amendments

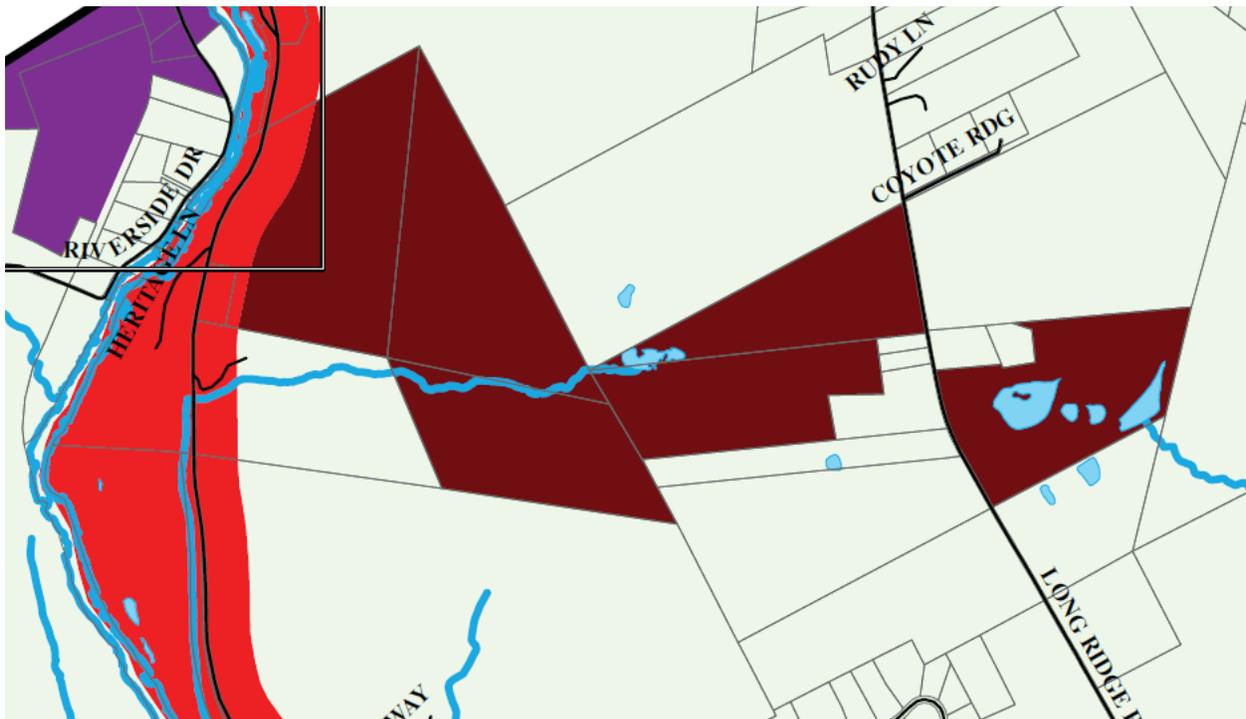
Honesdale Borough proposed amendments to their zoning ordinance to address signage in 2019. Our comments in reviews from August and October of 2019 focused on clarifying the non-commercial nature of most murals that allowed their free creation as public art within the Borough, without the need for a permit. These amendments were adopted by Honesdale Borough Council at their December 9, 2019 meeting.

Lake Region Comprehensive Plan

The lake region municipalities of Palmyra & Paupack Townships and Hawley Borough completed their multi-municipal comprehensive plan with Shepstone Management Company in 2019. Planning/GIS Department staff attended meetings, offered review and comment, and created mapping for the project, which began in 2017.

Palmyra Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Palmyra Township proposed amendments to their zoning ordinance addressing a discrepancy between their schedule of uses, which listed a C-2 Resort Commercial Zoning District and their zoning map, which did not show a C-2 district. Our office had no comments and provided updated draft zoning maps that reflected this correction. These amendments were adopted by Palmyra Township Supervisors at their December 3, 2019 meeting.



Portion of Palmyra's updated zoning map showing the C-2 District in maroon.

Wayne County and Municipal Comprehensive Plan Consistency Reviews

Central Wayne Regional Authority – Central Sewer System Rehabilitation Cherry Ridge Township

A letter of support was requested by the Central Wayne Regional Authority to apply for funding through the DCED Local Share Account for continued support of their inflow and infiltration reduction program through sewer line inspection and rehabilitation of infrastructure within Cherry Ridge Township. Currently there are 21,500 linear feet of gravity sewer mains, 6,500 feet of low-pressure sewer mains, 103 manholes, four simplex pump stations, five duplex pump stations and one main pump station. This rehabilitation project would have benefitted the residents of Cherry Ridge Township by providing reliable sanitary sewer service and to help maintain the structural integrity of the treatment plant located in Honesdale Borough. Based on the LSA grant application denial, the CWRA reapplied under the DCED H2O Program for this requested funding to continue these identified upgrades within Cherry Ridge Township's central sewer area. Another letter of support was provided to the Central Wayne Regional Authority as this infrastructure upgrade project is consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Central Wayne Regional Authority – Sewer and Water Improvement Projects Honesdale Borough

The Central Wayne Regional Authority is applying for funding through the PA DCED H2O Program for repairs to the sewer mains and manholes in the Crestmont area of Honesdale Borough. These sewer mains and manholes are approximately 70 years old, outdated and deteriorating. Replacing this infrastructure with current and more durable material will result in a more efficiently operating system that will serve this residential area. This central sewer improvement project is consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan and a letter supporting this funding was sent to the Central Wayne Regional Authority.

Damascus Township Recreation Park – Phase I

The Damascus Township Supervisors are applying for grant funding through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and also through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for Phase I improvements to be made to the Damascus Township Recreational Park. The improvements include a new parking area, an improved baseball field and a playground area with ADA paved greenway trails. Letters of support were sent to the Supervisors as these improvements to the park for use by area residents and visitors are consistent with the East Central Wayne County Comprehensive Plan and also the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

Damascus Township Recreation Park – Phase II

Damascus Township has requested a letter of support to apply for funding through the Commonwealth Financing Authority – Monroe County LSA program that will be used to build a new children’s playground and a community amphitheater as the second phase of this municipal recreational project. The amphitheater will be used for community events while the new playground will include features suitable for age ranges two through 12. These improvements are compatible with the East Central Comprehensive Plan and also the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan in that an identified objective is to “maintain/enhance recreation areas and facilities.” The Wayne County Planning Department provided the Damascus Township Supervisors with a letter supporting this recreational grant application.

Dreher Township – Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Study

A letter of support was requested and provided to Dreher Township to apply to the PA Gaming Local Share Account and also for a PA Water and Sewer grant through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for grant funding to conduct an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan. This project will evaluate the existing sewage disposal needs within the Newfoundland Area of Dreher Township. The project is consistent with both the Wayne County and Dreher Township Comprehensive Plans as sewage disposal in this area is a key issue facing the development of this southern Wayne County area. Providing adequate long-term sewer service for the residents of the Newfoundland village area will ultimately assist to revitalize the area.

Honesdale Borough – Stormwater Improvement Project

Honesdale Borough requested a letter to support a grant application to the PA DCED H2O Program for stormwater improvements to the Borough’s existing system. Improvements made to the system will reduce the potential for flooding, erosion of stream banks and adjoining properties, destruction of the existing infrastructure and environmental habitats, and prevent the contamination of the Lackawaxen River and associated tributary streams. This project was found in agreement with the Borough’s multi-municipal and the County Comprehensive Plan. A letter of support was forwarded to Honesdale Borough Council.

Lacawac Sanctuary Center – Environmental Education Center

Lacawac Sanctuary Center is applying to the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and also to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for funding to convert their existing residential structure into an Environmental Education Center that will be used by Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade students who attend Lacawac’s environmental field trip programs. This new structure will support multipurpose classrooms, an exhibit hall, meeting room and science laboratory that will focus on community education and environmental programs to strengthen academic achievement for the school districts in Wayne County. Letters of support were sent to both the PA DCED and the PA DCNR on behalf of the Lacawac Sanctuary Center as this project was found to be consistent with the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

Mount Pleasant Township – Paving Project

A consistency letter was provided to Mount Pleasant Township to support a grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development – Local Share Account. Funding is being sought to aid in paving around the Township building along with driveway access to the parking area. This project is consistent with both the North Country Region Comprehensive Plan and the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan by seeking grant funding that will help to provide essential community facilities while reducing the tax burden on the local residents. In January of 2020 a grant in the amount of \$45,000 was awarded to Mount Pleasant Township.

NEPA Sno-Trails

Northeast PA Sno-Trails, Inc. is requesting grant funds through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to be used to purchase a new tractor that will be used for maintenance and grooming of the existing walking, ATV and snowmobile trails that consist of the former D&H railroad bed. These trails are maintained for use by the residents and visitors to Wayne County. This project is consistent with the Recreation section of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan. A letter supporting this grant application was forwarded to the PA DCNR, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Waymart Borough – Sports Complex

A letter supporting a grant application was forwarded to Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. for funding to be used in the renovation and reconfiguration of the existing little league baseball fields located within Waymart Borough. These fields are used by the local residents and visitors to Waymart Borough. This recreational improvement is consistent with the recommendations outlined in the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

Wayne County Commissioners – Hankins Pond Dam

Wayne County is looking to secure funding under the Monroe County Local Share Account (LSA) that will be used for the reconstruction and preservation of the Hankins Pond Dam. The County will assume ownership of this hand laid dry-stone dam along with approximately 36 of the 110 acres currently under the ownership of the PA Fish and Boat Commission. This area will then be developed into an active recreational area to support recreational opportunities to the northern Wayne County area. The Planning/GIS Department provided a letter and GIS mapping to support this grant application as the project is consistent with both the North Country Region Comprehensive Plan and the County’s Comprehensive Plan. Funds totaling \$76,500 for this project were granted in January of 2020 for this project.

Wayne Highlands School District – Baseball Field Reconstruction Project

A consistency letter supporting a grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Local Share Account was forwarded to the Wayne Highlands School District to assist in securing funds that will be used for the reconstruction of the existing baseball field used by the High School Varsity Baseball team. The field was unusable during most of last spring season due to inadequate drainage causing games to be re-located to opposing team facilities. This project was found to be consistent with the “Community Facilities and Recreation Plan” of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

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