



Newsletter of the Delaware County Planning Department

# PLANNING MATTERS

## Bethel's Foxfield & Harrah's Chester Casino and Racetrack Receive Bates Awards

The Delaware County Planning Commission's 2007 William H. Bates Memorial Awards for outstanding land development were given to Foxfield, an active adult community in Bethel Township, and Harrah's Chester Casino and Racetrack.

Planning Commission Chairman Thomas J. O'Brien and John E. Pickett, AICP, Director of the Planning Department, presented the Bates Awards at the Commission's monthly meeting in January.

The Commission recognized The McKee Group for meeting the objective of the Bates Award by "employing innovative techniques and practices...in accordance with modern and evolving principles of site planning and development." Foxfield is both an affordable mix of dwelling types and an attractive mix of architectural styles that add interest to the landscape. The 173-acre development takes into account the topography of the site ringed by woodlands and sensitively blends the active adult community into its surroundings in Bethel. Foxfield offers its over-55 residents a host of amenities, from a

well thought out walkway system of sidewalks and trails to a handsome clubhouse.

Accepting the Bates Award plaques were Jim Webb, Vice President of New Homes, Kevin McLaughlin,

Harrah's Chester Casino and Racetrack was selected because it fulfills the purpose of the Bates Awards Program. "In an era of ...diminishing open space, recreation, and nonrenewable resources, the Commission encourages a more efficient use of land and public services for the residents of Delaware County." The Casino turned an eyesore, an abandoned industrial property in Chester City, into an attractive entertainment



2007 Bates Awards Winners—*Harrah's Chester Casino and Racetrack (above) and Foxfield in Bethel Township (right). Photos courtesy of Harrah's and The McKee Group*



Senior Vice President – Business Development and General Counsel, and Jennifer McKee, Director of Public Relations for The McKee Group; Bob Pluciemik, Chester Valley Engineers; and Matt Houtman, Bethel Township Engineer.

The year 2008 started off brightly for The McKee Group. The evening before the Bates Awards presentation, the developer was named Builder of the Year by the Homebuilders' Association of Chester and Delaware Counties.

center with an uninterrupted view of the Delaware River waterfront. The Casino is also a productive use of land and a revenue source for the County and the City. The design and toned-down exterior of the structure integrate the Casino into its setting in an industrial neighborhood.

Receiving the plaque for Harrah's were Vince Donlevie, Senior Vice President/General Manager, Jason Birney, Advertising/Public Relations Manager, and Mike Chowansky, Banquet/Catering Sales Manager. For

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## Encourage Pedalin' in Your Community: Bike to Work Week is May 12 through 16

Want to host a Bike to Work Week event in your community? There is plenty of time to get involved in the County's 9<sup>th</sup> annual Bike to Work Week in May, and DCPD can help you plan and publicize it.

With gas prices still high, alternative transportation options are increasingly important for those who reside and work in your community. Now is the time to get your municipality and local businesses involved in this

weeklong series of new biking opportunities.

The Borough of Media, for instance, is scheduling its event for Friday, May 16, at 8 a.m. There are also plans in the works for a twilight event in downtown Swarthmore for Friday evening, May 16, at 4 p.m. at the train station. Volunteers are hoping to organize other events at locations throughout the County, such as the 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal.

Help spread the word about all of the great bike events coming up. Attention-grabbing posters will be available in April. Call DCPD's Transportation Planning section at 610-891-5219 or email [dulaj@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:dulaj@co.delaware.pa.us) to get on the mailing list. As May 12 gets closer, check for Bike to Work Week updates under *News and Events* on the County's website, [www.co.delaware.pa.us](http://www.co.delaware.pa.us).



*Dave Bennett from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia is about to join the Bike to Work festivities on the Government Center Plaza. Photo by Lisa Fillipaldi, DCTMA*

## Bates Awards (continued from cover)

their role in the development, plaques were given to Chester City Mayor Wendell N. Butler, Jr.; Patrick McNulty of the Flynn Company; Jeff Wynkoop of Sosh Architects; and Catania Engineering Associates, Inc., represented by Lisa Catania, Alex Rodriguez, and Lou Brown.

The Awards Program honors the late William H. Bates, who served on the Planning Commission for 17 years and was for many years its chairman. Established in 1980, the Awards Pro-

gram was renamed for Bates in 1982.

Throughout the year, municipalities are encouraged to evaluate land planning projects in their communities that merit consideration for a Bates Award. Take a look at the Plan & Ordinance pages on our website ([www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning](http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning)) for details on the Program and the nomination process. For further info, please contact James C. Long at 610-891-5225.

## THE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

**A** new year and a fresh, new look to *Planning Matters*. Our goal is to get it out to you quarterly during '08 to keep you abreast of Upcoming Events for your planning calendar. It will also clue you in as to what DCPD's staff have been up to, working on improving life in your community.

We are pleased to announce the winners of the Delaware County Planning Commission's 2007 William H. Bates Memorial Awards for outstanding land development. It's our front-page news.

Another DCPD staffer has become a member of the elite American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Steven Beckley, a Senior Environmental Planner, joins Lee Senior, Manager of County & Regional Planning, Justin Dula, Principal Transportation Planner, and me in having the right to put AICP after our names. Welcome to the ranks, Steve.

*John E. Pickett, AICP*  
Director

## On the Trails Again

The design and engineering for the **Chester Creek Trail** from Lenni Road to Creek Road in Middletown and Aston Townships is moving forward. Representatives from PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and other agencies gathered for a kickoff meeting in October. They discussed potential environmental and historical constraints in engineering the project. The area has been mapped in detail, and preliminary design work has begun. For updates on the project's progress, visit [www.chestercreektrail.org](http://www.chestercreektrail.org).

The **East Coast Greenway feasibility study** for the segment between Ridley Creek and Flower Street in Chester has also started in earnest. A kickoff meeting was held with the municipalities to identify stakeholders for the steering committee. The study is looking at connecting residential and commercial areas with the Greenway trail through signage and identification of preferred routes. Both frequent trail users and visitors

will then have better access to local businesses and the amenities that they offer.

The **John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge access study**, being conducted by the Clean Air Council, examines three different options for improving bicycle and pedestrian access in and out of the Refuge in Tinicum. The trail is an effort to reestablish the link for both residents and employees in the Township with the nearby open space at the Refuge that was cut off with the construction of I-95. The draft report is available online at <http://www.cleanair.org/Transportation/tfmtrail.html>.

The Clean Air Council has also completed a study for the **Cobbs Creek Connector Trail**. It is expected to link the existing Cobbs Creek Trail with the Heinz Refuge and would travel through Colwyn on the way. It is an exciting op-

portunity to provide residents of eastern Delaware County with great recreational resources very close to home. The completed plan is available online at <http://www.cleanair.org/Transportation/tfmtrail.html>.



*What to expect in the future along the Chester Creek Rail Trail? A beautified bridge and enhanced gateway signage, like you see here. The rail bridge turned footbridge will carry walkers over Route 452, Pennell Road, in Aston Township. Photo by DCPD*

## Historic Preservation Happenings

Several events are springing up the next few months that are worthy of special note. Two are related to activities of the County's Heritage Commission. They are the **Call for Nominations for the County's 30<sup>th</sup> annual Preservation Awards**, with a March 21 deadline for submissions, and a **free workshop tentatively titled *Oral History 101*** that will take place on Saturday morning, March 29.

For more information on these activities, please visit the Planning Department's website and click on Heritage Commission. The brochure for last year's Preservation Award winners is on our website, too, and will give you an idea of the breadth of historical activities for which awards are given. The 2008 awards will be given out at the County Council meeting on Tuesday, May 6, during National Preservation month.

Details about the oral history workshop are also on the website under Heritage Commission. The featured speaker is Dr. Charles Hardy III, Professor of History at West Chester University and nationally recognized expert on oral history. He will present a workshop on how to begin and carry forth oral history programs in our families, neighborhoods, and municipalities.

Another happening in the Historic Preservation section is a **free DCPD-sponsored workshop on local historic resource surveys**. Saturday morning, April 12, PA Historical and Museum Commission staff will be taking participants through the steps involved in the process, both updating and initiating a resource survey.

Kathy Wandersee, staff person for the Heritage Commission and a Principal Planner in the Historic Preservation section, will be happy to answer any questions by phone (610-891-5329) or email ([wanderseek@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:wanderseek@co.delaware.pa.us)).

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** – Make time for a workshop on *Creating Connections Between Trails and Health*. It's the first workshop in the Delaware Valley on which trail, health, physical activity, and planning advocates have collaborated. Mark Fenton, a nationally recognized expert in these areas, is the keynote speaker, with a choice of six sessions to follow. The place? Penn State Great Valley Campus in Malvern. For full details, visit News and Events on the County's website.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 21** – It's the deadline for submitting nominations for the **County's 30<sup>th</sup> Preservation Awards**. To learn more about the awards, read *Historic Preservation Happenings* on page 3.

**WEDNESDAY MARCH 26, 9:30 to noon** – Save the date for the **next Coastal Zone Task Force meeting**, but pencil in the topic. Marcus Hook will host the bi-monthly meeting. For more info, call Karen Holm at 610-891-5213 or email [holmk@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:holmk@co.delaware.pa.us).

**SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 8:30 to noon** – Plan to attend a **Heritage Commission workshop, Oral History 101**. Learn how to preserve the recent past by taping the memories of the seniors in your community. For full details, see page 3.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 8:30 to noon** – Mark your municipality's calendar to attend a **DCPD-sponsored workshop on updating local historic resource surveys**. PHMC staff will discuss identifying and documenting additional historic resources in your community. See page 3.

**TUESDAY, MAY 6** – Celebrate National Preservation month. Come and **honor the winners of the Preservation Awards**, presented by County Council at its weekly meeting.

**MONDAY, MAY 12 – FRIDAY, MAY 16** – It's the **County's 9<sup>th</sup> Bike to Work Week**, with special biking events throughout the County. Check out Bike to Work under News and Events on the County's website. For more details, see page 2.

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