

JUNIATA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



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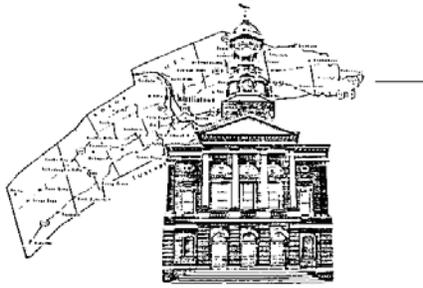
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OCTOBER 20, 2009



JUNATA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Harry J. Becker, III, Chairman
George L. Hackenberger, Vice Chairman
Harry F. Leach, Secretary

October 20, 2009

Juniata County Board of Commissioners
Juniata County Courthouse – Bridge & Main Streets
P.O. Box 68
Mifflintown, PA 17059

Dear County Commissioners:

We are pleased to submit to you and the citizens of Juniata County the Juniata County Planning Commission's 2008 Annual Report. For more than 30 years the Juniata County Planning Commission has been active in planning and community development activities throughout Juniata County and the surrounding region, and 2008 was a busy year for new and continuing projects.

During the past year, we have partnered with diverse groups to advocate sound land use, sustainable economic development, responsible environmental stewardship, and a better quality of life for the residents of Juniata County.

As always, our accomplishments would not be possible if it were not for the continued support and assistance of the County Board of Commissioners. In consideration of this, and in fulfilling our obligation under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247, as amended, it is with great pleasure that we present to you the 2008 Annual Report.

Thank you again for your invaluable help throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Harry J. Becker, III
Chairman

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mission Statement

The mission of the Juniata County Planning Commission is to provide strategic, coordinated, and objective guidance and oversight to the growth, planning, and development activities of Juniata County. In doing so, it is the goal of the Commission to ensure Juniata County's future is characterized by a healthy environment, economy, and society achieved through proactive planning, citizen representation, effective communication, and the provision of professional services from the Juniata County Planning Department.

1.2 Juniata County Board of Commissioners

Jeffery M. Zimmerman, Chairman

Dale S. Shelly, Vice-Chairman

Teresa J. O'Neal, Secretary

Sherlyn Moseby, Chief Clerk

1.3 Juniata County Planning Commission

Purpose

Through its activities and those provided by the Mifflin County Planning Department, the Juniata County Planning Commission's purpose is to:

- Provide the orderly growth, development and redevelopment of Juniata County in accordance with the long-term objectives, principles and standards in the best interest and welfare of its citizens and political subdivisions
- Coordinate and integrate plans for orderly growth, development and redevelopment of Juniata County
- Improve the social and economic climate and well-being of the County

- Encourage appropriate land use and the efficient use of fiscal resources through implementation of the County Comprehensive Plan to be completed in 2008
- Encourage the maximum utilization of the existing infrastructure and plan for new infrastructure, including housing
- Promote the conservation and effective use of energy, land, water and air in Juniata County, as well as the preservation of unique historic, cultural and natural features and resources
- Promote and assist in achieving improved traffic and transportation flow
- Collect and distribute relevant County and regional data and information
- Ensure that citizens and municipal officials are well informed of their responsibilities regarding effective planning and development in Juniata County
- Ensure consistency, coordination and communication between and among the County's municipal planning entities
- Encourage the continued support of a fully staffed Planning Department
- Encourage effective coordination and communication between all County entities, agencies and organizations whose activities either influence or are influenced by the effective planning and development of Juniata County

Members

Harry J. Becker, III, Chairman

William D. Fulton

George L. Hackenberger, Vice
Chairman

John M. Hepner

Harry F. Leach, Secretary

R. Donald Love

Barbara A. Foster

James S. G. Thompson

Christopher Snyder

1.4 Juniata County Planning Department

Responsibilities

The Planning Department is responsible for:

- carrying out the duties set forth in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PA Act 247 of 1968, as amended by PA act 170 of 1988)

- providing staff assistance to the Juniata County Planning Commission
- maintaining the Juniata County Comprehensive Plan
- coordinating with other agencies in the areas of transportation, housing, economic development, solid waste and tourism
- providing design guidance and reviewing subdivision and land development plans
- helping guide public policy and land use decisions related to growth and development
- providing assistance to the Counties' Municipalities on a variety of issues and subjects

Staff

Mark A. Colussy, Associate Planner

1.5 Planning Commission Committees

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee was formed to advise the County Planning Commission during the development of the County Comprehensive Plan. The committee is comprised of the following members:

John F. Shirk, Chairman

Richard Crawford, Vice
Chairman

Christopher Snyder

Glenn C. Supplee

Curt Dreilbelbis

Maureen Jordan

Don Kline

Donald Bashore

Davis Stetler

John B. Antine Jr.

Ron Taverno

Cynthia A. Iberg

Kelly Stidfole

Robert Kratzer

Harry Becker

Dr. Kenneth Albaugh

Michael W. Kramer

Greenways, Open Space, and Rural Recreation Plan Committee

The Greenways, Open Space, and Rural Recreation Plan Committee, collaboratively by Juniata and Mifflin Counties, was convened to oversee the development of the Juniata/Mifflin County Greenways, Open Space, and Rural Recreation Plan. The committee is comprised of the following members:

Mifflin County

John Czerniakowski
Brian Frey
Mike Makufka
Marie Mulvihill
Cadie Pruss
Rick Williams

Juniata County

Floyd Ciccolini
Martin Driebelbis
Trish Hoffman
Ken Mummah
Chris Snyder
Jeff Whitesel

SECTION 2: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

2.1 Planning

Greenway, Open Space, and Rural Recreation Plan

Juniata County has teamed up with Mifflin County on a joint Greenways, Open Space and Rural Recreation Plan. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has a program called the Community Conservation Partnerships Program that provides grant money for such projects. In the spring of 2006, the two counties were awarded with a grant to develop the plan. The project is expected to last about fifteen (15) months until completion, estimated to be completed August of 2008.

Preferred Park Types by County

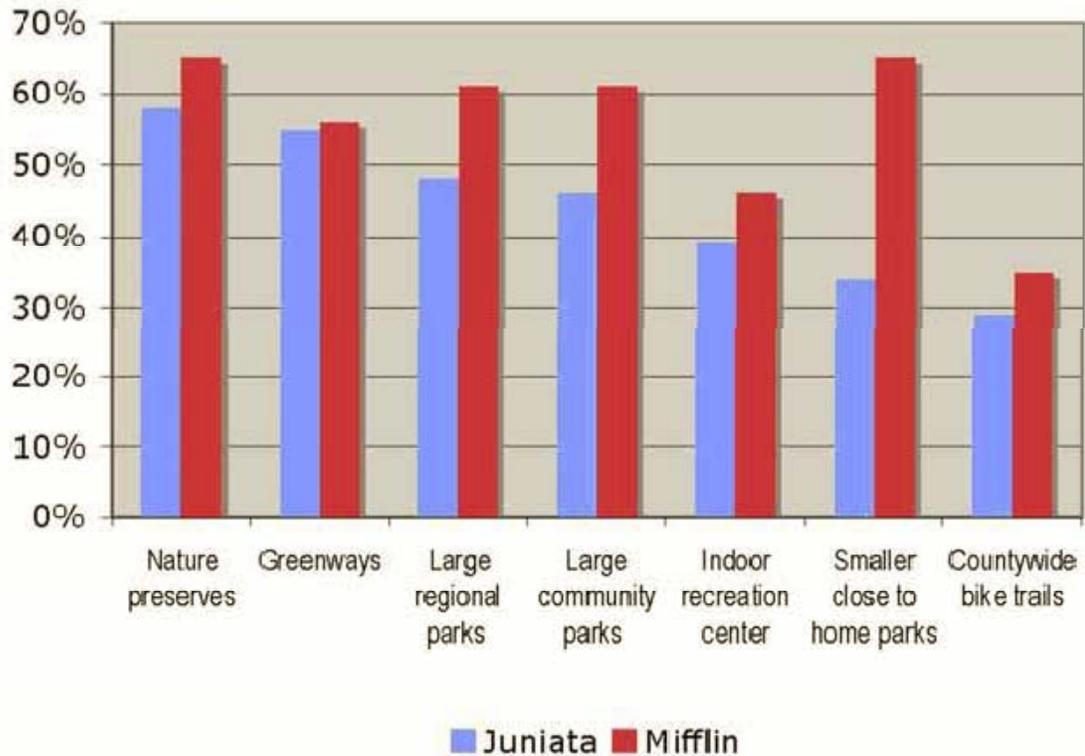


Chart 1 – An example of the results of surveys submitted for the Greenways, Open Space and Rural Recreation plan.

The plan will propose green connections to community destinations, target conservation of significant natural resources, explore park and recreation trends and needs, and recommend actions to advance parks, recreation, trails, and greenways in Juniata and Mifflin Counties.

The elements of the plan and the planning process include identifying the purpose of the work, establishing an inventory for existing data and related plans including natural resources and manmade resources, analyzing data and developing a proposed greenway network vision, mapping, developing an action plan, and preparation of the final plan. Public participation is also crucial for the project, as multiple meetings were held as well as surveys sent to random households. The plan will compile all the phases of the project to develop opportunities associated with greenways, trails and open spaces.

The Greenways, Open Space and Rural Recreation plan is a joint effort between the consultants hired for the project in Ann Yost, RLA of Yost Strodoski Mears, and Ann Toole of Toole Recreation Planning.

Shared Municipal Services Program

In October of 2006, the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) approved a Shared Municipal Services Program (SMSP) grant between Juniata and Mifflin County. The grant continued through 2008, which the two counties received \$19,500 for FY 2008. A portion of the grant will fund the Associate Planner's salary. The Associate Planner is a shared position between the Juniata County Planning Department and the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department.



In October of 2007, after interviewing several candidates for the Associate Planner position, Mark Colussy was hired to replace the departed Andrew Hartwell.

In Juniata County, the Associate Planner was tasked with reviewing subdivision and land development plans, assist with the development of the Juniata County Comprehensive Plan, assist with the development of the Tri-County Hazard Mitigation Plan, assist with the development of the Greenways, Open Space, and Rural Recreation Plan, as well as maintain the Planning Department's website. Also, since the Acting Planning Director retired in 2007, the Associate Planner was the only position filled in 2008 in the Planning Department. Because of the vacancy, the Associate Planner also helped with several other tasks to maintain and

operate the Planning Department office.

Figure 1 – DCED's Shared Municipal Services Program

Juniata County Comprehensive Plan

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code now requires counties to update their comprehensive plan every 10 years. Therefore, in 2004, the Juniata County Board of Commissioners approached the Mifflin County Board of Commissioners for assistance from the Planning and Development Department to develop a comprehensive plan for Juniata County.

This is extremely important given Juniata County's geographic location in central Pennsylvania and the recent and ongoing highway improvements that contribute to the county's accessibility and desirability.

The comprehensive plan is a policy document that will help guide the county over a 10-year period. The plan will also identify community planning strategies that local municipalities can utilize to initiate or strengthen their planning programs.

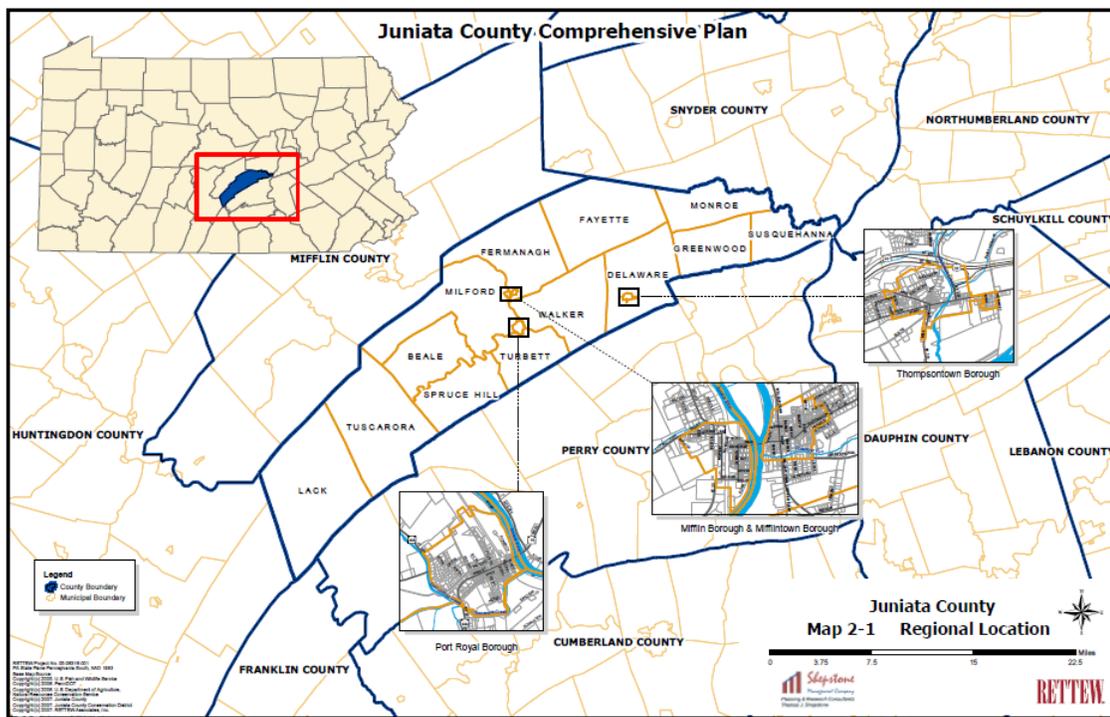


Figure 2 – Map 1 from the draft Juniata County Comprehensive Plan

Key elements of the plan include public participation, community survey, infrastructure analysis, housing analysis, future land use, natural resources availability, agricultural preservation and protection, watershed management,

and historic preservation. The plan will also recommend implementation strategies and identify funding sources. The plan will become the framework from which local municipalities can update or prepare their own plans. It is important to develop a common vision and an atmosphere of consistency throughout Juniata County and its 17 municipalities.

In 2005, the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department worked with the Juniata County Commissioners and the Juniata County Planning Department to secure funding and hire a consultant for the project. Funding for the project was secured in 2006 through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program. The Planning and Development Department assisted with developing a request for proposals, reviewing proposals, interviewing prospective consulting firms, and selecting the consulting firm to facilitate development of the plan. The Juniata County Board of Commissioners contracted with the consulting firms of RETTEW Associates Inc. and Shepstone Management.

In 2006, a memorandum of understanding was developed between Juniata and Mifflin Counties authorizing the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department to oversee the development of the Juniata County Comprehensive Plan.

Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

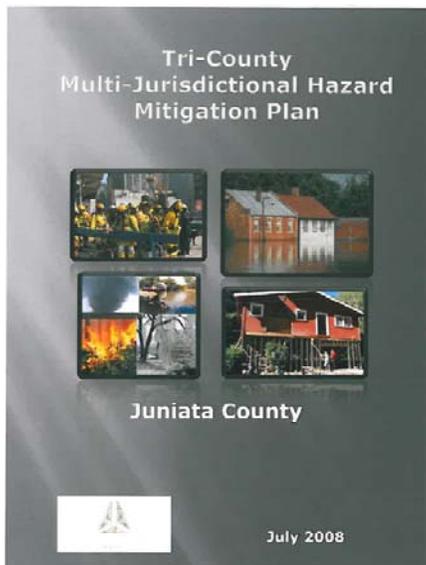


Figure 3 – Tri County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Juniata County Planning Commission and the Department of Emergency Services worked with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to prepare a countywide, multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) that is in compliance with the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000).

The HMP aims to reduce or eliminate long-term risks to life and property that result from natural and manmade hazardous events, such as floods, severe winter weather, drought, and transportation accidents.

The County and each municipality that adopts the plan will be eligible to apply for funding from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to implement the mitigation strategies outlined in

the plan.

All political jurisdictions are required to have a FEMA-approved HMP to be eligible for federal hazard mitigation project funding.

FEMA approval of the plan was sent to each municipality to adopt on Sept. 30, 2008.

2.2 Subdivision and Land Development

Description

An important function of the Juniata County Planning Commission is to review and provide comments for subdivision and land development plans, as authorized by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act 247 as amended. In cases where municipalities have a Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, plans must be submitted to the Juniata County Planning Commission for review to provide comments to the municipality within 30 days. All municipalities in the county have their own Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance with the exception of Monroe Township.

The Planning Commission reviewed 97 plan submissions in 2008. Of those plans reviewed, 49 plans, or 50.5% of the plans were minor subdivisions (9 lots or less). Refer to Chart 2 for total plans reviewed by type. Fermanagh Township had the most plans reviewed 19. Refer to Chart 3 for plans reviewed by Municipality.

Totals

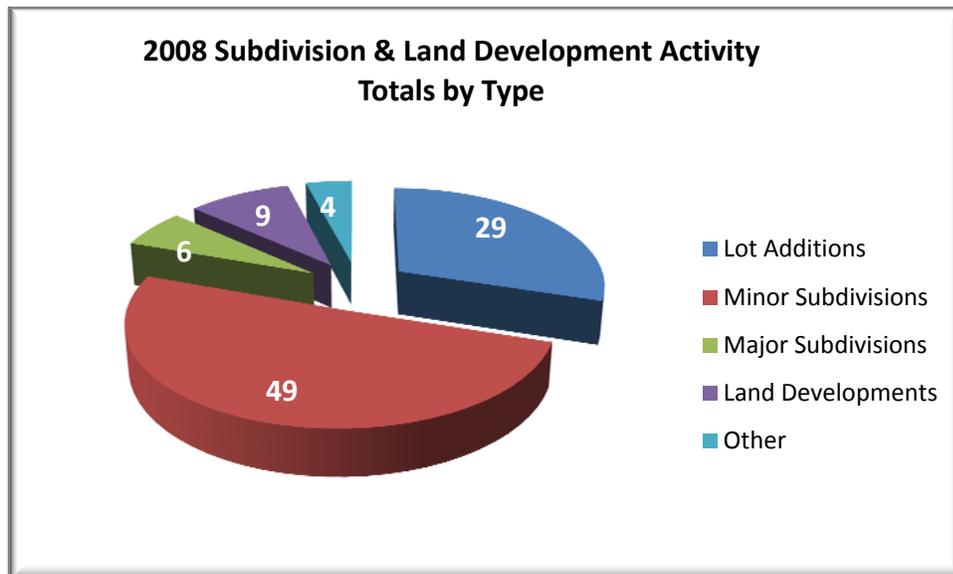


Chart 2 – 2009 Subdivision & Land Development Activity Totals by Type

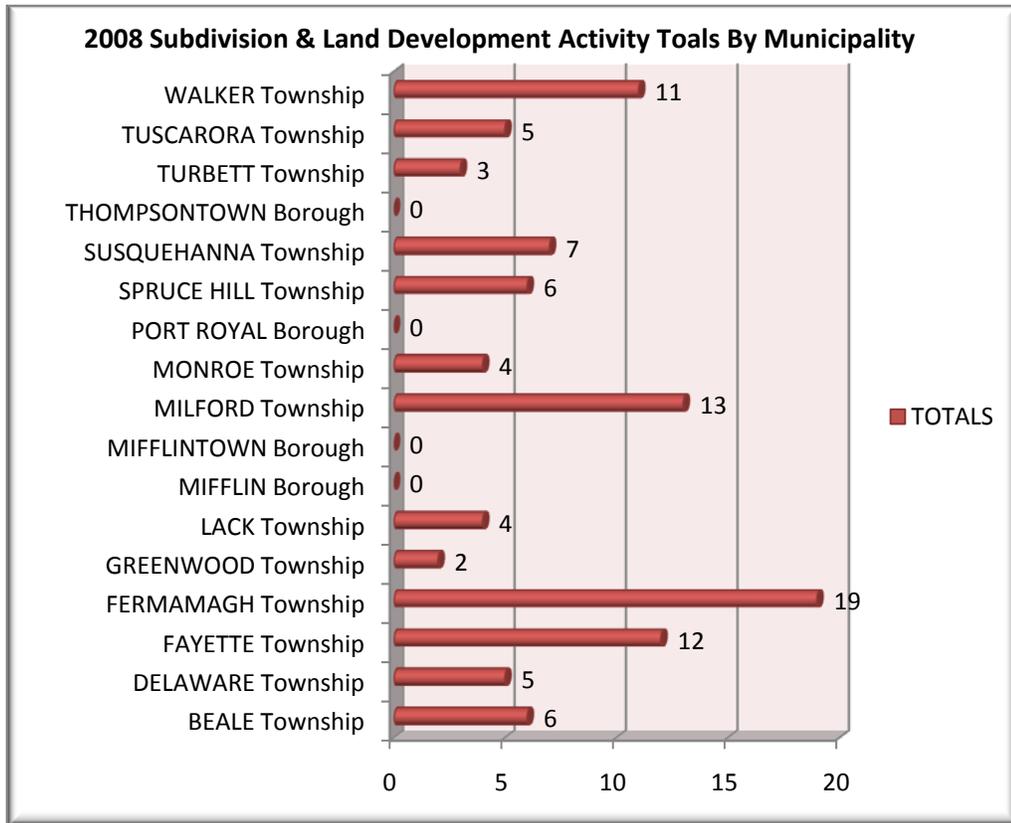


Chart 3 – 2008 Subdivision and Land Development Activity Totals by Municipality

2.3 Community Development Block Grant Program

Description of CDBG Program

Juniata County utilizes Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to benefit low and moderate income citizens by alleviating serious and immediate threats to the health and welfare of community residents by improving neighborhood infrastructure. Projects typically funded by this program are improvements to water and sewer systems, housing rehabilitation for qualified families, road resurfacing, ADA modifications to public facilities, and playground improvements. In addition, a portion of the funds may be spent on improving or adding new public services. Juniata County received \$245,400 for FY 2008 from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). These funds are used for County-wide projects or distributed to local municipalities, authorities, and non-profit organizations on a competitive basis.

Fundable Activities

All CDBG projects must benefit a majority (over 51%) of low-to-moderate income persons. If a community-wide activity is funded, then over 51% of low-to-

moderate income persons. If a community-wide activity is funded, then over 51% of the residents in the community must meet the low to moderate income limits.

In addition to Census data and County-wide survey data, other methods can be used to document the fundability of a particular project:

1. A survey of the households in the service benefit area be conducted that demonstrates that over 51% of the individuals benefiting from the project have low-to-moderate incomes.
2. The project is designed specifically to serve low-to-moderate income individuals. An example of such a project is housing rehabilitation, where assistance is provided only to those families that meet income guidelines.
3. The project is designed to benefit individuals who are presumed to have low-to-moderate incomes, i.e., senior citizens and handicapped individuals.

Eligible Activities

Many types of projects are eligible including:

1. Construction and reconstruction of public facilities. Public facilities can include, but are not limited to: roads, storms and sanitary sewer systems, water, recreation improvements, firefighting equipment.
2. Acquisition of land, economic development, housing rehabilitation, removal of architectural barriers that restrict the movement of handicapped persons, historic preservation, conservation and other activities
3. Establishment of new, or expansion of existing public services. Examples of this could be child care, health care, job training, education programs, recreation programs, drug abuse counseling and/or treatment, services for homeless persons, etc.

Activities that are NOT generally eligible include the construction or improvement of municipal buildings (except with the removal of architectural barriers), the purchase of municipal equipment (i.e. snow plows), and general operating and maintenance expenses.

Project	Total CDBG	Description
Richfield Area Joint Authority Water System Improvements	\$66,667	Development of a new well and other water system improvements. Project financed with CDBG funds from 2005-2007. Construction finished in 2008.

Table 1- 2008 projects already underway

Project	2008 CDBG	Total CDBG	Description
Housing Rehab – Milford Township Sewer Laterals	\$158,992	\$158,992	Installation of sewer laterals and decommissioning of septic system for income eligible home owners. Construction completed in June-July 2009.
Public Service – Mifflin Juniata Dental Clinic	\$8,068	\$8,068	Funds for the purchase of dental equipment needed for quantifiable increase in service. Funds expended early 2009.
Village of Walnut Sanitary Sewer	\$34,172	\$859,657	Design and installation of a lagoon based wastewater treatment facility in the Village of Walnut, Beale Township. This project has been underway since 2003 and should be complete in 2010.
Administration \$	44,168	\$44,168	Grantees are entitled to use 18% of the grant for administration
Total \$2	45,400	\$245,400	

Table 2 - New Projects Selected on Juniata County 2008 CDBG Application

SECTION 3: MEMBERS AND STAFF

3.1 Staff Changes

The Planning Commission would like to welcome Mark Colussy, Associate Planner, who started October 15 of 2007. Mark replaced Andrew Hartwell, who left in July of 2007. Mark Colussy holds a Bachelors of Science degree in Geography with an option in Urban and Regional Development from Penn State University. He previously worked as a planner in Blair Township, Blair County. Mark is a member of the American Planning Association (APA), the Pennsylvania Planning Association (PPA), and Friends of Prince Gallitzin State Park. The Planning Commission welcomes Mark to the department!