

JUNIATA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Prepared by:

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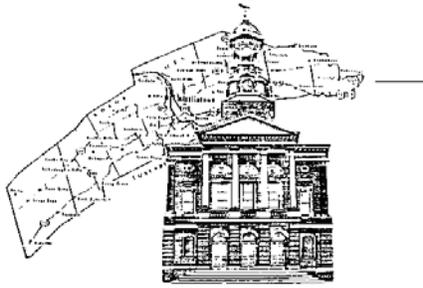
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April 6, 2012



JUNATA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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

April 6, 2012

Juniata County Board of Commissioners
1 N Main Street
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 2011 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 2011 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 2011 Annual Report.

Thank you again for your invaluable help throughout the year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harry J. Becker, III".

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 Mosebey, *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

Section 1: Introduction

- Encourage appropriate land use and the efficient use of fiscal resources through implementation of the County Comprehensive Plan, which was 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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Begun Service</u>	<u>Current Term Ends</u>
Harry J. Becker III, <i>Chair</i>	Jan. 01, 1999	Dec. 31, 2014
George L. Hackenberger, <i>V. Chair.</i>	Jan. 01, 2000	Dec. 31, 2013
Harry F. Leach, <i>Secretary</i>	Jan. 01, 1999	Dec. 31, 2014
John M. Hepner	Jan. 01, 2005	Dec. 31, 2013
William D. Fulton	May 18, 1995	Dec. 31, 2013
Barbara Foster	Jan. 01, 1993	Dec. 31, 2011
Christopher Snyder	Jan. 08, 2008	Dec. 31, 2011
James S.G. Thompson	Jan. 01, 1977	Dec. 31, 2012
John F. Shirk	Jan. 01, 2009	Dec. 31, 2012

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*

David C. Bardell, *Planning Director*

1.5 Planning Committees

Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Steering Committee

The Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Steering Committee was formed to advise the County Planning Commission during the development of the Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The committee is comprised of the following members:

Harry Becker, III, County Planning Commission Chair

Christopher Snyder, County Conservation District
Tony Neimond, Monroe Township Resident
Barb Foster, Lack Township Secretary
Marian Casner, Fermanagh Township Secretary
Gary Zeiders, Juniata County School Board
George Campbell, PLS, Tuscarora Land Surveying
Bob Kratzer, Juniata Sewage Committee

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

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

Dave Bardell, Juniata County Planning Director
Keith Mingle, Juniata County 911 Services
Rich Fisher, Juniata County Maintenance Supervisor
Chris Snyder, Juniata County Conservation District
Mark Partner, Former Commissioner
Glen Supplee, Walker Township Planning Commission
George Sheaffer, Monroe Township Supervisor
Denise Troyer, Mahantango Enterprises Tire Recycler
Polly Digon, School District & Mifflintown Borough Council
Wendy Elsasser, Cocolamus Creek Disposal

SECTION 2: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

2.1 Planning

Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

In 2011, the Planning Department completed work on the Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance that began in 2010. The objective of the ordinance is to formalize uniform standards and processing procedures for subdivision and land development throughout Juniata County. Municipal officials, real estate developers, financial institutions, surveyors, engineers, landscape architects, planners, and property owners will benefit in this effort to guide community development in an orderly manner.

In the preparation of this model subdivision and land development ordinance, the Juniata County Planning Commission strongly encourages municipal officials within the County to consider the model either if officials are looking to adopt an ordinance or if officials are considering amendments. Local officials will find this Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance most helpful in these efforts. Public officials are however, cautioned to seek competent legal and planning counsel in the use of this Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Moreover, municipal officials are advised to consider the regional and local recommendations from the Juniata County Comprehensive Plan, Juniata County Greenways Open Space and Rural Recreation Plan, and local Comprehensive Plans in the preparation or amendment of a municipal subdivision and land development ordinance.

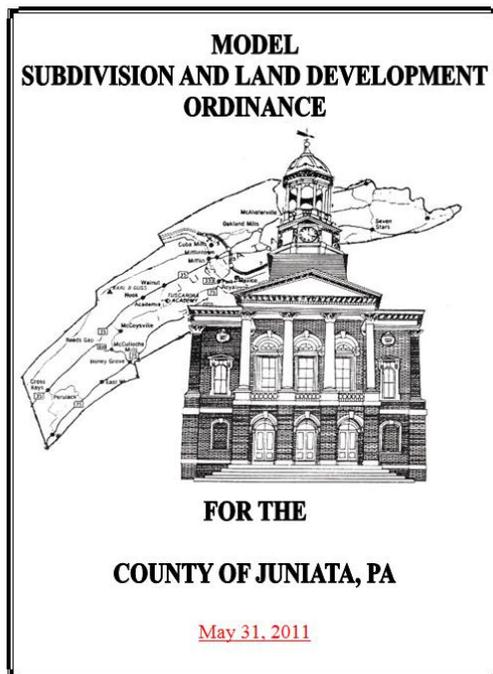


Figure 1 – Juniata County Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

The Commission believes that the best way to encourage better subdivision and land development in the County is to encourage the local municipalities to adopt local subdivision and land development ordinances containing regulations designed to fit the particular needs of the municipality. The municipality in developing such an ordinance should attempt to secure citizens' opinions, including those of landowners, developers, and subdividers, during the preparation of such an ordinance.

Municipal officials are also encouraged to seek competent legal and planning aid in the use of this Guide.

Any municipality in Juniata County interested in preparing a new subdivision and land development ordinance, or amending an existing one, and needs assistance may contact the Juniata County Planning Department. The Department's staff is available to provide such assistance.

Municipal Waste Management Plan

The Planning Department continued its ongoing relationship with the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department in 2010 and 2011 by beginning the process of updating the Juniata County Municipal Solid Waste Management Plan that was adopted by the Juniata County Commissioners on March 26, 2003.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) requires the plan to be updated every ten years, and the planning process to update the plan must begin three years before the ten year update. The planning process

will be slightly different from that of 2003 in that Juniata County is undertaking the project jointly with Mifflin County. Mifflin County had received grant funding to update their plan too, which was also adopted in 2003. The project is being funded primarily by PA DEP Municipal Waste Planning Grants awarded to both Mifflin and Juniata Counties.

Part of the planning process was the establishment of the Solid Waste Advisory Committees (SWAC), which is comprised of representatives of local government, businesses, school districts, and the solid waste community. In September 2010, the Juniata County SWAC met once, and the Mifflin County SWAC met twice. A joint SWAC meeting was held in November 2010.

The Juniata and Mifflin SWACs have been discussing waste deliveries to the transfer station, flow control, joint planning opportunities for both

Counties to address common needs, and enhancing recycling services in Juniata County. These discussions led to the SWACs conducting a site visit on October 26, 2010 to review the food recycling operations of Penn State and the Borough of State College. These operations will be fully reviewed in terms of feasibility in the development of the update of the Municipal Waste Management Plans.

Barton & Loguidice, the project consulting firm, developed a project webpage for people in the community to better understand the process. The project webpage is available at:

<http://tinyurl.com/JuniataSolidWaste>

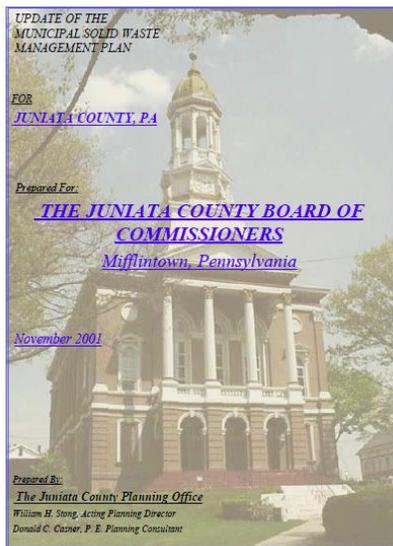


Figure 3 – Juniata County's Solid Waste Plan

Drafts of the Municipal Waste Management Plans for Juniata and Mifflin Counties are expected to be completed in 2012, which will initiate the plan review process for the community and PA DEP.

Once accepted and approved by the SWAC committees, the plan will sit idle until 2014. This is due to the capacity contracts for each county expire at different times. In 2014, contracts will go out for bid to ensure the expiration dates are the same for both Juniata and Mifflin County. In 2015, the plan will be completed and approved by the counties and then the municipal approval process will start.

Recycling in Juniata County

Juniata County has made efforts to work with a private recycler in the county to establish a county supported drop-off site, but nothing new to report on this effort.

The state had passed the Covered Device Act which requires televisions and computers to be removed from the solid waste stream and be recycled starting in January of 2013.

To help residents meet this goal, Dave Bardell has been working actively with Skills of Central PA. Skills is a certified electronics recycler and are very acceptable to establishing a recycling collection program for televisions. This effort is also supported by the Mifflin County Solid Waste Authority. We are currently on track to start a one morning a month television recycling program at the Skills location in Juniata County. This will start in the April-May of 2012 time frame. More information can be found on the Recycling page on the Juniata County Web site.

Park and Ride Program

The Juniata County Planning Department and SEDA-COG identified need in Juniata County for Park and Ride lot in Juniata County. The Park and Ride Program is a program established by PennDOT to help commuters find other commuters to carpool. This is done by establishing a Park and Ride lot, which people can use to leave their vehicles to participate in car or vanpools. The lots are typically located in convenient locations throughout most of the state. These lots help facilitate the reduction of parking and traffic congestion. Lot users make their own arrangements for transportation to and from the lots.

Once this need was identified in Juniata County, specific sites throughout the County had to be identified. Once this was done, Mr. Bardell assisted PennDOT with data acquisition to then be used to assess the feasibility of the program. The project is currently in the Engineering stage and awaiting funding. Recent drive-

bys of the parking lots defined in the study show increased use by commuters. This further reinforces the need for a Park and Ride lot in the county.

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, Mifflin Borough, and Mifflintown Borough.

The Planning Commission reviewed 44 plan submissions in 2011. This total is significantly less than 2010 numbers (64 plans), and still lower than the previous four years where there has been a pattern of decreasing plan submissions. The 2010 total is only 42% of what was seen in 2005 (105 plans) and even as little as 45% of the plans in 2008 (97 plans). Of the 2011 plans that were reviewed, 25 plans, or 57 percent of the plans, were minor subdivisions (9 lots or less); also, 19 were Lot Additions, which accounted for the remaining 43 percent of plan submissions. There were no major subdivision plans, land development plans, or other types of plans submitted in 2011. Refer to Chart 1 for percent of plans reviewed by type.

The plan submissions were not also equally geographically spread. Tuscarora Township had the most plans reviewed with 8 plans (one of those also being half in Lack Township), followed by Fayette Township with 7 plans. Walker Township rounded out the top three with 5 plans. Nearly half of the County's plan submissions (44%) occurred in the aforementioned three townships. The four boroughs combined only had one plan submission (one in Thompsontown Borough). There also were no plans submitted in Beale Township in 2011. Refer to Chart 2 for plans reviewed by Municipality.

Totals

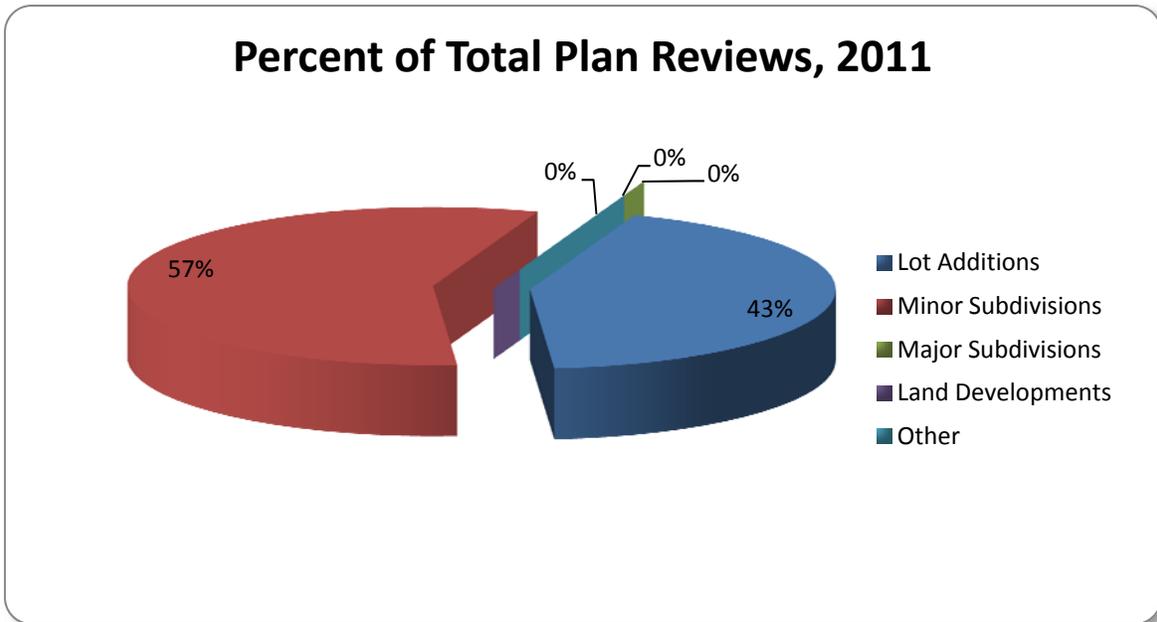


Chart 1 – 2010 Subdivision & Land Development Activity Totals by Type

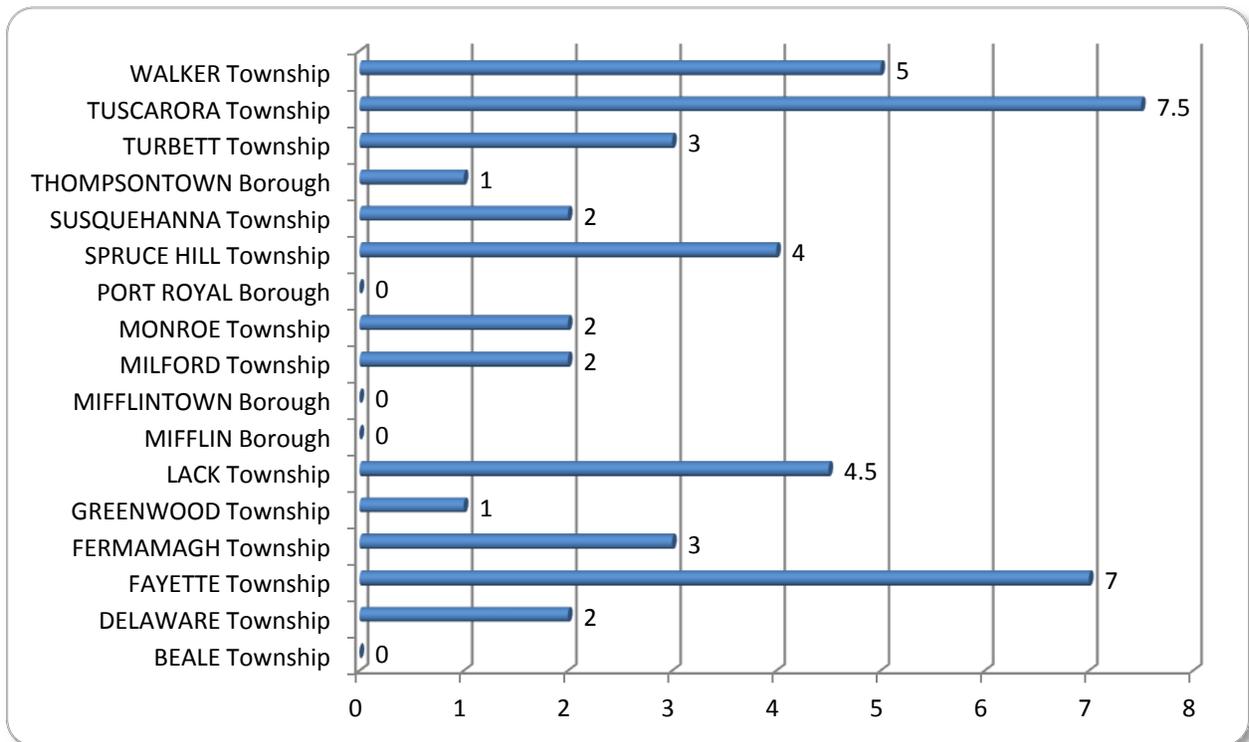


Chart 2 – 2010 Subdivision and Land Development Activity Totals by Municipality

The Planning Commission reviewed a wide range in plan numbers over the past several years. The average over the past six years is 80 plans. The total plan reviews has been trending downward over the past seven years, as depicted in Chart 3. The 44 plans that were reviewed in 2011 was significantly less than the average of 80 plan reviews a year.

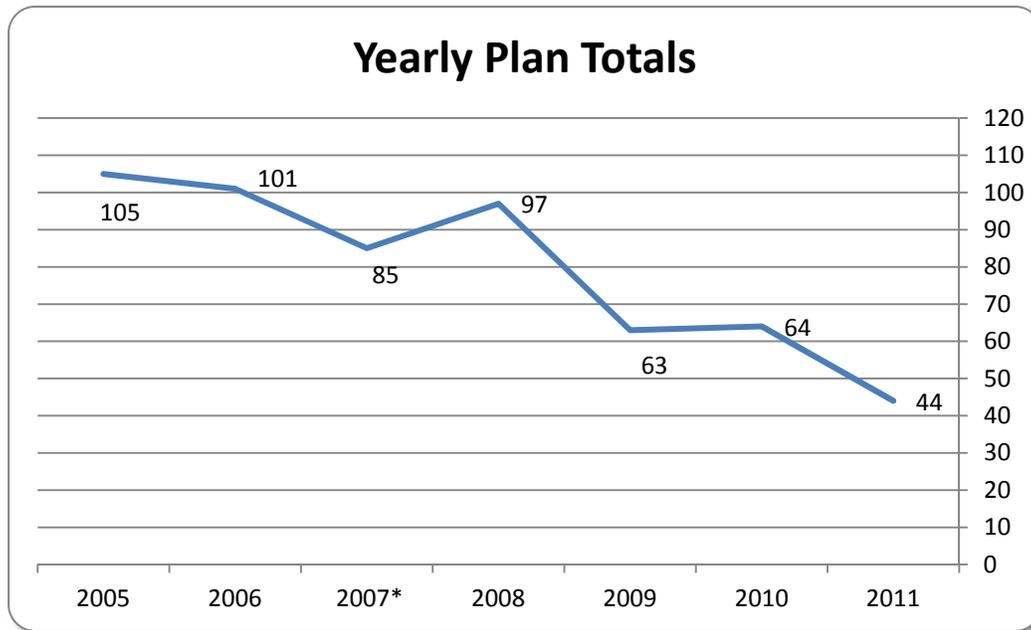


Chart 3 – Subdivision and Land Development Activity Totals by Year

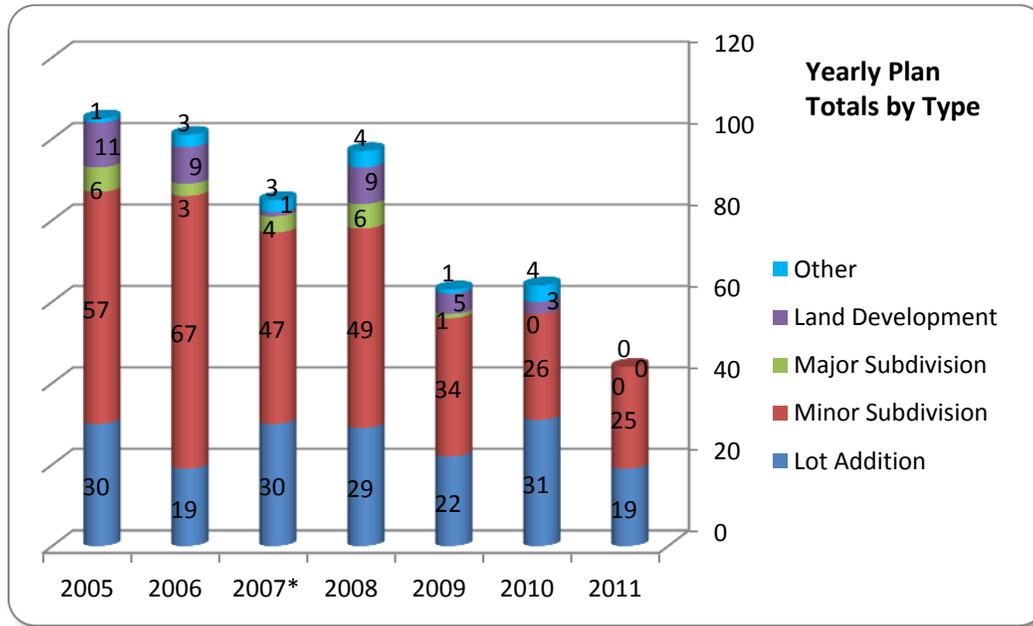
It seems apparent that the assumption can be made that the worldwide recession that still continues to occur has affected plan review totals in Juniata County. Refer to Table 1 for plan review totals over the past 7 years.

Year	Lot Addition	Minor Subdivision	Major Subdivision	Land Development	Other	Total
2011	19	25	0	0	0	44
2010	31	26	0	3	4	64
2009	22	34	1	5	1	63
2008	29	49	6	9	4	97
2007*	30	47	4	1	3	85*
2006	19	67	3	9	3	101
2005	30	57	6	11	1	105
Average	25.7	43.6	2.9	5.4	2.3	79.9

*Note that 2007 does not include October totals due to the absence of staff and records

Table 1 – Subdivision and Land Development Activity Totals by Year

Chart 4 shows the number of plans over the past seven years broken down into reviews by type. It is easy to see the number of plans being reviewed is decreasing, but it significant to note the drop in Major Subdivisions and Land Development submissions. This is a telling sign of a recession in the economy because people, businesses, and developers do not have funds to start large projects as the risk of return is much greater.



*Note that 2007 does not include October totals due to the absence of staff and records

Chart 4 – Yearly Subdivision and Land Development Activity Totals by Type

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 \$259,569 for FY 2010 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.

The next page will show the projects that were still ongoing (Table 2), as well as the project approved in 2011 (Table 3). The Emergency Communications Tower that was approved in 2011 will stack funds previously approved in 2009 and 2010.

Section 2: Planning and Development Projects

Source	Funds
Juniata County FFY 2003 CDBG Entitlement	\$50,000
Juniata County FFY 2004 CDBG Entitlement	\$285
Juniata County FFY 2007 CDBG Entitlement	\$176,544
Juniata County FFY 2008 CDBG Entitlement	\$176,800
Juniata County FFY 2009 CDBG Entitlement	\$150,018
Juniata County FFY 2006 CDBG Competitive Award	\$465,000
U.S. Army Corps Section 313 Funding	\$500,000
TOTAL	\$1,518,648

Table 2 – Previous Entitlements with Remaining Funds to be Spent

Project	2011 CDBG	Description
Emergency Service Tower	\$191,022	Erect a public safety communications tower, gravel access roads, generator, and electric lines to serve the site to provide increased emergency communication capabilities in the region between Reeds Gap and Black Log. (2011 Entitlement Funds will be added to previous 2009 (\$17,201) and 2010 (\$210,699) Funds .)
SEDA-COG Administration	\$44,020	Grantees are entitled to use 18% of the grant for administration
Juniata County Administration	\$6,300	Grantees are entitled to use 18% of the grant for administration
Total	\$241,342	Total 2011 CDBG Allocation

Table 3 - New Project Selected on Juniata County 2011 CDBG Application

SECTION 3: MEMBERS AND STAFF

3.1 Staff Training

Staff members of the Planning Department have participated in conferences, workshops and other events throughout the year to continue their training and professional development.

Blighted Housing Workshop

On October 20, 2011, Mark Colussy attended a workshop on Blighted and Deteriorated Housing at the Chamber of Commerce in Huntingdon, PA.

Communities throughout the Commonwealth are challenged by the issue of how to deal with vacant and abandoned buildings, poorly maintained structures, and rundown dwellings. These conditions cause safety and health problems, which affect the value and health of the surrounding neighborhood. Due to this being a bigger and bigger burden on communities, a workshop was held to inform attendees of the impacts of such blighted buildings. The workshop focused on potential solutions to the problem of blighted housing, including information on eminent domain, rental housing ordinances, and conservatorships.

PA Chapter of APA Holds Annual Conference

From October 16-18, 2011, Mark Colussy attended the Annual PA Chapter of American Planning Association's (APA) Annual Conference in Scranton. More than 500 planners and planning officials attended the conference.

Sessions available to attend provided diverse information on ethical, procedural, analytical dilemmas faced by many planners in today's communities. Mark attended sessions on Implementing your Comprehensive Plan: The Official Map; Active Design: the Connection between Health, Land Use, Recreation, Transportation, and Technology; Planning for Compatible Economic Development to Initiate Community Sustainability; AICP: Is it for You; Creating an Implementable Comprehensive Plan; and Complete Streets: Transforming Communities. The PA Chapter of the APA always does a good job of providing sessions on hot button topics facing planners in Pennsylvania.

CDBG Tools for Compliance

Dave Bardell attended the SEDA- Council of Governments training, CDBG Tools for Compliance. This is an overview of the regulations determining the Community Development Block Grant process.

United States Census 2010: Results are Out...Now What?

Dave Bardell attended United States Census 2010: Results Are Out... Now What? Training, which was promoted by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services and delivered by United States Census Bureau. This training covered what is available and how to access census data.

Posting and Bonding of Local Roads

Dave Bardell set up and hosted, as well as attended, an LTAP training session for the townships on Posting and Bonding of Local Roads. The Posting and Bonding of Roads could become a major savings to townships in the event of any unconventional well drilling operations that may take place in the county in the future.