



REGIONAL REVIEW

Volume 9, Issue 1

Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson
Metropolitan Planning Commission

Winter 2008

2008 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING ELECTION OF OFFICERS—NEW FACES AND A REVIEW OF GOALS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE YEAR

On Wednesday, January 23, the BHJ Full Commission elected Gary Folden for the third time in five years as chairman. Other officers for 2008 are Vice Chairman Chuck Svokas (Hancock County director of economic development), Secretary Art Miser (City of Weirton representative to BHJ) and Treasurer Bernie Kazienko (Brooke County Commission).



Norma Tarr passes the gavel to Gary Folden.



Norma Tarr

The members passed a resolution acknowledging Norma Tarr, 2007 chairman, for her dedication and service to the agency. Mrs. Tarr served as an officer for the past four years. Besides her term as chairman, she was elected secretary in 2004, treasurer in 2005 and vice chairman in 2006. Mrs. Tarr was presented a plaque and flowers as an expression of appreciation.

Several new members were in attendance. The Honorable Patricia Freeland (Village of Smithfield) and The Honorable Harry Thomas (Village of Richmond) who will both also serve on the BHJ Executive Committee were introduced. In addition, Robert Cochrun, councilman and BHJ representative for the Village of Wintersville and Jason McCallister from WVDOT, Division of Highways were there.

Dr. John Brown, BHJ executive director, said the agency has many goals and challenges for the coming year. He said that although a new Ohio River bridge remains the top challenge, staff is working on several other projects of importance. The U.S. 22 corridor expansion is a top priority. That and addressing the impact on the region

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Jason McCallister, WVDOT



Harry A. Thomas



Robert Cochrun



Patricia Freeland



**BHJ METROPOLITAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
OFFICERS—2008**

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Publication of this newsletter is made possible with assistance from the Federal Highway Administration, the Ohio and West Virginia Departments of Transportation, the West Virginia Development Office, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the U.S. Economic Development Administration and BHJ member governments.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The push and pull to invest in national, state and local infrastructure is a true unfolding drama with a clear problem, many proposed solutions and few real options.

While the I-35W bridge collapse over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis highlights the problem, predecessors such as the Silver Bridge in Point Pleasant and Galloping Gertie in Tacoma exist. As a result, our state departments of transportation (DOT) carefully monitor bridges such as the Market Street Bridge and the Fort Steuben Bridge. In the case of the Fort Steuben Bridge, ODOT has set aside \$6 million to demolish this 1928 structure.



The replacement costs for infrastructure is extraordinary. In January 07, the administration of Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland said the state faced a \$3.5 billion shortfall in funding for proposed new highway projects previously approved for construction. In its 2008-2009 Business Plan, the Ohio Department of Transportation said the shortfall was prompting by rising construction costs.

The combined rate of construction cost increased from 2004 to 2007 was 40.7 percent. The report stated costs went up due to “unprecedented rising costs of oil, increased demand for steel and raw materials in the global economy and the lingering effects of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.”

Pundits have proposed a variety of funding options. These include privatization, public-private cost sharing programs, an increase in the fuel tax, increased local participation and a new federal investment program. These options are not universal solutions. The privatization of the Indiana Turnpike has brought mixed reviews. While the Mon-Fayette Expressway in Pittsburgh is considering a public-private program, the project costs is clearly imposing. While the federal gas tax has not been increased since 1993, with the surge in gas prices, the tax is not popular. If the citizen denial of a local user fee in Monongalia County (West Virginia) holds true, local initiatives are not palatable. More than 80 percent of the Monongalia County voters who participated in an early February 08 election turned down the \$2-a-week user fee.

The problem and the absence of a universal local-state revenue solution have strong local impact. Our #1 regional transportation priority is the construction of a new Ohio River Bridge crossing, priced at \$100 million. In addition, the Columbus to Pittsburgh Highway Corridor has a high sticker tag but a higher local economic return. This problem demands the initiative of a strong federal highway bill. Congress will consider the renewal of this bill, SAFETEA-LU, during the upcoming session. With the guidance of local officials and state DOT's, BHJ is a partner in this search for truth.

John C. Brown, AICP
jbrown@bhjmpc.org

WEIRTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY CHAIR APPLAUDS ARCELOR-MITTAL WEIRTON'S PLAN TO SELL NON-ESSENTIAL PROPERTY

The following opinion by Mark Zatezalo, Chair for the Weirton Redevelopment Authority, appeared in the February 10th edition of the Weirton Daily Times. Mr. Zatezalo is a resident of Weirton and is the Brownfield Services Manager for Chester Engineers. His comments follow Arcelor-Mittal's announcement (January 16, 2008) to solicit the sale of 1,700 non-essential acres in the City of Weirton.

In 2001, I was appointed to the Redevelopment Authority by then Mayor Dean Harris. Since that time the redevelopment of Weirton has undergone many twists, turns, trials and tribulations. That is until I saw the map of property available from ArcelorMittal Steel Corporation that has been presented to the City. The available property is breathtaking in not only size, but potential opportunity. Several square miles will become available for development--an opportunity not experienced by many municipalities in their history.

In my opinion, the development of Weirton should follow two interrelated paths. The first and most short term goal is development of transportation hub and intermodal downtown area that includes portions of the mill. Weirton's ultimate success will inevitably be tied to its natural advantage—transportation. If we properly plan the transportation infrastructure (rail, roads, and river) the industry that we seek will follow. If industries express interest in locating here we should be as supportive as possible provided the transportation infrastructure is maintained and even strengthened. If a business leaves, the transportation advantage will allow other businesses to take advantage of the features that attracted business in the first place.

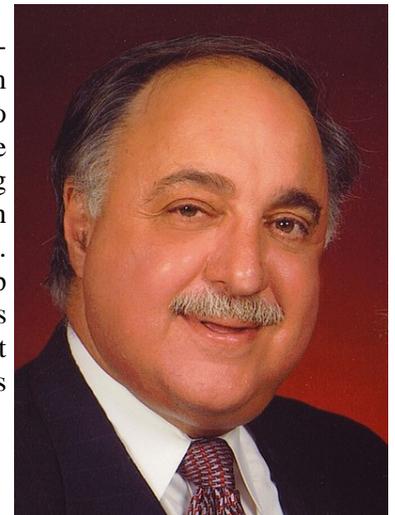
The second developmental path is what I will call upper Weirton. This area includes Weirton Heights and Terrace Heights.

Development in this area should proceed with the Pittsburgh Airport proximity in mind. It is interesting to note that the airport is now as close to Weirton as it is to Pittsburgh. Once again, this location is a tremendous transportation advantage.

There is not one person or entity that can assure our success. It will ultimately take a group of civic, business, and industry leaders working together to achieve the prosperity we seek.

One more thing. If ArcelorMittal wishes to be a long term citizen of Weirton, we need to do everything that is practicable to allow the mill's remaining manufacturing property (tin mill, sheet mill, etc.) to prosper. The way to entice and keep business and good paying jobs is to be business friendly. It works almost every time it is tried.

Mark P. Zatezalo
Chairman
Weirton Redevelopment Authority



BHJ WEBSITE IS MORE INTERACTIVE IN 2008

Shawn Price, BHJ's senior technical engineer says that in 2008 the agency's website will be reinvented with a little more interactivity. The first step was to take the 2006 traffic counts and make them interactive. Using technology from Google, the traffic counts are now mapped to specific locations in the three county areas. The general location link has an Average Daily Traffic count on it, followed by a PDF file of a more detailed study.

The 2007 counts are being finalized and will be available in the coming months. On the top right hand side of the site you will see a calendar of events. When the calendar dates are highlighted there is information to view. Once you click on the date a more detailed listing will come up with further information, whether you are looking for a meeting location or time, or directions to BHJ's office.

Stay tuned for further information at www.bhjmpc.org.

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CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

BY GARY R. FOLDEN

First, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for your support and confidence in my abilities by electing me to serve as the 2008 BHJ Chair. I will do my best to live up to those expectations.



The Commission has many major issues on which it must focus its attention. Of those issues, the most important continues to be the push to implement the recommendations of the Bridge Study Committee. It is extremely important that each and every political entity garner the support of their Federal and state legislators to provide the necessary funding to see these recommendations to fruition. The Ohio Department of Transportation has made it known that the Fort Steuben Bridge is scheduled for demolition in 2009 and the West Virginia Department of Transportation indicates that the Market Street Bridge does not have much time remaining on its life span. This puts our area in a very precarious position. The loss of the Ft. Steuben Bridge will have a serious impact on the Valley's transportation system; and without improvements to the accesses to the Veteran's Bridge, that impact will be devastating. Your influence is needed to help BHJ successfully lobby for funding to upgrade the Veteran's Bridge accesses on both sides of the river. It is never too early to begin lobbying your congressmen for their help.

A second major transportation issue for our area is the U.S. Route 22 Corridor from Pittsburgh, PA to Columbus, OH. Even though that project is just beginning to appear on the extended studies, we need to keep that vital project on the radar screen. After all, we all know how quickly 20 years pass and the need for the improvements will be upon us before we realize it.

Another vital issue facing the constituents of the tri-county area is the need to foster a culture that encourages entrepreneurship throughout the area. I believe that smaller businesses are our future and we need to support the local efforts that are taking place at BHJ and at Progress Alliance to bring this issue to the forefront. While we cannot stop trying to attract the larger businesses, we need to realize that the local business person constitutes a vast majority of the commercial ventures in our area. If you are called upon to assist with any of these programs, I encourage you to give whatever time you can spare.

One of the duties that I feel is incumbent upon the BHJ Chairman is to accompany the Executive Director to meetings with our legislators. With that in mind, Dr. John Brown and I have met with Ohio State Senator Charlie Wilson and Ohio State Representative John Domenick to discuss the vital issues with them. We have requested their support in the State House of our local funding needs. I encourage you to make contact with your legislators and Dr. Brown and I will be happy to meet with them and discuss the needs of the BHJ area.

I look forward to, again, working with each of you to promote the BHJ agenda in the tri-county region.

.....Continued from page 1—2008 Organizational Meeting

with the proposed demolition of the Fort Steuben Bridge in 2009 are just two issues BHJ is working with local officials to resolve.

In addition, over the past year, BHJ staff has worked with Wilbur Smith Associates (Columbus, OH) on the development of a Jefferson County Regional Transit Study. Staff is currently following through on the consultant's suggestion to create the new position of mobility manager who will coordinate this effort on a long-term basis for the tri-county area.

And, although transportation makes up more than half of BHJ's budget, there are even more challenges ahead with various water and sewer projects in Brooke and Hancock counties. There are grants to be sought for brownfield projects, and the development of a regional cluster analysis is being coordinated with Brooke and Hancock counties, the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle, Progress Alliance and the State of West Virginia.

The BHJ staff is dedicated to facing these challenges and achieving these goals.

COMMUNITY PROFILE - STEUBENVILLE, OHIO

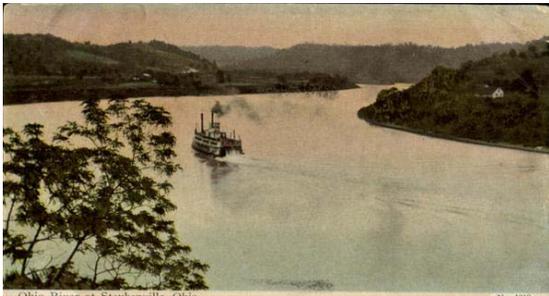
All along the Ohio River are towns, cities and villages that have so much history and have played such a big part of making this Nation what it is. Steubenville is no exception.

Centered in a valley of the Seven Ranges with fertile soil, Steubenville was founded on the remains of Fort Steuben (destroyed by fire in 1790) by Bezallem Wells and James Ross in 1797. The first sale of town lots was on August 25 that year. Interestingly enough, Mr. Ross never actually resided in the town; his interests were basically real estate. Mr. Wells, on the other hand, lived here and was quite the entrepreneur. In the early 1800s, he began to diversify his business interests, and by 1815, he was instrumental in establishing a woolen mill. The three-story high building was approximately 100 feet long and employed an estimated fifty men, thirty women and forty children until it closed in 1819. The first bank was also established by Mr. Wells.



Fourth Street

By the late 1840s, Steubenville was home to 7,000. There were eleven churches, five woolen mills, two glass factories, a paper mill and an iron foundry. There were two private schools by 1846—one for boys and one for girls.



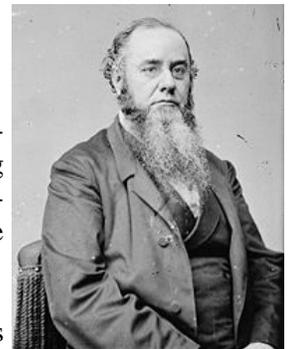
The 19th century saw the rise of steamboat trade with the construction of the *Bezallem Wells* in 1819-1820. The city attracted craftsmen and entrepreneurs in river trade. Another major industry was beer brewing with the first one established in 1815. By the 1870s, one brewery produced more than two thousand barrels of beer annually. The beer was aged in cellars dug more than one hundred feet into the sides of the hills that surround the town. The life of the breweries was threatened in 1908 when Jefferson County became a dry county. Local brewers did, however, continue to sell the alcohol to nearby counties, but then faced additional financial hardships when the eighty bars in town were forced to close. The breweries were closed for good with the passing of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919.

In 1879, the Steubenville Pottery was founded by 25 citizens with \$25,000 worth of stock. Like many china companies, the company did not mark their name on the dinnerware. The pottery closed its door with its last firing on December 15, 1959 and sold its moulds to Canonsburg Pottery. Collectors can still purchase the pottery through dealers and on-line. This very pretty leaf design cup and plate to the right was manufactured by Steubenville Pottery and called Woodfield. This is one of two of the most recognized Steubenville lines



R. Fingers

Steubenville is the county seat for Jefferson County and has many historical sites and buildings. Union Cemetery opened in 1854 and is the final resting place for many of the founding fathers. The Jefferson County Courthouse was built in 1874 and a statue of Edwin McMasters Stanton, Steubenville native and Secretary of War under President Lincoln, graces the front lawn.



Edwin Stanton



Jimmy
"The Greek"

Other notable Steubenville residents include Dean Martin, Dimetrios Georgios Synodinos aka Jimmy "The Greek" Snyder (sports commentator and Las Vegas bookie) and Roland (Rollie) Glen Fingers (former relief pitcher in Major League Baseball). In 1946, the electric pizzelle iron was invented by Charles "Chip" DeMarco, another Steubenville native.

And, although it wasn't invented here or by a Steubenville native, the Westinghouse Air Brake (railroad brake) was tested here first in 1900.

The citizens of Steubenville have a rich heritage and are proud to say they live here.

NINTH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

The Serbian-American Cultural Center in Weirton, WV was the site for the ninth annual awards dinner on September 19. The format for this year's event was changed to be less formal rather than a business meeting. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful buffet and a time of casual conversation thanks to the sponsorship of Chase Bank, Hancock County Savings, Main Street Bank and WesBanco.

The highlight of the evening was, of course, the presentation of awards. This year's awardees were all especially deserving and have contributed so much to make the tri-county region a better place.

The Public Service Award was presented to **Dave France** (then mayor of the Village of Wintersville) by Bob Laukert. Dave has been involved in public service for many years and is a member of several organizations that work toward furthering economic growth in the region such as BHJ.



In his local community, he is an active participant in the Thunder of the Valley Fireworks Festival Committee as well as the Wintersville Betterment Committee. In addition, he is a member of the Scenic Valley Trail Committee whose goal is to develop walking trails within the Village.

This former member of the U.S. Navy resides in Wintersville with his wife of 33 years, Chris.

Ruby Greathouse presented the Special Recognition Award to Brooke County Sheriff Richard Ferguson. In nominating him, Ms. Greathouse said that from a very young age, Sheriff Ferguson has dedicated his life to serving others. At just 23, he was elected constable and served from 1971 to 1977 with his main interest becoming



drug enforcement. Being elected sheriff in 1977 afforded him the opportunity to speak to youth groups, schools and community organizations to help educate them about the adversity of drug usage.

Sheriff Ferguson is active in community clubs and is an active member of his church. He and his wife, Pam, are the parents of three sons and grandparents to four—Josh, Brianna, Ben and Hannah.

The public recognizes him for his outstanding dedication to the citizens of Brooke County. His family credits him with that same dedicating saying that his “love, respect, patience and kindness has always made him a leader at home.”

George Hines - a name synonymous with volunteer in Hancock County—was presented the 2007 Volunteer Award by Chuck Svokas. Doing for others has been a way of life for George. As a young boy, you would find him helping families and local businesses move their possessions in and out during



the nearly annual flooding in New Cumberland. His desire to help others has continued all his life. Since its inception in 1994, he has been the sole caretaker of New Cumberland's Pride Park where he mows the grass, landscapes and decorates for major holidays and community events.

In addition he is the volunteer director of “Keep New Cumberland Beautiful.” He is the community service director for the City and coordinates both the Adopt-A-Highway and Adopt-A-Spot campaigns. He directs the three-month long Great American Clean-up Program.

One of his greatest successes is the establishment of a living history museum in the halls of the former New Cumberland High School. He also co-authored a book about the history of Hancock County.

He and his wife, Milli, reside in New Cumberland.

PHOTOS FROM THE DINNER



Dave & Chris France



*Pam & Richard Ferguson
Walter & Edith Ferguson*



George & Milli Hines



Enjoying the Evening



*George Hines, Richard Ferguson,
Dave France*



Registration

March 4	BHJ Executive Committee	Noon
March 21	Good Friday—BHJ Office Closed	
March 26	Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Full Commission	10:30 a.m. Noon
April 1	BHJ Executive Committee	Noon
May 6	BHJ Executive Committee	Noon
May 9	BHJ Open House—Tentative	
May 26	Memorial Day—BHJ Office Closed	
May 28	Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Full Commission	10:30 a.m. Noon



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Related Web Sites

Appalachian Regional Commission
www.arc.gov

Brooke County Economic Development Authority
www.brookewv.org

Brooke Pioneer Trail Assoc. Inc
www.brookepioneertrail.org

**Business Development Corporation of the
Northern Panhandle**
www.bhbdc.org

CHANGE, Inc.
www.changeinc.org

City of Steubenville
www.ci.steubenville.oh.us

Hancock County Convention and Visitors Bureau
www.hancockcvb.com

Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce
www.jeffersoncountychamber.com

Ohio Department of Transportation
www.dot.state.oh.us

Progress Alliance
www.progressalliance.com

State of Ohio Government Information
www.state.oh.us

State of West Virginia Government Info.
www.state.wv.us

State Route 2 & Interstate 68 Authority
www.route2andi68.com

U.S. Census Bureau
www.census.gov

U.S. Department of Transportation
www.dot.gov

U.S. Economic Development
www.commerce.gov

Village of Wintersville
www.wintersville.net

Weirton Chamber of Commerce
www.weirtonchamber.com

West Virginia Department of Transportation
www.wvdot.com

West Virginia Development Office
www.wvdo.org