



REGIONAL REVIEW

Volume 14, Issue 1

Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson
Metropolitan Planning Commission

Winter 2013

MARVIN SIX IS ELECTED 2013 CHAIRMAN AT BHJ ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

The BHJ Full Commission met on Wednesday, January 23, 2013 to hold its annual organizational meeting and election of officers.

Mr. Marvin Six, a resident of Hancock County and assistant director of the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC) will take the helm as BHJ chairman for 2013. Dr. Thomas Graham, the 2012 chairman, was



Dr. Graham (l) passes the gavel to Marvin Six (r)

elected vice-chairman for the coming year. The secretary is The Honorable Sue Simonetti, mayor of the City of Wellsburg. Tom Timmons, who is the City of Steubenville's representative to the BHJ Full Commission, was re-elected treasurer.

Mr. Six announced his appointments to the Executive Finance Committees.

Representing Jefferson County will be the mayors of Steubenville and Richmond, Dominic Mucci and Harry Thomas. Charlie Mitchell and Jesse Mestrovic will represent Hancock County. Mark Henne, city manager for the City of Wellsburg, is Brooke County's representative. The Honorable Jay Eisenhower from the Town of Bethany was named the At-large appointee. Rounding out the Executive Committee members are one com-

missioner from each of the three counties.

Mr. Six also named his appointments to the Finance Committee. Those serving will be Jay Eisenhower, Dr. Tom Graham; Mark Henne, Dom Mucci and Tom Timmons.

Prior to the Full Commission meeting, the Technical Advisory Com-

mittee (TAC) met and re-elected Bob Laukert representing the Village of Wintersville as chairman. Mike Dolak, City of Steubenville engineer, was again voted vice-chairman.



Bob Laukert (l) and Mike Dolak (r)

The TAC and Full Commission meet the third Wednesday in January, March, May, September and November. The Full Commission meetings begin at noon and are open to the public.

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**BHJ METROPOLITAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
OFFICERS—2013**

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Thomas Graham, Vice Chairman
Sue Simonetti, Secretary
Tom Timmons, Treasurer

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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

Walk into our front office and you can see photo frames which cover BHJ's accomplishments and hopes. For our visiting customers, they celebrate BHJ's work while to BHJ staff they're a constant reminder of milestones and partnerships. The milestones include the following work.

- 2006** Prepared and administered US Economic Development Grant for side work at the Weirton State Office Building
- 2007** Financial participation and administration of Unionport Pedestrian Bridge in Jefferson County
- 2008** Prepared and administered block grant for Lazars Lane Sewer Project
- 2009** Financial participation and administration of Alexander Street Resurfacing Project in Toronto, Ohio
- 2010** Prepared and administered Safe Routes to School Project in Follansbee, West Virginia
- 2011** Prepared grant and request for Washington Street Rehabilitation in Steubenville, Ohio



While these projects are significant community investments and, in many cases, years of partnership building, the BHJ Full Commission and Technical Advisory Committee have always been the guiding rudder to these successes. They confirm priorities. They bring history and experience to the table. They communicate and translate. So, when BHJ's new leadership was elected in late January, the moment was more than ceremonial. It reset our front line. It determined the face of BHJ. Congratulations to our newly elected leaders. Your donation of time and experience is valued. Our lead *Regional Review* article ("Marvin Six is Elected 2013 Chairman at Organizational Meeting"), is a timely introduction to these new officers.

Other articles include the discussion of traffic roundabouts. In the changing world of transportation design, "roundabouts" are the new trend. They've proven to reduce injury crashes by 76%, fatalities by 90% and overall crashes by 35%. A roundabout could be in Steubenville's Lovers Lane near future. In the article "Commuting to Work Dave's Way," you'll read how a BHJ staffer commutes to work with a low carbon footprint. In "Jefferson County Brownfield Program", you'll read how the Jefferson County Regional Planning Commission has initiated the recovery of mothballed commercial-industrial properties.

John C. Brown
Executive Director

ROUNABOUT CONSIDERED FOR LOVERS LANE/MALL AREA

The City of Steubenville is currently looking at Lovers Lane at the entrance of the Fort Steuben Mall in Steubenville as a possible site for a Roundabout. At the January 23 meeting of the BHJ Full Commission, Mike Paprocki, BHJ transportation study director said that area is an excellent example of where a Roundabout would be beneficial. If the City decides to move forward, the project would be eligible for 100% Federal funding.

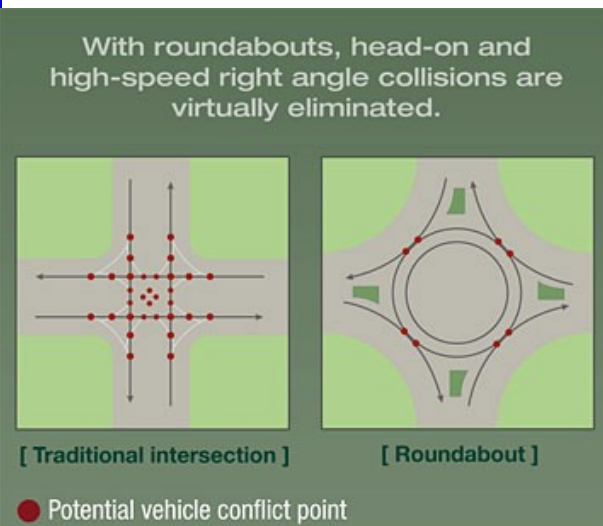
Although Roundabouts as an intersection control are in common use throughout the world, it's only been in recent years they've gained acceptance and begun to be used in the United States. What exactly is a Roundabout? How is it beneficial? The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (Columbus, OH) provides an excellent source of understanding the concept on their website www.morpc.org.

A roundabout is a one-way, circular intersection in which traffic flows around a center island. Roundabouts are designed to meet the needs of all roadway users, such as drivers, pedestrians, pedestrians with disabilities, and bicyclists. Because roundabout traffic enters or exits only through right turns, the occurrence of severe crashes is substantially reduced. Slower speeds and fewer stops and starts result in less traffic noise. Since traffic is continuously moving, air pollution and fuel use decrease as well. Roundabouts are energy efficient and easier to maintain due to the lack of traffic signals.



Benefits of Roundabouts

- **Safety:** Modern roundabouts, compared to "traditional" traffic signal intersections, have been proven to reduce injury crashes by 76%, fatalities by 90%, and overall crashes by 35% (source: FHWA brochure, "[Roundabouts: A Safer Choice](#)"). This is mainly because of the lower speeds at roundabouts compared to traffic signal intersections. Crashes at roundabouts are typically less severe.



- **Improved traffic flow:** Roundabouts allow traffic to flow continuously through intersections, alleviating congestion.

- **Better solution for complex intersections:** Roundabouts can be constructed at intersections with unusual geometry, such as 5-legged intersections or where two roads intersect at sharp angles. Signalizing these types of intersections is often difficult.

Fewer conflict points: Compared to a typical traffic signal intersection, a roundabout has fewer conflict points where crashes can potentially occur.

COMMUTING TO WORK DAVE'S WAY

Every morning people get into their personal vehicles or take the bus for their morning commute to work or school. In good weather, you'll see some of those commuters on their motorcycles. And along Sunset Blvd. in Steubenville on most mornings—winter, spring summer or fall—you will see one man on his bike. Dave Snelting, BHJ's transportation engineer, has been commuting to and from work on his bike for the past six years.

Why does he do it? Recently Dave and Dr. Brown (BHJ executive director) discussed that as well as what it takes to travel by bike and also the advantages.

What equipment do you need to be a bike commuter?

Obviously, to begin with you need a bicycle in good condition. A bicycle that allows you to sit upright is preferred. I have one that is known as a "Hybrid" bicycle which is a cross between a road bike and a trail bike. It has larger tires than a road bike and less aggressive tread than a trail bike. In our area, a 10 speed or higher geared bicycle will help make the hill climbs easier. That said, I find that I only use about 4 gears on my commutes. In addition to the bicycle, there are some pieces of equipment that I consider essential. You want to be visible especially in an area where motorists don't expect to see bicyclists such as ours. So I have a safety vest (the type that highway workers use with the reflective stripes). To ride safe, a bike helmet will save your brain if you should wipe out. And a rearview mirror allows you to see behind you without having to twist your neck and take your eyes off of what's ahead. I tried one of the mirrors attached to my helmet but I prefer one mounted to the handlebar. Regarding clothing, you don't need to get real fancy although thermal leg tights and shorts that are made for bicycling will make the ride more comfortable especially in the colder weather. A good pair of vented goggles will help keep the eyes from watering in the colder weather.

How fit do you have to be to commute by bike?

You will get fit by commuting over time. If you're a couch potato and want to start commuting by bike, start out slow, maybe doing it once a week and then gradually work up to doing it every day. Initially, you may have to stop, catch your breath and rest your body. You need to remember to plan extra time into your commute and not be in a hurry. If you get in a hurry, that's when mistakes can happen.

Why are you a bike commuter?

I started bicycling mainly to get into better physical condition. I am a Boy Scout leader and our Troop does a lot of physical activities including backpacking which can be very physically demanding. The bicycle commute "kills two birds with one stone". I already need to take time to commute to and from work. I live fairly close to downtown so it doesn't take much additional time to commute by bicycle and it helps me get and stay in better physical condition while doing it.

What % of the time do you commute by bike?

When I first started, I commuted by bicycle maybe 30 percent of the time. Now, I commute over 70 percent of the time. Severe weather and meetings away from the office, where I need to drive a car, are the only reasons I don't commute by bicycle.

How many miles a day do you commute and how many miles a year do you commute?

Depending on the route I take the round trip commute is between 4 and 5 miles. I do try to take different routes from time to time just to change to the scenery. I put over 600 miles on my bicycle commuting to and from work last year.

Do you see other bike commuters out there or are you the only one?

From time to time I'll see another biker on the road. I think the interest may be on the rise. It seems to me that more people are conscious of their health and are looking for ways to stay in shape without consuming a lot of time.

BE HEALTHIER, WEALTHIER & HAVE A BETTER STANDARD OF LIVING

(Statistical information was obtained from various Internet websites including www.governing.com and businessinsider.com.)

Although bicycling is not the usual method of commuting to work in the BHJ region, it is gaining popularity in other parts of Ohio such as the Columbus area. A survey by the U.S. census for the years 2006-10 estimated that 3,157 people in Franklin County — or about 0.5 percent of commuters — were getting to and from work by bicycle. It is believed that those efforts to encourage bike commuting have probably increased the number since, according to officials. Nationwide, more than 777,000 people rode bicycles as their primary means of traveling to work last year, according to the Census Bureau's 2011 American Community Survey.

The benefits of biking are numerous. **It is vastly cheaper than driving** Due to rising fuel costs and tire upkeep, the cost of owning a car increased nearly 2 percent in 2012 to \$8,946, according to AAA. It costs just \$308 per year to keep bikes in shape—nearly 30 times less than cars, according to the [Sierra Club](#): "If American drivers were to make just one four-mile round trip each week with a bicycle instead of a car, they would save nearly 2 billion gallons of gas. At \$4 per gallon, total savings would be \$7.3 billion a year."

It's a free gym on wheels. On average, bicycle commuters lose 13 pounds in their first year of cycling alone.

Uncle Sam will pay you to bike. Since January 2012, cyclist commuters have been entitled to a \$20 per month tax-free reimbursement for bike-related expenses. This applies to workers who bike at least three days per week to the office. Qualifying expenses include bike repairs and storage expenses, according to the [National Center for Transit Research](#).

(Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/13-reasons-you-should-bike-to-work-2012-10#ixzz2KcnSZzaS>)

Ride a Bike to Work for These 4 Health Benefits

- 1. Fitness/Weight Loss**
- 2. Lung Health**
- 3. Improved Coordination**
- 4. Time to Relax**



Dave Snelting, BHJ's transportation engineer doesn't let the cold weather deter him from commuting to work by bicycle.

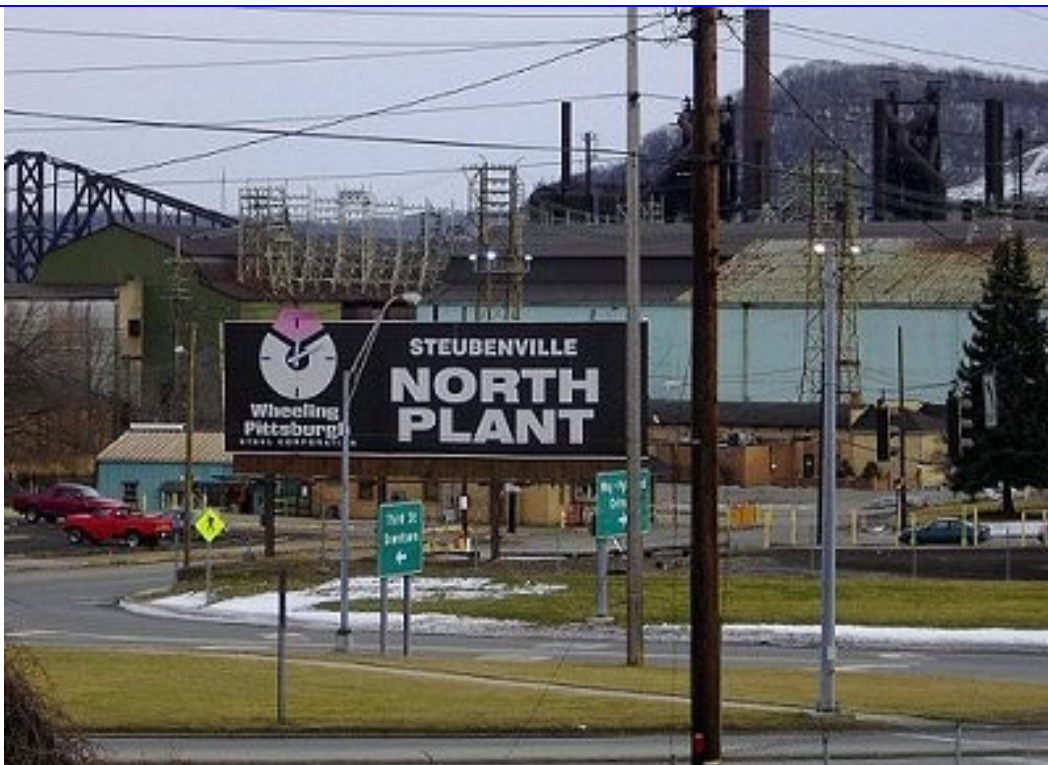


JEFFERSON COUNTY BROWNFIELD PROGRAM

In Jefferson County, the Regional Planning Commission is the agency that works with brownfield projects. Featured in this issue is the history of the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel site located on Third Street and Route 7 in Steubenville. Thanks to Rich Fender, planner for the Regional Planning Commission, who provided the information.

Once a major player in the production of steel, the former Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Steubenville North Plant is now reduced to a scrap yard of empty buildings. It's one of the more noticeable brownfields in Jefferson County.

The Steubenville Planning and Zoning Commission recently agreed to apply for a \$1 million brownfield grant through the Clean Ohio Assistance Fund for asbestos abatement and demolition of the blast furnace. Previously, the Jefferson County Regional Planning Commission paid \$60,000 of the \$80,000 cost for the asbestos assessment through the county's U.S. EPA Brownfield Grant Program. Future plans for the site are under development.



The former Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Company's North Plant in Steubenville, OH. It was later owned by Esmark, Severstal, RG Steel, and finally River Rail Development LLC.



No. 1 Blast Furnace in Steubenville, which produced iron from 1899 (when it was constructed by the Labelle Iron Works) until 2005. When it was idled it was one of the oldest blast furnaces in the United States.

.....continued on page 7

THE HISTORY OF THE STEUBENVILLE PLANT

Information for the history of the Steubenville North Plant of Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel was obtained from various sources including "Steubenville Historic Contexts and Resource Evaluation" prepared for the Steubenville Historic Landmarks Commission by Benjamin D. Rickey & Co., as well as other Internet sites.

The story begins in 1856 when the Frazier, Kilgore & Co. erected a rolling mill known as the Jefferson Iron Works at the site of the Steubenville North Plant. A rolling mill used metal rollers to form hot iron or steel into such shapes as I-beams or rails. The company was sold in 1859 and in the mid-1880's became known as "The Jefferson." A steel plant was built in 1890 that consisted of one blast furnace with a capacity of 200 tons of pig iron per day and a cut nail factory with a capacity of 8,000 kegs of nails a week.

The LaBelle Iron Works of Wheeling purchased Jefferson Iron Works in 1900 along with a 25-acre tract on the south side of Steubenville. They constructed one of the largest iron and steel plants in the country. In 1901, construction began on an open hearth and six 50-ton furnaces. The same year a sheared plate mill unit, which cut large flat pieces of metal into smaller pieces, was built. The production capacity increased to 400 tons per day per furnace.



By 1915, the mill was one of the nation's top independent steel producers. In 1916 with the onset of war, foreign governments began spending millions of dollars for LaBelle products. By 1919, LaBelle Iron Works had more than \$3.85 million in income.

The auto industry gave the steel industry a boost around 1915. with the demand for sheet steel that was used to make hoods and doors. The City's rail system gave Steubenville easy access to the automobile plants in Detroit making sheet steel a main product of LaBelle Iron Works.

Wheeling Steel Corp. was formed in 1920 when the operations of LaBelle Iron Works, Whitaker-Glessner Company, and Wheeling Steel and Iron were combined. In December 1968, Pittsburgh Steel Company was merged into Wheeling Steel Corporation to form Wheeling-Pitt.

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Commission

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WINTER CALENDAR

<i>February 18</i>	<i>President's Day—Office Closed</i>	
<i>March 4</i>	<i>Executive Committee Meeting</i>	12:00
<i>March 20</i>	<i>Brooke-Hancock Regional Council @ WesBanco, 333 Penco Road, Weirton</i>	4:30
<i>March 27</i>	<i>Technical Advisory Committee Full Commission</i>	10:30 12:00
<i>March 29</i>	<i>Good Friday—Office Closed</i>	
<i>April 1</i>	<i>Executive Committee Meeting</i>	12:00
<i>May 6</i>	<i>Executive Committee Meeting</i>	12:00

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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.cityofsteubenville.us

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.ohio.gov

State of West Virginia Government Info.
www.wv.gov

Top of WV Convention and Visitors Bureau
www.topofwv.com

U.S. Census Bureau
www.census.gov

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

U.S. Economic Development Administration
www.commerce.gov

Village of Wintersville
www.wintersville.net

Weirton Area Port Authority
www.wapainc.org

Weirton Chamber of Commerce
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West Virginia Department of Transportation
www.transportation.wv.gov

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