

ANNUAL REPORT

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FOUNTAIN SQUARE PARK PLANS PROGRESS

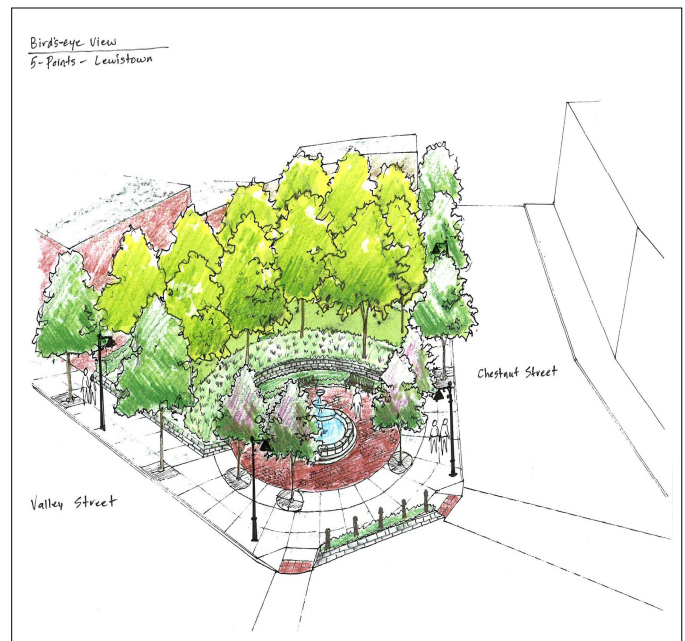
The plans for Fountain Square Park at the Five Points intersection unveiled to the public last summer continue to progress. These base improvements are intended to provide needed green space at the entrance into the Neighborhood and act as an anchor for the eastern edge of the downtown. The array of greenery will serve as a backdrop for the proposed central feature—a Fountain “of landmark size and visual interest for downtown” as described in the Charter Plan for Downtown Lewistown (2000).

A professional design consultant, the SEDA-COG Community Resource Center, has engaged the public in the development of the current design and has worked with various agencies, contractors, engineers, estimators, and other professionals to take the ideas and opinions of town and Neighborhood leaders to design a community space that fits the boundaries of the property, meets the objectives set forth by the Site Committee, and is in-line with the budget proscribed. Currently, the plans are being reviewed by the various regulatory bodies including PENNDOT, Planning Commissions, and UNI-TEC, the Borough’s Consulting Engineer. Once the reviews have been completed and the project approved, bidding of the state supported project will commence with construction scheduled to be underway this fall.

The Fountain, to be installed in the Park after these base improvements are completed, is being selected by a Committee of representative residents and leaders based on a number of considerations. First, the Committee is analyzing the sizing of fountains to remain true to the vision of a feature of “landmark size and visual interest”, the type of materials that endure colder weather, a design that accommodates a variety of amenities, ie. lighting, site enhancements, etc. and assumes a reasonable project timetable and budget. This component of the Park design is being coordinated by the Neighborhood Image & Identity Committee with selection of the desired fountain design expected by late summer.

This Project is financed in part by a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community & Economic Development, a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and support from local businesses, organizations and property owners.

In addition to this monetary support, the in-kind volunteer efforts of Directors, Committee members, community leaders and private individuals have been invaluable in advancing both these investments and actions set forth in the Charter Plan for Downtown Lewistown and the Five Points/East End Neighborhood Strategy in combination with efforts to improve the region as a whole.



Birds Eye View Image of Proposed Fountain Square Park

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIONS HIGHLIGHTED

Residents and community leaders have continually been working to implement the collective vision for the designated Five Points/East End Neighborhood Elm Street area. The Neighborhood encompasses properties east of Dorcas Street to Walnut Street with the southern edge following Rec Park. The Neighborhood also encompasses properties on the north side of East Third Street to North Main Street. The Neighborhood also includes the site of the former Mann Edge Tool Company.

Neighborhood residents and community leaders reinforced the Neighborhood and Downtown image by incorporating it into the Fountain Square Park Development site. Other committees have led specific projects and opportunities based upon the feedback of resident responses received through the Annual Quality of Life survey of the Neighborhood conducted each fall. In an attempt to reach

Neighborhood residents and property owners, a communications network is in place to engage residents and help them become more involved. Additionally, the Residential Reinvestment Program has begun targeting improvements to owners of residential or mixed-use properties that are "seeking to preserve and maintain the historic qualities and to foster image-making improvements to all designated/awarded residential properties". The Program is intended to work with other funding sources to leverage coordinated improvement to meet four specific objectives: Reduce or eliminate vacancies in the Neighborhood and promote the adaptive conversion to single family ownership; Bring substandard building conditions into compliance with basic health, safety, and building codes and enhance the visual appeal of the Neighborhood; Facilitate compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements; and Assist with the preservation of historic residential and mixed-use buildings and assure such buildings are rehabilitated in an appropriate manner. A maximum \$5,000 Residential Reinvestment Reimbursement Grant may be available for projects costing \$10,000 or more. All Residential Reinvestment Grant reimbursements must be matched. Some applicants may be eligible for a reduced matching requirement based upon applicable income guidelines. (See the specific breakout of the Program elsewhere in this Report).

The Neighborhood Clean, Safe & Green Committee has actively worked with the Mifflin County Communities That Care Prevention Board, and the Mifflin County Regional Police Department to reconstitute the Five Points/East End Neighborhood Community Watch Program. Mifflin County Communities That Care has engaged a Community Watch Coordinator, Chuck Dicken, to actively recruit new and reconstitute inactive Neighborhood Watch Groups throughout the County. In a demonstration of further cooperation, the Mifflin County Housing Authority hosts the Five Points/East End Neighborhood Community Watch Group the second Thursday of the month at Authority owned and managed Burgard Apartments, at 120 Chestnut Street. Additionally, the Clean, Safe & Green Committee has overseen maintenance and clean-up projects in the Neighborhood.

The Neighbors & Economy Committee has been active in working to enhance the Downtown Farmers Market detailed elsewhere in this Report. Additionally, the Neighborhood Coordinator is working with residents and property owners on a grass roots level to plan and develop improvements that will be of benefit to both the property owner and the Neighborhood. Through this one-on-one interaction, the Coordinator has enlisted the support of the Borough Codes Officer, in one example, to address needed improvements to subject properties in the Neighborhood and community.

Residents and community supporters are invited to take an active role in leading the effort through participation in the four established Committees implementing the Neighborhood strategy. These are listed below with their respective Committee Chair.

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| Image & Identity Committee | – Rhonda Walters, Chair |
| Neighbors & Economy Committee | – Jim Tunall, Chair |
| Character & Design Committee | – Bill Gomes, Chair |
| Clean, Safe & Green Committee | – Jim Zubler, (Interim Chair) Ron Napikoski, Vice Chair—Safety Geoff Burke, Vice Chair—Green |

Call the Downtown Lewistown, Inc.-Five Points/East End Neighborhood Office at 248-9606 for more information.



DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET DEVELOPMENTS

A collaborative partnership of several organizations are implementing a set of actions designed to enhance and promote the Downtown Farmers Market. Beginning in June, the Lewistown Ministerial Association is assuming sponsorship of musical entertainment on Thursdays during Market. RB Powell & Bridget Allen, two familiar names in the local music scene are booking these acoustic performances on behalf of the Ministerial Association. Additionally, DLI, the Juniata River Valley Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, Mifflin County Human Services & Planning & Development Departments worked with Community Partnerships RC&D to prepare an application to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funding the cost of installing electronic balance transfer machines and promoting Farmers Markets in the region. With the implementation of these machines, PA Access Cards, and bank debit cards will be able to be utilized for purchases with an expected boost in overall sales of farm produce. Finally, this consortium of organizations is discussing the possibility of building a new structure or retrofitting an existing structure in the downtown or Neighborhood to serve as a new home for the Farmers Market. In a related development, Lewistown Borough has secured bids to replace deteriorated or missing sections of the South Mall roof structure with work to commence later this spring. Discussions with the Tri-County Farmers Market have indicated an interest and excitement for these planned enhancements.

DOWNTOWN THEATRE DEVELOPMENTS

During this past spring, the Miller Theatre invested in 3D technology bringing the latest in movie making upgrades to this downtown entertainment venue..

DLI continued work with the Friends of the Embassy Theatre to secure funding and prepare bid documents for a rehabilitation project to seal the exterior of the 1927 Theatre building. Aided by an \$85,000 Keystone Preservation grant from the PA Historical & Museum Commission, a \$246,000 earmark from Congressman Peterson through the Save America's Treasures Program, and a \$25,000 Community Development Block Grant allocation from Lewistown Borough, the Friends are working to secure additional matching local funding in order to maximize the rehabilitation effort. The Friends have engaged the services of a local Architect, Denson Groenendaal & Associates, whose work also included a study of interior finishes and treatments. This rehabilitation work is supported by a Historic Structures Report completed previously by the SEDA-COG Community Resource Center and Architect Ray Goodman, outlining needed phased improvements to rehabilitate the structure for adaptive reuse.

Once the rehabilitation plan, detailing improvements to the National Register Historic Structure, has been approved by these regulatory bodies the Friends will be in a position to let the project for bid later this summer.

RESIDENTIAL REINVESTMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Through a \$50,000 allocation of Residential Reinvestment funds from the PA Department of Community & Economic Development, residents are eligible for direct reimbursement grant assistance to fund improvements to residential and mixed-use properties in the designated Elm Street Five Points/East End Neighborhood. Property owners are eligible for up to \$5,000 in assistance for qualified projects that meet four specific rehabilitation objectives: 1) Reduce or eliminate vacancies, encourage persons to remain in the Neighborhood, and promote the adaptive conversion to single-family ownership; 2) bring substandard building conditions into compliance with basic health, safety, and building codes and enhance the visual appeal of the Neighborhood; 3) facilitate compliance with federal; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements; and 4) assist with the preservation of historic residential and mixed-use buildings and assure that such buildings are rehabilitated in an appropriate manner. In all cases, an exterior inspection identifying code compliance items and objectives will be performed with the completed project having to meet exterior code approval. All Residential Reinvestment Grant Projects must be matched. Some applicants may be eligible for a reduced matching requirement based upon applicable income guidelines.

Since the Program was launched, five properties have received reimbursement grant commitments with the minimum amount allocated of \$756 to a maximum amount allocated of \$4,217 to date. The total amount of commitments as of May 27, 2010 stands at \$10,135.00.

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DOWNTOWN STEWARDSHIP

The Mifflin County Historical Society, DLI and the Juniata River Valley Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau continued the program to recognize owners of significant historical properties and the care they have taken to maintain and preserve landmark buildings. Each owner was presented with plaques, manufactured by local entrepreneur Bryson Wagner of Bryson's Stuff, representative of the site's contribution to the heritage of Mifflin County, and the date of the property's significance. This year the Committee and Society recognized the 1917 Fosnot-Wilson Building built by quality Lewistown builders W.D. Steinbach Sons currently housing Wilson's Gifts & Jewelry, the 1936 Lewistown Municipal Building, built by the depression-era Public Works Administration, the 1883 First Baptist Church Building with the congregation first organized in 1840, and the 1949 Miller Theatre on Market Street. With the addition of these four buildings, the properties so honored now numbers twenty-seven with additional sites slated for recognition this summer.



ANNUAL MEETING HELD

The Downtown Lewistown, Inc. Board of Directors held their Annual Meeting today electing Officers & Directors for the 2010-2011 year in addition to a review of the past year of Downtown and Neighborhood Development, synopsis of programs, projects and services advanced during the past year and a summary of various business developments and improvements that occurred in the downtown and Five Points/East End Neighborhood. A listing of the current Officers and Directors is provided on page 1.

DOWNTOWN-NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS UPDATE

During the past year a proposal to redevelop a portion of the former Mann Edge Tool Company site for elderly housing was led by the Mifflin County Industrial Development Corporation partnering with the SEDA-COG Housing Development Corporation. The \$5 million project leveraged local investment of \$100,000 from both Lewistown Borough and Mifflin County to support the construction of 31 units of elderly housing at the corner of Water & South Dorcas Streets. With construction scheduled to begin late 2011, this former Brownfield location will see new life as residential living quarters tagged as Mann Edge Terrace, in recognition of its past heritage and unique location overlooking Kishacoquillas Creek.

Michele's opened for business on North Dorcas Street, Zimmie's Restaurant opened on South Main Street and American Home Patient opened in former vacant space on South Plaza Drive. Mid-Penn Legal Services expanded their offices in the 3 West Monument Square Building while Joyner Sportsmedicine Institute, The Bears Den, Gold Star Pub, Mel & Dotty's Place, and Hotel Lewistown ceased operations during the past year.

DLI continued business development services to private business owners by offering direct assistance on a one to one basis on a wide range of issues/concerns including expanding product offerings, exploring new business opportunities, information regarding current programs and trends, and review of trade area and customer base research. DLI continued maintenance of available commercial property listings, web presence and exploration of funding opportunities and programs to address reinvestment options in the Downtown and adjacent Neighborhood. DLI works with MCIDC to assist with retention and expansion opportunities for existing businesses and maintains a strong working relationship with the Juniata River Valley Chamber of Commerce & Visitor's Bureau to actively improve the quality of life for employees and residents of the Juniata Valley