Guidance for Historic Preservation Planning

The Municipalities Planning Code was revised in 2000 and included a provision for historic preservation planning. The Bureau for Historic Preservation (BHP) has developed guidance for Historic Preservation Planning to provide a framework for what constitutes a comprehensive historic preservation plan.

Purpose: The Historic Preservation Plan provides local units of government a working document to identify historic and cultural resources in the county or municipality; to consider the issues, problems and opportunities associated with those resources; to explore the possibility of county-wide and regional approaches to management of important resources; and to develop goals, policies, and strategies for their appropriate use, conservation, preservation and protection that are consistent with those established for other comprehensive plan elements.

Planning Process: The character and historic resources of each county varies, therefore the process in developing a Plan for Historic Preservation will depend upon the particular needs of the county or municipality. However there are some common steps that should be followed in the planning process:

(A) evaluation of the county's or municipality's developmental history;
(B) inventory of existing conditions;
(C) assessment of current and future needs;
(D) articulation of community goals, objectives, and strategies;
(E) implementation program/action plan;
(F) identified funding sources, tools, and methods to implement historic resources plan; and
(G) establishing the legal basis for historic preservation.

The planning process should be guided by public participation that provides a forum for open discussion of preservation issues. Resources for incorporating public participation in the historic preservation planning process are listed in *Planning Resources*.

The planning process should result in the preparation of a Historic Preservation Plan. The plan should include the results of completing items A through F. The Bureau for Historic Preservation is available to review and comment on plans through the planning process.

A. Developmental History:
A narrative of the county's or municipality's development should be prepared. Historic atlases, maps, written histories, and other similar resources should be consulted. The developmental history should address natural resources and the evolution of transportation systems with respect to the role they played in developing the county and its communities. Extant resources associated with the area's development should be identified in the text.

B. Inventory of Existing Conditions:
Where applicable to the county or municipality, the items listed at (1) through (4) below should be identified and inventoried. Maps are strongly recommended for inclusion in the plan to indicate the locations of these resources.

(1) National Register Listed and Eligible Properties: Any designated building, district, site, structure, or object located wholly or partially in the county or municipality that is listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

(2) Significant Historic and Cultural Resources: Any areas or any other resources that are of county-wide or local significance.

    a. Residential Resources. Residential districts, neighborhoods, multifamily dwellings, individual homes, gardens, including examples of locally significant or distinctive building traditions and styles;

    b. Commercial Resources. Commercial districts (e.g., crossroads, downtowns, etc.), marketplaces, and individual buildings (e.g., general stores, offices, etc.);

    c. Industrial Resources. Mills, factories, industrial complexes, mines, etc., as well as locally significant industries and traditional occupations and skills;

    d. Institutional Resources. Institutional districts and individual buildings (e.g., schools, military complexes, churches, etc.);

    e. Transportation Resources. Roadways, bridges, pedestrian ways, footpaths and trails, railroad tracks, structures and buildings, trolleys, streetcars lines and cars or equipment, canals, waterways and landing areas, airports and airfields, gateways;

    f. Rural Resources. Landscapes, farm complexes, crossroad communities, barns, etc., as well as locally significant agricultural practices and traditions; and

    g. Other Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Resources. Community landmarks (natural or man-made), battlegrounds, gardens, parks, views, cemeteries, burial grounds, festival locations and gathering places, etc.). The inventory should also include generalized locations of any archaeological sites identified as significant by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

(3) Critical Areas: Identify any historic areas that are experiencing pressures related to economic decline, growth/sprawl, transportation projects, etc.

(4) Local Programs and Ordinances: Identify any existing local programs or ordinances related to management of historic and cultural resources including: Main Street/Elm Street program, local historic district ordinance, preservation component to local zoning ordinance, redevelopment authority, Heritage Park Region, etc.

The level of the inventory should be based upon the county's or municipality's needs and may be conducted through such means as: windshield survey, professional or technical surveys, formal solicitation of community comment through written surveys and/or public meetings, and input from community groups (such as task forces; historical, archaeological and cultural societies; school groups; etc.).

The Bureau for Historic Preservation maintains CRGIS, a map-based inventory of the historic and archaeological sites and surveys stored in the files of the Bureau for Historic Preservation. Currently there are approximately 20,000 archaeological sites and 113,000 historic properties in the **C**ultural **R**esources **G**eographic **I**nformation **S**ystem. The CRGIS should be consulted to provide a framework for future survey needs. Web access to all of the historic resource data is available to the public. Access to archaeological site locations and detailed site information is restricted and password protected and will be granted to qualified individuals on a need to know basis. CRGIS can be accessed by the link provided in the *Planning Resources* section.

Once an initial inventory has been completed, a determination should be made as to whether further documentation or study of historic, archeological, or cultural resources is appropriate.

C. **Assessment of Current and Future Needs:**
Once the inventory of existing conditions is complete, an analysis should be conducted to determine:

(1) the likelihood that the identified historic/cultural properties are currently, or will be in the future, affected by inappropriate land uses or other human activities and, if so, whether measures already being carried out by local governments or other parties in the county and/or state are adequate to manage or protect the resources;
(2) any historic/cultural resources that are in need of attention by the local government due to encroachment of human activities, unintended land use conflicts or physical disturbance, or rapid physical deterioration;
(3) whether policies or activities recommended in other parts of the county or municipal comprehensive plan will adversely impact the historic/cultural resources;
(4) whether any conflicts, inconsistencies, competing priorities, or opportunities for coordination are evident in the resource management plans of the various local governments in the county.

The results of this analysis should be considered in the identification goals and strategies as well as the development of an implementation program that sets forth an agenda for management of these resources over the planning period.

D. Articulation of Community Goals, Objectives, and Strategies:
This step should include public involvement and coordination with other elements of the comprehensive plan. The intent of this section is to identify goals, objectives, and specific municipal strategies. Recommended goals:

Historic Preservation Goal
Heritage Education Goal
Economic Development Goal
Cultural/Historic Resource Survey Goal
Local Historic Resource Protection Goal
Sustainable Development Goal

E. Implementation Program/Action Plan:
The implementation program should prioritize stated strategies within each goal and set forth projected timeframes for completing projects. This step should also identify responsible parties for accomplishing strategies.

F. Funding Sources, Tools, and Methods to Implement Historic Resources Plan:
A variety of agencies, organizations, foundations, and private funding sources should be identified and consulted to accomplish goals and priority projects to aid in the implementation of the historic preservation plan. The Bureau for Historic Preservation can assist municipalities in identifying appropriate resources to implement comprehensive historic preservation plans.

G. Establishing the Legal Basis for Historic Preservation:
The Historic Preservation Plan should include citations for applicable federal, state, and local laws governing your community's character.

Planning Resources: The following is a partial list of publications and online resources that can assist municipalities with the historic preservation planning process:

Historic Preservation Law

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.html

Pennsylvania History Code
http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/History%20Code%20Title37.pdf

Pennsylvania Historic District Act
http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhp/Community/Historic_District_Act.pdf

Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code
http://mpc.landuselawinpa.com/

Public Participation

Public Participation in Historic Preservation Planning
http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/pad/plancompan/PublicPartic/index.html

Historic Preservation Planning

Historic Preservation Planning Program. National Park Service, Heritage Preservation Services
http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/pad/

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Preservation Planning.
http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/pad/PlngStds/index.htm

Preservation Planning: Ensuring a Future for Our Past. Cultural Resource Management, Vol. 23, No. 7.
http://crm.cr.nps.gov/issue.cfm?volume=23&number=07

Preparing a Historic Preservation Plan. Bradford J. White & Richard J. Roddewig. American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Service, Report Number 450.

Historic Resource Surveys

Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning.
http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb24/

Cultural Resources Geographic Information System
http://crgis.state.pa.us

Local Historic Resource Protection

Historic District Designation in Pennsylvania. Michel R. Lefevre, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.
http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhp/community/07hist-designation.pdf

Smart Growth Tools for Main Streets. National Trust for Historic Preservation.
http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/smart-growth/

Pennsylvania Planning and Programs

Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
http://www.newpa.com/index.aspx

The Pennsylvania Greenways Clearinghouse
http://www.pagreenways.org

DCED – Land Use, News and Highlights
http://www.landuseinpa.com/

The Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program
http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/heritageparks/

Planning Guidance for Archaeological Sites

The purpose of this guidance is to encourage planners to incorporate archaeology into county and municipal comprehensive plans. The document also provides basic language that may be incorporated into planning documents and guidance on identifying areas with a high probability of containing archaeological sites.

Archaeological Sites

Humans first arrived in what is now Pennsylvania approximately 16,000 years ago. Europeans began settling in what would become Pennsylvania in the 17th century; by 1682, William Penn had arrived and established the colony of Pennsylvania. During the 1730s, settlers began entering the Ohio River Valley. Over these thousands of years, humans have left a substantial material record of their lives. The study of this material record forms the basis of **archaeology**, the basic unit of which is the **archaeological site**. The number of archaeological sites identified in Pennsylvania's counties and municipalities varies; however, this variation likely reflects a lack of archaeological research, not a lack of sites. Archaeological sites in Pennsylvania include but are not limited to, locations where prehistoric hunters manufactured stone tools, prehistoric encampments, late prehistoric villages, prehistoric burial mounds, historic iron furnaces, historic taverns, historic fortifications and other military sites, and small late nineteenth/early twentieth century farmsteads.

Archaeological sites, like historic buildings, are considered **cultural resources** and, if they meet eligibility requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), they are **historic properties**. Unlike historic buildings, however, archaeological sites are not always evident to the untrained eye. While some archaeological sites have obvious above ground indicators such as earth mounds, or chimney remnants, most consist of **artifacts** (objects made or modified by humans such as stone tools, pottery, bottle glass) and **features** (post holes, trash pits, stone hearths, human burials, etc.) that are **underground**. There are two types of archaeological sites: prehistoric sites and historic period sites. These different types of sites require different techniques for discovery and treatment.

How do you know if an area contains an archaeological site? The only sure way to know is to have a professional archaeologist **survey**, or sample, the area. In many cases, local archaeological societies or amateur/avocational archaeologists may have information, as well. There are some general criteria you can apply to determine the probability if a location may contain an archaeological site(s) and thus, plan accordingly. Prehistoric (Native American) sites are most commonly located near water sources such as streams, springs, or marshes. Historic (European/African-American) sites are commonly located close to old/historic roads and often are associated with above-ground resources. Both prehistoric and historic sites are generally located on level to gently sloping ground and on well-drained soils. Previous disturbance can also affect a location's potential to contain archaeological sites. For example, road/utility rights-of-way have usually been subjected to heavy disturbance and are not likely to contain intact archaeological deposits. Cultivation, however, does not necessarily destroy archaeological sites and does not, by itself, indicate a low potential area. These criteria, along with others, are often used by archaeologists to create a "predictive model." A predictive model organizes areas by the probability that they will contain archaeological sites. Hiring a professional archaeologist/consultant is an effective way "to foster conditions under which our modern society and our prehistoric and historic resources can exist in productive harmony and fulfill the social, economic,

and other requirements of present and future generations" (NHPA 1966 Section 2(1)]. Hiring a professional may also assist in streamlining the compliance process and ensuring that archaeological resources are being treated according to federal and state laws.

Please note that Pennsylvania's Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS) has a planner level access. With this level of access, planners may register for a password that allows them to receive information concerning archaeological sites within specified project areas. This information does not give specific site locations, but informs if there is a previously-recorded site within the project area. Visit http://crgis.state.pa.us to learn of the necessary qualifications and to apply for a username and password.

While cultural resources work is often completed in response to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, meaning that there is some federal involvement (i.e., federal funds, permits, etc.), it is important to remember that there are also state laws that may need to be complied with in project planning, such as the Pennsylvania History Code (http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/History%20Code%20Title37.pdf).

Key points to remember when considering archaeology in development projects and to ensure compliance with federal and state laws:

- Humans have been in the area now known as Pennsylvania for at least 16,000 years, so the potential for finding evidence of past human activity (i.e., archaeological sites) is generally high.
- Unlike historic buildings, prehistoric archaeological sites often have no above ground components that would indicate their presence; however, historical archaeological sites are often associated with aboveground resources or ruins.
- While factors such as distance to water and/or old roads, slope, soil drainage, and previous disturbance can help prioritize areas of archaeological concern, the only sure way to know whether an area contains archaeological sites is to conduct an archaeological survey.
- To see if a project area contains previously identified site(s), see Pennsylvania's Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS): (http://crgis.state.pa.us). This resource's Planner Level access gives planners the ability to draw a project area and find out if there is an archaeological site within it; however, the precise locational information is restricted.
- If you know or suspect that there is an archaeological site in a project area, or if there is a high probability for an archaeological site in your project area, the most desirable way to preserve it is to avoid it. Full excavation is a last resort because it results in the destruction of the site.
- The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission restricts access to archaeological site locational information, due to the very real danger of looting, trespassing, and vandalism.
- Most archaeology is done in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and regulations implementing that act (36 CFR Part 800). These laws ensure that projects receiving federal funds (CDBG/EIP grants, FDIC loans, etc) or requiring federal permits (e.g., Section 404 of Clean Water Act) take into account effects on archaeological resources.
- In addition to federal laws, there are state laws to consider as well, such as the Pennsylvania History Code.
- If you have any questions please contact the BHP at (717) 787-4363 or (717) 783-8946.