

V  
E  
N  
A  
N  
G  
O



C  
O  
U  
N  
T  
Y

VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
2009 ANNUAL REPORT



## INTRODUCTION

THE VENANGO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION WAS CREATED IN 1961 AND CONSISTED OF A NINE-MEMBER BOARD. IN 2005 THE VCRPC BECAME THE VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CONSISTING OF A FIFTEEN-MEMBER BOARD COMPRISED OF COUNTY RESIDENTS, ELECTED MEMBERS, AND THREE MEMBERS OF THE AREA COGS. ALL MEMBERS ARE APPOINTED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. THE COMMISSION EMPLOYS A STAFF OF FOUR FULL TIME EMPLOYEES TO CARRY OUT THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITIES. THE RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE COUNTYWIDE COMPREHENSIVE AND FUNCTIONAL PLANNING IN THE AREAS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING. THE COMMISSION ALSO COMPILES AND ANALYZES INFORMATION ABOUT COUNTY CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS FOR USE IN EVALUATING PROPOSED ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS AND IN PREPARING STUDIES AND PLANS.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED TO COUNTY AND LOCAL AGENICES ON NUMEROUS MATTERS INCLUDING PLANNING, ZONING, SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT. THE COMMISSION ADMINISTERS THE COUNTY SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE, WHICH REQUIRES THAT PLANS FOR SUBDIVIDING LAND OR ENGAGING IN MAJOR LAND DEVELOPMENT BE REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION. THE PLANNING COMMISSION MAINTAINS A LIBRARY OF PUBLICATIONS AND DATA USED BY THE COMMISSION IN CARRYING OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AND IS MADE AVAILABLE FOR USE BY OTHER AGENICIES AND INDIVIDUALS.

THE VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION COORDINATES ITS EFFORTS WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS. THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SERVE ON THE NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, WHICH INCLUDES REPRESENTATION FROM CLARION, CRAWFORD, ERIE, FOREST, LAWRENCE, MERCER, VENANGO, AND WARREN COUNTIES. THE COMMISSION IS A MEMBER OF BOTH THE PENNSYLVANIA AND AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATIONS. THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ARE GOVERNED BY STATE LAW, PRIMARILY THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE CREATION, FUNDING AND OPERATION OF PLANNING COMMISSIONS AT THE DISCRETION OF EACH MUNICIPAL OR COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

<http://www.co.venango.pa.us/Planning/>





## VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

### ~ MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES ~ 2009

ALLEGHENY TOWNSHIP  
 BARKEYVILLE BOROUGH  
 CANAL TOWNSHIP  
 CHERRYTREE TOWNSHIP  
 CLINTON TOWNSHIP  
 CLINTONVILLE BOROUGH  
 COOPERSTOWN BOROUGH  
 CORNPLANTER TOWNSHIP  
 CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP  
 EMLENTON BOROUGH  
 FRENCHCREEK TOWNSHIP  
 JACKSON TOWNSHIP  
 MINERAL TOWNSHIP  
 OIL CREEK TOWNSHIP  
 PLEASANTVILLE BOROUGH  
 PLUM TOWNSHIP  
 POLK BOROUGH  
 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP  
 ROUSEVILLE BOROUGH  
 SANDYCREEK TOWNSHIP  
 SCRUBGRASS TOWNSHIP  
 SUGARCREEK BOROUGH  
 UTICA BOROUGH  
 VICTORY TOWNSHIP

If your municipality has not yet voted to join the Venango County Regional Planning Commission, there are a number of benefits by doing so including assistance with planning and grant documents, waived fees for subdivisions, and CDBG funding.

For more information, please contact Judy Downs, Executive Director of VCRPC, at 814.432.9681.

## SUBDIVISIONS AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

For 2009, the Venango County Regional Planning Commission processed and reviewed eighty four minor subdivisions, and nine land developments for a total of ninety three. The month of June was our busiest with a total of thirteen subdivisions received, followed by September with twelve subdivisions received. Of the 93 subdivisions or land developments received, sixty five were located in member municipalities.

Cranberry Township led the way with the most subdivisions; twelve minor subdivisions and one land development. Pinegrove saw the second most development with nine minor subdivisions. Cornplanter had five minor subdivisions and two land developments. Other land development locations include: Cherrytree Township, Rouseville Borough and Sandycreek Township.

## ASSISTANCE TO MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES

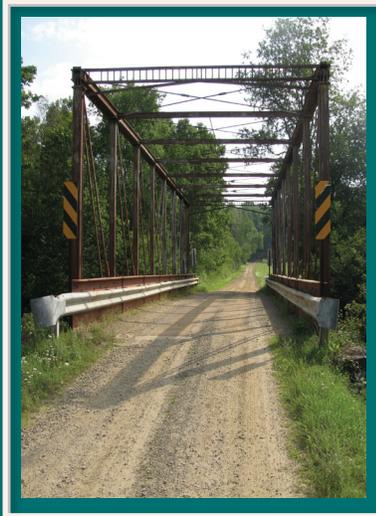
- Jackson Township bridge
- Mineral/Utica/Frenchcreek LUPTAP grant application and visioning
- Rouseville/Cornplanter LUPTAP grant background studies
- Plum Township Cooper Park C2P2 grant administration
- Cooperstown Borough Stormwater
- Sandycreek Township Morrison Run Waterline
- Cornplanter, Rouseville and Sugarcreek Borough Zoning maps
- Barkeyville Income and Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Cranberry, Franklin and Oil City Source Water Protection Planning
- Sandycreek and Franklin FEMA Storm Water grant
- Victory Township liquid fuels application
- Cranberry Township Deep Hollow/Aires Hill Rd. Illegal Dump Clean-Up
- Emlenton Water

## Community Development Block Grant



CDBG construction funded projects occurring in 2009 include Architectural Barrier Removal at the Venango Fairgrounds (\$22,452) and new sidewalk construction in Utica Borough (\$108,000).

## TRANSPORTATION



Planning Commission staff assisted Jackson Township in the replacement of the East Wayne Road bridge over Lake Creek. The cost for bridge replacement through the Penn Dot Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was estimated to be \$835,000. With VCRPC assistance and the use of county liquid fuels grant money, the bridge was replaced for just over \$100,000.

VCRPC staff also travelled to Harrisburg several times in 2009 to participate in the PennDot “Linking Planning and NEPA” process. PennDot is working to ensure that transportation improvement projects are born out of a sound land use planning process that truly links transportation planning decisions with community land use decisions. The goal is to maximize linkages between comprehensive plans and the decision-making processes. Smart Transportation Land Use corridor studies began in the City of Oil City (Route 8/62) and Barkeyville Borough (Route 8) as a result of this effort.

Testimony was presented at the State Transportation Commission hearings in Erie. Rather than focusing on specific projects, counties were requested to present testimony on the needs of the region. Venango County concentrated on the need for development of “Complete Streets” in project design and development.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- VCRPC staff cooperated with and assisted the Oil Region Alliance of Business Industry and Tourism in their funding package for the Sandycreek Industrial Park. Sources of funding include county CDBG, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) and the Rural Development Administration (RDA).

- VCRPC facilitated an Act 537 planning meeting with DEP & the municipalities of Rouseville, Oil City, Cornplanter and Cranberry. The facilitation was successful in allowing Rouseville to move forward with their sewage treatment facility upgrade and Cranberry Township in completing the necessary planning documentation that would allow Matric Limited to move toward public sewage.

- The federal Economic Development Administration CEDS (Community Economic Development Strategy) projects were developed and delivered to the NWRP&DC for future funding; as well as the LUTED (Land Use and Transportation for Economic Development) project listings for Venango County.

- A Pennsylvania Conservation Works energy grant was prepared for ARRA funding.

### Pricing Guidelines for the VCRPC

**VCRPC Municipal Membership Fees - \$0.50 per capita**

**GIS Mapping**

Existing Maps	8.5" x 11"	\$5.00
	11" x 17"	\$10.00
	42" x 36"	\$45.00
Custom Map Development	\$50.00/hour	

No charge for mapping for direct member municipalities

**Garbage Hauler's Fee - \$25**

**Community Development Block Grants Administration – 18%**

**Subdivision Fees - Minor**

- \$0.00 for applicants in member municipalities
- \$100 for applicants in non-member municipalities
- \$25 for Register and Recorders

**Subdivision Fees – Major Land Development**

\$300 - \$500 plus direct costs for engineering review

**Grant Writing - \$60.00/hour**

**Grant writing - free to member municipalities**

**Grant administration fees - \$60.00/hour or an allowable/negotiated percentage of the grant**

**CDBG Environmental Review/General PNDI Search - \$60.00/hour**

**Land Use and Ordinance Preparation/Administration - \$60.00/hour**

**CDBG/HOME/ESG Applications - \$3,500 plus \$500 per project activity**

**Desktop Publishing - \$60.00/hour**

## STORMWATER

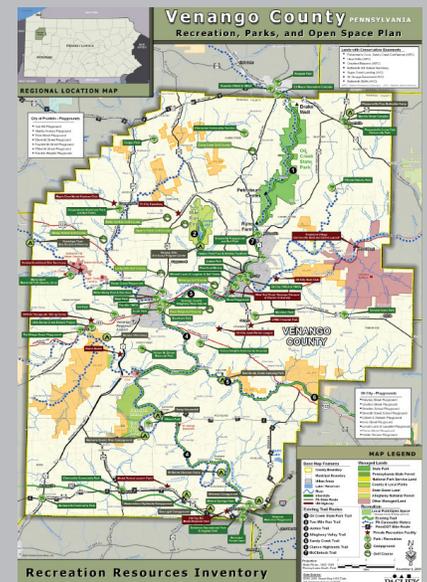
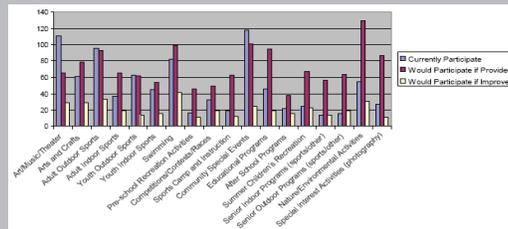
Work continued on Phase II of the Venango County Stormwater Management Plan. The GIS department, working with the consulting firm of HRG, Inc. developed a Future Land Use map to determine new impervious surface for watershed modeling. Stormwater funds were eliminated from the state budget in November and the County's Integrated Water Resources Plan was removed from the study. The time frame for completion of this project was also shortened by one year and will now be finalized before June 30, 2010. It is anticipated that the educational workshops that were to be provided by the consulting firm will now be undertaken by VCRPC and the Conservation District.



## HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The mandatory 5 year update of our Hazard Mitigation Plan began in 2009. Michael Baker Engineering was hired by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) to complete the planning documents in Venango County.

## RECREATION



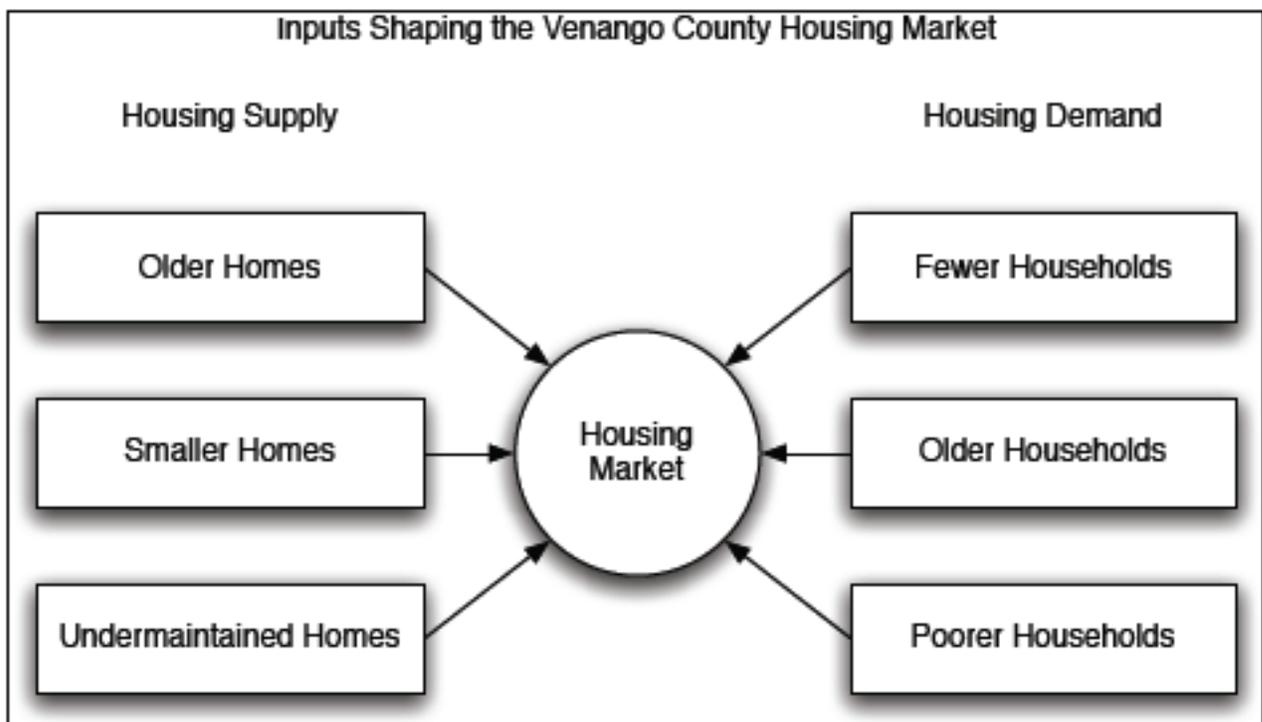
The steering committee for the Venango County Recreation Plan met several times in 2009. The recreation plan includes an inventory and evaluation of recreation opportunities in the County and makes recommendations for supporting and upgrading those facilities. Pashek Associates of Pittsburgh is the consultant planner. A re-visioning process for Two Mile Run County Park also took place in 2009. The re-visioning committee included a broad cross section of public officials and residents. Matching funds for this countywide plan were provided by the Oil Region Alliance, Venango County Fair, Inc, Edith C. Justus Charitable Trust, Frederick & Ellen Fair Charitable Trust, and UPMC.





## HOUSING MARKET STUDY AND NSP2 GRANT APPLICATION

A major initiative for VCRPC in 2009 was completion of and implementation actions on the County's Housing Market Study. This study was completed in 2009 and approved as an amendment to the Venango County Comprehensive Plan by the County Commissioners. The study quantified the Venango County housing market and found a highly affordable closed system with sub markets; housing quality is the issue to address. The study also recommends a regulatory environment with "teeth". To implement the plan's recommendations, the Venango County Regional Planning Commission requested a Neighborhood Stabilization Grant (NSP2) to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for \$9.2 million. The grant funds were targeted for four census tracts in Oil City and Franklin as determined eligible by HUD. Venango County learned that their request for this highly competitive grant was unsuccessful. The County's Affordable Housing Trust Board will continue to work on the grant initiatives in 2010. The initiatives include the development of a Land Bank and the application for HOMES grant funds in targeted neighborhoods. The Housing Market Study action plan is geared toward improving our housing market by building a "floor" in the market.



## Survey of Historical Resources in Northeastern Venango County



Within the Venango County Comprehensive Plan under Goal #2, objective #13 states: there is an immediate priority to update the “Venango County Historical Survey of 1980” while adding implementation provisions to the plan. This task was charged to the Venango County Regional Planning Commission and the Oil Region Alliance.

In October 2009, a contract was awarded to Indiana University of Pennsylvania Research Institute and America Stories, Inc. to conduct a survey of Historic Resources in Northeast Venango County. The primary areas of interest were pre-1960 buildings and structures within Allegheny Township, Oil Creek Township and Pleasantville Borough.

From October 22<sup>nd</sup> -24<sup>th</sup>, IUP Professor Dr. Benjamin Ford and his grad students, along with Paula Stizler and Jack York of America Stories, Inc. and Chad Cochran of the VCRPC conducted windshield surveys of potentially historic buildings and structures within the three municipalities. A total of 386 structures were identified during this windshield survey. A public meeting was held October 23<sup>rd</sup> to make the population aware of the historical survey.

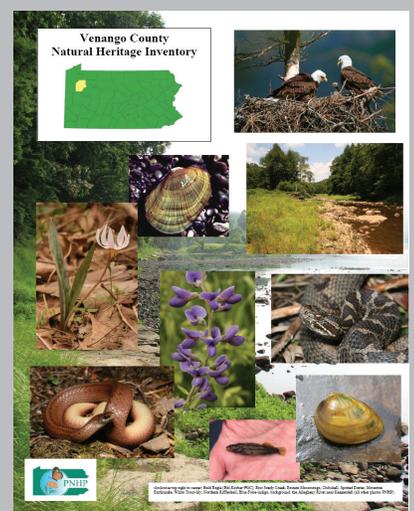
On December 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, detailed surveys were conducted in Allegheny and Oil Creek townships. A total of 206 historical buildings, structures and oil related features were surveyed. In spring of 2010, the VCRPC will conduct the survey for Pleasantville borough. A final report of the findings of the Historical Resources in Northeast Venango County is expected to be published in May 2010.



multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*)



The flowers of blue false-indigo (*Baptisia australis*) are quite showy, and the blooms are visible from May through August.



## COUNTY NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY (CNHI)

Staff from the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy completed the second year of field work for Venango County’s Natural Heritage Inventory which will be available in 2010. The CNHI focuses on the best examples of living ecological resources in our County. The inventory will be used in conjunction with other resource information in review of various projects and in our comprehensive planning endeavors. Land use decisions made with adequate information can prevent substantial and costly delays. This inventory will allow consultants to see potential conflicts before establishing the land development footprint or developing detailed plans and applying for permits. This will allow projects to be changed early on when flexibility is at a maximum. The sites identified in the Venango CNHI will help guide wise land use and county planning.





Venango County's recycling program has seen a slight increase in 2009 countywide data with regards to overall diversion rate (see chart).

In 2008, the County's diversion rate was 23.3% - this percentage reflects recycled tonnage diverted from the solid waste stream going to the landfill. Currently, as of 2009, our diversion rate is at 25.14% (an increase of 1.84%) with overall post-consumer solid waste/recycling tonnages down across the board.

## Countywide Recycling

Sectors and Modules	2009	2008
<b>RESIDENTIAL:</b>		
Recycling	965.92 Tons	1,143.08 Tons
Household Hazardous Waste	9.77 Tons	1.67 Tons
Organics	425.25 Tons	724.00 Tons
Solid Waste	10,477.75 Tons	15,052.61 Tons
<b>Total Tons Collected</b>	<b>11,878.69 Tons</b>	<b>16,921.36 Tons</b>
Total Tons Diverted (for diversion calc.)	1,400.94 Tons	1,868.75 Tons
Total Tons Disposed (for diversion calc.)	10,477.75 Tons	15,052.61 Tons
Diversion Rate	11.79%	11.04%
<b>COMMERCIAL:</b>		
Recycling	2,117.80 Tons	2,704.00 Tons
<b>Total Tons Collected (all sectors):</b>		
	<b>13,996.49 Tons</b>	<b>19,625.36 Tons</b>
<b>Total Tons Diverted (for diversion calc.):</b>		
	<b>3,518.74 Tons</b>	<b>4,572.75 Tons</b>
<b>Total Tons Disposed (for diversion calc.):</b>		
	<b>10,477.75 Tons</b>	<b>15,052.61 Tons</b>
Cross Sector Diversion Rate:	<b>25.14%</b>	<b>23.30%</b>

## CLEAN - UP EVENTS AND COLLECTIONS

### PA CleanWays of Venango County Completes Illegal Dump Cleanup in Cranberry Township

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, PA CleanWays of Venango County, a chapter of PA CleanWays, hosted a successful illegal dump cleanup event along Deep Hollow Rd & Aires Hill Rd. in Cranberry Township. The cleanup took place from 9AM to 1PM and encompassed three separate dumpsites. A crew of local volunteers, along with municipal support from Cranberry Township and guidance from PA CleanWays staff, worked diligently throughout the morning to remove 1.86 tons of debris from the surrounding areas. In addition, 45 tires were salvaged and taken to Sehman Tire in Franklin for proper recycling. Funding for the event was provided through a grant from The Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds



### PA CleanWays of Venango County Completes Illegal Dump Clean Up in Oil City

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, the PA CleanWays chapter in Venango County hosted a successful illegal dump clean up event above the West End Pond in Oil City, Pa. The clean up took place from 9AM to 1PM and encompassed multiple piles of trash and debris. A crew of local volunteers, along with municipal support from the City of Oil City, worked diligently throughout the morning to remove 6.47 tons of debris from the surrounding areas. In addition, 6 tires were salvaged and taken to Walmart in Cranberry Township for proper recycling. Funding for the event was provided through a grant from The Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds.



**COLLECTING HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS**  
 814-432-9684  
 412-488-7452  
[www.swpahhw.org](http://www.swpahhw.org)

Sponsored by

VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**Safely Dispose of Common Household Chemicals**

**Venango County Cranberry Mall**  
 Route 322, Cranberry Township  
**Saturday, July 25, 2009**  
 9am - 1pm

FEE: \$2/gallon - Cash Only

**ACCEPTABLE ITEMS INCLUDE:**

- aerosol cans
- automotive fluids
- motor oil, transmission fluid, antifreeze, brake fluid
- batteries
- chemistry sets
- compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs)
- gasoline and kerosene
- household cleaners
- ammoniac, drain openers, acid cleaners, oven cleaners
- mercury
- paint products
- latex, oil based, alkyl based, arts/crafts chemicals, rust preservatives, creosote, water sealers, paint thinners, furniture strippers
- pesticides/herbicides
- rodent killers, insecticides, weed killers, mothballs, fertilizer
- photo chemicals
- pool chemicals

**WE DO NOT ACCEPT:**

- ammunition • appliances • bulk waste • commercial and industrial waste • compressed gas cylinders (including propane tanks) • drugs • explosives • flares • fluorescent tubes
- leaking containers • medical waste (including needles) • PCBs and dioxin • radioactive materials (including smoke detectors) • tires

The County hosted a 2009 Household Hazardous Waste collection at the Cranberry Mall on July 25<sup>th</sup>. This aided in the proper disposal of over 18,000 lbs of hazardous waste.

**West End Pond Cleanup**  
Oil City, Venango County

Volunteers needed to help remove litter and illegal dumping

**WHEN:** Saturday, May 16, 2009  
**WHAT:** Volunteer trash cleanup at the West End Pond illegal dumpsite in Oil City  
**TIME:** 9 AM - 1 PM  
**WHERE:** Meet at 8:45 AM at the Clarion University Venango Campus Parking Lot located on West First Street in Oil City  
**CONTACT:** Susan Carmichael @ 1-877-772-3673 ext. 107 toll free or Erin Johnson @ 814-432-9684 or [sp@swpahhw.org](mailto:sp@swpahhw.org) with any questions or to register.  
 Registration deadline is May 13, 2009.

**Drive for safety at all times!**

All volunteers should wear sturdy shoes/boots and long pants. Youth volunteers age 12-17 must bring a PA CleanWays Volunteer Waiver Form with signed parental consent. Call PA CleanWays for more participation requirements.  
**Lunch and drinks will be provided.**

The cleanup will be organized in case of inclement weather.  
 Call 1-877-772-3673 for a received message on the status.

This cleanup is supported by PA CleanWays of Venango County.  
 Cleanup funding provided by The Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds.

Visit PA CleanWays at [www.swpahhw.org](http://www.swpahhw.org)

## 2009 VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD MEMBERS

**Debra Kapp**  
Chairperson  
Oakland Twp.

**Garnet Wood**  
Vice Chair  
Franklin City Council

**Fred Krizinsky**  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Oil Region COG

**Ken Garland**  
Victory Twp.

**Sonja Hawkins**  
City of Oil City, Mayor

**Dave Owens**  
Polk Boro. Council

**Marc Rickard**  
Cranberry Twp.  
Conservation District

**Warren Thomas**  
Richland Twp.

**Neil McElwee**  
City of Oil City, Council

**Terry Ray**  
Cranberry Twp.

**Susan Hileman**  
Cornplanter Twp.  
NW Industrial Resource  
Council

**Matt Carlson**  
Sugar creek Boro.  
Chief of Police

**Therese Alcorn**  
Cranberry Area School  
District

**Jim Berry**  
Pleasantville Boro.  
Oil Creek COG

**Rodney Gladd**  
Clintonville Boro.  
Southern COG

### VCRPC STAFF

	Judith A. Downs	Executive Director
	Karen Wenner	Shared Municipal Services
	Erik Johnson	Planner 1/Recycling & Solid Waste
	Chad Cochran	Planner 1
	Jacob Spuck	GIS Intern
	Willis Thomas	Planning Intern
Al Wodzianski	PE, Engineer	

## VENANGO COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TIMOTHY S. BROOKS  
TROY A. WOOD  
JANET D. BEICHNER



**DEBRA KAPP**  
VCRPC CHAIR



Plan Review Committee Meeting

## VENANGO COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE



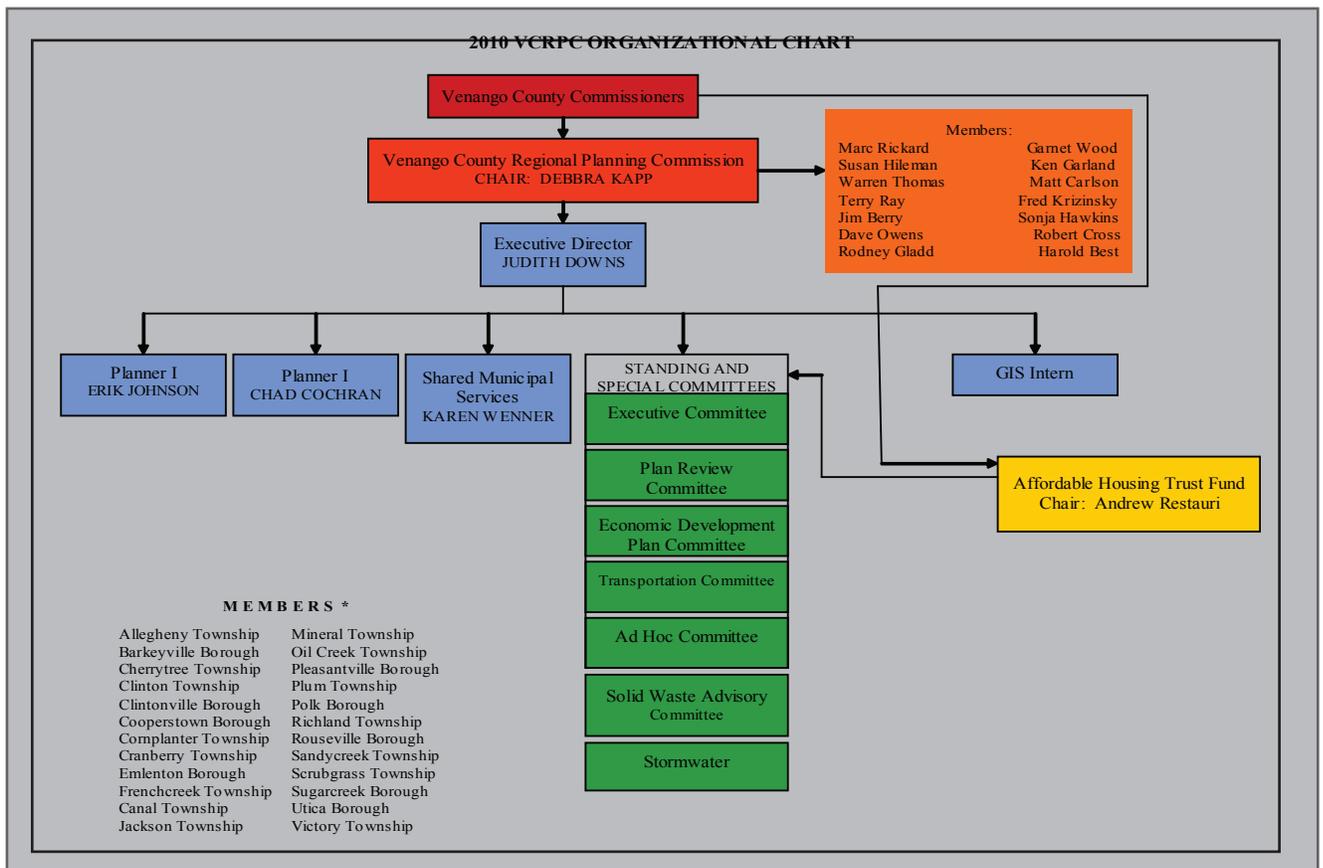
**WARREN THOMAS**



**MATT CARLSON**



**KEN GARLAND**



# 2010 PROJECTS

- Complanter / Rouseville / Oil City Comprehensive Plan Review
- Subdivision And Land Development Ordinance Update
- CDBG Construction:
  - Two Mile Run Architectural Barrier Removal
  - Oil Creek Sewer
  - Emlenton Chair Lift
- Cranberry Township CDBG Administration
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event
- Recycling 903 & 904 Reimbursement Grants
- Finalize Stormwater Plan Act 167
- Barkeyville Smart Transportation Study
- Cultural & Historic Research Survey
- Home Grant Application
- Municipal Outreach
- Economic Development Plan
- Solid Waste Management Plan Update
- Two Illegal Dump Clean Ups
- Hazardous Mitigation Plan
- Land Banking

## 2010 Annual Work Plan Topics

~ Top Priorities Listing ~

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
- COUNTYWIDE COOPERATION & OUTREACH
- TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT
- HOUSING
- SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOP. ORDINANCE
- SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
- STORMWATER
- LAND USE MAPPING
- MAPPING SERVICES
- MAXIMIZE RURAL STRENGTHS
- CDBG
- PLAN IMPLEMENTATION



2009 ANNUAL MEETING & WORK PLAN SESSION



Venango County Regional Planning Commission

1168 Liberty Street, P.O. Box 831

Franklin, PA 16323

Tel: (814) 432-9689

Fax: (814) 432-9679

[www.co.venango.pa.us](http://www.co.venango.pa.us)