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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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July 8, 2009

Mr. Jeri Stumpf
PO Box 85
Willow Street, PA 17584

Dear Jeri:

Just read the attached article on you in the most recent edition of The Dickinsonian. After a great career in the PA Legislature, I hope you are most successful in your current consulting firm. Let me know if I can ever be of assistance!

In Hoc!

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress

JG: kg

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Will Work for Food

DICKINSONIANS REGALE WITH TALES OF MEMORABLE FIRST JOBS AFTER COLLEGE

I HAVE DICKINSON COLLEGE to thank for my current career; it wasn't a first job but an internship while at Dickinson between my sophomore and junior years, that led to my first job and current career.

Knowing that I was tired of loading and unloading railroad cars and tractor-trailers for summer employment, my beloved political-science professor Bruce Andrews told me to contact the chairman of the redevelopment authority in York, Pa., who happened to be on the college's board of trustees. He advised me to contact the redevelopment authority's executive director to schedule an interview for a summer internship.

When my Sigma Chi brothers heard I had an interview the next day with the redevelopment authority in York, they asked, "What's a redevelopment authority?" I said, "I don't know. I think they tear down old buildings."

Sure, as a political-science major I had read Jane Jacobs' book, *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*, in which the term "redevelopment authority" was used. Otherwise, I hadn't a clue, and I certainly never imagined where that internship would lead.

Due to a reference from the redevelopment authority, I landed my first job out of college as a planner with the York County Planning Commission. Shortly thereafter, I became a planner with a private planning consulting firm in Harrisburg.

I became the director of planning for the city of York, the youngest planning director in Pennsylvania. A few months later, I also became executive director of the city's redevelopment authority, where I had been an intern several years earlier.

My experience in York led to my hiring in 1973 as the first executive director of the House Local Government and Urban Affairs committees for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. I held that position for 28 years.

What is perhaps most ironic is that a report I wrote before leaving titled "Eradicating Blight & Expediting Economic Development in the 21st Century" was used by the American Planning Association in Chicago to

develop its recently adopted national redevelopment policy for underutilized property in America.

Shortly after his election, Pennsylvania's Gov. Edward G. Rendell established the state's first Governor's Office of Housing and Community Revitalization. I was asked to join. I helped develop a new housing and revitalization strategy for the commonwealth and its communities.

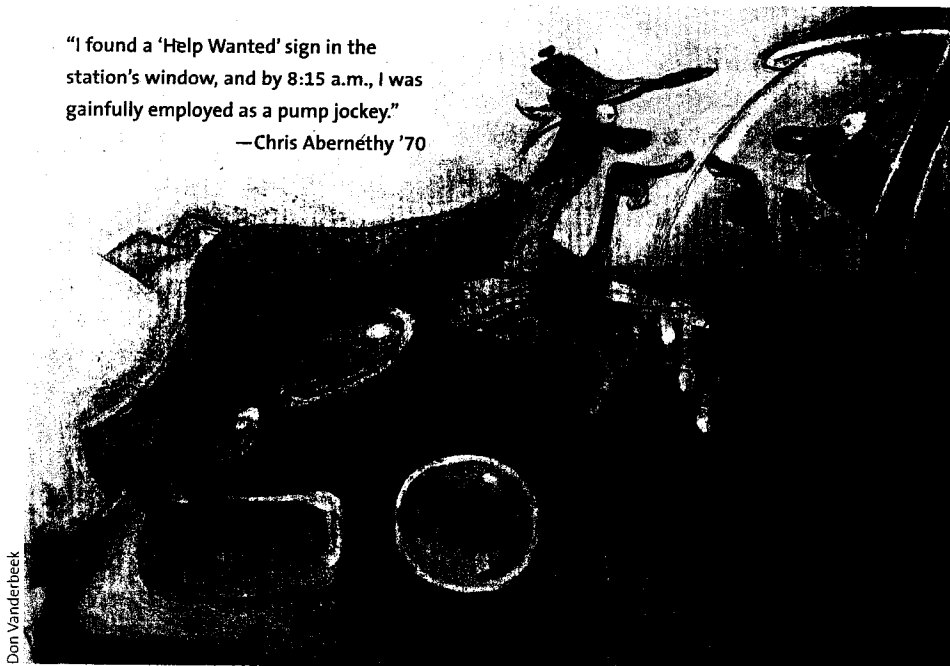
Then, in 2006, I established my own community development and governmental affairs consulting firm, Jeri E. Stumpf & Associates Inc., based in Lancaster, Pa.

—Jeri E. Stumpf '66

LESS THAN A WEEK after graduating in May 1970 (shortly after the Kent State shootings), my new wife, Elizabeth "Bif" Young '71, and I were back on campus for her final summer-school session. She needed a few credits to finish up her degree, and I had nothing to do until law school began in September, so we rented out the housemother's apartment in the Phi Kap house.

"I found a 'Help Wanted' sign in the station's window, and by 8:15 a.m., I was gainfully employed as a pump jockey."

—Chris Abernethy '70



Don Vanderbeek

State adviser pays a visit

Establishing plans for development is the key to revitalization of Connellsville.

BY JUDY KROEGER
DAILY COURIER

Like many communities in Southwestern Pennsylvania, Connellsville suffers from a lack of jobs and opportunities. But, with some development planning on the part of the city, it does have great potential, according to an official.

Jeri Stumpf, special assistant for urban affairs with Gov. Ed Rendell's Office of Housing and Community Revitalization, told officials and residents Tuesday that Connellsville should take advantage of its assets, its people, natural resources and heritage, to fight decline and to attract development.

The city needs to discover its assets and capitalize on them through strategic planning, a comprehensive plan and code enforcement, Stumpf said.

Stumpf emphasized that superficial fixes will not work for long-term results.

"Facade and streetscape work is not enough. The businesses will deteriorate and the work will have to be re-done," he said.

Stumpf added that the city must first determine what businesses "would be supported in a Connellsville that would be attractive and attract existing businesses. It isn't just about aesthetics, it's about revitalization."

He said new housing downtown would also add to revitalization. A number of business establishments have housing units upstairs, which can be restored and leased to provide business owners additional income or a place for the owners to live.

Stumpf said that Connellsville must increase its code enforcement efforts to retain and attract businesses. He advised Brownsville, and that borough concentrated on cleaning up its former downtown business district.

"Deteriorating property is

SEE PLANS • A3

State adviser pays a visit

PLANS • FROM A1

not only life-threatening and unsafe, it sends a bad signal to potential investors," he said.

Stumpf formerly served as executive director of the state House Local Government and Urban Affairs Committee.

In that position, he drafted legislation to get tough on so-called slumlords.

Although not yet passed by the General Assembly, the legislation would subject the owner of blighted property to five years in prison and heavy fines following a fifth code citation.

"If I go and rob a bank, I go to

jail," Stumpf said as example. "If I ruin an apartment building, I've taken and destroyed a neighborhood. It's time that the courts recognize that the slumlords are to be held accountable. Costs of demolition can exceed the value of land, so a lien can mean nothing."

He said that such legislation could be enforced through a statewide computer registry.

"You've got to hit them economically to make them responsible," he said.

Even without the legislation, Stumpf said communities can improve their quality of life by enforcing existing regulations re-

garding property maintenance. He said that an aggressive approach to code enforcement must be strategic and systematic.

"Connellsville is on the right track. There are real assets that Southwestern Pennsylvania has, that Connellsville has. Biking, Ohio, the quality of its people. The assets are innumerable. The government is committed to turning things around in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The potential is phenomenal," Stumpf said.


Judy Kroeger can be reached at jkroeger@tribweb.com or 724-626-3538.

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Connellsville official calls for action on business properties

By Patty Yauger, Herald-Standard
02/07/2006

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CONNELLSVILLE - Connellsville's director of public health and safety plans to extend the hand of cooperation to downtown business property owners to bring the sites into compliance with maintenance codes.

Crumbling facades, broken windows, accumulation of trash in doorways and no plan in place to rent, sell or upgrade the buildings are a concern, said Councilman David McIntire, who oversees the department, and if the city is to move forward, a plan of action must be formulated.

"We need to start somewhere," he said.

McIntire said that he will propose a resolution to council at its upcoming meeting to target the properties along Crawford Avenue and Pittsburgh Street that have been unoccupied and their owners who have yet to comply with city property codes and ordinances.

"If we want to market our city, we must begin in the downtown business district," he said of the area selected. "No one wants to come into the city, purchase a building and then have to look across the street and see a dilapidated building."

The unoccupied buildings of concern to McIntire include the Brimstone Building at Crawford Avenue and Pittsburgh Street, the former Aaron's Furniture Store on Pittsburgh Street and the former W.N. Leche Dry Goods store, adjoining PNC Bank on Crawford Avenue, among others.

"These historic buildings should not be allowed to fall into further disrepair," he said. "We need to do something before they are no longer salvageable."

The initiative, said McIntire, will be to schedule a meeting with the owners to discuss their plans for the buildings and to inform them of the city's intention to enforce the maintenance codes.

"We want to take a positive approach and hopefully these owners will be cooperative," he s

This week, McIntire along with other city representatives met with Jeri E. Stumpf, Governor's Community Revitalization special assistant for Urban Affairs, to discuss options concerning the maintenance codes and how to draw business and residents to the city.

Stumpf, who is working with municipalities named as Blueprint Communities, said that revitali owners responsible for their properties and sharing information about the community with tho

"Code enforcement and marketing of the community are critical aspects of revitalization," said mistake in thinking that revitalization is only aesthetics.



Connellsville Councilman David McIntire
Connellsville Redevelopment Authority
outside the vacant Brimstone Building I
Pittsburgh Street and Crawford Avenue
with building owners to improve their cc

SECTION LINKS

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Standard Photographer Ed Cope

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Do you think the Steelers can win the Super Bowl again next year?

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No

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"They think if you make buildings look better; have a facade improvement program or a street revitalization, but that is untrue."

Stumpf said that potential investors look at how a community enforces its regulations and will little is being done to hold owners responsible for the condition of their properties.

He is currently working with state lawmakers to draft legislation that would impose stricter per non-compliance with maintenance codes.

If enacted, said Stumpf, guilty parties would face hefty fines and jail sentences.

"Why should an investor be able to purchase an apartment building, milk all of the equity out of it leaving it boarded up and in a dilapidated condition with tax liens and property liens?" he said

The lack of action by the owner, said Stumpf, translates into the taxpayers being held hostage as values in the neighborhood.

"It is time the courts and everyone else recognize that what slumlords are doing is destroying lives and destroying communities," he said. "It is time they are held accountable."

As leaders look to upgrade its physical image, said Stumpf, thought also must be given to those who have been a part of the community, in addition to seeking new economic ventures.

"If the business (in the revitalized district) doesn't have any foot traffic to support it, then in a way it is going to be vacant," he added.

"Too many times, we talk about attracting new businesses and forget about those that have been here for a long time."

"A market study for revitalization needs to focus on what can be done to support existing businesses and help them expand as we look for new niche businesses that will compliment (the existing businesses).

The city's multiple-floor buildings that have first-floor businesses, said Stumpf, could be transformed into new residents.

He added that having a strategic vision is crucial to revitalization and includes capitalizing on the Youghiogheny River and Yough Bike Trail, along with nearby tourist attractions.

"Connellsville is a charming community that needs some attention," said Stumpf.

Councilman Terry Bodes, who also accompanied Stumpf on the city tour, said he is eager to see the city become a state official.

"We need some guidance and direction, and I believe he will point us in the right direction," said Bodes.

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1015 First Street, Suite #1, Nanty Glo, PA. 15943

PHONE: (814) 749-0331 FAX: (814) 749-0331

Visit us online: www.sapdc.org/nantyglo

June 8, 2006

Mr. Jeri Stumpf
62 Hawthorne Circle
Willow Street, PA 17584

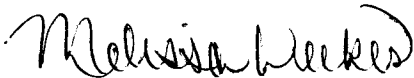
Dear Jeri,

Thank you for speaking at the monthly meeting of the Nanty Glo Borough Joint Cooperation Committee. Your presentation on revitalizing our community was very well received by our members. The information in your speech was fascinating and timely. Our only regret is that we did not have more time with you.

We hope that you enjoyed meeting the members of the Nanty Glo Borough Joint Cooperation Committee and that you will consider returning in the future to continue the discussion.

Thank you again for taking the time to speak at our meeting. We hope you enjoyed your visit to our community.

Very truly yours,



Melissa Weekes
Borough Secretary

Thomas Cunningham, Mayor
Nanty Glo Borough Council:

Herbert Oldham, president, Patricia LaMantia, vice president
Francis Kaschalk, Thomas Kupchella, Michaela Markovich, Mark Williams

SAVING OLD SCHOOLS

The greatest strength of Pennsylvania's traditional towns – historic architecture and the ability to walk places – is lost when schools, stores and offices are located out of town.



Dwindling assets

Renovating existing in-town campuses can help stop the 'hollowing out' of state's communities



BY THOMAS HYLTON

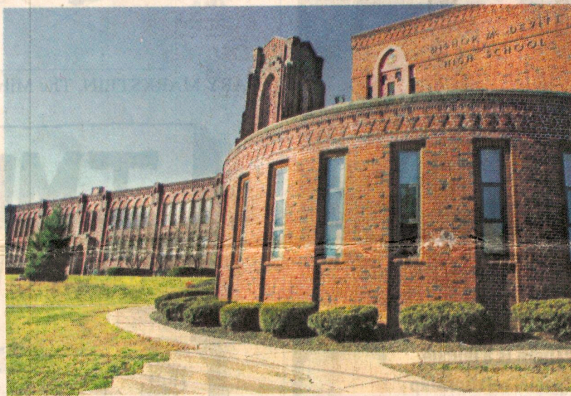
Harrisburg's historic Bishop McDevitt High School, a mainstay of the city since its construction in 1930, might move out

of town. Although the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg prizes the school's architecture and tradition, the diocese believes a 50-acre site would be preferable for a modern high school of 750 or more students, providing space for parking lots and athletic fields.

Hundreds of public school districts throughout Pennsylvania have faced similar issues in recent decades — whether to renovate existing schools or replace them with new schools on virgin land. Often, new schools win out, spawning car-dependent development on the urban fringe and draining the life from older communities by removing one of their prime assets — walk-accessible neighborhood schools.

The Steelton-Highspire School District, for example, will soon have no schools in either of the boroughs that comprise the district. Instead, an elementary school is being constructed next to the high school in neighboring Swatara Twp. The reason? The

THOMAS HYLTON, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist living in Pottstown, is president of Save Our Land, Save Our Towns Inc., a nonprofit organization that designed and published "Renovate or Replace?" with funding from the William Penn Foundation.



The Patriot-News

Top: The Camp Hill School District is considering demolishing Eisenhower Elementary and building an arts center in its place. Above: The Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg is considering moving Bishop McDevitt High School out of Harrisburg.

existing elementary school is too old to be renovated, the district says.

Statewide, the loss of such schools has been a major factor in what the Brookings Institution calls the "hollowing out" of Pennsylvania — disinvestment in older urban areas in favor of developing suburbs.

Alarmed by this trend, the state Department of Education and the Pennsylvania School Boards Association have sponsored a new publication called "Renovate or Replace? The case for restoring and reusing older school buildings." The booklet features essays by Gov. Ed Rendell's top cabinet officers, arguing that renovating

older schools can save tax dollars, reinforce established communities and provide facilities that meet 21st century educational standards.

For those who think it's too expensive to renovate older schools, Education Secretary Gerald Zahorchak writes that the department's experience shows renovating schools is generally less expensive than building new ones. In fact, a review of all major school construction projects approved by the department in the last three years shows that new construction is nearly twice as expensive, per square foot, as al-

5 BENEFITS of preserving neighborhood schools

1. Less busing holds down transportation costs.
2. Helps urban areas by keeping neighborhood centerpiece.
3. Preserves energy and green space.
4. Renovation is often cheaper.
5. Kids get more exercise.

ASSETS: Renovating schools can help preserve towns



Students watch a video in the renovated library at Henry Houck Elementary School in Lebanon. A state review indicates that renovations cost about half as much as new schools.

Continued from Page F1

tations and additions when total project costs are considered. Included in that list are some early 20th century schools, such as Lebanon's 1918 Harding Elementary School and 1924 Henry Houck Elementary School.

In addition, Zahorchak writes that the Public School Code was amended in 2005 to provide an extra state reimbursement to school districts that renovate schools. The extra reimbursement also applies to additions to existing schools. If an existing school is brought up to "green" building standards, the district will receive yet another subsidy. "Historic schools are significant community assets," says Barbara Franco, director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. They reflect community pride.

For example, Zahorchak cites Harrisburg's 1924 John Harris High School, currently undergoing renovations, as an example of a historic school whose craftsmanship and materials could not be duplicated today.

Other cabinet secretaries analyze the merits of existing schools in broader contexts. Dennis Yablonski, secretary of community and economic development, highlights the Keystone Principles adopted by the Governor's Economic Development Cabinet to promote sustainable development and make maximum use of the state's resources. The principles include fostering growth in core communities, preserving and reusing existing buildings, promoting pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and protecting rural areas.

The creative use of older school buildings and the integration of school construction decisions with community

planning goals can make schools an anchor for revitalization and economic development, Yablonski says.

Allen D. Biehler, secretary of transportation, and Dr. Calvin B. Johnson, secretary of health, emphasize that walk-accessible schools reduce the need for busing and encourage exercise. Kathleen McGinty, secretary of environmental protection, says that renovating existing schools reduces the need to manufacture materials and cuts down on demolition debris.

Phillip Diller, a professor of education at Shippensburg University and principal of its laboratory elementary school, cites a wealth of academic literature showing that students — especially those from low-income families — perform better in small schools. The economies of scale often cited as a reason for the consolidation of small schools might create an inferior learning environment, he says.

A "Best Practices" section of the brochure addresses issues such as those faced by Bishop McDevitt. Renovating the school is estimated to cost about \$9.6 million, far less than the cost of a new facility. The price skyrockets, however, when the cost of a parking garage and off-site athletic center is factored in.

But could Bishop McDevitt share facilities with other institutions? "Renovate or Replace?" points out that Reading High School recently financed a new stadium jointly with nearby Albright College, providing a shared facility of higher quality than either institution could have afforded separately. The Harrisburg High School stadium next to the John Harris building is two blocks away from Bishop McDevitt. Meanwhile, the Bishop McDevitt cam-

pus stands cheek-by-jowl with Harrisburg's Reservoir Park, which might offer shared space for expanded parking and athletic facilities.

Likewise, Steelton-Highspire is abandoning its historic elementary school primarily because the 1882 building is "too old" to renovate. But the Lancaster City School District successfully renovated an 1850s cotton warehouse into the Carter and MacRae Elementary School, preserving a city landmark and providing a school where it was needed most, in the heart of a densely populated neighborhood.

Perhaps the most important benefit of "Renovate or Replace?" is its holistic view of school construction decisions. The greatest strength of Pennsylvania's traditional towns — historic architecture and the ability to walk places — is lost when schools, stores and offices are relocated out of town. Meanwhile, the countryside is eroded by a jumble of new development that can be reached only by car.

The downsides to sprawl go beyond the loss of scenic views and increased time stuck in traffic. Excessive driving requires enormous amounts of gasoline, which makes America dependent on foreign oil. Emissions from cars are a leading cause of global warming.

Upward mobility is hindered because the poor and minorities have become concentrated in older communities while the middle class live, work and send their children to school in homogeneous townships.

All these problems, and more, could be alleviated if Pennsylvania valued walkable historic towns more than abundant parking spaces. But changing our culture won't be easy. "Renovate or Replace?" is a step in that direction.



DR. CALVIN B. JOHNSON is secretary of the state Department of Health.

"A third of our school-aged children are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight. ... School districts can assist with efforts to address childhood obesity by keeping walkable neighborhood schools, by locating new schools in established neighborhoods with sidewalks and by working with local municipalities to create routes allowing more children to walk to school."



KATHLEEN MCGINTY is secretary of the state Department of Environmental Protection.

"A 'green' school doesn't have to be a new school. In fact, the No. 1 principle of green building design is to renovate and recycle existing buildings. A green building is one whose construction and operation ensures the healthiest possible environment and makes the most efficient and least disruptive use of land, water, energy and resources."



JERI E. STUMPF is retired director of the House Urban Affairs Committee.

"For [older people], seeing children walking to school brings a reassuring sense of community. Families with children like having other families with children living nearby. A neighborhood school allows their children to walk to school with their siblings and playmates. It means PTA meetings, parent teacher conferences and other school activities are closer and more convenient."



ALLEN D. BIEHLER is secretary of the state Department of Transportation.

"We now bus more than 75 percent of our public school students at an annual cost of more than \$1 billion. Our school buses travel more than 381 million miles a year ... Pennsylvanians don't typically think of walking or bicycle riding as transportation, but it's actually the most energy-efficient and environmentally friendly form of mobility that exists."



DAVID ANSTRAND is an architect and board member of the Council of Educational Facility Planners International.

"Most schools built between 1900 and 1940 ... are masonry bearing structures that rely on massive walls to provide structural stability. Many were overdesigned in load-bearing capacity by today's structural standards. Most of these older schools are easier and less costly to renovate than schools built in the postwar suburban era, when cheap materials and inferior construction techniques became common."

Brownsville takes steps to recover its dignity

BATTLING BLIGHT

By SCOTT BEVERIDGE
Staff writer
sbeveridge@observer-reporter.com

BROWNSVILLE — The narrow road nicknamed “The Neck” is tucked so tightly between tall, run-down storefronts in Brownsville that the buildings loom like overgrown weeds over the sidewalks.

Vacant and allowed to deteriorate, some for more than two decades, these once-stately buildings have become the worst examples of metropolitan blight in Pennsylvania.

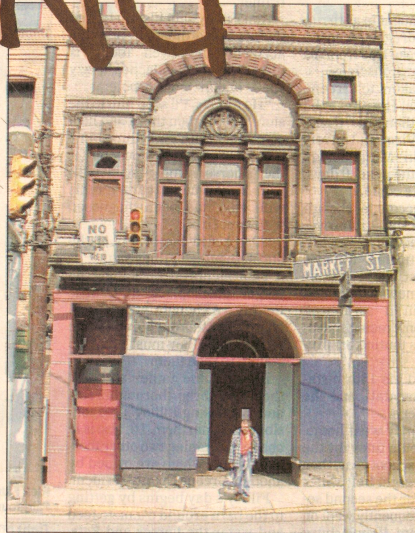
“I’ve not seen anything like Brownsville in my travels in 35 years. It’s criminal, a catastrophe waiting to happen,” said Jeri E. Stumpf, an urban planner who just may be the borough’s last hope for recovery.

Stumpf was hand-picked by Gov. Ed Rendell to lead Brownsville in a new direction in what may prove to be a test case for the state’s new aggressive code enforcement program. Last year, the governor also gave the cash-strapped borough a free, full-time code enforcer to cite property owners for ignoring building codes, citations that can rise to a crime carrying a possible prison sentence upon conviction.

For the officer, Donald Baugh, it’s been an overwhelming challenge just to inspect a string of buildings in the heart of town owned by a Pittsburgh man, who holds an unusual property monopoly.

Baugh issued the property owner, Ernest Liggett, building code citations that carry \$17,000 in fines and court costs, Fayette County court records show. The violations were issued because windows are broken or falling out, roofs are in dire disrepair or exterior walls are crumbling or bowing. Liggett was found guilty of the citations in local court and appealed the verdicts Feb. 28 to Fayette County Court. The filing did not include grounds for the appeal, said Melinda Dellarose, Brownsville’s solicitor. She said Liggett is facing many other fines stemming from separate code violations.

Liggett or his corporation, Manor Investments, also owes more than \$55,000 in unpaid real estate taxes on 23 Brownsville buildings, according to the Fayette County Tax Claim Bureau. He is on a payment plan with the county that prevents the buildings from being sold at tax sale, according to the bu-



A pedestrian waits to cross Market Street in front of a building that has been condemned under Brownsville’s strict code enforcement program.



JOAN O’NEILL/OBSERVER-REPORTER

A section of Market Street known as “the neck” welcomes motorists to Brownsville’s blighted downtown.

reau.

Liggett was a stranger to Brownsville before he began buying up the property, some of which had been on the market for unpaid property taxes. He introduced a grandiose vision for Brownsville in 1994 named “Rebirth of an American City ... River City USA,” complete with architectural renderings showing renovated storefronts as factory outlets. At some point, the development touted riverboat gambling on the nearby Monongahela River.

While floating casinos had been considered by the state Legislature at the time, the initiative drowned in committee. Liggett later said he had agreed to sell the buildings to an American Indian tribe and profit by gaming as part owner in that deal, which has yet to come to fruition.

It seemed that some residents of this aging borough built on river and coal industries had begun to lose hope that things in the downtown might improve. The commu-



“I’VE NOT SEEN ANYTHING LIKE BROWNSVILLE IN MY TRAVELS IN 35 YEARS. IT’S CRIMINAL, A CATASTROPHE WAITING TO HAPPEN.”

JERI E. STUMPF, URBAN PLANNER

nity had just 2,804 residents at the time of the 2000 census, having lost more than half of its population since the 1940 count.

Rendell, however, had a plan to breathe new life into Pennsylvania’s downtown districts, all of which have

slumlords and decaying neighborhoods to varying degrees. After taking office in 2003, he created the Governor’s Office of Housing and Community Revitalization by executive order to attack the problem.

In worst-case scenarios, the office would enforce 1999 amendments to the crimes code that gave municipalities police power to condemn and demolish dangerous buildings. The law recognizes that it’s a crime to “bilk the equity” out of a building to the point where someone else’s well-maintained property loses its value, said Stumpf, who is special assistant for urban affairs for the new state office. It’s the same thing as stealing your neighbor’s money, he said.

“The fire chief will not allow (firefighters) to enter any of those dilapidated buildings,” he said. “It could be a tragedy waiting to happen. It’s very dangerous.”

But now, a property owner in Pennsylvania can be

charged with a misdemeanor on the fourth consecutive guilty verdict on a building code citation involving a risk to the public, and face a possible 2-year prison sentence. A 5-year prison sentence can be handed down on the fifth consecutive violation leading to a conviction. To date, no one has been convicted to such a degree under the law.

Recognizing Brownsville’s dilemma, Rendell came to its downtown in April 2005 to deliver \$150,000 to establish the code enforcement office. The grant was matched by lumber giant Joe Hardy, a commissioner in Fayette County with a reputation of giving small business owners there money to improve their buildings.

A high school marching band welcomed the governor,

Blight: *Brownsville takes steps to recover its dignity*

Continued from Page B1

A high school marching band welcomed the governor, while more than 400 people stood alongside the vacant buildings to greet him. Rendell was impressed with the turnout, which suggested to him that people still had pride in their hometown, Stumpf said.

The governor also demanded that the downtown be placed on the list to receive new sidewalks, landscaping and underground utilities.

In no time, Baugh identified 128 properties in the downtown district, 31 of which are listed as being owned by Liggett, either separately or jointly with his wife, Marilyn, or with other investors, according to Stumpf.

"They all have historical significance," Baugh said. "They want to see most of them saved."

While several property owners were approached to make building repairs after the inspections, Liggett became the only person with citations from Baugh that reached the courts, Stumpf added.

Most of his buildings line Market Street, a dirty thoroughfare where windows are boarded up

"I ABSOLUTELY WANT TO SEE OUR TOWN COME BACK. THOSE BUILDINGS, MOST OF THEM ARE FIVE BRICKS THICK. THEY'RE BUILT TO LAST."

NORMA RYAN, PRESERVATIONIST AND FORMER BROWNSVILLE MAYOR

and litter and debris collect in vestibules.

Baugh now is completing interior inspections and preparing to cite Liggett a second time over the same buildings, Stumpf said.

Additional citations can be issued now every 15 days, he said, until the violations are corrected.

It's possible that Liggett could see his fourth and fifth convictions in local court before his initial appeal is heard by a Fayette County judge, Stumpf added.

In lieu of jail time and paying the fines, Liggett could be given the option to turn over title of his dilapidated buildings to Brownsville, Stumpf added. That would begin a new chapter in finding uses for the buildings or tearing down those that are beyond repair.

"I absolutely want to see our

town come back," said Norma Ryan, a local preservationist and former borough mayor. "Those buildings, most of them are five bricks thick. They're built to last."

But with leaking roofs, some are feared to have lost their elaborate interior balconies and stairwells.

"These just aren't ordinary buildings in this downtown," Stumpf said, pointing to hand-carved sandstone ornamentation around a clock above the entrance to an impressive building that once was home to Monongahela National Bank.

"You talk about a crime, when you look at the artistry that went into these buildings," he said.

The Liggetts agreed to discuss the code enforcement effort over the telephone when they were approached by the *Observer-Reporter* Tuesday at a meeting in Brownsville on the downtown revitalization plan. However, they did not return messages seeking comment.

The attorney representing Liggett in his appeal of the building code fines, Sean P. Audley of Pittsburgh, also did not return messages.



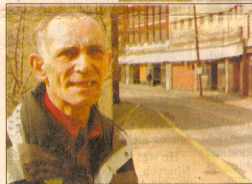
Run-down buildings are near collapse as rooftops begin to cave in around the city of Brownsville.

JOAN O'NEILL/OBSERVER-REPORTER



JOAN O'NEILL/OBSERVER-REPORTER

Neglected buildings tower over Brownsville's main thoroughfare. Code enforcement officer Donald Baugh has identified 128 dilapidated properties in the borough.



JOAN O'NEILL/OBSERVER-REPORTER

Stumpf, Jeri

From: tkupchella [tkupchella@prodigy.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2006 12:16 PM
To: Stumpf, Jeri
Cc: holdham@cjlengineering.com; fkaschalk@yahoo.com; LDI1379@hotmail.com; nantygloboro@netzero.net
Subject: Community Revitalization

BOROUGH OF NANTY GLO

1015 First Street, Suite 1, Nanty Glo, PA 15943 Phone (814) 749-0331

March 22, 2006

Jeri E. Stumpf
Governor's Office of Housing
and Community Revitalization
211 Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Stumpf:

I read, with interest, as did other members of our borough council and committees, your article in February issue of *Borough News*, regarding "Revitalization 101: Brownsville, PA." Your article kindled spark that has been smoldering within us for quite a while. We could surely use the talents that you exhibited in your recent article.

I believe that our borough would be interested in participating in such a program, but we would need to discuss the details. Although we have some of the "ingredients" that you identified, especially the "community commitment to succeed," we fall short on many of the others you identified.

What, then, should we do next to fan the flame? Are you available to assist us? What are the costs associated with your services? Thank you for the article and for your time.

Sincerely,

Thomas Kupchella, Ph.D.
Member, Nanty Glo Borough Council

3/23/2006



TRIBUNE-REVIEW

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Rendell delivers to Brownsville

By **Marsha Forsy**
TRIBUNE-REVIEW
Thursday, April 21, 2005

Bands were playing, flags were flying and the sun was shining for Gov. Ed Rendell's visit to Brownsville on Wednesday, and the state's top leader didn't disappoint the large crowd that gathered to welcome him.

Arriving to the Brownsville Area High School band playing "Happy Days are Here Again," Rendell presented the distressed Mon Valley town with a check for \$150,000.

The grant money, from the governor's Office of Housing & Community Revitalization and the Department of Community & Economic Development, comes on the heels of a \$125,000 state grant that was used by the borough last year to purchase the former Odd Fellows building in the heart of downtown.

This latest funding is earmarked by Brownsville officials to set up offices in the renovated building, located at 31 Market St., and hire a full-time code enforcement officer, along with legal and secretarial assistance.

Photo Gallery

[click to enlarge](#)



Gov. Ed Rendell speaks to a crowd Wednesday

Kenneth Brooks/Tribune-Review

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BRIGHT Tomorrow --
"Brownsville's

Revitalization for a Great Home Town," according to
Jeri Stumpf, special assistant for urban affairs with
the governor's office and a strategic investment
officer assigned to Brownsville.

Stumpf said the hope is that stricter code
enforcement will force property owners in the town's
central business district to clean up their act.

He pointed to the town's many assets, including its
location on the Monongahela River and its
underutilized wharf. But he also acknowledged that,
for years, many downtown buildings have sat empty
and crumbling despite efforts by borough officials to

encourage businesses to locate there and have property owners held accountable.

In presenting the check to borough officials, Rendell announced, "This is meant to say, 'This is
Brownsville. We need to bring Brownsville back.'"

Addressing those property owners who have allowed their buildings to deteriorate, Rendell said, "You
need to bring your building up to code or we're going to raze it, and we're going to raze it at your
expense. ... That's the first part of revitalization. ... Once the buildings are demolished or brought up to
code, then we can start to redevelop."

Referring to the strides made in downtown Uniontown in the past year, Rendell said, "We can do it here.
This is only step one. We will be back with more money to redevelop the way you want it redeveloped."

Then came a surprise announcement from the governor.

After being pulled aside by Fayette County Commissioner Joe Hardy, Rendell told the crowd that Hardy
had offered to match the \$150,000 state grant, giving the borough an even greater boost, and bringing
enthusiastic applause from the crowd.

"That will speed up the process," Rendell said of Hardy's gift.

As for Hardy, he praised Rendell's efforts in Uniontown.

"He's an activist. He made it happen. He stepped up there and did it, and now there's hope," Hardy said.

Prior to the governor's arrival yesterday, Hardy commented on the town's efforts.

"It starts within, and it grows. The citizens of Brownsville are the prime force. You get them together, and you can't stop the force," Hardy said. "There are a lot of hard choices to be made, but it has to happen here and it will."

While there were plenty of accolades being offered yesterday, no one received higher praise than Brownsville Mayor Norma Ryan, who has spearheaded the revitalization movement in recent years.

Rendell joked about how Ryan lobbied him for funding even before he was elected to the state's top post.

"I can't say enough about Mayor Ryan," said Stumpf, who has spent a considerable amount of time in the borough since October. "She's a dynamo, and she inspires the kind of community spirit you need."

"Norma is absolutely unrelenting," said state Rep. William DeWeese, who represents the borough.

Anthony Vigliotti, a Brownsville native, has lived in the borough for much of his 56-year marriage to his wife, Marian. Together, they have seen the town's good times and the bad.

"I hope this opportunity is the first step in bigger and better things to come," said Marian Vigliotti. "The mayor and BRIGHT have done a great job in bringing this all together."

Humbled by the praise, Ryan said, "When you have a passion for your town and a vision for its rebirth, you have to work at it. It's not just me; it's a huge group of supporters.

"I know there's potential here, and I feel thrilled that this is just the beginning."

Marsha Forys can be reached at mforys@tribweb.com

Former state official opens consulting firm to liase with government

By CHRISTINE HAINES

Herald-Standard

After more than 35 years of working in government, Jeri Stumpf wants to teach municipalities how to get what they want and need from government.

Stumpf, the former special assistant to Brownsville for the Governor's Office of Housing and Community Revitalization, has formed his own consulting business, Jeri E. Stumpf and Associates Inc.

"My strength is being able to figure out what people need, then being able to work with the state and federal government to get it done, because what (municipalities) need is not always what the state and federal government are willing to pay for," Stumpf said.

Although Stumpf is from Eastern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania found a spot in Stumpf's heart while he was working as the liaison to Brownsville.

"The work ethic in this part of Pennsylvania is unlike any other part of Pennsylvania. You won't find harder working people anywhere. In Southwestern Pennsylvania, there is a sense of community you won't find in Philadelphia. The only thing they lack is financial resources," Stumpf said of Southwestern Pennsylvania communities. Although Stumpf is no longer in that position, he wants to see results for the town.

"It's become more than a job. I really want to see things turn around," Stumpf said. "I saw an awful lot of bright, talented

"My strength is being able to figure out what people need, then being able to work with the state and federal government to get it done..."

Jeri E. Stumpf

people. Their commitment to their community is unparalleled in Pennsylvania. They don't just want to talk about it, they want to make a change and make it happen. This is an area that wants to see results."

Stumpf said he likes to take a project from concept to fruition.

"That's accountability,"

Stumpf said. "It's more than jut planning. It's more than just affordable housing. It's improving people's lives."

Stumpf said he would like to help communities bring residents back to their urbanized neighborhoods.

"By rehabilitating housing urban settings, it brings more than aesthetics. We've got to make it profitable to invest in our urban areas again. Our urban areas will never be what they were, but you can certainly have more people. The potential is not only that the quality of life will improve, but we are also preserving farmland



Stumpf

Please see **Stumpf**, Page **B5**

Stumpf

Former official begins new phase

Continued from B1

and open spaces," Stumpf said.

Stumpf has prepared a "Do It Yourself Marketing Manual" for boroughs that will be published this month through the Joint Center for Urban Studies in Wilkes-Barre. The manual points municipalities to free information on the Internet that can help them to put together a community profile to attract businesses and development.

"With that manual, we can save them tons of money," Stumpf said. "A lot of things can be solved without money. It may mean doing things differently."

Stumpf said Southwestern Pennsylvania is not as good as it could be and he would like to help it become competitive with the other parts of the state.

"I think in Western Pennsylvania we need more councils of

governments than we already have. We need code enforcement involving several communities. I know everyone wants to have their own and their own control, but the reality is, in 2006, municipalities do not have the resources," Stumpf said.

Stumpf said he is willing to work with several municipalities at one time to develop an affordable plan and to maximize state and federal funding that may be available.

"You don't have to spend a lot of money to be innovative and creative," Stumpf said.

Stumpf said that in addition to the municipal consulting business, he would also like to develop affordable housing, particularly housing that is handicapped-accessible, through his company's "Smart Growth Partners" division. Stumpf said most new home construction in the state starts at \$200,000, putting it out of the affordability range for many working families.

"When we talk about affordable housing today, we're talking about people who work in banks, people who have two incomes, but can't afford rents let

alone buying a house. I'm not looking at duplicating what the housing authorities are already doing," Stumpf said.

Stumpf said he would target individuals who earn too much money to qualify for subsidized housing. "I'd really like to get into disability housing, because people with disabilities should have options too," Stumpf said. "Everything we talk about with disability housing are things your home should have already. Assuming it's flat land you're building on, it's really no more expensive."

Stumpf said accessible housing is needed by all segments of society so more people will be able to stay in their own homes as they grow old.

Stumpf lists his company's areas of expertise as local government research consulting, public relations, municipal and infrastructure finance and government affairs-lobbying. The Smart Growth Partners division is also offering growth management consultation, urban revitalization initiatives, comprehensive planning, economic and community development, affordable housing, and mediation services.

Ship downtown is a 'treasure,' speaker says

By TAYLOR SIMCOX
Staff Writer

Downtown revitalization speaker Jeri Stumpf gave a presentation at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon at the Market Cross Pub Wednesday afternoon, and talked about ways of bringing new business into Shippensburg, while revitalizing the downtown's current elements.

Stumpf began by saying he was impressed with the downtown. "I just drove through Shippensburg, and you have a beautiful downtown. I just want to compliment you because I know that doesn't happen by accident."

Stumpf said that downtown revitalization is an ongoing process, and even a successful business community should always have a game plan for vacancies.

"The whole idea is to maximize foot traffic in our downtowns," he said.

Stumpf said historically in Pennsylvania, the downtown area was the center of banking, government and social activity. Today, boroughs average 82 businesses in their downtown, breaking down to 43 percent retail, 35 percent services, 14 percent education and non-profit, and 4 percent each for county governments and manufacturing.

Malls, box stores, shopping centers and suburban life centers are now designed to look like downtowns, but Stumpf said they can't recapture the charm and ambience of a real downtown.

"This town has non-chain restaurants, historic architecture and beautiful libraries, people-watching and street benches," he said. "What a treasure; they can't replace what craftsmen did

(See DOWNTOWN, page 3)



STUMPF

Downtown

Continued from page 1

here in the 17th and 18th centuries.”

Reinvesting in downtown Shippensburg would save farmland and open space, said Stumpf, which is something dwindling in this region.

He said there are certain considerations which must be made when reinvesting downtown, such as public safety, parking availability, cleanliness and signage. Questions concerning the business aspect of downtown are whether the stores are inviting, unique and affordable, and whether their products or services are readily available and consumer-friendly. Stumpf also said the right mix of businesses is important when considering the needs of a downtown.

“If anyone knows what will work with business, it is the business community. You can’t have half of the businesses open and half of them closed, with all of them going in different directions. You have to be competitive with mall hours; it has to be market-driven.”

As far as competition between downtown businesses is concerned, Stumpf doesn’t see the point.

“If we’re going to get businesses and downtown revitalized, we need to look for what’s unique, what we have a market for. Think of what we need and what we have, and what will go with the current businesses.”

Stumpf said that current businesses in Shippensburg are the lifeblood of downtown, and when it comes to such considerations as zoning ordinances, “we should be flexible and reasonable.”

“It’s easy to impose those ordinances on new buildings because they aren’t up yet, but with current businesses, it’s easier for them to stay and to want to stay without meeting ridiculous ordinances, such as hallway widths or parking allowance.

“Give these businesses a break. They’re here; let’s not make it hard for them to be,” said Stumpf.

While Stumpf wants flexibility on zoning for current businesses, he is less lenient on the topic

of blight, buildings that have been abandoned or severely neglected.

“If I’m an investor and there is blight, I want to know what’s being done. What is said on what’s going to be done may be different from what is actually done. Investors need to be protected and the lender needs to be protected,” said Stumpf. “It robs equity from people the same as if I were to rob a bank.”

Stumpf said that communications between a college and a community “can almost always be better” when Shippensburg University President Bill Ruud asked how to better partner with the community.

“Businesses need to properly market to the students. If students shop downtown, how do we get more from that? Communication is critical,” Stumpf said.

Ruud said he wants to “make the university fit with the community and the community fit with the university, be flexible and make a lot of money” for the area.

Overall, Stumpf sees a lot of potential for Shippensburg.

“In all honesty, I really was impressed. It has a clean appearance, great architecture. Most communities have vacant storefronts but I don’t think I saw any. You could tell a lot of buildings were restored, it was attractive and appealing.

“The only thing I would suggest is maybe some more greenery for summer, additional landscaping or brick sidewalks, but all the businesses appear to be on the right track. It has a great ambience.”

Stumpf said there is a pattern of people wanting to get out of their small hometowns, only to return years later, wanting to revitalize and maintain that small-town flavor.

“In Shippensburg you’ve done so much already, all you have to do is maintain it and stay competitive in the future.”



**Office of the Mayor
The City of Harrisburg**

M.L.K. City Government Center
10 North Second Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1678

Stephen R. Reed
Mayor

(717) 255-3040

September 20, 2006

**Mr. Jeri E. Stumpf, President
Jeri E. Stumpf & Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 85
Willow Street, Pennsylvania 17584**

Dear Jeri:

Many thanks for your correspondence, received September 9th. Your gracious words concerning the continued progress in this City – and your additionally kind words regarding this office – are most appreciated. Most people have absolutely no idea of the extent of time and effort on a daily basis to make good things happen.

Thanks, too, for sending the news article on the Blight Task Force. We had not seen it prior to your sending it.

It remains my hope that the Senate Task Force on Blight will engage your good services. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that their mission and purpose would be well served and more certain of a positive conclusion if you were engaged in the Task Force activities as consultant.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Yours sincerely,

**Stephen R. Reed
Mayor**

SRR/klk