

# Stumpf moves from York post to state urban affairs

**J**eri E. Stumpf has moved forward from city planning to urban affairs in Pennsylvania in the past three decades.

In 1968, Jeri became the city's director of planning. Today, he is the executive director of the Urban Affairs (majority) Committee of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, an elite and powerful position.

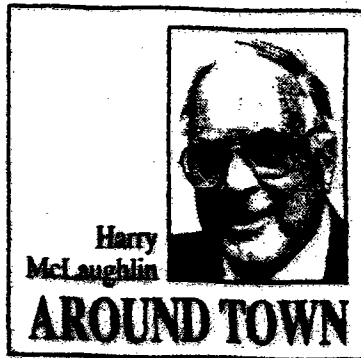
Jeri has gained the respect and support of the house members, and officials of cities and smaller municipalities across the state. He's recently completed and published a report to the General Assembly on eradicating blight and expediting economic development in Pennsylvania in the 21st Century.

He developed the report for the House Urban Affairs Committee, headed by Rep. Chris R. Wogan, and is now sponsored in the House as Resolution 91 by Rep. John Fichter, of the Republican majority.

York's Stephen Stetler is a Democratic minority committee member.

Stumpf has received praise for his work on the blight eradication and economic development bill from Michael S. Levine, general counsel for the national organization, Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC) in New York City, and from Irene McLaughlin (no relation), a Pittsburgh city magistrate who handles the housing court involving property conditions. (LISC has yet to reach York.)

Stumpf's bill, which he hopes will become law, tells



Harry McLaughlin

**AROUND TOWN**

slum landlords to improve their properties or go to jail. He wants municipalities to seize other assets owned by slumlords for ignoring demands that they eradicate blight.

"Municipalities should have the legal right to take assets in other states, if necessary. Presently, communities can file liens against the slum lord, but that isn't as effective as confiscating the other properties to pay for expenses to improve the blighted ones," says Stumpf.

He would also file judgments against slum owners and force the sale of the blighted properties.

Stumpf praised the efforts of York City's private and public groups working together in partnership to improve downtown York, and pointed to Eric Menzer, York's economic development director, and the York Federal Savings and its CEO, Robert Pullo, as examples of community leadership. Dauphin Deposit Bank is also interested.

Stumpf and the House Urban Affairs Committee were directed in 1995 to examine the cause and effect of blight in urban areas, including city and

## AIR RAID WARNING SIGNALS

### RED ALERT - ATTACK IMMINENT

OR SHEN - 3 MIN. FLUCTUATING SIGNAL

OR WINDS - 3 MIN. INTERMITTENT SIGNAL

OR SHEN - 3 MIN. INTERMITTENT SIGNAL

### WHITE ALERT - ALL CLEAR

3 STEADY SIGNALS 1 MIN. EACH

2 MIN. SILENCE BETWEEN SIGNALS

This air raid warning notice was salvaged by Bill Walters, county register of wills, when he worked at AMF Inc.

rural communities. As many as 29 bills have been introduced by members to provide legislation in this matter.

One bill has been introduced by Stetler, who tells Around Town that Stumpf is a committed public urban affairs official. Stetler adds that legislation should be adopted to make it a criminal act for slum lords to ignore the elimination of blighted properties.

"The blight problem legislation is pursued on a bipartisan basis," adds Stetler.

When AMF Inc. took over the facilities occupied by the U.S. Naval Ordnance Plant after World War II, the new workers removed signs from inside the buildings. As one employee was ready to dispose of an air raid warning notice, then new management staffer Bill Walters, now county register of wills, salvaged it and it can be seen here. Harley-Davidson Inc. took over from AMF Inc.

Harry McLaughlin's local Around Town column appears Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in The York Dispatch.