



# TCA Newsletter

Thomas Comitta Associates, Inc.

Fall 2010

Town Planners & Landscape Architects

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### Welcome Manheim Township!

TCA welcomes its newest client, Manheim Township, Lancaster County! Our challenge is to refine the Zoning Ordinance to promote desirable development throughout a Township that boasts productive farmland, a vibrant urban environment, and everything in between.

Even as the leaves begin to turn their brilliant autumn shades, TCA remains focused on variations of "green": green infrastructure and open spaces, green energy, and the overall art and science of creating sustainable places. This work made for a busy summer assisting clients with expert witness testimony, form-based codes, brainstorming new approaches and strategies to municipal challenges, and, of course, designing memorable community spaces.

Our efforts continue into the latter half of 2010, and as we welcome our newest client: Manheim Township. Our increasing presence in Lancaster County is evidence of the growing desire for approaches to planning and development that provide greater sensitivity to design and promote functional and attractive places.

Enjoy the colors of the season!

Regards,

Thomas J. Comitta, AICP, RLA, ASLA  
President, Thomas Comitta Associates, Inc.

**TCA Recognized for Excellence in Analysis & Planning**

## New Face at TCA West

Welcome to Andrew Kriemelmeyer who will be joining the "TCA West" office in Lancaster! Andrew will be assisting the office while Megan is on maternity leave starting early next month.

## Upcoming Events!

### *PA APA Annual Conference*

**Oct. 3 -6 Lancaster, PA**  
(TCA is a proud sponsor of this event.)

### *GVF Land Use Seminar*

**Oct. 8th, Villanova, PA**  
(Join Tom for a session on Form-Based Code principles and Smart Growth.)

## Marcellus Shale Update

TCA will be speaking before the PA State Planning Board at an upcoming meeting to discuss the long-range planning implications of Marcellus Shale on our communities.

## Follow TCA Online!

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Urban Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan for the City of Lancaster Pennsylvania - July 31, 2008

Earlier this year, the PA/DE Chapter of the ASLA recognized TCA for excellence in Analysis and Planning for its *Urban Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan* created for the City of Lancaster. The Award is featured in the current issue of ***PLAN***.

The Plan's strength comes from its strategic, long-term view of the City's park, recreation and open space resources as part of its overall Smart Growth approach. It recognizes that 'green' infrastructure benefits the City's environmental quality, community health, and a sustainable economy.

As the lead consultant, TCA was responsible for all phases of research, public outreach, meetings, and subconsultants.

## Project Updates:

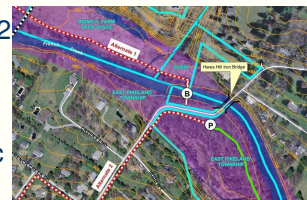
### *Penn Township (Lancaster County) Form-based Code/Ordinance Amendments*



Envisioning, and regulating, better development is greatly enhanced with Form-Based Code and illustrative graphics depicting preferred development types for key locations in the Township. With amendments well underway, revised Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances based on "Transect Zones" are scheduled for adoption in early 2011.

### *French Creek Master Trail Plan*

TCA recently completed a Master Trail Plan for 2 miles along the scenic French Creek in East Pikeland Township. The multi-use (pedestrian, bicyclist, equestrian) trail will incorporate historic resources and new pedestrian bridges within a scenic natural floodplain. The trail will link to local and regional trails, and supports Chester County's regional recreation corridors.



Adoption of the master plan is anticipated in Fall 2010.

### *6th Ward Park Reconstruction*



While other park amenities remain under construction, Lancaster's first combined 'sprayground' and wading pool opened to the public on August 16th. Replacing a wading pool constructed in 1937, Sixth Ward's new pool

takes the form of a figure '6', and has a bathing capacity of 140 people. Designed by TCA with critical input from neighborhood children, water spray features include a dumping trough, ADA-accessible sliding boards, and a 'rain' tunnel.

Current and upcoming park construction phases include an accessible playground and specially designed basketball courts featuring pervious asphalt and a sub-surface infiltration bed to reduce storm water runoff from the park and surrounding streets. New walkways, benches, litter receptacles, traffic-calming curb extensions, and colorful plantings will also enhance this beloved neighborhood open space.

### *City of Lancaster Green Infrastructure Plan*

Prepared by CH2M Hill with supporting input and graphics from TCA, Lancaster's Green Infrastructure Plan provides a timely strategy to address overflows from this city's combined storm water-sanitary sewer system into the Conestoga River and, ultimately, into the Chesapeake Bay. Among many other initiatives, this plan identifies potential



demonstration projects where impervious land coverage is replaced with 'green' infrastructure such as pervious pavement, vegetated roofs, linear infiltration systems, and 'rain gardens' throughout Lancaster's public spaces. Plan goals include removing 14.9 million gallons of water from existing 'grey' infrastructure, improving local water quality, and restoring natural hydrological cycles to make our nation's oldest inland city a recognized model for other Class 3 municipalities.

### **TCA Around Town**

\* On September 23rd, the National League of Cities Leadership Training Institute hosted its *18th Annual Leadership Summit in Philadelphia*. The Summit focused on the roles and responsibilities of elected officials. Carolyn Comitta, Mayor of West Chester Borough (and TCA's CFO) served as facilitator and "theme weaver". Tom Comitta facilitated a team building exercise.

\* On September 9th, Tom shared his Form-based Code insights with the audience at the "*First Annual Community and Economic Development Summit*" for Westmoreland County at St. Vincent's College in Latrobe, PA.

\*On September 2nd, Tom was a featured speaker at the "*Alternative*

*Energy and Regulations in PA Communities"*, sponsored by the PA APA, Central Section, in Harrisburg, PA. Using the transect to illustrate a variety of neighborhood types, Tom's discussion highlighted the energy efficiencies offered by compact, mixed use development.

\* This past summer, the PA Commonwealth Court used analysis and testimony of Edward A. Theurkauf pertaining to open space as the legal basis to uphold Charlestown Township's denial of an ineffective PRD application.

### **Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities: Core Communities in Crisis Task Force**

Struggling municipalities across the state have joined together to discuss the fiscal challenges facing local governments, in hopes that the next governor and 2011 General Assembly present an opportunity for joint solutions. The Core Communities in Crisis Task Force, including TCA's Carolyn Comitta, has met twice this summer and will hold its final meeting on October 14th at Albright College in Reading.



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**Town Planners & Landscape Architects**

18 West Chestnut Street, West Chester PA 19380 | 135 North Duke Street, Lancaster PA, 17602

ph: (610) 696-3896 | fax: (610) 430-3804 | ph: (717) 606-2098 | fax: (717) 394-1362

marketing@comitta.com | [www.comitta.com](http://www.comitta.com)