

Annual Report 2004

Young Preservationists on the move!

Young Preservationists
Association of Pittsburgh



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Young Preservationists are on the move! From Indiana to Beaver, Butler to Waynesburg, Ford City, Greensburg, Uniontown, and Washington to the neighborhood of Manchester, young preservationists continue to build momentum in the Pittsburgh region. With our “New Frontiers” project, our second-annual “Top Ten” list, successful historic designation of the New Granada Theater, and negotiated settlement with RIDC over the future of the former Nabisco plant, YPA was in the news, on the ground, and part of the action throughout the region in 2004.



YPA set several precedents this year. For the first time, regional preservation workshops were held to determine the historic preservation priorities for each of the nine counties in southwestern Pennsylvania and the City of Pittsburgh. Called “New Frontiers in Preservation,” ten focus group meetings were held to identify the top preservation priorities in the region. Preservation of Main Street communities was overwhelmingly chosen as the top priority.



Continuing our commitment to recognizing and preserving Pittsburgh's African American heritage, YPA embarked on several new initiatives this year. We were a co-sponsor of National City Bank's 12th-annual Black History Essay Contest that focused, for the first time, on African American historic *sites* (as opposed to famous African Americans).

We also nominated the New Granada Theater to be a City of Pittsburgh Historic Landmark, only the third city historic landmark dedicated to African American history.



We also negotiated a unique agreement with the Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC) for the preservation and reuse of the former Nabisco plant, and avoided a costly “showdown” in public hearings and the press.

Most of all, YPA kept historic preservation in the spotlight. There were at least 20 different articles about YPA and historic preservation in 2004. A brief Google search turns up 28,800 of hits for YPA, many referring to articles that have appeared throughout the year.

Our Membership has topped 100 people, our website has been seen by thousands, our web-based reports have been downloaded hundreds of times, and we are on target to host the first-ever conference for young preservationists in September 2005. Not bad for a group of committed volunteers. The state of the Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh is strong.



“

How wonderful that all of you are there, organized and energized!

What you are doing—getting young people engaged in leading—is vital. I was 29 when the National Trust chose me to open the new Midwest Regional Office, and 31 when the idea of the Main Street Project emerged, as I traveled through countless towns with beautiful, nearly vacant downtowns.

I can remember vividly the frustration we all had with the confining world view of Those Who Called the Shots in Preservation—most of whom were a generation older at least. We knew we were doing desperately needed work: finding a pragmatic, realistic, systemic way of assuring the continuity of historic downtowns, but we were butting up against established Truths.

I can see a fresh approach in the work described on YPA's marvelous website: a top 10 opportunities list rather than an 11 most endangered. What a concept.

”

Mary C. Means
Founder, the National
Main Street Program and
Principal, Mary Means &
Associates, Inc.
Alexandria, VA

Partners

YPA could not have accomplished these things without the dedication and expertise of our committed partners.

- ◆ Beaver Initiative for Growth
- ◆ Susan Brandt
- ◆ Carnegie Library of Braddock
- ◆ Citizens Bank
- ◆ Community Connections, Heinz School
- ◆ Dollar Bank
- ◆ Fayette County Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Greater Ford City CDC
- ◆ Greene County Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- ◆ Harmony Museum
- ◆ Hill Community Development Corporation
- ◆ Main Street Washington
- ◆ Main Street Waynesburg
- ◆ Manchester Citizens Corporation
- ◆ National City Bank
- ◆ National Road Heritage Corridor
- ◆ National Trust for Historic Preservation
- ◆ Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
- ◆ Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation
- ◆ PNC Bank
- ◆ Preservation Pennsylvania
- ◆ Preservation Pittsburgh
- ◆ Sky Bank
- ◆ Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County
- ◆ Sustainable Pittsburgh
- ◆ University of Pittsburgh
- ◆ Urban League of Pittsburgh
- ◆ Western Pennsylvania Museum Council

We would also like to acknowledge the good work provided to us on the New Frontiers project by our interns, **Sean Capperis** (now a Board Member) and **Natalie Newman**.



Braddock's Main Street was among those commercial corridors identified by residents as a preservation priority for Allegheny County during a YPA New Frontiers workshop.



Winners of the YPA-National City Bank Black History Essay Contest.



Mark Rendulic, Executive Vice President of National City Bank and Kemo Crawford of YPA (spokesperson for the contest), pose with an award winner at the YPA-National City Bank Black History Essay Contest.

YPA Board (2004)

1. **Lee Ann Antol**, *Secretary of YPA*, Examiner, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
2. **Sean Capperis**, Student, University of Pittsburgh
3. **Rachel Colker**, Independent Consultant
4. **Kemo Crawford**, Architect, IKM
5. **Jerome Frank**, Program Coordinator, Urban League of Pittsburgh
6. **Dan Holland**, *Founder and Chair of YPA*, Senior Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Pittsburgh Branch
7. **Jeff Gernert**, Director of Tourism, Greene County Convention and Visitor's Bureau
8. **Linda Gwinn**, President, Blairsville (Indiana County) Improvement Group
9. **Deborah Gross**, *Vice Chair of YPA*, Partner, Percolater consulting firm
10. **Matthew Ragan**, Analyst, Mellon Financial
11. **Heather Sage**, Outreach Coordinator for Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future
12. **Sean Simmons**, Research Analyst, National City Bank of Pennsylvania
13. **Chloe Velasquez**, *Treasurer of YPA*, Founder and Principal of Sabio Water
14. **Dan Woodske**, Director of Marketing, Beaver Initiative for Growth



City Photographer's Collection.

The New Granada Theater is now a City Historic Landmark, only the third African American historic landmark in the City.

Left, a 1935 photo of the New Granada, built as the Pythian Temple.



Arthur Ziegler of Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation speaks at YPA's Preservation Week event in May.



Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

YPA negotiated interim protection for the former Nabisco Plant in East Liberty. Only time will tell if the agreement will be honored by RIDC.

Photo: Nabisco in the 1950s.



Indiana County residents decide the historic preservation priorities at a New Frontiers in Preservation workshop.

“Your organization performs outstanding services which assist all young preservationists to become part of Allegheny County’s preservation movement. I wish you much success.”

Stanley A. Lowe
Senior Vice President, Community Revitalization
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Washington, DC

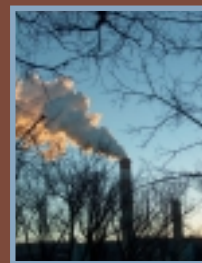


Pittsburgh residents weigh their vote on preservation matters for the city in the Manchester neighborhood.

YPA Advisory Committee

1. **Scott Brown**, Vice President and Community Investment Manager, Citizens Bank
2. **Terri Davis**, Vice President and CRA Officer, Sky Bank
3. **Lu Donnelly**, Architectural Historian
4. **Kim Falk-MacArthur**, Project Coordinator, Community Connections, Carnegie Mellon University
5. **Larry Glasco**, Professor of History, History Department, University of Pittsburgh
6. **Randy Harris**, Historian
7. **David Kahley**, President and CEO, The Progress Fund
8. **Stanley Lowe**, Vice President, National Trust for Historic Preservation
9. **Jim Matthews**, Senior Vice President and Corporate Community Reinvestment Manager, National City Bank
10. **Tracy Montarti**, Owner, In the Loop, Inc.
11. **Cathy Niederberger**, Senior Vice President, PNC Community Development Banking, PNC Bank
12. **Charles Peterson**, Vice President, Community Development, Dollar Bank
13. **Rob Ruck**, Senior Lecturer, History Department, University of Pittsburgh
14. **Doug Skowron**, Real Estate Developer, Pittsburgh Gateways
15. **John Stephen**, Consultant
16. **Richard Taylor**, CEO, Macedonia Development Corporation
17. **Althea Worthy**, Historic Preservationist

Sprawl is the *new* smoke



More than a century ago, many people in the Pittsburgh region equated smoky skies with progress—it was a symbol that the mills were running and people had jobs. Then, the skies cleared up, industry got cleaner, but the mills shut down and the jobs dried up. Pittsburgh lost its chief identity as “workshop to the world.”

Today, in a struggle to find our identity and recreate the sense of prosperity we once had, some people have begun to equate sprawling development with progress. They see earth movers, people working, and houses and stores rising along a ridgeline in the suburbs. “I like sprawl!” one man asserted in a public hearing to approve a new suburban mall development.



But sixty years ago, we learned that we could have clean skies *and* jobs; we don't have to pollute the land, water, and air to thrive. Most people would agree that the Pittsburgh region is a better place with smoke controls, water filtration plants, sewage removal, and landfills. Steel mills have been replaced by so-called “clean” industries like software development, medicine, and banking that provide good jobs without the streetlights coming on at noon.



The same goes for Main Street revitalization, transit-oriented development, brownfield revitalization, and adaptive reuse. We don't have to sprawl to grow. Perhaps because other, more prosperous parts of the United States, such as the Washington, D.C.-Baltimore metro area, have outward signs of growth along high-profile corridors do we equate sprawl with growth.

But Washington, D.C., is also doing a marvelous job of reinvesting in its inner core. Downtown Washington bustles with life not seen for fifty years. Hotels, restaurants, shops, and housing proliferate and people throng the streets at midnight where just fifteen years ago few dared to venture, even during the day. And young people are everywhere to be seen.



Meanwhile, the Pittsburgh region continues to make inconsistent decisions about its future.

“

YPA is taking good risks that will benefit us all in the long run.

”

Susan Shearer,
Executive Director,
Preservation
Pennsylvania

“

The arrival of the YPA on the local preservation scene is the best news I've seen in ten years.

”

John Murdoch
Local
Preservationist,
Pittsburgh



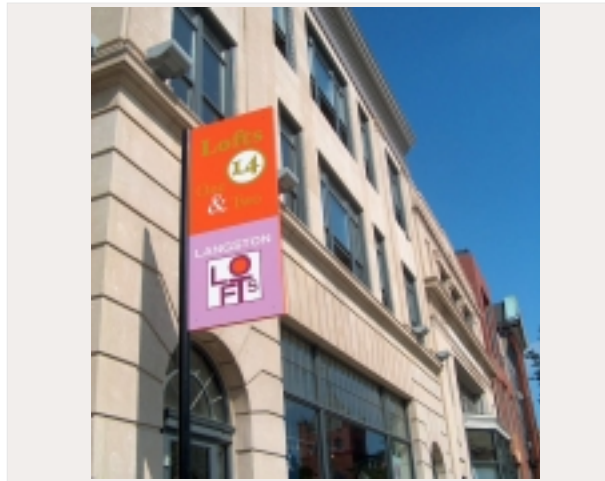
Does sprawl equal progress in a declining region?

Is there a better way to grow?



Supply of historic loft housing, shops, and restaurants can barely keep pace with demand in Washington, DC.

This is Logan Circle, an area that 15 years ago was D.C.'s "Red Light District." Now, it's a red hot real estate market.



Meanwhile, demand for urban space is low in Waynesburg and other small towns in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Historic preservation has been proven, again and again, in multiple communities across the country, to have a substantial economic benefit on local and state economies. So, then, why is the Pittsburgh region not pursuing this as a holistic economic development strategy? Instead, we are moving in bits and pieces, only to take two steps backward when decision makers finance sprawl.



While Uniontown celebrates its downtown revival, thanks to the millions of private investment poured into the town by County Commissioner and Eighty Four Lumber magnate Joe Hardy, \$3,000,000 in federal money is being used to build new roads to serve an office park being constructed outside the city.



Waynesburg has toiled for years to rebuild its Main Street with little government support, but Greene County commissioners have already committed \$13 million in tax dollars to bring Wal-Mart to a suburban location just outside Waynesburg.



In Washington County, \$3 million in state and federal funds have been committed to create a "lifestyle center" at the suburban Southpointe development, but few federal or state funds have been committed for the revitalization of downtown Washington, Canonsburg, or Carnegie.

As Connellsville moves to create a strategic plan for the future of the borough, three new business parks—in Fairchance, North Union Township, and South Union Township—have been built outside the city.

The future of the Pittsburgh region lies with young people and broad-based community support for historic preservation as a tool for community and economic development. Last year, there were nearly 27,000 degrees conferred on college graduates in a region that supports more than 90,000 college students. That's a lot of young people. Some will stay; many will leave for better opportunities elsewhere. But we all have one thing in common: we seek a high quality of life.

Pittsburgh has what many regions of the country are trying to create: a unique sense of place that is attractive to knowledge workers looking for lively, diverse communities. Our older towns and historic neighborhoods, which offer this distinctiveness, are the Pittsburgh region's *competitive advantage*. So, why are we not investing in our competitive advantages? Instead, we continue to abandon, neglect, and demolish them. Why tear down the things that young people want?

In 2004, it was announced that we would lose Braddock's historic Main Street, Chiodo's Tavern in Homestead (a contributing structure to the National Register district), the Samson Funeral Home built in c. 1890 in Shadyside, and the former St. Joe's Hospital along Penn Avenue in Friendship (a sad blemish on the otherwise highly successful Penn Avenue Arts Initiative corridor). What kind of a message does this send to young people?



However, there is good news for the Pittsburgh region, and it is built on historic preservation. Some examples:

- ◆ Transformation of the historic Armstrong Cork Factory (#10 on YPA's Top Ten List in 2003) into 297 loft apartments, parking, and retail shops has begun.
- ◆ Pittsburgh's historic Lawrenceville neighborhood is one of the hot new places to live, work, and play, with new restaurants, antiques shops, and housing—old and new.
- ◆ Downtown Uniontown (#1 on the Top Ten List in 2003) is in the midst of a renaissance by County Commissioner Joe Hardy, who calls it "the Marshall Plan" for Uniontown.
- ◆ Nationwide Appraisal and Title Services Corp. and Millcraft Industries are constructing a 140,000-square-foot headquarters in downtown Washington, Pa., which is to be a green building with street-level retail. The development, known as Nationwide Centre, and an adjacent Beau Street Park, are part of Phase One of The Crossroads, which Millcraft envisions as a long-term, mixed-use, residential, commercial and retail development in Washington.
- ◆ S&T Bank plans to build its new headquarters in downtown Indiana, Indiana County.

“

"The work of the YPA reminds us that a city's history is one of its greatest assets."

Rachel Colker, YPA Board Member

"While the YPA is bringing awareness to preservation issues throughout the region, it is also developing some of the brightest and best young community leaders for Southwestern Pennsylvania."

Dan Woodske, YPA Board Member

"Having YPA support the work that needs to be done in regard to preserving history is very refreshing...and lends a great deal of credibility to the cause!"

Linda Gwinn, YPA Board Member

"I would hope that the Young Preservationists could inspire future generations to preserve special places and to appreciate their value."

Matt Ragan, YPA Board Member

"The YPA's proactive mission is invaluable in securing the regional assets we have today for the generation of tomorrow."

Sean Simmons, YPA Board Member

"YPA has staked a solid claim to become an important catalyst for positive social and economic change in Western Pennsylvania."

Randy Harris, YPA Advisory Committee Member

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Preservation Losses

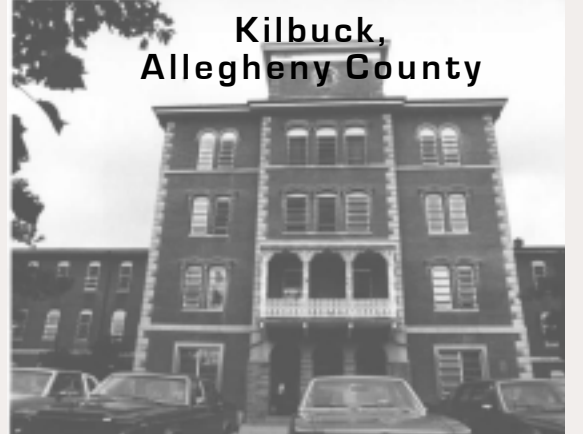


The Samson Funeral Home in Shadyside, left, was reduced to a pile of rubble (right) in 2004.



Tough times for Main Streets in the Mon Valley:

Historic buildings in Braddock, left, lost their designation as a National Register Historic District and will be demolished, while Chiodo's landmark tavern (right) in Homestead will yield to a Walgreens.

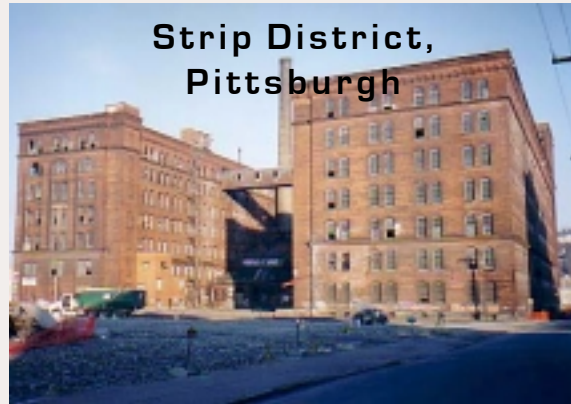


Dixmont photo taken from National Register application, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

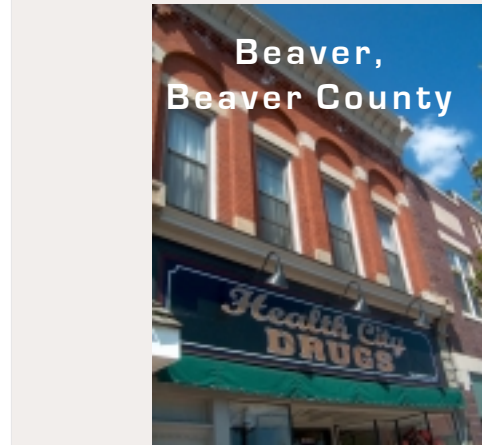
Historic St. Joe's in Friendship succumbed to the wrecking ball (left).

The National Register-listed Dixmont Hospital (right) may be replaced by Wal-Mart.

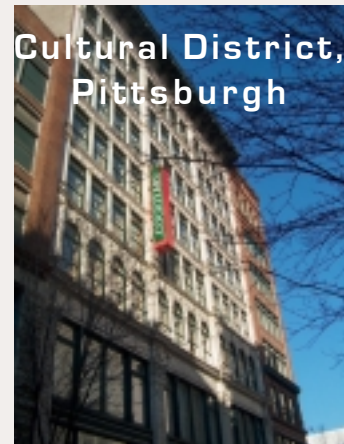
Preservation Victories



The historic Armstrong Cork Factory (left) will be restored and converted into 295 loft apartments and retail shops. S&T Bank announced that they will build a new headquarters in downtown Indiana, Pa. (right).



Ford City's Heritage and Technology Park (left), identified as the top priority in Armstrong County, will soon be home to a new, clean, 9,200 square-foot state-of-the-art manufacturing facility for silicon carbide wafers and employ 140 people. Main Street Beaver's aesthetic beauty also produces economic returns for the town (right).



Color has returned to Butler Street in Lawrenceville in the form of new retail shops (left). A new hotel and restaurant enliven downtown's only thriving part, the historic Cultural District (right).

“
Historic preservation is important to all of us and you have done a wonderful job of showing just that through the sites you have chosen.”

Richard Moe
President
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Washington, DC

“
Thanks very much for the information about your Top Ten and a proactive approach to identifying preservation needs in the Pittsburgh area.”

Peter Brink
Senior Vice President,
Programs
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Washington, DC

If sprawl is our number one challenge it is also our call to action. It makes us all feel good to point the finger at big developers, politicians, and Wal-Mart and say, “it’s *their* fault for our region’s decline!” Some have lamented the many layers of government in this region. But in reality, we must take some responsibility for our region’s destiny. After all, someone elected our leaders to vote—or not vote—on legislative matters affecting our region. Someone—or no one—provided a voice at public hearings on how best to develop land. Someone must shop at Wal-Mart.



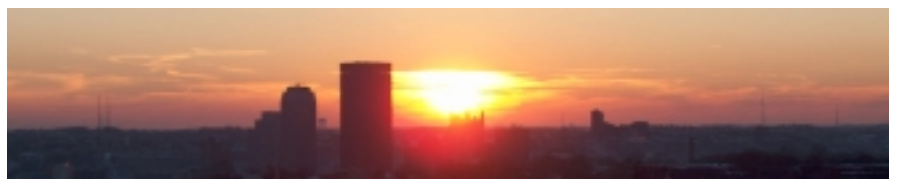
To keep the momentum going, several progressive measures need our support. The PA State Historic Tax Credit legislation (HB 26, 27, and 504) will, if passed, substantially enhance economic development in underserved markets which are rich in historic structures. Another bill, sponsored by PA State Rep. Dave Reed of Indiana, will encourage the location of state government agencies to downtown areas. We also need to support the Campaign to Renew PA, a three-year initiative hosted by 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania to create a network of organizations and individuals that advocates for state policies and local and regional actions that will restore the economic competitiveness, government effectiveness, and quality of life of Pennsylvania’s communities.

In addition, preservationists need to comment on their county Comprehensive Plan—a master plan that guides growth. These plans, which require public input, will dictate how your tax dollars will be spent. We should support our local museums, including Fort Necessity in Fayette County, which is constructing a multi-million dollar interpretive and education center to honor the French and Indian War. And, we must support each other by communicating, collaborating, and forming a united front for preservation.



The future is in us. We hold the key to the hope of the region by organizing, voting, and participating in the public process. This is the agenda of the Young Preservationists Association: to inspire our young people—and people of all ages—to take control of our communities and our region to shape a better tomorrow. There are challenges, to be sure. But as we watch the sun set on another productive day, we think forward to tomorrow as being a better one than the last.

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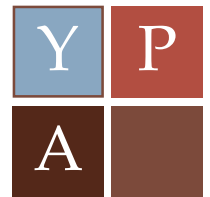
"Winter Comes to Monongahela Valley," 1915, by Arthur Watson Sparks (1870-1919). Oil on canvas. Approximately 36 " X 48.5"

Publication rights for non-commercial use granted by Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA, May 2004. Painting acquired by Elizabethtown College as a gift from Armstrong World Industries, Lancaster, PA.

Reproduced from a photograph by Randolph J. Harris, Mount Joy, PA, formerly of Homestead. The painting is believed to have been brought to Lancaster in the 1920s when Armstrong moved its headquarters from Pittsburgh.

Sparks was head of the Department of Painting and Illustration at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh and earned the reputation according to William Gerdtz as "probably Pittsburgh's leading Impressionist artist."

For more information on Sparks, go to <http://www.arthurwatsonsparks.com/>



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YPA Mission

The active participation of young people in the preservation of historic resources.

Young Preservationists
Association of Pittsburgh
PO Box 2669
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-2669
info@youngpreservationists.org
www.youngpreservationists.org

Places & Spaces:
The Regeneration of Preservation
the first-ever preservation conference
for Young Preservationists
September 16-17, 2005
Pittsburgh
details at www.youngpreservationists.org