How can we achieve our vision and succeed in our mission? Looking ahead, a group of Friends of Worcester volunteers got together this past summer and brainstormed ideas to establish and implement goals for the next five years.

**Friends of Worcester’s Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2009 - 2014**

Our Five-Year Strategic Plan has several elements, which are intended to coordinate with the different parts of our Mission.

**Open Space**

The protection and preservation of open space are at the heart of Friends of Worcester. We are committed to promoting the preservation of open space by working with landowners to ensure that they are aware of this option. Our goals are to facilitate the preservation of 500 acres of open space in Worcester over the next five years, and to create a dedicated land preservation fund, in cooperation with an existing land trust, to help with this land preservation goal.

**Villages**

We propose to return our villages – Fairview Village, Center Point, and Cedars – to their former role as centers of community activity. Village-scale shops, offices, and
green spaces will be attractive to both residents and visitors. FOW supports the creation and adoption of a “walkable” Village Center ordinance, including options to transfer development rights (TDR) and to permit mixed-use zoning where it is appropriate. We encourage residents to support the creation of a Village Master Plan for each of Worcester’s villages, to guide desired growth in these areas.

Community Education

Community education is vital to our success. We will continue to reach out to educate Worcester residents about township issues that affect our community, using our newsletters, meetings, website, emails, and visibility at township meetings and events.

Organizational Growth

Organizations do not work without people. We will encourage more residents to join us at our meetings and to become active in Worcester’s future. We need community support, involvement, and funding to move our mission forward.

Partnerships

Partnership relationships are already an important priority for FOW. We can all benefit by working together to promote our shared goals. We will continue to expand, enhance, and build new alliances to advance and generate support for our goals. We will develop productive working relationships by partnering with other township organizations on joint projects and initiatives that benefit our community and facilitate the achievement of FOW’s vision, mission, and goals. We will also develop effective working relationships with local land trusts and the Worcester business community.

Our goals in this Five-Year Strategic Plan are a continuation of FOW’s efforts over many years. Our labor of love in keeping Worcester “special” is ongoing. If we join together, we can keep Worcester a wonderful community in which to live, work, and play for generations to come. We need your help and support. We invite you to join us to keep Worcester green. 😊

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead

Once it’s gone, it’s gone forever!

Meet Montgomery County Lands Trust

By Montgomery County Lands Trust

Montgomery County Lands Trust (MCLT) is grateful for the long and productive partnership we have with Worcester Township. In cooperation with the township and with the support of Friends of Worcester, MCLT has preserved over 400 acres in Worcester. Most recently, we partnered with Natural Lands Trust, located in Media, on the conservation of the D’Lauro property on Valley Forge Road. We are pleased to work so closely with a community that serves as a conservation model for the region.

Montgomery County Lands Trust was formed in 1993 to preserve and connect the natural areas, farmland, and neighborhood green spaces that contribute to our quality of life, to a clean and abundant water supply, and to the health of our region’s economy. When we were established as a non-profit organization, the county commissioners had just adopted the first Montgomery County Open Space Program.

The group of county leaders who spearheaded this first $100 million Open Space Preservation program felt strongly that a private, non-profit organization was needed to complement the public effort to address the increasing loss of green space and natural resource areas throughout Montgomery County. The Lands Trust was formed not only to advance the county program, but to address private aspects of land preservation and to provide leadership in structuring public/private partnerships.

Since that time, the efforts of Montgomery County Lands Trust have been directed at preserving open space, fostering smart growth, and providing education to county citizens. We maintain a unique position as advisor and counselor to community leaders and elected officials at the local, county, and state levels. We have grown from an organization staffed by two part-time employees to an energetic office fueled by five professionals.

In 2003, Montgomery County Lands Trust played a pivotal role in the passage of the $150 million Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns Open Space Referendum. In 2006, MCLT spearheaded Montgomery County
Green Futures, an education initiative featuring events and workshops that provide local leaders with the open space tools they need to make informed decisions benefiting their communities. In the last four years, more than 900 municipal officials, technical advisors, and open space advocates have attended these workshops.

As with so many projects, the catalyst for conservation is a local citizen. In 2002, that was the case for the 30.55-acre Gerstemeier parcel in Worcester, which was preserved through the actions of long-time MCLT member and Worcester resident Peter Schlotterer. With our guidance, Mr. Schlotterer stepped in to place a large buyer’s deposit on the property, which was at risk for development.

After another conservation buyer was found for the Gerstemeier tract, Mr. Schlotterer, who has since passed away, donated a conservation easement on his own 17-acre property next door. Mr. Schlotterer’s generosity, combined with the foresight of township and county leaders, created a block of protected land in Worcester which includes the connecting Scarlett Farm (protected through the Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Program) and the county-owned Peter Wentz Farmstead historic site.

More recently, MCLT played a role as a conservation partner in the protection of the 104-acre D’Lauro family property. Bordered by Valley Forge Road, Stump Hall Road, and Water Street Road, this expansive, classic Pennsylvania landscape was designated for conservation by Worcester resident Frank D’Lauro. Now lovingly maintained by his heirs, it preserves stunning roadside views enjoyed by Worcester residents. Sixty of the preserved acres — owned and managed by Natural Lands Trust — are set aside as a Nature Preserve for the public enjoyment of Worcester and county residents. The remaining 44 acres remain in private hands, preserved in perpetuity by Montgomery County Lands Trust.

Acting both as a clearinghouse for land preservation questions and as a resource for public and private land conservation, our organization continues to focus on preservation and education. MCLT accepts donations of conservation easements and monitors them throughout Montgomery County and beyond. Since our founding, we have acquired easements on 2644 acres and facilitated the protection of another 2252 acres.

Montgomery County Lands Trust looks forward to future collaborative projects with Worcester Township and is pleased to work with a community whose residents place such a high value on land conservation.

What Does a Township Supervisor Do?

Township Supervisors are the elected officials responsible for making all of the major decisions of the township, with the exception of zoning appeals. Worcester’s three Supervisors are elected to serve staggered six-year terms.

Worcester’s Supervisors meet twice monthly to discuss current issues and vote on the best course of action for the township to take. The Supervisors’ decisions are carried out by the Township Manager and staff. They are advised on legal issues by a Township Solicitor and on engineering issues by a Township Engineer, both of whom are appointed annually by the Supervisors. They also appoint the members of the Planning Commission, the Zoning Hearing Board, and the various township committees, such as Parks and Recreation.

Township supervisors must also create and pass a balanced budget every year, reflecting anticipated revenues for the year and the expenses and capital projects they expect to incur. Typical Worcester expenses include the township’s administration, salaries and benefits, repairing township roads, mowing grass, snow plowing, park acquisition and maintenance, contributions to the Worcester Volunteer Fire Company, and much more.
Worcester’s municipal taxes are among the lowest in the county, yet our township has been a leader in the acquisition of open space and the purchase of development rights. The township has also contributed to the preservation of Worcester’s historic heritage through its ownership of Community Hall in Fairview Village (built in 1919), Farmers’ Union Hall in Center Point (built in 1895), and the Smith spring house near Hollow Road (believed to have been built in the late 1700s).

Another major area of responsibility is overseeing the management of the township staff, much like the CEO of a business. The Supervisors hire and give direction to the Township Manager on a wide variety of issues, including staffing; problem solving; maintenance of township parks, trails and other real estate; snow plowing; road maintenance; and major purchases.

Supervisors also review plans for proposed residential and commercial developments and make sure that these projects meet all local, state, and federal requirements. With the assistance of the Planning Commission, Engineer, Solicitor, and Manager, the Supervisors consider issues such as stormwater drainage, sewage disposal, setbacks, density, open space, trail connections, and the concerns of neighbors.

Our township Supervisors are Worcester’s representatives and spokespersons for the township in the greater community. Local interests must be represented when decisions are being made by the County Commissioners and their various Boards, PECO, PennDOT, the Turnpike Commission, our state legislature, DCNR (which runs the state park system), local lands trusts, and many others. Supervisors must be able to work with all of these agencies and organizations in order to serve the needs and interests of township residents.

The Board of Supervisors is also the township’s legislative body. At times, the township’s ordinances must be adjusted to handle the changing times and reflect the needs and wishes of the residents. Township ordinances affect many situations, from how close to a stream a house can be built to how many parking spaces a retail store should have. New issues also arise, such as whether to allow electric generation for sale to PECO using solar panels, or deciding where cell towers should be allowed. Supervisors must also stay current on federal, state, and county regulations that could affect our township.

Preserving Worcester’s character as a rural community has been possible because of the dedication and hard work of generations of Worcester’s Supervisors. Community involvement and a knowledge of township issues are important, but vision and commitment are key to any successful endeavor. Township Supervisors are public servants who must work constantly to be aware of what residents are thinking and what kind of community they want their township to be.

Worcester Elementary School Community Fall Festival
Friday, October 30
Worcester Elementary School
6:30-9:30 p.m.
Food ~ Entertainment ~ Activities ~ Displays
Fun for the Whole Family!
Eyes on the Issues

FOW continues to keep an eye on the issues in the township which can affect open space and our rural heritage. Many of these issues are updated regularly on our website, friendsofworcester.org. Proposals for most subdivisions and land development activities (both commercial and residential) are shown on the “Township Maps” page of our website.

Pennsylvania Turnpike Expansion

Proposal: Widen the 10.5-mile section of the Northeast Extension between Lansdale and the Mid-County Interchange from four to six lanes, plus a 26-foot median strip.

Last September the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission released a revised design plan for the project which reflected additional sound barriers and fewer property takings. The new design also noted that the project has been divided into two sections. The southern section includes a large number of the affected properties in Worcester, from North Wales Road to Berks Road. This section will be addressed first.

A noise study commissioned by the turnpike last year recommended noise barriers in Worcester from North Wales Road as far north as the last house on Crestline Drive in Sunnybrook. Barriers were not recommended for the remainder of the homes in Worcester along the turnpike. Friends of Worcester continues to work with affected residents and local, state, and turnpike officials to extend the noise barriers further along the turnpike in Worcester.

Worcester residents in the Bethel Road area have been working with the turnpike’s engineering firm to minimize the impact of the stormwater basins proposed for this section of the turnpike. An alternative design was proposed this summer which consists of just one naturalized basin. This proposal is now under review by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, which must issue the final approval for the design.

PECO Generating Substation

Proposal: Build an electricity routing substation, including two “ring buses” (a rectangular cluster of poles 20 to 30 feet high), three transformers (three-sided enclosures with approximately 30-foot-high concrete walls), clusters of circuit breakers (approximately 20 feet high), a control building, and four to six lightning masts (approximately 60 feet high), on a 9-acre parcel owned by PECO south of Fisher Road. A security fence will surround this equipment.

PECO started site work, including construction of an access road, last fall. Earlier this year, PECO’s application to build this substation was approved by the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission. PECO has worked with its Residents Advisory Committee to design the entrance to the access road and address issues concerning screening and stormwater basins. The project’s completion date has been pushed back to the summer of 2011.

Cedars Country Store Zoning Request

Proposal: Expand the Cedars Country Store by over 1000 square feet. The proposed expansion is more than what is allowed under the zoning ordinance without a variance.

The hearing for this matter began in March. At the April 28 meeting, the applicant provided additional details, as requested by the board, on the proposed project. According to the applicant, between 1307 and 1595 square feet are proposed to be added to the building to accommodate a new steak house restaurant with a bar area.

Several residents of Cedars village expressed their concerns about increased noise, traffic, lights, and odors. They also pointed out that the use of the property proposed by the applicant is allowed only in Worcester’s Shopping Center district.

At the May 26 meeting, the Zoning Board announced its decision to deny the requested variance.

November 3rd General Election for Worcester Supervisor

Get ready to cast your vote! You can make a difference!

Important issues in this election —

- Managing growth in Worcester
- Keeping Worcester rural
- Preserving our open space

What is each candidate’s position on these issues?

What experience will each candidate bring to the office?

Cast your vote for Worcester’s future on November 3rd

Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
**Arbor Day at Worcester Elementary**

Friends of Worcester’s Outreach Committee joined volunteers from Meadowood to spend a day last spring helping Worcester Elementary School students celebrate Arbor Day. A white oak seedling was presented to each student, along with an educational booklet explaining the history of Arbor Day and providing information about the value of trees in our community and in our own back yard. Coupons for local businesses were also included.

Families wondering what their white oak might look like someday can visit the Methacton Oak (pictured above), one of Worcester’s longest lived trees. This historic tree, located near the Methacton Mennonite Cemetery on the corner of Mill and Dell Roads, is about 375 years old.

Friends of Worcester would like to thank the following businesses for their support of Arbor Day:
- Fabulous Folks
- Hatfield UPS Store
- Merrymead Farm
- O&F Farms
- Solaris Grille
- Willow Creek Orchards

**Worcester Historical Society presents**

“**Barns of Worcester**”

Monday, November 2, 2009
7:30 pm

Farmers’ Union Hall
2011 Valley Forge Road, Center Point
Light Refreshments Will Be Served

**Keep Worcester Clean and Green**

Please join us Saturday, November 14
8:30 to 10:00 a.m.

Help keep our township roads "Clean and Green" — Skippack Pike between North Wales and Bethel Roads

Interested residents may contact FOW Outreach Coordinator Jennifer Strouse at jennifer_strouse@emcare.com or 215-272-3989

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**SUPPORT FRIENDS OF WORCESTER**

FRIENDS OF WORCESTER is a non-profit organization made up of new and long-time residents of the township. All involved residents share an appreciation for the rural quality of Worcester and a common concern for its future. FOW seeks to influence that future. All funds received are used to support our efforts to preserve open space, maintain the rural lifestyle of the community and keep our neighbors informed through our minutes and newsletters. All contributors receive our monthly agenda and minutes as well as notification of important township events.

- □ Friend - $30
- □ Partner - $50
- □ Benefactor - $100
- □ Other

NAME: ____________________________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________________________

PHONE: ____________________________________________

E-MAIL: ____________________________________________

All residents, contributing or not, are always welcome at FOW monthly meetings.

Please send your tax-deductible contributions to:

FRIENDS OF WORCESTER
P.O. BOX 545
WORCESTER, PA 19490

The official registration and financial information of The Friends of Worcester may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.
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Join us at these upcoming meetings and events

Meetings: Wednesday: January 13, February 10, March 10, April 14
7:30 p.m., check website for location

Holiday Potluck: Monday, December 28
6 to 9 p.m., Home of Rob and Wini Hayes
3033 Fisher Road RSVP 610-584-0371

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FOW Invites You To Get Involved!

- **Open Space Committee** — Land preservation, village planning, Open Space Fund
- **Education & Outreach Committee** — Community activities, newsletter, website, community partnerships
- **Organizational Advancement Committee** — Membership recruitment and development, operational fundraising

Contact FOW at info@friendsofworcester.org or call Wini Hayes at 610-584-0371

FRIENDS OF WORCESTER OFFICERS

Kim David - President (610-584-1805)
Rob Hayes - Vice President (610-584-0371)
Wini Hayes - Treasurer (610-584-0371)
Barbara McMonagle - Secretary (215-257-1436)

Worcester Township Public Meetings

**Community Hall, 1031 Valley Forge Rd, Fairview Village**

**Board of Supervisors**
Monday, 8 am: November 2, December 7
Wednesday, 7:30 pm: November 18, December 6

**Planning Commission**
Thursday, 7:30 pm: November 12, December 10

**Zoning Hearing Board**
Tuesday, 6:30 pm: November 24, December 15

**Supervisors/Planning Commission Joint Meeting**
Monday, 9:30 am: December 7