

**West Whiteland Township
Historical Commission Agenda
April 8, 2019**

7:00 PM

Business Meeting

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. New Business
 - A. Applicant: Elizabeth and John Witmer
Historic Site: Site 211, Class II Historic Resource, Valley View Farm
Address: 435 North Whitford Rd., Exton
Request: Review and advise on replacement of windows and door at
The historic resource to receive building permits.
 - B. Applicant: Church Farm School – North Campus
Historic Site: Site 345, Class I Listed National Resource, Greystock Hall
Site Address: 201 Church Farm Ln., Exton
Request: Review and advise on the proposed addition to historic
resource to receive building permits.
 - C. Cory Kegerise, PA Historical and Museum Commission – Certified Local
Government Program Presentation
- IV. Old Business
 - A. Waterloo Reserve Interpretive Marker Text Discussion
 - B. Historical Resources Maintenance Discussion
- V. Approval of Minutes for January 14, 2019
- VI. Historical Commission Concerns
 - A. Township update – Justin Smiley
 - Arrandale Barn
 - VPP Grant: History of West Whiteland update
 - Commission Vacancies
 - Community Development Coordinator Position update
 - SharePoint Update
 - B. Update on consideration of clarifications for HC Ordinances – Matthew
Morley
- VII. Adjournment

Next Meeting: May 13, 2019



West Chester Office

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commonwealthheritagegroup.com

April 3, 2019
WC-382

Mr. John Weller, AICP
Director of Planning and Zoning, and
West Whiteland Township Historical Commission
222 North Pottstown Pike
Exton, PA 19341

**RE: Project Review
435 North Whitford Road
Proposed Window Replacement**

Dear Mr. Weller,

At the request of West Whiteland Township, Commonwealth Heritage Group (Commonwealth) has reviewed the proposed project for partial replacement of the existing doors and windows at the historic stone house at 435 North Whitford Road. The property is currently owned by J. Robert and Elizabeth U. Witmer. The Witmer's stone house is the original farmhouse associated with the early nineteenth century Valley View Farm property. This property is listed in the West Whiteland Township Historic Register as Historic Site #211, a Class II site, of historical significance. The register describes Valley View Farm as follows: *Stone farm house, core built c. 1800, additions c. 1829...Extensive remodeling 1929...Barn, carriage house, sheep cote.* The house probably appears much as it originally did, and retains renovated the carriage house and sheep cote structures. In the 1980's the barn was heavily renovated as a modern residence and two modern homes were built on the property.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED UNDERTAKING

The owner has submitted a proposal to replace some, but not all, of the existing windows and doors in the house. The proposal documents include a thorough narrative description of the work, site plan, photographs and product information for the proposed Anderson replacement windows and doors. The proposed work at the original c. 1800 west section of the home, which directly abuts North Whitford Road, is to replace all the existing double-hung windows (12 total), and two existing south facing exterior wood doors. Additionally, at the later c. 1829 section of the building, three double-hung windows, three casement windows, and two exterior wood doors will be replaced. All windows to be replaced in the c. 1829 section are associated with the first floor kitchen area.

The owner describes the existing double-hung windows in the c. 1800 portion as wood, 6-over-6 lite units, of modern construction with metal internal springs. The owner describes the double-hung windows in the in the c. 1829 section as wood, 6-over-6 lite, with internal sash weights. Because of the sash weight construction these are clearly earlier windows, and may be original to that section of the structure. The wood casement windows in the c. 1829 section are also older and may be original.

Mr. John Weller, AICP

April 3, 2019

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The proposal is for all the replacement windows to be Anderson 400 series wood windows, clad with a Fibrex exterior material. The new windows will be installed in the existing wood window frames. The new windows will be insulated glass with simulated divided light muntins replicating the original window lite patterns. The double casement window on the north side of the c. 1829 section will be a fixed window to eliminate the “head knocking” interference of the current casements that overlook the exterior main entrance stair.

Commonwealth visited the site on Friday, March 29, 2019 to observe the existing condition of the windows and doors. Our visit confirmed that the windows are in need of repair and painting. The two south doors were covered with tarps. The casement windows in the c. 1829 section clearly need attention. Overall the windows in the 1829 section appear repairable, but it is understandable that the owner desires to upgrade the performance of the windows in the home’s kitchen area.

It is not completely clear from the application documents how closely the Anderson 400 window sash and muntin profile details will match the design of the existing windows to be retained at the basement and second floor levels of the c. 1829 section. Since both types of windows will be co-exist on the building, the owner is advised to review full size samples in the field before proceeding with the window replacement at the first floor level.

The new Anderson doors proposed as replacements will all be $\frac{3}{4}$ glass type, with a single raised panel below. This will not replicate the historic doors but will provide a consistent treatment and bring additional light into the home. We are not sure of the age of the existing doors, but suggest that the owner retain, mark, and store any doors that appear to be old and possibly original. A future owner may be happy to have them available for reinstallation or use as patterns.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our review of the submitted documents the proposed window and door replacements are appropriate to this historic structure. The home is close to North Whitford Road, but largely hidden from public view. The work will have no adverse effect on the c. 1800 section of the home, and only a minimal adverse effect on the c. 1829 section, due primarily to removing the earlier windows.

Should you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip Yocum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip Yocum, RA, NCARB, LEED AP
Preservation Architect

cc: Justin Smiley, WWT
Commonwealth file



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April 4, 2019
WC-382

Mr. John Weller, AICP
Director of Planning and Zoning, and
West Whiteland Township Historical Commission
222 North Pottstown Pike
Exton, PA 19341

**RE: Land Development Plan Review
Church Farm School
Greystock Hall
1001 E. Lincoln Highway
Exton, PA 19341**

Dear Mr. Weller,

Church Farm School has submitted a Building Permit application for renovations and additions to Greystock Hall, the school's main administrative and classroom building on its north academic campus. In accordance with the West Whiteland Township Zoning Ordinance, Article XVI: Historic Preservation, Commonwealth Heritage Group (Commonwealth) has reviewed the proposed undertaking for potential impacts on the Township's designated historic resources. Commonwealth previously reviewed the Land Development Plan for the proposed North Campus Development of Church Farm School as documented in our review letter of October 31, 2017.

Review Documents

For this review Commonwealth utilized the documents submitted with the Building Permit application for review by the West Whiteland Historical Commission. The documents were prepared by prepared by Voith & Mactavish Architects, LLP, dated December 13, 2018, as follows:

- Early Conceptual Design Sketch of the addition to the north elevation of Greystock Hall
- Updated Conceptual Design Sketch of the addition to the north elevation of Greystock Hall
- Close-up of Updated Conceptual Design Sketch of the addition to the north elevation of Greystock Hall
- Drawing A0.1 – First Floor Demolition Plan
- Drawing A1.0 – Lower Level New Work Plan
- Drawing A1.1 – First Floor New Work Plan
- Drawing A1.2 – Second Floor New Work Plan
- Drawing A1.3 – Third Floor New Work Plan
- Drawing A1.4 – Roof Plan New Work Plan
- Drawing A3.1 – Building Elevation
- Drawing A4.1 – Building Section

Historic Resources Impacted by the Proposed Project

In accordance with Section 325-92.A of the Township Zoning Ordinance, Class I, II, or III historic resources located within the boundary of a proposed project site or within 300-feet of the boundary of a proposed project site shall be reviewed for potential adverse affect. Commonwealth's review of the submission has determined that the following designated historic resources are potentially impacted by the proposed undertaking:

Historic Resources within the proposed Project Site:

- Site #345** – Greystock Hall, Church Farm School, E. Lincoln Highway, c. 1923
- Class I Historic Resource, Listed on the National Register

Adjacent Historic Resources within 300 feet of the proposed Project Site:

- Site #25** – Church Farm School Dormitories, E. Lincoln Highway, 1918 (through early 1930's)
- Class I Historic Resource, Listed on the National Register
- Site #26** – Headmaster's House, Church Farm School, E. Lincoln Highway, 1919
- Class I Historic Resource, Listed on the National Register
- Site #27** – Church of Atonement/ Church Farm School Chapel, E. Lincoln Highway, 1927-1928
- Class I Historic Resource, Listed on the National Register

Description of the Proposed Undertaking:

As Church Farm School's central administration and academic building, Greystock Hall is the focal point of school's academic north campus, located on the north side of the Lincoln Highway, Route 30. Greystock Hall fronts directly onto Route 30, with the rear (north) side overlooking the north campus. The current main entrance is on the Route 30 (south) side of the building. The proposed work at Greystock Hall is the initial phase in the school's plan to refocus the academic north campus on a new central pedestrian green at the rear (north) side of Greystock Hall. The project currently under review focuses on constructing a new multi-level addition within Greystock Hall's north courtyard, and associated building renovations. The project will relocate the main entrance of Greystock Hall from Route 30 to the north side of the existing building. The building's new main entrance will front onto the green common, forming the primary public outdoor space for the Church Farm School's academic campus.

The new 84-feet wide by 58-feet deep addition is tucked within Greystock Hall's existing north courtyard. The addition has two floors of programmed space surrounding a four-story central circulation tower containing stairs and an elevator. Greystock Hall is a three story building (plus attic level) built into a hillside; two-stories on the south side and three-stories on the north side. The addition's two main floors align with the lower two floors of Greystock Hall's north side. The ground floor level contains a new main entrance lobby and administrative offices. The addition's second level features an expanded dining room, board room, and outside dining terraces overlooking the new green common. The central circulation tower rises four floors, becoming the distinctive central visual feature on the north side of Greystock Hall. The tower rises above the level of the existing three-story walls that enclose the courtyard on three sides, but does not exceed the top of the existing Greystock Hall roof.

Review of the Design and Potential Effects on Historic Resources:

The exterior visual impact of the additions and new addition to Greystock Hall are limited to the north side of building. The current entrance façade facing Route 30 at the south side is basically unchanged. The new addition in the north courtyard does not exceed the height of the existing steeply pitched Greystock Hall roof. When viewed from Route 30 the building will appear largely unchanged. It may be possible that the top of the

new circulation tower roof may be glimpsed from the elevated residential campus on the south side of Route 30. However, this would be a very limited view and not objectionable, if it is visible at all.

The new addition when viewed from the north side of Greystock Hall is an improvement to the building's present appearance. Currently the north elevation is quite stark and the courtyard is an unused and featureless area. The new entrance addition is attractive and brings an appropriate focus to the front door of the school's most important academic building. The addition has been carefully designed to visually complement the existing building while also providing a needed focal point to the new green common area. The massing of the addition is appropriately subservient to the overall form of the historic Greystock Hall, while simultaneously forming the most visually interesting element in the composition. The two-story height of the main portion of the addition allows the enclosing courtyard walls and windows to remain visible at the third floor level. This not only provides natural light to third floor spaces, but creates a pleasing three dimensional complexity to the building's overall design.

While it is clearly a modern structure, the proposed detailing of the addition mirrors the restrained Tudor Revival style that is typical throughout the campus. The exterior wall surfaces are stucco with brick accent details. Detailed design information on the new exterior railings, windows and doors is not included with submission. It is assumed the materials will be high quality products that visually match the existing materials. Detailed product information for the railings, windows, doors and other finish materials should be provided to the Historical Commission for final review when available.

Conclusions:

Commonwealth's review is limited to the effect of the proposed undertaking on the historic resources listed above. The proposed design for the renovations and addition to Greystock Hall, as depicted in the Building Permit submission, will primarily effect Greystock Hall itself. The listed historic resources at Church Farm School's south residential campus will not have a view of the proposed north side addition at Greystock Hall. As described in our review comments above, the proposed renovations and additions are respectful of the historic Greystock Hall and appropriate. The alterations are generally seen as improvements. To travelers passing by on Route 30, the building will remain largely unchanged. The anticipated site improvements at the south side will likely include reduced paving and enhanced landscaping. The new central green common, in association with the new north entrance addition, will provide a significant visual and functional improvement to the Church Farm School north academic campus.

Therefore, no adverse effect was found for the proposed renovations and addition to Greystock Hall at Church Farm School.

Should you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Sincerely,



Philip Yocum, RA, LEED AP
Preservation Architect

cc: Justin Smiley, WWT
Commonwealth file

Certified Local Government Program

Program Overview for Pennsylvania Communities



The Certified Local Government (CLG) program is a partnership between municipal governments, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO), and the National Park Service (NPS) that promotes and supports holistic historic preservation programs and policies in Pennsylvania municipalities. Designation is a mark of distinction that provides participating communities with credibility, as well as access to technical assistance and grant programs; it means that the municipality follows best practices and views preservation as an integral part of its community and economic development.

What does the CLG program in Pennsylvania do?

The CLG program in Pennsylvania recognizes the unique characteristics of the Commonwealth's communities while promoting technical, legal, and procedural best practices that are common to all participating communities. The CLG program in Pennsylvania:



- Establishes standards and distributes guidance for best practices in municipal historic preservation programs;
- Engages CLGs in implementing State and Federal historic preservation programs;
- Provides technical and financial support for projects that increase local capacity and implement best practices related to historic resources;
- Facilitates networking and the exchange of ideas among CLGs; and
- Facilitates training opportunities for municipal leaders.

Why should my community become a CLG?

The CLG program provides exclusive benefits for participating communities, including a dedicated grant program, specialized technical assistance, and participation in the National Register of Historic Places nomination process.



- The **CLG Grant Program** provides funding to develop the tools, products, programs, and services municipalities need to administer their local preservation programs effectively and in accordance with the CLG program guidelines.
- **Designing for Preservation Solutions** provides free design services to CLGs and related community organizations.
- **Guidance for Preservation Solutions** is a technical assistance program that provides CLGs with free, comprehensive advice from the PA SHPO on cultural resource issues and projects in their communities.
- CLGs participate formally in the **National Register of Historic Places review process** for properties in their communities.

Beyond the tangible benefits, being a CLG also provides **credibility** and **distinction** by demonstrating that the community is following best practices and meeting its legal and ethical obligations.

What are the requirements for being a CLG?



In order to become a CLG, municipalities must demonstrate their commitment to historic preservation by having certain policies and practices in place at the time of application. These minimum certification requirements are the building blocks of an effective local preservation program and will help the community make the most of its participation in the CLG program. To remain active and in good standing, CLGs must meet ongoing performance standards and submit brief annual reports.

The Certification Checklist and the CLG Guidelines and Procedures provide detailed information about the specific tools, policies, and practices that a municipality must have in place in order to be eligible for the CLG program. These core requirements include:

- Enacting an historic preservation ordinance that, at a minimum, requires the municipality to review and approve the proposed demolition of designated historic buildings and new construction in historic districts;
- Appointing a preservation commission or Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) to administer the preservation ordinance;
- Incorporating historic resources and historic preservation strategies into the community's comprehensive plan.

How can my community become a CLG?

If your community is interested in becoming a CLG, your first step should be to talk with the PA SHPO Community Preservation Coordinator for your region about your community's preservation program and the application process.



Here are a few important pointers and tips about the application process:

- There are no application deadlines, and applications are accepted on a rolling basis.
- Once your municipality submits its application, the certification process generally takes 3 to 4 months to complete.
- The CLG application must be signed by the chief elected official in your municipality. This typically requires authorization from the governing body, such as the City or Borough Council or Board of Supervisors.

For more information contact the Community Preservation Coordinator for your region:

Eastern Pennsylvania – Cory Kegerise | ckegerise@pa.gov | (215) 219-3824

Central Pennsylvania – Bryan Van Sweden | bvansweden@pa.gov | (717) 772-5071

Western Pennsylvania – Bill Callahan | wcallahan@pa.gov | (412) 565-3575

Visit the [Community Preservation section](#) of the PHMC website for more information



Certified Local Government Program

Certification Requirements and Performance Standards At-A-Glance

Each of the statements below corresponds to a Certification Requirement or an Ongoing Performance Standard in the Certified Local Government (CLG) Guidelines and Procedures. This is a quick comparison guide; please refer to the CLG Guidelines for a full explanation of each of these statements.

Certification Requirements are the minimum programs, policies, documents, or actions the municipality must have in place in order to be certified.

Ongoing Performance Standards are the expectations and performance metrics CLGs will be expected to meet following certification and that will be used to prepare the periodic performance evaluations.

		Certification Requirement	Ongoing Performance Standard
1	Consistently demonstrate through policies, programs, and actions a commitment to historic preservation as a vital and integral component of community and economic development.		X
2	Give thoughtful consideration to historic resources and preservation policies in the most recently adopted comprehensive plan.	X	X
3	Adopt and implement the International Existing Building Code.	X	X
4	Adopt and enforce a preservation ordinance that meets the minimum requirements described in Chapter III(B)[1] of the CLG Guidelines.	X	X
5	Each review board/commission and its local governing body shall have rules of procedure or by laws pertaining to official duties and functions.	X	X
6	Adopt and utilize design guidelines that illustrate how the review standards and criteria in the ordinance should be applied to designated properties.		X
7	Applicants must be given written notification of decisions or recommendations of the review board or preservation commission.		X
8	All review board/commission meetings must be publicly announced and be open to the public in accordance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.	X	X
9	All decisions by the review board or preservation commission, and governing body related to enforcement of local legislation or Certified Local Government responsibilities must be made in a public forum.	X	X
10	The review board/preservation commission must meet at least 4 times per year.		X
11	The municipality must have detailed inventory information for designated historic properties regulated under the municipality's preservation ordinance.	X	X
12	Inventory information must be gathered or updated within the past 10 years		X

		Certification Requirement	Ongoing Performance Standard
13	Inventory information must contain property-level information that is consistent with the minimum record guidelines established by PA SHPO		X
14	Inventory information must be in a format that allows for integrating the information into the databases and file systems maintained by PA SHPO		X
15	All inventory information must be accessible to the public, except for restrictions on the location of archaeological sites when deemed necessary by the PA SHPO or local government.	X	X
16	The municipality must have a program/procedure to carry out reconnaissance-level survey for further identifying historic resources within the municipality or have a written plan that describes how such a program will be implemented.		X
17	Municipally-owned properties that are designated as historic under local ordinances must follow the same established review procedures and guidelines as other properties.	X	X
18	The municipality must evaluate and, where applicable, designate municipally-owned properties as historic resources under the provisions of the appropriate preservation ordinances, or have a plan in place for doing so.		X
19	Maintain a preservation board/commission whose members meet the membership requirements as defined in F(1)(a)(1-3) of the CLG Guidelines.	X	X
20	Maintain information about the credentials of preservation board/commission members and make this available to the public and the State Historic Preservation Officer upon request.		X
21	Fill vacancies on the preservation board/commission within 90 days.		X
22	Provide staff support to the preservation board/commission in the fulfillment of its responsibilities under the ordinance, including the tasks identified in F(1)(b) of the CLG Guidelines and Procedures.	X	X
23	Maintain regular communication with PA SHPO via a designated staff point-of-contact.	X	X
24	Board/commission members and support staff must participate in at least 4 hours of continuing education and training programs annually.		X
25	Submit CLG annual reports by the established deadline annually.		X
26	Administer all CLG grants and scholarships according to established guidelines, procedures, and deadlines, including fully expending all funds awarded.		X
27	Review and comment on at least 75% of all National Register nominations within the municipality annually, following the procedures and requirements described in Section VIII of the CLG Guidelines and Procedures.		X
28	Satisfactorily perform all other responsibilities delegated by the PA SHPO.		X



Who may submit an application to become a CLG?

Any Pennsylvania municipality is eligible to be a CLG if they meet the minimum certification requirements; county governments and regional authorities are not eligible for certification because they typically do not have the authority to review and approve projects affecting historic properties. Certification applications must be signed by the chief elected official of the municipality.

What requirements does a municipality have to meet to be eligible for certification?

The basic requirements include enacting a historic preservation ordinance that regulates demolition and new construction, appointing a preservation commission or review board, and including historic preservation strategies in the community's comprehensive plan. The Certification Checklist contains a detailed list of all tools, policies, and practices a municipality needs to have in place in order to meet the minimum certification requirements.

What information is required for the certification application?

A completed certification application includes some basic information about the community's preservation program and its needs/goals, copies of the preservation ordinance and relevant sections of the comprehensive plan and building code, resumes for review board/commission members, and a cover letter signed by the chief elected official.

What are the application deadlines?

There are no fixed application deadlines. Certification applications may be submitted at any time and are reviewed on a rolling basis.

What happens after a municipality submits a certification application?

The PA SHPO will review the certification application in accordance with the certification requirements and respond to the chief elected official within 45 working days. If the application is approved, PA SHPO will prepare a written certification agreement and send it to the local government for execution. After the PA SHPO has received the signed agreement from the municipality, it will be signed by officials from the Commonwealth and sent to the National Park Service (NPS) with a recommendation that the community be officially certified. The process is not complete until the NPS notifies the community and SHPO.

How long does the certification process take?

The certification process takes 3 to 4 months from the time the municipality submits a complete application to NPS notification.

Pennsylvania Certified Local Government Program

Certification Requirements Checklist

How to use this Checklist

Each of the questions below corresponds to a Certification Requirement in the CLG Guidelines and Procedures. If the answer to a question is “Yes”, then your community meets that requirement for certification. If the answer is “No”, then that is an area/issue that your community should focus on before submitting a certification application.

A. Demonstrate a commitment to historic preservation as a vital and integral component of community and economic development

Certification Requirement		Yes	No
A1	Does your municipality’s most recent comprehensive plan contain a chapter or other policies and recommendations related to historic preservation?		
A2	Does your municipality implement the International Existing Building Code?		

B. Implement and enforce laws, policies, and procedures that advance preservation goals, uphold the public interest, and respect individual rights

Certification Requirement		Yes	No
B1	Has your municipality adopted an ordinance that meets the requirements described on page 3 of this checklist?		
B2	Does your HARB/commission have rules of procedure or bylaws?		

C. Engage the public in historic preservation

Certification Requirement		Yes	No
C1	Are all meetings of your review board or commission announced and open to the public in accordance with the Sunshine Act?		

D. Maintain, utilize, and share current information about historic resources in the community

Certification Requirement		Yes	No
D1	Does your municipality have survey information about locally designated historic resources?		
D2	Is survey information available to the public, with the exception of locational information about archaeological resources?		

E. Appropriately maintain historic resources owned by the municipality

Certification Requirement		Yes	No
E1	Are municipally-owned properties and projects required to follow the same guidelines and procedures as other properties designated under local preservation ordinances?		

F. Provide adequate human and financial resources to implement historic preservation programs effectively

Certification Requirement		Yes	No
F1	Does your preservation board/commission consistently meet the membership requirements as defined in F(1)(a) of the CLG Guidelines and Procedures?		
F2	Does your municipality maintain information about the credentials of preservation board/commission members and make this available to the public and the State Historic Preservation Officer upon request?		
F3	Does your municipality provide staff support for the preservation board/commission as outlined in F(2) of the CLG Guidelines?		
F4	Has the CLG designated a staff person to serve as a point-of-contact with PA SHPO?		

NOTES:

Preservation Ordinance Requirements

The following questions pertain to the various components that your community's preservation ordinance must contain. If your community has more than one preservation ordinance, then each piece of legislation should meet these requirements.

Ordinance Requirements	Yes	No
Does the ordinance include a statement of authority and legislative purpose?		
Does the ordinance describe the duties and responsibilities of the HARB/commission?		
Does the ordinance include a process and criteria for designating properties as historic that do not refer to or rely upon the National Register status of a property?		
Does the ordinance, inventory, or local register describe the boundaries of designated districts or properties?		
Does the ordinance describe the steps and timelines for reviewing Certificates of Appropriateness and other permit applications?		
Does the ordinance list the criteria that are used to evaluate Certificate of Appropriateness applications?		
Does the ordinance require the municipal review and approval/denial of all applications to demolish or relocate designated resources?		
Does the ordinance require the HARB/commission to review and comment on all proposed new construction within locally designated historic resources?		
Does the ordinance apply to all property types and applicants?		
Does the ordinance contain criteria and procedures for evaluating economic hardship?		
Are decisions made by the governing body under the ordinance binding on the applicant?		
Does the ordinance contain enforcement procedures and penalties for violations?		
Does the ordinance include a process for appealing decisions?		



Design issues are often at the core of preservation projects, and sometimes all that's required is some practical advice, visualization of what could be, or investigating some alternatives to help move a project forward. The Designing for Preservation Solutions (DPS) program provides Certified Local Governments (CLGs) and their partners with focused design assistance from PA SHPO staff on design issues involving specific buildings and projects in their communities.

How DPS Works



Under this program the PA SHPO staff can provide preliminary design consultation and services for preservation projects within CLG communities throughout the Commonwealth. These services are provided at no cost to the municipal government or partnering organizations as a benefit of the community's participation in the CLG program. The goal of the program is to help communities achieve preservation outcomes for historic buildings by:

- providing guidance and design expertise at critical moments in project planning
- identifying and troubleshooting challenging design issues
- visualizing opportunities



The DPS program is intended to give project sponsors and communities enough information to make decisions about a project. This could include exploring what uses might be most appropriate for a building, identifying alternatives for accessibility improvements, or producing schematic designs for façade improvements. This program is **not** intended to provide construction drawings, bid specifications, or detailed technical reports that would normally be prepared by architects, engineers, or other design professionals. DPS will, however, provide partners with graphics and written summary documents that will help communicate ideas and recommendations to outside designers and to stakeholders.

Requesting DPS Assistance



The DPS program is a benefit of a community's designation as a CLG and is available to the municipal government, Main Street organizations, community development corporations, history/preservation organizations, and other community organizations for projects within the boundaries of the CLG. Requests from organizations other than the local government will need to be endorsed by the municipality when the request is submitted to the PA SHPO.



There are no deadlines for DPS and requests are accepted on an ongoing basis. Each request will be reviewed to determine whether PA SHPO staff can provide the assistance requested within the desired timeframe. While the PA SHPO will make every attempt to support as many projects as possible, limited capacity and ongoing projects may affect availability and scheduling. Most projects will take about 30 days to get started, thus DPS is probably not well suited for projects that are urgent or deadline-driven.

Designing for Preservation Solutions

Technical Assistance for Pennsylvania Communities

To request DPS assistance, please email the Community Preservation Coordinator for your region with the following information:



- Name, title, organization, email address, and phone number for project contact
- Property/project location, including street address and map
- Property owner name and whether the requesting organization has permission to access the property
- Photographs of the building and project location (exterior and interior if available). Include photos of the property in context, including adjacent properties and streetscapes.
- Description of the project and issues/questions you are seeking assistance with
- Description of your goals, desired outcomes, and anticipated products
- Timelines and deadlines for the project
- Letter of support from municipality (if request is coming from a partner organization)

Please limit your request to 2 typed pages or the equivalent.

Eligible Requests for Assistance



The PA SHPO staff includes preservation practitioners with diverse backgrounds and experience including architecture, private sector consulting, city/regional planning, nonprofit management, and preservation tax credit programs. Depending on the nature of the resources and the assistance requested, different members of the PA SHPO staff will be engaged to provide the best possible guidance and products for the project. Examples of the kinds of questions/requests that DPS can assist with include, but aren't limited to:

- developing options for adapting a historic commercial building for a new use
- conceptualizing possible designs for reorganizing spaces and functions within a building
- investigating and visualizing changes to the façade of a historic building
- identifying opportunities to improve accessibility in and around a historic building
- analyzing code compliance issues and preservation-friendly alternatives for historic buildings



Each building and project is unique, so there's no standard approach, product, or outcome to a request for assistance. In some instances, the project's goals can be met through a site visit and in-depth discussion. Other projects might benefit from a line drawing or augmented photography, while some may involve a detailed technical memo. The PA SHPO can produce limited graphics including schematics drawings, plans and layouts, and line work perspective developed in Revit. At the end of the project, the SHPO staff will summarize the goals and outcomes, along with all graphics, in a memo that will help partners have productive conversations with other stakeholders.



What happens after a community becomes a CLG?

After a community is designated a CLG, there are only a few requirements and expectations that may be different from what the community was already doing. The municipality may need to amend its ordinances, develop design guidelines, or revise some policies to be consistent with the ongoing performance standards. These standards follow the certification requirements very closely but include a few additional items that are intended to help a CLG grow and improve their preservation program. CLGs are also required to submit brief annual reports, attend training programs, and participate in the National Register of Historic Places process, as required. The Performance Standards Checklist can help your community evaluate its program and identify opportunities for improvement.

What does a municipality have to do in order to remain a CLG?

To remain in good standing, CLGs are expected to meet the ongoing performance standards and submit annual reports. If a CLG community is considering changing its ordinance, updating its comprehensive plan, or conducting a survey of historic resources, they should consult with the Community Preservation Coordinator for their region to be sure the project is consistent with the CLG guidelines. These projects, and others, may also be eligible for CLG grant funding.

What are the reporting requirements?

CLGs are required to submit brief annual reports by March 1 of each year. The reports cover the previous calendar year and provide updated contact information, basic information about the number and types of projects reviewed, training activities, and changes to ordinances and plans. CLGs may not be eligible to receive CLG grants or scholarships if they do not submit their annual reports.

How are CLGs evaluated?

The PA SHPO evaluates each CLG every 4 years. Evaluations are an opportunity for CLGs to discuss issues, needs, and priorities with PA SHPO staff, and they include an assessment of how the community is meeting the performance standards. The evaluation process may involve reviewing ordinances, plans, and annual reports, meetings with review boards, staff, and elected officials, and public input. Each evaluation concludes with a written report that identifies strengths as well as opportunities for improvement.

What happens if a CLG isn't meeting the performance standards?

The goal of the CLG program is to help communities develop and improve effective preservation programs, so failing to meet every performance standard all of the time will rarely result in decertification. However, if there are significant or recurring preservation issues in a community or the evaluation process identifies problems with a CLG's ordinances or practices, the PA SHPO may ask the community to take corrective actions within a specific timeframe. Failure to address the requested changes may result in decertification.



From time to time, your municipality may be asked to review a complex project, face challenging issues related to a specific property or have preservation-related planning needs. These issues are often multi-faceted and may require outside expertise as well as comprehensive guidance on a range of preservation issues, some of which may not have been considered previously. The Guidance for Preservation Solutions (GPS) program is a way for the PA SHPO to provide Certified Local Governments (CLGs) with focused comments, suggestions, and direction on cultural resource issues in their communities.

How GPS Works



The GPS program brings together PA SHPO staff from each of the agency's programs to review your community's project/issue and provide relevant comments and guidance. Examples include consideration of how a development project may impact National Register eligibility, the appropriateness of certain design or material choices for a historic property, a property's archaeological potential, and/or survey and documentation needs.



Formal requests for review/assistance may be submitted by your municipality along with relevant project plans, documents, and specific questions/issues the community is seeking help with. The Community Preservation Coordinator (Coordinator) for the region will present the project to the PA SHPO regional team for review and discussion. The team will identify issues and guidance from all relevant program areas and the Coordinator will provide your community with a written report within a specified timeframe, generally 30 days.

Requesting GPS Assistance



GPS is only available to CLGs and all requests must be made in writing. Requests for assistance may come from the HARB, Historical Commission, elected body, planning commission, or staff. No requests from individual citizens or community organizations will be considered for GPS. There are no deadlines for GPS and requests are accepted on an ongoing basis. While the PA SHPO will make every attempt to provide guidance as quickly as possible, most responses will typically take 30 days.

To request GPS assistance, please email or write to the Community Preservation Coordinator for your region (see attached map) with the following information:



- Name, title, email address and phone number for project contact
- Project description, including location and detailed project plans
- Drawings, renderings, specifications, and photos, as applicable
- Type of review being performed by the municipality (i.e. SALDO, building permits, Certificate of Appropriateness) and timeline for issuing a decision
- Specific questions or issues that the CLG is seeking PA SHPO guidance on
- Date you would like a response from the PA SHPO

Eligible Requests for Assistance



To avoid potential conflicts with other PA SHPO programs or projects, the staff will only consider projects where PA SHPO has no other formal role through environmental review/Section 106, tax credits, grants, other programs, or there is little likelihood that the PA SHPO will be involved in the future. PA SHPO may choose not to respond to a specific request if:

- the project will likely involve the PA SHPO in the future; or
- the scale and nature of the request is too complex or is beyond the PA SHPO's areas of expertise; or
- the timeframe for response does not allow sufficient time for meaningful review and comment.

The PA SHPO will notify the CLG whether or not the project qualifies for GPS within 3 working days after receiving the request.



EXAMPLE: A private developer is seeking various local approvals to build a housing development on a property that is National Register listed and locally regulated by the Township's Historical Commission. The project is entirely privately financed and doesn't require any Federal or State permits. The municipal leadership is preservation sensitive but wants advice on preservation issues that may be at play before commenting on the proposal. There is some preservation language in the zoning ordinance, but it's murky and the Planning Commission is asking for SHPO's advice so it can make an informed decision on the developer's request.



EXAMPLE: A Borough has recently acquired a prominent historic property to prevent likely demolition by a private owner. Borough staff and elected officials want to proceed in a prudent manner and would like advice before engaging a consultant to develop a plan for preserving the property.