



# West Virginia *PLANNER*

Winter 2002

Published by the West Virginia Planning Association

## 2002 WVPA Conference a Rousing Success

More than 60 planners and students attended the West Virginia Planning Association's 2002 Conference held October 12-14 in Morgantown.

The conference itinerary included sixteen sessions that ranged from citizen advocacy in planning to planning commissioner and BZA training; from urban sprawl to downtown redevelopment; and from affordable housing to tax incremental financing.

The underlying theme this year was to promote the importance of striving for excellence in urban and planning design while showcasing the charm and successes within the greater Morgantown area.

Thomas Hylton, Pulitzer Prize recipient and author of *Save Our Land, Save Our Towns*, served as the Conference Keynote Speaker at the WVPA 2002 Planning Awards Luncheon. His slide show and presentation was an educational exercise of what has historically driven our Country's cyclical growth to and from the city.

Other speakers included:

- Scott Rotruck, Morgantown Chamber of Commerce
- Bill Wonderlin, Citizens for Responsible Development (Morgantown)
- Marjorie Ryan, Benetec Associates
- Jim Wood, AICP, Morgantown City Planner
- Kevin Leyden, WVU Department of Political Science
- Mac Warner, Square at Falling Run (Morgantown)
- Susan Salisbury, Charleston Renaissance Corp
- Michael Castle and Rich Lane, Petroplus Associates
- John Culler, Beyond Marketing
- Lonnie Stringer and David Rathbun, West Virginia Housing Development Fund
- Terry Cutright, Main Street Morgantown

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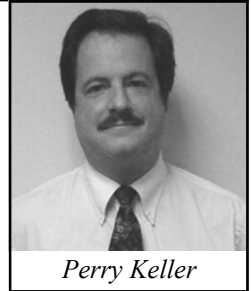


*The opening session got the conference off to a strong start.*

*President's Message*

## Conference Credit Goes to Organizers

What a great conference. We had over 60 in attendance for the three-day event. Our host city, Morgantown, was an exceptional place to have the 2002 West Virginia Planning Association's Annual Conference. Even the weather, except for a rather chilly Sunday evening during our musical entertainment, was beautiful.

*Perry Keller*

There were many excellent presentations given on varied topics that kept the Conference interesting and enjoyable. Thomas Hylton was the keynote speaker for the awards luncheon and was on hand to sign copies of his book "Save Our Lands, Save Our Towns" after lunch. Several of the presentations had to do with neo-traditional planning and the prevention of sprawl. As many of you know, West Virginia leads the nation in sprawl, the costly effects that will be felt for years to come.

I heard many of you say that Conference was excellent. All the hard work and effort behind the scenes was evident by the success of the Conference. Credit goes to Chris Fletcher, Jim Wood, his staff and City of Morgantown. Everything from the quality of the accommodations to the entertainment was first rate.

The West Virginia Planning Association will continue to work on the planning legislation with a subcommittee headed by Marjorie Ryan. She and our Vice President, Chris Fletcher, will continue to work with Senators Bowman and McCabe on this important work. We will also try to increase the number of members in the Association as well as strengthen the regional representatives on the Executive Committee. If you know someone that might be interested being one of the regional representatives, please let me know. In closing, I'll leave you with the Conference theme "Almost Heaven? Keep Planning, We'll Get There."

*Perry J. Keller*

President, West Virginia Planning Association

### • Conference

*(Continued from Page 1)*

The mobile sessions included a walking tour of Morgantown's Historic Downtown, a tour of WVU's new Student Recreation Center, and a tour of the State GIS Center with Trevor Harris, Chair of the WVU Department of Geography.

The conference also included some excellent social and networking events. Several conference attendees participated in the "Pub Walk" on Sat-

urday night. On Sunday night, the Falling Run Bluegrass Band entertained attendees in the luxurious Pinnacle Club. Perry Keller, Jim Wood, and myself, aided by liquid fortitude, joined the band in singing a tune from the movie "O Brother, Where Art Thou."

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to this year's successful Conference. We were very fortunate to enjoy the support of several key corporate sponsors, in-kind contributors, and volun-

teers. Special thanks to the City of Morgantown and the city's Planning Department, especially Jim Wood, AICP, for their care and hospitality in hosting this year's conference.

*Christopher M. Fletcher, AICP*

Vice President,  
WVPA

*Chris Fletcher*

## WVPA Launches New Awards

The WVPA launched its Annual Planning Awards Program this year at the 2002 Conference in Morgantown. The intent of the program is to recognize and highlight the work and achievement of planning professionals, lay planners, citizens and projects of significant importance from across the State. The program was well received and is expected to grow in the coming years.

The inaugural awards recipients included:

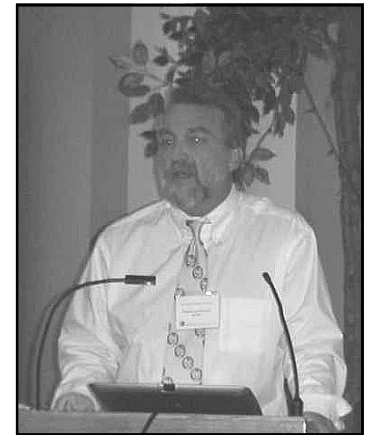
- Outstanding Comprehensive Plan or Ordinance: City of Weirton
- Distinguished Service in Planning: Brooke-Hancock Veteran's Memorial, Inc.
- Outstanding Public Participation/ Outreach: City of Morgantown
- Outstanding Development Project Using Significant Public Sector Funds: Co-Recipients were Huntington Housing Authority and the Harrison County Planning Commission

We ask that our colleagues from around West Virginia assist our efforts in cultivating this program. We are hopeful that it will also serve as a tool to heighten awareness and strengthen the influences of sound planning principles and practices across the Mountain State.

*Christopher M. Fletcher, AICP*  
WVPA Vice President



## WVPA CONFERENCE IMAGES



A lot of things happened at the 2002 West Virginia Planning Association Conference.

Thomas Hylton gave the keynote address on sprawl and smart growth (*first picture from top on left*).

Mobile workshops traveled through Morgantown (*second on left*).

Scott Rotruck spoke at Saturday dinner on Amendment One (*picture on right*).

Participants overflowed meeting rooms, here at the Hotel Morgan (*third on left*).

Awards were passed out. Here, Bob Ricelli accepts for Weirton from WVPA President Perry Keller (*fourth on left*).

### WVPA Dues for FY 2002-03

All current members and anyone interested in joining the West Virginia chapter of the American Planning Association must complete this form in order to be included in our membership directory. Dues are now being collected on a July-June fiscal year in an effort to make it more convenient for local units of government that are on the same fiscal year.

' **Renewing Membership**

' **New Membership**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Certifications \_\_\_\_\_

Other Professional Organizations \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Level**

'APA Member.....Dues paid through APA

'Professional Planner .....\$45/year  
*(Any person employed in planning or a related field)*

'Lay Planner .....\$20/year  
*(Any person serving on a planning commission, board of zoning appeals, or other board, as well as elected officials. If all Commission/Board members join, the cost is reduced to \$10/year/member)*

'Student Member.....\$5/year  
*(Any student enrolled in a course of study in planning or a related field)*

**Method of Payment** — Please enclose a check payable to WVPA.

Please tell us if you would prefer to receive:

|                               |      |     |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|
| News updates by e-mail alert? | 'Yes | 'No |
| Newsletter via e-mail?        | 'Yes | 'No |

(If you've checked "yes" to either question, make sure you have provided your correct e-mail address above).

Mail completed form and payment by January 1, 2003 to:

WVPA  
P. O. Box 2537  
Morgantown, WV 26502

## WVPA Working to Update State Planning Law

The effort to modernize West Virginia's planning enabling legislation is moving into high gear with a legislative subcommittee meeting scheduled for December 16 in Charleston to discuss SCR 38, the resolution adopted during last year's session. After the December Interim Session, there will be one more in early January before the full 2003 Legislature convenes just days later. Our goal is to have a draft bill ready for introduction early in the session. But, many hurdles still remain.

While the revisions proposed to §8-24 by the West Virginia Planning Association have been reviewed and generally supported by organizations such as the Municipal League, the Home Builders Association, the Manufactured Housing Association, the League of Women Voters, and the City Managers Association, among others, there is known to be opposition to our efforts.

For instance, some legislators have expressed a concern that the proposed revisions constitute a major overhaul and should be studied more before a bill is introduced. And, some developers in the eastern panhandle counties have voiced strong objection to stricter land use regulations. As a result, I believe that much debate and consensus-building remains before we will see positive results for our efforts to update §8-24. What this means for you, a professional or citizen planner working and living in West Virginia, is a commitment to personally talk to your state legislators to determine where they stand on this matter. We need to learn why a legislator may be hesitant to support this initiative and what we, as an organization, can do to earn their active support.

Take the time to thoroughly read and understand the proposed revisions. You can review or download a copy at [www.wvplanning.com](http://www.wvplanning.com). Call your legislator and discuss their understanding of the revisions, or offer to e-mail or mail them a copy if they have not yet seen it. Explain that the proposed changes are permissive and not mandatory. Discuss with them the need to expand the description of the comprehensive plan so that West Virginia municipalities will have greater guidance as to how to prepare their own. Inform them of the new Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) concept. It's a regulatory method whereby municipalities can better regulate new development without restricting land use type and location associated with zoning. These

are just a few of the examples that may need to be explained and debated on an individual basis with our legislators.

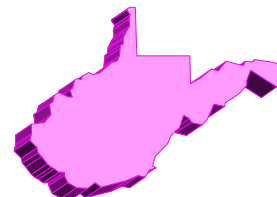
In addition to advocating for revisions to §8-24, we will also be monitoring all other planning-related bills to be introduced in the upcoming session. So, start networking and polishing up your speaking skills. It will take the combined efforts of all our membership to see that sound planning principles are introduced, that our legislators and the general public are educated by well-informed planners, and that our political leadership recognizes the value of sound planning to the future economy and overall well-being of West Virginia.

*Marjorie Ryan*

WVPA  
Legislative  
Liaison



*Marjorie Ryan*



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## Morgantown Planner Jim Wood Elected WVPA Secretary

James “Jim” Wood, AICP, is the new Secretary of the West Virginia Planning Association. He was elected at the executive board meeting during the WVPA Annual Conference in Morgantown.

Wood is the Planning Director for Morgantown, a position he has held for the past two years. Prior to returning to West Virginia, he worked in various planning jobs in North Carolina and South Carolina. Most recently, he was a senior planner in Gastonia, N.C.

Being in the university city is nothing new either. For Wood graduated from West Virginia University with a degree in geography. And his first job out of college was with what was then the Governor’s Office of Community and Industrial Development.

Wood is now back at WVU, pursuing a doctorate in political science. He earned a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Charleston (S.C.) in 1997.

Wood replaces Beth Cade, the city planner for Charleston. Cade stepped down to spend more time with her family.

The rest of the officers remain the same. Perry Keller of Edwards and Kelcey is President. Christopher Fletcher of Mullin & Lonergan Associates, Inc is Vice President. And Kim Brady of the National Technology Transfer Center is Treasurer.



*Jim Wood*

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