



Revitalization Update and Constituent Questionnaire

Ashland • Frackville • Girardville • Mahanoy City • Ringtown • Shenandoah

State Senator David G. Argall • 29th District

W I N T E R 2 0 1 0



Upper Schuylkill is a unique concept in statewide revitalization efforts. You will not find many other models like this! Six communities - Ashland, Frackville, Girardville, Mahanoy City, Ringtown and Shenandoah have come together to work as a group to improve the entire area. Each community has retained its own identity, but has recognized the importance of teamwork and cooperation. I am very impressed by what has been accomplished in a short amount of time.

Since my election as your state Senator, I have enjoyed working with many of the people involved in these revitalization efforts. My predecessor, Senator Jim Rhoades, was instrumental in creating the Upper Schuylkill Program. His goal was to restore community pride in northern Schuylkill County and the Upper Schuylkill Program was the result of that dream. My goal is to continue to build upon Jim's hopes and dreams for these communities.

My strong belief in these communities is why I continue to maintain an office in Mahanoy City, as established by Senator Rhoades. Many people expected me to move this office, but I know that the rent the state pays for this office helps the cause of local revitalization every month. In addition, this location provides a host of important services to area residents across northern Schuylkill County.

Partnering is crucial in revitalization efforts. Downtown groups must be able to work hand-in-hand with municipal officials to achieve the desired outcome. Upper Schuylkill communities have been successful in doing this. Numerous successful projects such as very visible business building improvements, streetscape programs, a pedestrian safety program and a downtown clean-up program show that community partnering works. A regional partnership has opened many doors that never would have been possible for each community on its own.

I saw firsthand, during my years as a State Representative, how successful downtown partnerships between the local and state governments and local community volunteers can transform a community. If you don't believe me, look at pictures from the Tamaqua of the 1980s, with vacant storefronts and deteriorated buildings, and visit the Tamaqua of today, with its revitalized shops, restaurants and its brand new community college. A successful partnership, just like Upper Schuylkill, made this happen.

My belief in the importance of downtown revitalization is why I offered to assist the Shenandoah Valley School District to again utilize some classrooms in the former J.W. Cooper High School. It's also the reason that I have asked a number of individuals to consider options to breathe new life into the old school in Girardville and the historic Temple Theater in Ashland.

There is still much work to do. Our communities all share in the common problem of blighted and dilapidated properties. Current laws are not strong enough to deal with this problem. I have introduced legislation that

...continued on back



Before (top) and after (bottom) photos of Budgen's Image Design Salon and Webb Realty located in the Borough of Shenandoah.

Please fold this page so that the address below is shown and mail.

Mahanoy City, PA 17948
P.O. Box 150
SENATOR DAVID G. ARGALL

State _____ Zip _____

City _____

Address _____

Name _____

(Please Print Clearly)
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Tape or staple along this edge.

U.S. Postal Service
Will Not Deliver
Without Postage
**PLACE
PROPER
POSTAGE
HERE**



Before and after of the Asbland Historical Society in Asbland Borough.

would give our communities tougher enforcement tools to deal with these problem properties. Landlords and property owners need to be held personally accountable

for the condition of their properties and this legislation will do just that. My goal is to see this legislation pass the Senate and House and be signed into law.

Revitalization, however, is not a short-term undertaking. It is an ongoing process that requires a strong commitment from the community. For the program to be successful, the community needs to establish a plan to sustain the revitalization efforts. Programs that are now in place will need to be sustained not only financially, but also with volunteers and new ideas. Local businesses need to be supported so that our downtowns can once again flourish. Communities that undertake a revitalization program are committing to years of hard work, but I know the end result is worth the effort! I have seen this happen, again and again, all across Pennsylvania.

These small communities would never be able to establish successful downtown revitalization programs on their own without the partnership opportunity provided by Upper Schuylkill. It is a testimony to the numerous

volunteers and municipal officials that everyone has been able to come together for the greater good of the entire region. Upper Schuylkill has proven that with determination and the will to achieve something positive, this can not only be done, but be done well!

Other communities in Schuylkill County and across the six-county region I am proud to represent can learn from the Upper Schuylkill model. I am hopeful that this community revitalization strategy will continue to grow far beyond the original six towns in the months and years to come.

Sincerely,

State Senator David G. Argall
29th District



Senator Argall joins Mary Luscavage, Downtown Shenandoab Inc., to view the Legion Memorial Gardens. This revitalized area was the result of a collaborative effort between the Borough of Shenandoab which donated the property, Upper Schuylkill which provided funding for the gazebo, and Shenandoab Valley School teacher Barb Boyer who secured a grant that enabled the painting of the mural by Martin Brakus and students.

**I'm interested in learning what you have to say on this subject.
Please complete the questionnaire below and return to my office.**

1. What improvements would you like to see in your community's downtown?

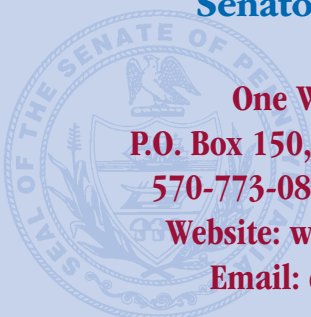
2. Has the Upper Schuylkill Program improved the quality of life in your community?

3. What buildings in your downtown need to be renovated?

4. What buildings in your downtown need to be demolished?

**5. Would you like to volunteer for the Upper Schuylkill Program and/or your local community downtown group?
(Example: organization, townwide cleanups, planting trees, etc.)**

Senator Argall's Northern Schuylkill County Office



**One West Centre Street
P.O. Box 150, Mahanoy City, PA 17948
570-773-0891 • FAX 570-773-1675
Website: www.senatorargall.com
Email: dargall@pasen.gov**

