

206250

August 30, 2001

Honorable Vernon Williams  
Surface Transportation Board  
1925 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



RE: 1411 Corp - Exemption - in Lancaster County, Pa. AB-581X  
Middletown & Hummelstown Railroad Co. - Exemption -  
in Lancaster, Pa. AB-529X

Dear Mr. Williams,

Find enclosed ten (10) additional copies of The Borough of Columbia Planning Commission correspondence which was originally transmitted to you in a single copy by overnight mail on August 28, 2001. Please incorporate this document as a component of the official record for the matter indicated above.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Paul J. Nikolaus, III.'.

Paul J. Nikolaus, III, AIA  
Chairman,  
Borough of Columbia Planning Commission

# Borough of Columbia

*Incorp. rated 1814*

ROSE A. WELSH, MAYOR  
SCOTT K. RYNO, PRESIDENT  
R. L. PFANNEBECKER, SOLICITOR  
EDWARD J. ARNOLD, BOROUGH MANAGER

*Reincorporated 1886*

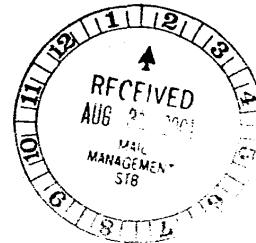
## Planning Commission

PAUL J. NIKOLAUS, III, AIA, CHAIRMAN  
MARY VIRGINIA ABENDSCHEIN, VICE-CHAIRMAN  
ROSEMARY T. ROBINSON, SECRETARY

FREDERIC ABENDSCHEIN, P.E.  
JAY LEWIS  
SYLVIA POWELL  
JOHN ZERCHER

August 25, 2001

Honorable Vernon Williams  
Surface Transportation Board  
1925 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



RE: 141i Corp - Exemption - in Lancaster County, Pa, AB 581X;  
Middletown & Hummelstown Railroad Co. - Exemption - In Lancaster,  
Pa, AB-529X

Dear Mr. Williams,

The Borough of Columbia Planning Commission voted unanimously during its August 20, 2001 meeting to support the redevelopment of the long inactive Middletown and Hummelstown Railroad corridor as a greenway and trail. This action occurred after a thorough review of the master plan document illustrating the 2.4-mile corridor. The implementation of the greenway and trail would realize the accomplishment of a 35-year old planning concept and current component of the Borough's Comprehensive Plan (adopted 1995) and Zoning Ordinance (adopted 1999) that will provide numerous benefits to the residents of our town.

The Planning Commission views the greenway and trail not only as a recreational amenity but as a critical linking element that provides safe access from densely populated residential neighborhoods to public parks and the downtown commercial district. In light of Governor Tom Ridge's announcement this week (Wednesday, August 22, 2001) designating Lancaster and York Counties as the Lancaster-York Heritage Region, we

308 LOCUST STREET, PO BOX 509, COLUMBIA, PENNSYLVANIA 17512  
PHONE 717 684 2467 FAX 717 684 7764

believe the greenway and trail connection to the downtown will also prove to be good for business as it compliments the Heritage Tourism focus of the region. As you know, small communities throughout the country are struggling to find methods for economic revitalization. For Columbia Borough, the greenway and trail are a critical component of this revitalization process.

The Planning Commission understands that the greenway and trail master planning process involved a series of public meetings resulting in a January 2001 Master Plan. To the best of our knowledge, no information was provided during this process indicating that rail use could be economically implemented and supported or would realistically occur. It is also the Commission's belief that the construction of the greenway and trail in conjunction with retaining the old rail line would sacrifice the pedestrian safety and positive economic impact of the greenway and trail with no commensurate public benefits. We understand that no information supporting the reestablishment of rail service has been recently supplied to alter any of the preceding considerations.

The Borough of Columbia Planning Commission supports the effort to seek the Surface Transportation Board's ruling in favor of our community and the greenway and trail in the most expeditious way possible. We look forward to the Board's decision and sincerely appreciate its consideration of this correspondence.

Respectfully,

The Borough of Columbia Planning Commission  
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Attachments: Previous correspondence concerning greenway and trail

Cc: Andrew P. Goldstein, Esq. (for M&H)  
Jeffery O. Morano, Esq. (for Sahd)  
Planning Commission  
Columbia Borough Council  
Edward J. Arnold  
Planning Commission File

# Borough of Columbia

*Incorporated 1814*

ROSE A. WELSH, MAYOR  
SCOTT K. RYNO, PRESIDENT  
R. L. PFANNEBECKER, SOLICITOR  
EDWARD J. ARNOLD, BOROUGH MANAGER

*Reincorporated 1886*

## Planning Commission

PAUL J. NIKOLAUS, III, AIA, CHAIRMAN  
M. VIRGINIA ABENDSCHEIN, VICE-CHAIRMAN  
ROSEMARY T. ROBINSON, SECRETARY

FREDERIC H. ABENDSCHEIN, P.E.  
JAY LEWIS  
SYLVIA POWELL  
JOHN ZERCHER

March 27, 2001

Mr. Michael L. Stark  
President  
Shawnee Run Greenway, Inc.  
P.O. Box 207  
Columbia, PA 17512

Re: Shawnee Run Greenway  
2001 Community Parks Initiative Grant Funding

Dear Mr. Stark,

The Borough of Columbia Planning Commission voted unanimously, at the March 19, 2001 regular monthly meeting, to support Shawnee Run Greenway, Inc. in its efforts to develop Phase One of the Greenway plan. This support extends to the immediate need to secure additional funding through the 2001 Community Parks Initiative, as administered by the Lancaster County Planning Commission, in order to make Phase One a reality.

The Borough of Columbia Planning Commission stated its support of this project with the understanding that it will undergo a complete design and documentation process involving professional engineering and landscape design consulting services.

The Commission also acknowledges the importance of the Greenway project as it is based upon the Borough's 1995 Comprehensive Plan and is slated to extend into our neighboring municipality, West Hempfield Township. Additionally, the fully developed project has the potential to be a community amenity that provides connections throughout the Borough to residential neighborhoods, the riverfront and safe access to the Shawnee Run itself for educational and recreational activities.

308 LOCUST STREET, PO BOX 509, COLUMBIA, PENNSYLVANIA 17512  
PHONE 717 684 2467 FAX 717 684 7764

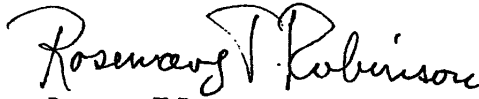
Page 2  
Shawnee Run Greenway, Inc.

In light of this potential, the Planning Commission envisions this project as a long term component of sustainability for the Borough and remains available to offer future support as needed.

Sincerely,

THE BOROUGH OF COLUMBIA PLANNING COMMISSION

  
PAUL J. NIKOLAUS, III, AIA  
CHAIRMAN

  
ROSEMARY T. ROBINSON  
SECRETARY

cc.  
Jeff Helm, Assistant Zoning Officer, The Borough of Columbia  
Mike Slelly, Community Planner, Lancaster County Planning Commission  
Rob Visniski, P.E., Borough Engineer  
Joseph Wright, Chairman, Community Development Committee  
Planning Commission File

**The Borough of Columbia  
Planning Commission  
308 Locust Street  
Columbia, Pennsylvania 17512**

January 24, 2000

Columbia Borough Council  
308 Locust Street  
Columbia, Pennsylvania 17512

Re: Rails to Trails Planning Study

Dear Council Members, Mr. Arnold and Mayor Welsh,

The Borough of Columbia Planning Commission unanimously supports the Shawnee Run (originally Reading to Columbia rail line) Rails to Trails planning initiative and strongly recommends that Borough Council fully endorse the efforts being undertaken by the Columbia Downtown Development Corporation in this regard including the partial funding that is being requested. The Planning Commission anticipates that the conclusions of such a study will answer questions addressing the day to day management of a trail as well as enable funding sources to be seriously pursued. We also believe that a Trail would have numerous direct and indirect benefits to the Borough, a few of which follow:

- The opportunity to work with West Hempfield Township on an inter-municipal project of this nature is consistent with the Lancaster County Planning Commission's objectives in promoting inter-municipal cooperation.
- The creation of a linear parkway through the Borough will provide for a safe walking, jogging and biking path in a natural environment.
- The linear parkway would permit outdoor study areas to be developed for school programs that could address ecology, conservation and historical issues.
- The study would illustrate the emphasis on continuity of Borough planning in that the Trail connects to the Riverfront Commercial District, the riverfront area and the Business District and therefore is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- The successful completion of the study and implementation of the plan would provide current and future residents of Columbia Borough and West Hempfield Township with a unique recreational amenity adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
- The financial support of the plan study by the Borough Council will communicate a message of commitment to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and other potential funding sources for this project and related projects.
- The financial support of the plan study would further energize the efforts of the Columbia Downtown Development Corporation as a private non-profit corporation promoting the use of existing Borough resources and the Trail as an economic tool for revitalization.

Finally, the Planning Commission believes that the Trail would truly be an asset to the Borough and its residents. Without question, it would enhance the Borough's image as a "liveable community" and provide a permanent amenity that improves the quality of life for Borough residents. For the above reasons we encourage the Council to act in support of the Trail.

Sincerely,

The Columbia Borough Planning Commission

cc.

Columbia Borough Planning Commission

Charles Douts, West Hempfield Township

Michael Skelley, Lancaster County Planning Commission

Robert Visnisky, RAV Associates

Michael Warren, Columbia Downtown Development Corporation

Borough File