



ORPC Oxford Region Planning Committee

Chair: Al Jezyk, Jr. Vice-Chair: Charles Fleischmann Treasurer: Robert Ketcham

2024 Annual Report

March 2025

To: ORPC Members

From: Mark Gallant, Chester County Planning Commission

The Oxford Region Planning Committee (ORPC) is an advisory group consisting of representatives from Oxford Borough and East Nottingham, Elk, Lower Oxford, Upper Oxford, and West Nottingham Townships. They meet at 7:00 pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month, when warranted. For the last few years, meetings have been held via Zoom and are open to the public. The ORPC met every month in 2024 with the exception of November when they met on December 5, 2024 in lieu of the November 28, 2024 and December 26, 2024 ORPC meetings.

Al Jezyk, Jr. of Elk Township served as Chair. Charles Fleischmann of Upper Oxford served as Vice-Chair. Robert Ketcham of Oxford Borough served as treasurer. Mark Gallant continued to serve as Secretary/Planner.

Part 1: Summary of Review and Support Letters

Moran Farm Preliminary Plan – Review letter to Oxford Borough and East Nottingham
 Herr’s Farm Preliminary Plan – Review letter to East Nottingham
 Elk Creek State Park transition to Preserve – Support letter to DCNR

Part 2: Speakers/Guests and Topics of Discussion

Speakers

A priority of the ORPC is providing information on meaningful and timely topics and inviting guest speakers to share their expertise and experience. In 2023 this included:

Speaker	Organization	Topic
Doug Azar	Christianacare	Future of former Jennersville Hospital
Dr. John Powell		
Pauline Corso		
Patti Quinn	CCPC	Transportation Outreach to Rural and Agricultural Communities

Part 3: Work Program - Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan Update

The ORPC held a Public Kick-off Meeting on February 28, 2024 at the Herr's Complex. It was organized in an open house format and included a presentation. Nearly 100 members of the public participated and the ORPC acquired nearly 75 email addresses for future correspondence.



Station 1 (to the right) and Station 2 (to the left) and Kevin Myers with the CCPC Consultant Team

The Existing Land Use map exercise was completed and map presented to the ORPC with input from the ORPC municipal planning commissions.

The development of the existing conditions section began and continued throughout much of 2024 and will be completed in 2025 in coordination with the plan chapters.



Station 3 and Heather Jacobson from the CCPC Consultant Team

A public survey was developed and distributed with help from the ORPC membership and municipal administrators. Over 400 surveys were completed.

Part 4: Sub-Committee Activities and Accomplishments in 2024

The Regional Volunteer Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)

Supporting ORPC Stormwater Action Initiative

- ✓ Produced the *Oxford Region Annual 2023/24 MS4 Activities* report for the annual MS4 status reports PaDEP requires permitted municipalities (East Nottingham and Upper Oxford in 2024) to submit by September 30.
- ✓ July 18 site visit to the RES stream restoration site in East Nottingham
- ✓ Disseminated information and facilitated conversations with local landowners about lawn to meadow conversion opportunities.
- ✓ Facilitated donation of native trees to Oxford Memorial Park, December 2024
- ✓ *Stormwater Action Initiative Public Tabling Events*
 - May 3, 2024 Oxford First Friday tabling; hosted by Oxford Mainstreet; Elk Creek Watersheds Association and Octoraro Watershed Association partners
 - June 7, 2024 Oxford First Friday tabling and “June in Bloom” native plant give-away; hosted by Oxford Mainstreet; Brandywine Conservancy partner

- June 29, 2024 Oxford Public Library Fishing Tournament tabling; hosted by Glenroy Preserve; Oxford Public Library, Brandywine Conservancy, Stroud Water Research Center and Elk Creek Watersheds Association partners
- October 4, 2024 Oxford First Friday tabling and native plant give-away; hosted by Oxford Mainstreet; Alliance for Chesapeake Bay partner
- ✓ Facilitated Opportunities for direct participation in improving water quality
 - March 2024 Live stake planting deliveries, Oxford Region EAC partnering with Penn State Master Watershed Stewards
 - April 6, 2024 Tree plantings, Alliance for Chesapeake Bay and DCNR, Big Elk Creek S State Park, Elk and Franklin Townships.
 - April 5 & 20, 2024 Tree plantings, Alliance for Chesapeake Bay, Township Arboretum, Upper Oxford
 - Spring 2024 Municipal Clean Up Days
 - April 27, 2024 Octoraro Reservoir Clean Up, Octoraro Watershed Association, Lower Oxford Township
 - June 1, 2024 Riparian Ranger training for monitoring and maintaining streambank tree plantings, Alliance for Chesapeake Bay, Penn State Master Watershed Stewards, Oxford Borough
 - Sept. 7, 2024 Community of Love Lutheran Church wetland stormwater control project planting, Chester County Conservation District's C3AP Non-Ag Implementation Program, Penn State Master Watershed Stewards, Oxford Borough
 - Sept. 28, 2024 Big Elk Tree Maintenance Workday, Alliance for Chesapeake Bay, Elk Creeks Watershed Association, Elk and Franklin Townships
 - October 6, 2024 Big Elk Tree Maintenance Workday, Alliance for Chesapeake Bay, Elk Creeks Watershed Association, Elk Township
 - October 19, 2024 Third St and Locust St native-plant garden plantings, Brandywine Conservancy, Penn State Master Gardeners, Oxford Borough
 - Nov. 16, 2024 Invasive plant removal workday, Elk Creeks Watershed Association, Elk Township, Elk and Franklin Townships

Other initiatives

- ✓ Supported ORPC outreach concerning the Comp Plan revision
- ✓ Monitoring and on-going discussions about the DCNR Master Plan for the Big Elk Creek parcel
- ✓ Monitored opportunities for the Region to take advantage of the County's Sustainability Initiative

- ✓ Informed discussions concerning the future of the name-sake tree of the Penn Oak development.
- ✓ “Pros and Cons of a Regional EAC,” presentation, EAC Network Conference, February 24, 2024
- ✓ Monitoring and on-going discussions about the environmental implications of the Herr Farm warehouse development

The Regional Historic Preservation Sub-committee

The ORPC HP sub-committee met monthly with Oxford Area Historical Association (OAHA) members and Chester County Planning Commission staff.

The ORPC HP is indirectly supporting the acquisition of the Union School building at 119 S 5th St, which is being identified as the Oxford Area History Center. It will serve as a county-wide Gateway to the Oxford Region’s Agricultural Heritage Interpretive Network. The building has the capacity to store historical documentation from the region that has been collected and held at municipal buildings, as well as private locations. West Nottingham formalized their file transfer agreement with OAHA and other municipalities may consider using this format for future arrangements.

The ORPC HP would like to ensure that all historical related documentation is accessible to municipal planning commissions and governing bodies going forward. Much has been collected, but there may be limited volunteers serving in these capacities in the future. The chair of the sub-committee, Jay Eaton, passed away in December, after years of collecting the history of Lower Oxford. We’ve attempted to include East Nottingham in these efforts and have begun reaching outside of the region for opportunities to partner with neighboring municipalities.

The ORPC HP’s focus in 2024 has been to develop interpretive signs to draw attention to the OAHA History Center and highlight some of the region’s agricultural history. These efforts have been coordinated with the CCPC and members of America 250 PA Chester County, and include consideration of the Chester County’s newly adopted Heritage Tourism Plan, which supports preservation, conservation, and quality of life. The three interpretive sites were chosen for the significance of their agricultural heritage; Glenroy Preserve, Lincoln Village, and Elk Township at the Mason Dixon Line.

In 2025, the ORPC HP will be looking forward to the installation of the interpretive signs, while participating in the update to the regional comprehensive plan and working on an agricultural exhibit at Glenroy Preserve.

ORPC Regional Goal: Identify and preserve the historic resources that contribute to the Region’s heritage and protect these features and the surrounding historic landscapes from encroachment of incompatible development.”

Objectives:

- A. Formulate protection strategies
- B. Monitor protection programs
- C. Encourage integrity of historic resources
- D. Continue tracking significant historic resources
- E. Work in cooperation with other regional entities

ORPC HP Mission Statement: *Advance the work of the region’s historical commissions, past and present, with the goal of preserving the region’s historic resources as outlined in the Oxford Region Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan in order to provide continuity with the region’s heritage and compatibility with the region’s land use.*

Priorities:

- 1. Ensure that existence of historic resources is checked on subdivision plans
- 2. Develop a regional Agricultural Heritage Center
- 3. Fully staff historical commissions
- 4. Develop basic historic resource protection standards

Part 4: Upcoming Activities for 2025

The ORPC will continue their speaker series as topics are identified and continue to support the Regional Volunteer EAC and Historic Preservation Sub-committee.

Work Program: Oxford Region Multimunicipal Comprehensive Plan update

- Development Goals and Objectives
- Hold a 2nd Public Meeting to present Goals and Objectives
- Complete existing conditions in coordination with the plan chapters
- Regularly update ORPC website

2024 ORPC Membership

Municipality	Supervisors/Council Members	Planning Commissioners
Oxford	Amanda Birdwell Pauline Garcia-Allen Alternate	Robert Ketcham
East Nottingham	Sam Goodley Rachel Greer, Alternate	Joe Marra
Elk Township	Albert Jezyk, Jr.	Melanie Ryan
Lower Oxford	Noël Roy	Joel Brown
Upper Oxford	Charles Fleischmann Scot Rugen Alternate	Colin Kaukunas
West Nottingham	Bill Winand	David Ross