

OLD VALLEY PIKE

Its History

A vital link between the county's six towns and other communities in the Valley, the Old Valley Pike—modern day US Route 11—has served the Valley for hundreds of years, from its early days as a trail used by Native Americans, to a wagon road used by the Valley's European settlers and an avenue for the movement—and clashes—of Civil War armies. In the 20th

The Old Valley Pike is one of our county's cherished historic byways. This early route, with a major branch known as the Wilderness Road, was the most important frontier highway in colonial America.

century, the road evolved into a favored travel route for many of the Shenandoah Valley's visitors and today serves as an inviting alternative to Interstate 81, linking together many of the Valley's historic towns and signature landscapes.



*Rt 11 South toward Woodstock at Pugh's Run (1930)
Photo courtesy of the Shenandoah County Historical Society.*

Its Plan

To ensure that Route 11 continues to provide a safe route through rural countryside and historic towns and serve as an artery for tourism and economic development, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Old Valley Pike Corridor Plan in 2008. Citizens gave input through a series of public meetings, Woodstock-based planners provided professional consultation, and the Planning Commission gave its recommendation. The plan provides guidelines to ensure new development and improvements are consistent with the existing historic and cultural character of the Old Valley Pike through the creation of a corridor overlay district. Extending 500-feet on each side of the road, the district consists of two sub-districts—a rural landscape district and a town gateway designation—with tailored guidelines such as lighting, signage, setback, sidewalks and landscaping buffers.

Citizens of Shenandoah County have stated that they treasure the county's rural setting and the individual character of each of our Valley towns and would like to see them protected.

County officials are now considering minor modifications to the plan, in response to concerns about its implementation. The goal is to give more flexibility to small business owners while remaining true to the corridor plan's character and purpose.

During colonial times, the Old Valley Pike was one of the most important frontier roads in America. Now it is a vital part of Shenandoah County's present and future.

For more information about the Old Valley Pike, see www.ShenandoahForum.org.

Old Valley Pike Corridor Plan *Statement of Intent*

It is the intent of this district to ensure that Route 11, the Old Valley Pike, continues to offer local residents and tourists a safe and beautiful route through rural countryside and historic towns, a scenic byway and an artery offering opportunities for tourism and economic development. To this end, these regulations are intended to:

- A. Protect and promote the aesthetic and historic character of the Old Valley Pike as a scenic byway.**
- B. Promote and create attractive gateways to the county's historic towns and villages.**
- C. Ensure safe and functional transportation systems.**
- D. Manage access from the Old Valley Pike to adjacent parcels for the safety and convenience of vehicular travelers, bicyclists and pedestrians.**
- E. Support quality economic development and tourism along the corridor.**

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A Message from the Chair

Summer, the County Fair, Labor Day have all passed and school has started again: we must be transitioning to fall. We hope you are still using our 2016

Shenandoah Grown Agriculture and Farm Guide and website to support our local farms when shopping. A big thanks to the many sponsors who made the guide possible.

Our communities are also in transition with new leaders and staff in several of our towns. As you read through the profile of town personnel, I think you will agree there are many thoughtful and talented folks working individually and collaboratively to keep our towns vibrant and desirable for residents, tourists and new businesses.

Connecting the county's towns is the venerable Old Valley Pike, or US Route 11. County Supervisors and staff are currently examining key provisions of the Old Valley Pike Corridor Plan and county staff have suggested changes to the ordinance to make standards and restrictions appropriate for different scales of development and uses along the corridor, from commercial, to rural residential and gateways for the towns. With current talk about Old Valley Pike, Shenandoah Forum decided to take a look back at the history of this extraordinary roadway and to examine what the corridor plan was put in place to protect.

Finally, as a salute to our agricultural heritage and joining the list of local fall festivals, we invite you to the Taste of Shenandoah at Cave Ridge Winery (see www.caveridge.com for details) on October 15th. You'll find a variety of Shenandoah grown food and beverages to sample and have an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the fall in a lovely rural, agricultural setting.

— Joan Comanor, *Chair*

AROUND OUR TOWNS

It has often been said that Shenandoah County's six incorporated towns line Route 11 "like a string of pearls."

Some towns were founded in the latter half of the 18th century, within decades of the arrival of the first European immigrant settlers in the Shenandoah Valley. Approximately 17,300 of the county's 43,000 residents live within the towns.

Our towns provide municipal services and are the hubs of commerce and community with distinctive shops, community events and cultural activities. The county's comprehensive plan promotes coordinated town and county planning that encourages new housing growth in and around the towns and the surrounding growth areas. Directing growth to towns promotes agricultural vitality by keeping large tracts of rural lands in production, increases housing affordability by using existing public services, like water and sewer, to provide a greater variety of housing options, and strengthens local businesses on Main Street and beyond.

We recently visited with town officials and asked them, "What is the most significant community development or planning issue facing your town?"



DAN HARSHMAN
Mayor, since 1992

EDINBURG

"Edinburg has the same problems and issues of a large city but we lack the economy of scale so it is a greater challenge. We are currently involved with a community development planning grant to identify the types of sustainable businesses that could be attracted to locate in our town. We want businesses that will survive for many years, bring new jobs and spur new supporting businesses. We are fortunate to have Shentel here and as a large enterprise they offer an infrastructure that might be attractive to other high-tech enterprises."



KEVIN FAUBER
Town Manager, since 2013

MT. JACKSON

"The town has infrastructure projects we hope to get off the ground including a sidewalk project first envisioned by Joe Williams, our former mayor. Improving walkability in Mt. Jackson is important for the community and our downtown. Of course, we will be spending time on the update of the town's comprehensive plan. There is discussion now about what we want the town to look like in 15 to 20 years. We want Mt. Jackson to be an asset for both residents and the county and setting that course is going to take time but I am excited about the process."



LISA CURRIE
Mayor, since May 2016

TOMS BROOK

"The number one concern right now is to maintain the town. We have cleaned up the streets and there is lots of support of our new recycling program that will start in October. These things build pride in a community and that is important. A big project I would like to see happen is to develop gateways into the town just so people would know they are entering the small town of Toms Brook. I think that is really important in preserving our small communities."

NEW MARKET

MIKE RITCHIE

Town Manager, since July 2014

“There’s a whole lot going on in New Market right now – these are exciting times. We continue to work on streetscapes to make the town more attractive for businesses and visitors. Making the position of Events and Marketing held by Brittany [Clem] full-time has been a boost for our existing local businesses and we hope will attract new businesses into the town.”



CHAD NEESE

Town Planning & Zoning Administrator, since January 2003

“While we would like to see more residential growth, we are focused on enhancing what we already have. We have a new pamphlet with the theme – this is a great community to live in. We want it to create a sense of place and show how attractive this community is. We are a small town with a lot going on and we want people to see themselves fitting in here.”



BRITTANY CLEM

Marketing & Events Director, since February 2015

“I have been really excited to see the whole community partnering and working together at our events. We have set up an Our Town Development Committee and recently adopted the Virginia Main Street Workplan approach. Our recent Family Movie Night in the Park and our Cross Roads Fest music events at Rebel Park have been great successes and, new this year, we created a Latin Fest.”



WOODSTOCK



ANGELA CLEM

Town Manager, since August 2016

“We will continue to concentrate on the ongoing upgrades to our infrastructure including having excellent drinking water quality and environmentally responsible wastewater management facilities. However, we don’t want to forget about those enhancements that make the quality of life in Woodstock so wonderful – public art, tree canopy, frequented businesses, pedestrian ways, trails, and bikeways.”



KATIE MERCER

Director of Marketing & Events, since November 2014

“At the top of my priorities is developing a business recruitment program. We want to see greater variety of businesses in Woodstock and to fill vacant spaces. By building a stronger economy with more commerce and shops, we generate a good feeling of community and culture. Coinciding with this initiative and knowing that a more attractive outdoor setting tends to make both residents and tourists happier and instills a greater sense of pride, we will be installing more public art spaces, like the ‘Pac Man’ sculpture in Jane’s Garden adjacent to the Spring House Tavern.”

STRASBURG

RYAN SPITZER

Town Manager, since July 2015

“In order to be competitive, Strasburg has to be a place where its citizens can and want to live and work. We must think strategically about how to increase economic opportunities, expand quality of life and work internally to give the best level of services possible. And we must do this all while staying within our town’s budget and maintaining Strasburg as a small town with tight knit community and rural setting. During all of this we also struggle to get the information out to our residents and keep them informed and involved.”



WYATT PEARSON

Planning & Zoning Administrator, since January 2015

“Planning for Strasburg’s future land use is absolutely crucial to maintaining the vision statements of both town and county citizens. Maintaining a primarily rural county while concentrating growth in the towns would be simple enough if that was the only component of long-range planning. We also strive to preserve the historic and natural amenities in Strasburg, while ensuring that proposed development meets the needs and standards of our citizens.”



MICHELLE BIXLER

Economic Development & Marketing Manager, since July 2016

“Like many rural or small communities, Strasburg’s economic challenges are just as complex as a large city’s, however, we have fewer resources to work with. Because of that, it becomes imperative to collaborate with others working on similar challenges. We are lucky to have several complementary organizations in the county and towns that also see the benefit in joining forces for the advancement of everyone.”



LEMUEL HANCOCK

Urban Designer & Neighborhood Planner, since July 2015

“It’s two-fold. First, the problem of ‘zombie subdivisions,’ which are these partially-built community areas with only one spec house, or only curb and gutter for a street. We want these areas not just rebuilt, but built anew to become part of the larger community, preferably to meet updated goals for preservation of urban tree canopies, protection of our watershed, and compatible with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and their business model. The second part is creating linkages. We have great parks, large and small, and we want to link the parks – with bike trails or trail networks – to our neighborhoods and accommodate multiple interests and specific goals, like the Green Infrastructure Plan proposes.”

Shenandoah Forum
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INSIDE:

***Old Valley Pike Corridor Plan
Town Profiles***



**STUDENT AWARDED
FORUM SCHOLARSHIP
IS OFF AT SCHOOL!**

Rachael Friedenberg, a Stonewall High School graduate, is attending University of Mary Washington.



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- Farmers & Merchants Bank
- First Bank
- All Things Virginia @ The Farmhouse

- Cave Ridge Vineyard
- Cristina's Café
- Cedar Hill Gardens aka Gabalot Gardens
- Country Gardens
- James River Equipment
- Mowery Orchard LLC
- Mt. Jackson Southern States
- Penelope's Café

- Pot Town Organics
- Sinclair Farm
- Swover Creek Farms and Brewery
- Woodbine Farm Market
- Woodstock Café and Shoppes
- Shenandoah County Tourism
- Northbrook Farm
- Image Grafx and Printing

TASTE
OF
SHENANDOAH
Sat. October 15th • 12 - 4 PM
Local Farm-To-Table
Food, Wine, Beer & Cider Event
At Cave Ridge Vineyard
1476 Conicville Rd., Mt. Jackson, VA

LIVE MUSIC
Featuring
Randy Black
& Pat!

\$25 Tickets include all food and drink pairings with vendors. Proceeds support the work of the Shenandoah Forum.

Shenandoah FORUM