

# Keeping LANCASTER Current

AN HOURGLASS PUBLICATION

Lancaster County Growth Management Issues September 20, 2005

FYI

**THE STATE OF WORKING PENNSYLVANIA 2005** –This year's [report](#), published by [The Keystone Research Center](#), is released at a time of growing uncertainty about the national economy. **Rising energy costs**, indications that the **housing market bubble may burst**, and **quickenning inflation** and interest rates have led some economic observers to anticipate a slowdown over the next few months.

The focus on the state minimum wage has increased as a result of the furor over the 2005 legislative pay raise. **Legislators' pay has increased over 40% since 1978**, a period in which minimum wage workers experienced a decline in pay.

In Pennsylvania, vulnerability to a slowdown, if it occurs, will be heightened by the fact that **three years of economic recovery have brought only wage stagnation or decline** for most workers. This stagnation coupled with rising gas prices help explain the intensity of public reaction to the 16-34 percent pay increases enacted for members of the General Assembly in July. This reaction has left the legislature searching for ways to demonstrate its concern for the average Pennsylvanian. One of the actions under consideration is **an increase in the state's minimum wage from the current \$5.15 per hour to \$7.15 per hour.**

Based on a review of the latest Pennsylvania labor market data and of research on the impact of raising the minimum wage, the *State of Working Pennsylvania 2005* **concludes that a state minimum wage increase should be implemented.** It also concludes that future erosions in the value of the Pennsylvania minimum wage should be protected against with an automatic annual cost-of-living increase.

## BETTER MODELS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA – IDEAS FOR CREATING MORE LIVABLE AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES –

This new [book](#) is the result of collaboration between [The Conservation Fund](#) and the [Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and National Resources](#) (DCNR).

**Development is inevitable**, but the destruction of community character and natural resources that too often accommodate growth is not. Progress does not demand degraded surroundings. Pennsylvania communities can grow without losing their beauty, history, or livability. Instead of debating whether growth will occur, we should be discussing the patterns of development; **where we put it, how we arrange it, and what it looks like.** If we start from this premise, communities can more easily balance conservation with economic development. This [book](#) presents many ideas on how to make development more profitable and **less costly for both developer and the community.**

### Six Principles for Development in Pennsylvania

- 1.) **Conserve** farmland, natural areas and scenic assets
- 2.) **Maintain** a clear edge between town and countryside
- 3.) Build and maintain **livable** and **attractive** communities
- 4.) **Preserve** historic resources
- 5.) **Respect** local community character in new construction
- 6.) **Reduce** the impact of the car and promote walkability

### Upcoming Events

**Water Resources Planning and Management in Pennsylvania – Friday, October 21, 2005** – 2004 Pennsylvania Section American Water Resources Association Annual Fall Conference held at Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA. [For more information.](#)

### Interesting Articles/Websites

[Strategic Action Plan of the Susquehanna Greenway](#)

[The Incredible Shrinking Box - Retailers shape stores to fit urban settings](#)

[The Effects of the Proposed Pennsylvania Minimum Wage Increase](#)

[HOPE VI and Mixed-Finance Redevelopments: A Catalyst for Neighborhood Renewal](#)

[Wrestling Sprawl to the Ground: Defining and Measuring an Elusive Concept](#)

[Metro America in the New Century: metropolitan and Central City Demographic Shifts Since 2000](#)

*Enabling informed growth management  
decision-making for Lancaster County*

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