



Progress Update

Vol. 52 Nos. 01-02

January/February 2016

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Progress Council 51st annual dinner set for May 12



The Mon Valley Progress Council’s 51st annual dinner is set for May 12 at the Willow Room (look for an invitation soon).

The annual dinner will feature recognition of two long-term Mid Mon Valley state legislators, Pete Daley and Ted Harhai, and presentation of a Frank Irey, Jr. Join in Progress Award to the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission.

The Frank Irey, Jr. Join in Progress Award is being presented to the Turnpike Commission for their decision to restart the Mon Valley/ Fayette Expressway project north of PA Route 51.

51. The Turnpike Commission plans include the Progress Council’s proposed busway extension from Swissvale to East Pittsburgh.

Look soon for more details on the Mon Valley Progress Council’s 51st annual dinner.

Progress Council initiates “Final Push Campaign” to advance completion of the Mon Valley/Fayette Expressway



Completion of the Mon Valley/Fayette Expressway has been a core mission of the Mon Valley Progress Council since its inception in 1965. We have seen times when the Expressway was in doubt and times of significant progress. To date, more than sixty-miles of the Expressway are completed.

This year there is the opportunity to advance the final section of the Expressway north of PA Route 51. Passage of state transportation funding legislation in 2013, supported by a broad coalition of organizations including the Progress Council, is an essential part of the opportunity to advance both the Mon Valley/Fayette Expressway and Southern Beltway.

Restarting of the Expressway project requires updating the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Expressway north of PA Route 51. It’s important to remember that there are groups who will see the update of the EIS as an opportunity to stop the Expressway.

Completion of the entire Expressway project will open new markets, reduce transportation time and costs, meet increasing just-in-time challenges, improve access to a broader labor pool, provide access to major brownfield industrial sites to promote the location of new businesses, and support revitalization of communities throughout the Mon Valley Expressway corridor.

We need your help for the Expressway Final Push Campaign to ensure that the Progress Council can commit significant time and effort to coalesce local support, prepare testimony for hearings and meetings, as well as continued research on the benefits of the Expressway project.

We hope you will choose to support the Expressway Final Push Campaign and would welcome the opportunity to answer your questions regarding the Expressway project.

MVPC/MMIDA consolidation plan reviewed at annual business meeting

Progress Council president John Easoz provided an update at the January 8 meeting at the Monongahela Valley Hospital's Education Center on ongoing efforts of a joint committee of the Mon Valley Progress Council and the Middle Monongahela Industrial Development Association to consider a consolidation of the two organizations.

In a recent letter to Progress Council sponsors, President Easoz outlined plans to present a consolidation plan with the Middle Monongahela Industrial Development Association at the Progress Council's spring quarterly meeting. A joint Progress Council / MMIDA committee has been meeting on a regular basis for almost a year.

The consolidation effort was initiated by remarks of MMIDA's president at the Progress Council's 2013 annual dinner regarding the importance of the two organizations seeking ways of working together more closely.

Fight Blight roundtable receives presentation on best practices to fight blight



A February 8 meeting of the Fight Blight Roundtable included a presentation on best practices to fight blight by Cindy Daley, Policy Director, Housing Alliance of PA with the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance.

Cindy reviewed two Housing Alliance's publications, *"From Blight to Bright, a comprehensive toolkit for Pennsylvania"* and *"Conservation Handbook"*. Together these publications combined with Housing Alliance online resources represent a truly comprehensive review of tools and best practices to address blight.

As Cindy Daley repeatedly noted in her remarks, the tools presented in the two publications are an important part of a local efforts to address blight. Among the measures discussed was a "quick ticket program" that can be used to addresses maintenance issues, particularly those found with rental properties.

In 2015, the Progress Council formed the Fight Blight Roundtable as an initiative of the Mid Mon Valley Intergovernmental Cooperative to promote discussion of broader initiatives to address community blight in the Mid Mon Valley. The municipalities of Monessen, Donora, Charleroi and Brownsville are core members of the Roundtable.

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