



Borough of Bath
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Senator David G. Argall, Chairman
Senate Urban Affairs & Housing Committee
Senate Box 203029
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3029

May 16, 2013

Re: Public Hearing/Future of Main & Elm Street Programs

Dear Mr. Argall:

Celebrating the 275th year of its founding in 2012, the Borough of Bath is a community facing similar challenges to those found in virtually all of the municipalities involved in both Main and Elm Street Programs within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – a decimated manufacturing district, a diminished commercial retail business district, a declining tax base, and increased traffic due to residential and commercial development in adjoining municipalities.

Also shared amongst these communities is uncertainty regarding whether the Main and Elm Street Programs that are typically facilitated at the local level by volunteers participating in grassroots organizations can achieve long-term sustainability. These volunteers must appeal to local corporations, businesses and governments in order to receive the funding necessary to carry out targeted local initiatives. The attempt to receive support consumes much of the time that is essential in order to illicit change at the grassroots level.

Main and Elm Street Programs help to revitalize communities by retaining and attracting retail businesses via initiatives such as façade grants, community events, community beautification, and strategic promotion- thus retaining the unique character and charm of nationally recognized historic districts while simultaneously facilitating economic development and growth. Programs at the grassroots-level identify the assets of the community and attempt to capitalize on them. The Borough of Bath has benefited tremendously since its involvement in the Main Street Program, with the number of businesses within the Borough continuing to increase and its defined downtown business district as envisioned by the Main Street steering committee starting to take shape.

For Main and Elm Street Programs, the most valued asset is by far the local volunteers who dedicate their time to the cause of enhancing the communities they live in, raise their families in, and work in. Without the support of volunteers, Main Street programs would cease to exist. Volunteers need economic support in order to continue their efforts and dedicate the majority of their time to the task at hand. Support is necessary for these needed programs to continue.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Petrucci
Borough Manager