



The Intelligencer

Planning commission sticking to the classics

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The Intelligencer

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When a car reaches a certain age, it's no longer old - it's classic.

The way regional planners see it, that distinction also applies to a number of older communities in greater Philadelphia.

On Thursday, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission added nine towns - including New Hope and Souderton/Telford - to its Classic Towns marketing initiative.

"We learned that a lot of people move to the Philadelphia region each year and don't hear about these places," said Karen Cilurso, a senior regional planner with the DVRPC. "We're just trying to give them choice."

More than 1 million people relocate to the region each year, according to the planning commission.

The two-year-old revitalization program helps 20 towns highlight why they are great places to live, work and play.

Towns are chosen after being recommended by their county planning commission and undergoing an extensive application process. They agree to a two-year commitment to the program and must pay \$2,500 a year toward the marketing the planning commission purchases, Cilurso said.

Classic Towns receive a marketing packet, including street banners, brochures and store decals, and a spot on the classictowns.org Web site, she said.

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The planning commission also markets the towns regionally, to places such as the New York metro area.

Communities must send representative to attend workshops each year. The program also provides networking opportunities and grant-writing support.

Town spokespeople say being named a Classic Town is a "source of pride" for residents.

"We're very excited," said Pam Coleman, director of the Souderton-Telford Main Street program. "We're classified with some really very impressive communities."

Three other Pennsylvania towns - Ardmore, Phoenixville and Wayne - and the Philadelphia neighborhood of Germantown were added to the planning commission's Classic Towns list this year.

The New Jersey towns of Glassboro, Merchantville and Moorestown were also added.

Last year, Doylestown was part of the original batch of Classic Towns.

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