



A Gateway to History and Culture

Executive Summary:

An 8-acre parcel of land in Millford, PA was well-positioned to become a gateway to the Grey Towers National Historic Site, the former home of Gifford Pinchot, first chief of the U.S. Forest Service and two-time governor of Pennsylvania. The owner of this northeastern Pennsylvania property envisioned a village with a variety of facilities and services for people drawn to the adjacent National Historic Site. He engaged Conservation Economics (CE) to aid in identifying opportunities for the site that would highlight the history, provide a scenic setting, and bring tourism to the community.

Conservation Economics brought the community together for conversations about the future of the site by:

- Facilitating public meetings
- Developing a conservation strategy for the real estate
- Identifying business opportunities
- Identifying potential buyers

Client Challenge:

The Millford parcel included the Apple Valley Restaurant, as well as rustic cabins and village shops situated near colorful gardens, woodlands and a pond. The owner envisioned expanding the property to create a gateway for tourists attracted to the Grey Towers National Historic Site. He was looking for partners and businesses, or a buyer, who would enhance the cultural and historic nature of the area while benefitting the community. A variety of public agencies, community leaders and private businesses had a stake in the outcome of this planning effort and needed to be included in the process. The client engaged Conservation Economics for assistance in making his vision a reality.

Conservation Economics Solution:

Over a year-long, multi-step process, CE contacted and engaged the National Park Service, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania State representatives, The Chamber of Commerce, community business leaders, real estate agencies, and other stakeholders in the process of envisioning a future for the Grey Towers gateway. CE helped to focus the public meetings on the cultural, historic and economic value of a gateway to the community. Potential sale or development concepts still being considered include:

- Partnership with a school or other educational facility
- A museum highlighting the history of the area and setting the scene for Grey Towers
- A non-profit conservation organization/think tank
- Businesses related to forest management, a conservation strategy for which Gifford Pinchot was known.