

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

1980s

## Historic ordinance, new campuses

*At a recent Progress Pottstown luncheon, borough officials expressed optimism about Pottstown's future. The following is one of a series about where we've been in the last five decades.*

Even as Pottstown was losing its traditional industrial base, it was creating new ones.



Commentary by  
Thomas Hylton

In the early 1980s, with state and federal funding, the borough acquired 50 acres adjacent to the Pottstown Municipal Airport to create the Airport Business Campus.

Thirty lots, ranging from 1 to 6 acres, were laid out around a loop road called the Circle of Progress. They went on sale in April 1985. The campus is managed by the Pottstown Area Industrial Development Corp. (PAID). Proceeds from selling the lots went to PAID to support other projects. It took more than 20 years to sell all the lots.

In 1985, using 35 acres formerly owned by the Clow Robinson Corp. which the company donated to Pottstown Borough, the borough contracted with Duro Development Corp. to create the Tri-County Business Campus.

Meanwhile, spurred by the demolition of the historic Pottstown High

School, a non-profit called Preservation Pottstown began a program to restore the borough's historic buildings.

Most of downtown Pottstown was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Developers who restored historic buildings in the district could receive a 25 percent tax credit for the cost of renovations.

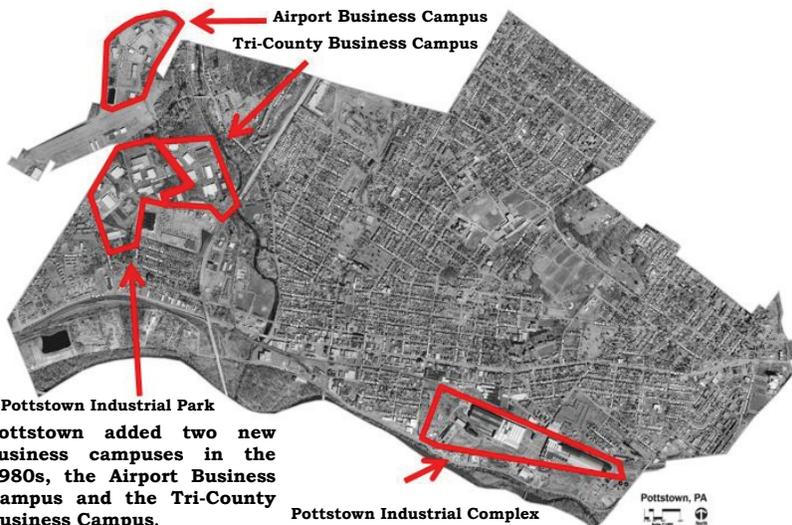
In 1986, Pottstown Council adopted an ordinance protecting the exterior of buildings in a similar historic district.

Among the buildings restored as offices or apartments were the Reading passenger station, the freight station, the former Kepner & Romich Furniture Store, the former Ecker warehouse, Sweet Orr Mills, and the Light Foundry.

Using \$1.8 million in grant money, what is now College Drive was built west of Hanover Street, connecting to High Street across from Pottsgrove Manor. This opened a new area for development (including the Community College in 1996 and later Keystone Boulevard).



**THE 1983 RESTORATION of the Roller Mills, a 1725 grist mill on Hanover Street at South Street, into offices and apartments, was the first historic tax credit project in Pottstown. Many more followed.**



**Pottstown added two new business campuses in the 1980s, the Airport Business Campus and the Tri-County Business Campus.**

**Pottstown Industrial Complex**

**Pottstown, PA**