

RESEARCH REPORT
PHMC Scholar-in-Residence Program, 2008

Name: Tracy Neumann

Grant Amount: \$1500

Period of Residency: 9/2/08-10/1/08

Financial Summary: \$1500 expended on food, lodging and transportation

Narrative Summary

I spent most of the time of my residency at the Pennsylvania State Archives, with some additional research time at the State Library. My research focused on economic development planning and urban policy programs in the state of Pennsylvania and in Pittsburgh in the 1970s and 1980s. The research I carried out will inform the chapter of my dissertation that focus on Pittsburgh as a case study of a deindustrializing city; on the US federal urban and economic development policy; and on state urban and economic development policy.

The most important record groups for my research were the Governor Milton J. Shapp Papers (MG 309); the Records of the Department of Labor and Industry (RG 16); the Records of the Department of Commerce (RG 31); and the Records of the Department of Community and Economic Development (RG 71).¹ At the State Library, I looked at the publications of MILRITE (Making Industry and Labor Right), a tri-partite advisory commission established in the 1980s to make recommendations to the state about industrial restructuring.

¹ I also looked at records from MG 209, the Governor Raymond P. Shafer Records; RG 10 Records of the Office of Governor [Robert Casey]; RG 34, Department of Community Affairs [plus a folder of unprocessed accessions]; and RG 54, Local Government Commission. These were not particularly useful for my purposes.

The Annual Planning Reports, 1975-1979 series and the Minutes of the State Job Coordinating Council Meetings, 1983-1988 series from RG 16 were particularly useful for understanding for how the state of Pennsylvania (through the Department of Labor) understood issues of economic diversification and the relative strength of the manufacturing industries in the Pittsburgh area. These records also provide information on the state's dislocated worker program, which seems to have been ineffective – the final report suggests that the program was not able to make significant inroads in matching unemployed workers to the highly skilled jobs that needed filling.

The Foreign Trade Mission Files series of RG 31 document Commerce Secretary Stengel's trips abroad to attract industry, the specifics of which are not particularly important to my project, but the files also contained significant information on trade fairs that Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh took part in, which were sought to promote foreign direct investment by linking foreign capital directly to city officials who were in the best position to cut them deals. Also, the files document a "reverse trade mission" with Canada – typically, of course, US companies invested in Canada, but the Commerce Department hoped to get Canadian companies to open branches in Pennsylvania. The latter documents are particularly useful for an aspect of my broader dissertation project – locating transnational linkages between US and Canadian industrial cities. The General Subject Files series contained useful background information and status reports on various economic task forces and information on economic development initiatives, some of which were enacted and some of which were not, which helped me make sense of what state programs were made available to Pittsburgh as it faced an economic transition.

The Strategy Program series of RG 71 documents a statewide strategy for economic development, job training, banking reform and general economic recovery. In addition to the final report, the records contain early workplans and memos discussing how best to approach economic development, offering a good sense of what policy alternatives were under consideration and why certain options were selected and others left aside.

The End of Administration Files from the Shapp Papers contained substantial information on economic development, local governments, and banking that were prepared for the transition from Shapp to Thornburgh and detailed what the Shapp administration considered to be the highlights of their policymaking in those areas. This was a particularly helpful collection because it shows the breadth and depth of the Shapp administration's economic development activities and the administration's involvement in local governments activities (including Pittsburgh).

The Subject Files, 1971-1979, series from the Shapp Papers offer general economic analysis; Pennsylvania's efforts to attract new industry and inter-state competition for industry; and Shapp's response to Nixon's economic and urban policies, including a large body of material on how Shapp tried to fight Nixon's revenue-sharing programs, which fundamentally reoriented federal aid cities in 1972. The latter group of documents is particularly useful as context for a section of my dissertation on the Nixon and Ford administration's urban policies.

The Files of Larry Hochendoner, Special Assistant to the Governor, 1977 [Special Assistant for Planning and Economic Development] series of the Shapp Papers contain a wealth of information about competition between states to attract new companies; about

Pennsylvania's efforts to accommodate US Steel in a variety of situations; and, most importantly for my research, there are documents relating to PA's involvement in two separate federal urban and economic development policy initiatives. Like the documentation of Shapp's fights with Nixon over revenue-sharing, these will allow me write a much more nuanced analysis of federal efforts urban policy planning, because these documents are quite explicit about what the state of Pennsylvania wanted from federal urban policy in the late 1970s.

The records I consulted at the Pennsylvania State Archives are integral to my dissertation. In addition to providing information on the politics and policymaking of the state government that I would not otherwise have had access to, the State Archives records filled some gaps in my research on local-level activities in Pittsburgh and, quite unexpectedly, offered a new perspective on federal policymaking as well. I very much appreciate the opportunity to spend a month with these records, time that would have been very difficult to manage without the generous support of the PHMC Scholars-in-Residence Program. You are welcome to post this report n the PHMC website if you think it would be of use to other scholars.