



## **Dillsburg Heart & Soul** **Frequently Asked Questions**

We are thrilled you are interested in learning more about Community Heart & Soul and the Dillsburg Heart & Soul process and team. Below is some information about our effort, as well as the Community Heart & Soul process itself, and our partners.

We invite you to also visit our website at [www.dillsburgheartandsoul.org](http://www.dillsburgheartandsoul.org), or connect with us on [Facebook](#). Not on social media? No problem! Reach out to us with questions, to provide feedback, learn about events, or get involved with the team by emailing us at [dillsburgheartandsoul@gmail.com](mailto:dillsburgheartandsoul@gmail.com).

### **About Community Heart & Soul**

#### **What is Community Heart & Soul?**

Developed and field-tested over a decade in partnership with small cities and towns across the United States, Community Heart & Soul is a proven process for engaging a community in shaping its future. Based on three powerful principles – involve everyone, focus on what matters most, and play the long game – Community Heart & Soul helps towns move toward a brighter, more prosperous future by bringing community residents closer together. When residents get closer, differences fade and the things they care most about replace the differences. Trust is built and residents become stronger believers in their communities and more collaborative in their decision-making. People continue to stay in their communities, new people move in, and investment in towns increases. Community Heart & Soul is unique in how it engages residents. It is a highly inclusive process that reaches deep into communities to ensure all voices are represented in determining a town's future. Instead of bringing residents to the table, Community Heart & Soul brings the table to residents at community events, neighborhood block parties, schools, businesses, and virtual gatherings. Learn more by downloading the one-pager [here](#).

#### **How did Community Heart & Soul originate?**

The seed for Community Heart & Soul was planted by businessman, Lyman Orton, who, with his three sons, is the proprietor of The Vermont Country Store. Orton served on his town's Planning Commission when it was wrestling with divisive proposals and grew frustrated that decisions being made that would shape the town's future were without guidance from the majority of the residents. Orton recognized that there had to be a better way—one that reflected the hopes, dreams and ideas of the entire community and not just the few who regularly attended Planning Commission meetings. Funded through profits from The Vermont Country Store, Orton created a nonprofit organization with the mission of establishing a community development process that engages all voices within a community in determining what matters most to the people who live there.

### **How does Community Heart & Soul work?**

Community Heart & Soul is an ongoing practice that provides municipal officials with a clear understanding of what matters most to their constituents—all the residents—and forges a partnership that builds on the first thing everyone has in common: they all live here. It's not a report that sits on a shelf; it's a way of coming together to make your town a better place to live in and visit. Community Heart & Soul begins with a four-phase, step-by-step process that brings residents together to identify and honor the unique character of their town and the emotional connection of the people who live there. Four phases are:

- Phase 1: Heart & Soul teams are formed to build awareness, interest, and commitment in the community.
- Phase 2: Stories are gathered from residents, leading to the development of Heart & Soul Statements that identify what matters most and reflect what they love about their towns.
- Phase 3: Residents develop action plans to guide future town planning based on their Heart & Soul Statements.
- Phase 4: Heart & Soul Statements are officially adopted by town and city councils, incorporated into comprehensive and other plans, and are used to guide future policies and decisions.

### **How many national Community Heart & Soul towns are there?**

From Downeast, Maine, to the Heartland, to the Pacific Northwest, towns and residents are making change in their community. Since the beginning of Community Heart & Soul, 90 communities from coast to coast have participated in the process. To learn more about towns across the country, [check out this map](#).

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### **About Dillsburg Community Heart & Soul**

#### **What is Dillsburg Heart & Soul? Where can I learn more about it?**

We are your neighbors - dedicated local folks, with no political or ideological agenda, who have been working together to shine a light on our beautiful small town. Some of us have lived here for generations and others for a few years. Together we have been gathering stories to highlight the things our community loves, and form connections among our neighbors here in Dillsburg and our surrounding communities. We are eager to listen and share what we hear. Together we hope to inspire Dillsburg and the entire Northern community to continue to be a place where we are all proud to live, work, play, and learn. You can learn more about the effort on [our website](#).

#### **When did Dillsburg Heart & Soul begin this project?**

After hearing about the successes in the Greater Carlisle Heart & Soul process, residents in Dillsburg reached out to PA Humanities to learn more. In 2020, Dillsburg Heart & Soul launched with the help of funding from South Mountain Partnership (through funding from the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources) and coaching from PA Humanities. Dillsburg Arts is an additional partner on the project, helping to oversee and administer funding from South Mountain Partnership.

#### **What geographic area does Dillsburg Heart & Soul cover?**

All the municipalities of the Northern York County School District - Carroll, Franklin, Monaghan, Washington, and Warrington townships and Dillsburg, Franklinton and Wellsville boroughs . However, we are eager to hear from anyone who lives, works and plays in the area and wants to contribute feedback to the process.

### **Where did the team collect feedback from residents?**

Throughout 2020-21, the team attended as many outdoor events and festivals as they could (given COVID restrictions). The team attended events throughout the Northern school district like the Farmers' Fair and Food Truck Fridays, in schools, through civic clubs, at senior centers and senior living facilities, and at social gathering places like restaurants and coffee shops. Folks were also encouraged to provide feedback through social media (Facebook) and on the Dillsburg Heart & Soul website.

### **No one from Dillsburg Heart & Soul reached out to me. How do I get involved to provide feedback?**

Given COVID restrictions in 2020-21, the team was careful to attend mostly outdoor community events. They were also able to connect to a few community groups and individuals who felt comfortable meeting in smaller groups with safety precautions in place. Because of this the team was not able to connect to many residents that may have been interested in providing feedback or being a part of the process. We are eager to connect with even more residents! Please reach out to us to set up a time to talk as a group or 1-1 about your loves, hopes and needs for Dillsburg.

### **How much data was collected in Phase 2?**

In total, we collected 2,000 pieces of data to date. This is comprised of two major types of data:

- “Thin” data consists of short answers through words and drawings (in the elementary schools) to our two main questions: what do you love about the Dillsburg area, and what would you like to see in the Dillsburg area?
- “Thick” data consisting of answers to about 6-7 interview questions that expanded on our two main questions

### **How were these themes and value statements drafted originally?**

The Dillsburg Heart & Soul volunteer leadership team spent several months analyzing collected data and categorized it by various themes that kept emerging. They then crafted summarizing statements based on the data and themes to capture the essence of what community members shared about what they love about Dillsburg and its surrounding areas.

### **Is Dillsburg Heart & Soul a political movement?**

NO. In fact, the Community Heart & Soul process is designed to be apolitical - that's why we are focusing on what matters most and not on concerns or complaints. Neither our local group nor the national organization is associated with any political group. The national group, Community Heart & Soul, was founded to celebrate small towns and help engage the people in those communities by asking them what they love about their area and what their dreams are for their area. It does not provide financial support to local Heart & Soul groups, but it does provide training in how to gather stories from people in the community and how to organize the Heart & Soul process.

### **What's the point? Why do this?**

Community Heart & Soul helps small communities celebrate their unique and beloved features while also providing data to help the communities determine ways to take action to maintain what they love and take action steps toward realizing dreams they have for making their communities even better. It is community-driven and invites all to participate.

### **Now that you've collected this feedback and created Statements. What's next?**

The Dillsburg team will take the feedback you offered on the statements and edit them accordingly. Once the Statements are finalized, we will share them publicly and begin the work of Phase 3. This phase is about more community outreach and engagement on action ideas, hopes and concerns for the future. This will help the team create a draft Community Action Plan that we will share with residents, stakeholders and local government.

## **How do I contact the team or become involved?**

Connect with project coordinator, Liz Fairchok, or the team by emailing [dillsburgheartandsoul@gmail.com](mailto:dillsburgheartandsoul@gmail.com).

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## **About PA Humanities**

### **Who is PA Humanities? Why are they involved in Community Heart & Soul?**

PA Humanities is an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to champion the humanities as a means to spark civic engagement, build community, educate, inspire, and make long-lasting change.

Founded in 1973, PA Humanities has grown and changed significantly in its nearly 50-year history. After forming from a startup grant at the University of Pennsylvania, we were officially incorporated at Bucknell University in 1973, we finally settled in Philadelphia in 1980 with the name Pennsylvania Humanities Council (PHC). State humanities councils are the independent nonprofit partners of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and were created with two goals in mind: (1) advancing knowledge and understanding of the humanities and (2) increasing public awareness of, access to, and support for the humanities in the US.

In our early years, activity consisted almost exclusively of making grants to nonprofit organizations with funds provided by the NEH. We began to focus on expanding access to the humanities in Pennsylvania beyond groups traditionally interested in cultural events. We sought to empower local groups that were working to build the programming capacity of small historical societies, museums, art centers, libraries, senior centers, and community groups. As our work progressed, we decided in 2013 to re-envision our future by focusing strategically on areas of need in Pennsylvania where the humanities can have the greatest impact: community building and education. Since our shift in strategy, we reflected on how far we've come as an organization and, in 2021, decided to rebrand as PA Humanities to better reflect the work we do. As we move into the future, we are always finding new ways to put the humanities in action to create positive change with people and communities across the Commonwealth.

In 2015, we were introduced to the work of Community Heart & Soul - and saw great alignment with our civic engagement goals. We launched a partnership with them to bring their field-tested resident-driven community planning process to towns across the state. Our first towns were in Meadville, Williamsport and the Greater Carlisle area.

PA Humanities is a wholly nonpartisan organization and works productively with public officials, organizations, communities, and residents from all backgrounds and across Pennsylvania to put the humanities into action to make meaningful change. Further, as a federal-state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, PHC may not promote a particular political, religious, or ideological point of view.

### **What is the National Endowment for the Humanities? Is it a political organization?**

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is an independent federal agency created in 1965. It is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. Because democracy demands wisdom, NEH serves and strengthens our republic by promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans. The Endowment accomplishes this mission by awarding grants for top-rated proposals examined by panels of independent, external reviewers. NEH grants typically go to cultural institutions, such as museums, archives, libraries, colleges, universities, public television, and radio stations, and to individual scholars. The NEH is not a political organization, and must remain non partisan due to its stance as a federal agency.

**How many communities in PA have participated in Community Heart & Soul?**

Since the launch of our partnership with Community Heart & Soul, PA Humanities has worked with 14 towns across the Commonwealth to bring the resident-driven planning process to their towns, cities and boroughs.

**Does PA Humanities provide funding to communities?**

Most of our communities are funded by PA Humanities, through funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and in collaboration with special funding partners like the Department of Community & Economic Development, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, South Mountain Partnerships, the Route 6 Alliance and Warren County. For all teams in PA that are connected to the network, PA Humanities staff provides coaching, training and resources as an in-kind contribution.

**Where can I find out more about PA Heart & Soul communities and PA Humanities?**

More information can be found on the PA Humanities website [here](#) and [here](#).

**About South Mountain Partnership****Who is South Mountain Partnership? Why are they involved in Community Heart & Soul?**

The South Mountain Partnership is a regional, landscape-scale conservation project in south-central Pennsylvania. This Partnership has emerged to guide efforts within the South Mountain Conservation Landscape, one of seven Conservation Landscapes that the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has identified throughout the state. Launched in 2006, the Partnership operates as a public-private partnership between DCNR and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and has grown into an alliance of citizens, businesses, non-profits, academic institutions, and local, state and federal government agencies and officials collaborating to envision and secure a sustainable future for the South Mountain landscape. This landscape is home, it is where we live. Together, the Partnership strives to collaborate in sustaining all that makes our home landscape so special and all that supports the quality of life that we enjoy.

South Mountain Partnership helped to launch Community Heart & Soul in the Dillsburg area in 2019, providing support and funding for the process through dollars raised from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Their interest in the Heart & Soul process stems from their stewardship of the Dillsburg area, and their mission to support its growth and development. You can learn more about them at [www.southmountainpartnership.org](http://www.southmountainpartnership.org).