

## NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT Committee of 100

BY APRIL HALL

» The impact of smart, responsible development is not lost on Delawareans. In fact, a group of businesspeople came together in 1967 to help state administrators and legislators monitor and analyze Delaware's population growth.

Originally formed to address problems associated with land use and the use of funds on the state and local level, The Committee of 100 has expanded to all manner of infrastructure and quality-of-life issues across the state. Paul H. Morrill, Jr., executive director of the group, says solutions to transportation, utility and educational needs are vital when growing a community.

"Our education system would stimulate economic development in the immediate and the distant future," Morrill says. "Whether we're talking about getting technology in the schools or energy conservation, if we want kids to mainstream into the technological economy, we need to make an investment."

During the economic downturn, Morrill says infrastructure development and planning weren't urgent issues, but as the state gets back on track and hires a new planning coordinator, he expects debates to pick up steam again.

"[Infrastructure] is always going to be a hot topic, it's just the nature of the beast," Morrill says. The group became a lead player in new storm water policies and supporting the creation of transportation improvement districts. In the TIDs,



*Paul Morrill and Lanor Ryder lead the business-focused Committee of 100*

PHOTO BY NICK WALLACE

developers would contribute to a pool of money that would be used for infrastructure as an area developed, rather than "the first people in get free capacity, the last guy gets a \$1 million bill."

During its monthly dinner meetings, the committee discusses current issues and invites guest speakers from around the state, whether they are legislators, other business leaders or key policy makers. The Committee set their agenda and work

in partnership with forums, task forces and other committees with similar goals.

"I guess I'm pleased at the impact we've had on some serious environmental regulations and becoming more cognizant of how business operates," he says. "Now we're starting to build up to engage in a real conversation of how planning should operate. I'm looking forward to that – the juxtaposition of land use planning and transportation planning."