

CEDS Project Proposal – INITIAL PROJECT BRIEF -- 2004

Project Sponsors: Complete and return this form by Friday, May 21, 2004 by MAIL, FAX, or E-MAIL:

To: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 1 Fenn St., Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Fax: 413-442-1523 Attn.: Peter Falcier; E-MAIL: pfalcier@berkshireplanning.org

This INITIAL PROJECT BRIEF is intended to provide an introduction to the project or project idea, and will be followed up by other requests for more detailed information, as necessary. Fill in or check off, as indicated.

PROJECT NAME: Project Native

Community: Great Barrington

Project Sponsors: Railroad Street Youth Project

Project Sponsor(s) Contact Person: Erik Bruun

Phone: 413-528-6816

E-Mail: erik@lenoxcapital.net

Municipality Sponsor (Contact): Burke LeClair

Phone: 413-528-1619

E-Mail:

Location of Project (Street Address): North Plain Road

TYPE OF PROJECT: (Check boxes to specify type in rows below)

Physical:

Building

Site

Infrastructure

Public & Private Institutions & Programs:

Workforce

Business Assistance

Other

Public Sector Policy

PROVIDE A BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION OR STATEMENT OF THE PROPOSED CONCEPT:

Project Native is an environmental Program of the Railroad Street Youth Project to promote the use of native plants to protect local natural habitats. It has recently located to Sunways Farm with the goal of restoring the 53-acre property into a working farm with a possible housing component for individuals and families participating in the venture. The Project has been done in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy and Berkshire Natural Resources Council. Project Native, which is in the process of becoming its own 501c3 organization, is discussing potential long-term partnerships on the farm with Berkshire Grown and several individual farmers and non-profits that focus on environmental and/or agricultural missions.

CURRENT PROJECT STATUS: READINESS TO PROCEED (check as appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Ready for Construction	Site Control: check:	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit
<input type="checkbox"/> Planning Stages	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Underway</u>	<u>Needed</u>	
Feasibility or Planning Studies:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Preliminary engineering plans:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial & Cost estimates:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marketing study:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Permitting:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Organizational/Management Plan:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Partners and project sponsors:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committed		

Concept or Early planning stages

COMMENT ABOUT PROJECT STATUS:

Briefly summarize what's been done (actions taken; studies completed) and what the next steps are:

Project Native has completed a preliminary feasibility study for the property, including an assessment by Foresight Land Services. It has just engaged Clark & Green to begin a site plan for the property that will provide an overall vision for the development of the property and an organizational framework to embrace working partners at the property.

Project Native has already moved its greenhouse operations from a donated lot to the new farm and is actively growing and selling plants from the farm. It has occupied the farmhouse, which has three apartments, and is in the process of converting a dilapidated garage into a retail space. There is a very large barn immediately adjacent to the road that needs significant repairs. The Clark & Green study will include an assessment of the barn and farmhouse.

TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST:

Required local/regional funding match identified: YES NO
 Funding partners: Amount: _____
 Amount: _____

EMPLOYMENT & WAGE EFFECTS:

Number of full-time (FTE) (non-construction) Jobs created: 10 Jobs retained: _____
 Skills or education level required for new jobs created: _____
 Labor Force expected to be drawn primarily from: (list below)
 Communities: Great Barrington Number: 4-5
 Sub-Regions (North, Central, South) South County Number: 1
 Wage levels (range): \$8-\$25 per hour

PROJECT BENEFITS:

Explain how this project will create or retain jobs, improve the economic conditions of the region, or meet a goal of the regional economic strategy.
 Project Native will meet several goals. It will help stimulate the emerging specialty/organic farming industry by providing space and a cooperative model from which to highlight, grow and process agricultural goods. The availability of two building lots owned by Berkshire Natural Resources Council immediately adjacent to Project Native provides an opportunity to build affordable housing for participating families and employees. The project will help directly and indirectly retain the region's environmental/agricultural heritage, key to the intangible quality-of-life factors that make the Berkshire an attractive region for new businesses. It will help train and encourage young farmers and horticulturalists to use sustainable and profitable growing methods.

Please briefly describe factors which make this project of regional significance (a regional priority?), and other project benefits not previously discussed.

Project Native provides an almost ideal opportunity for the region to invest in a community project that sprung from the inspiration of young people from South County to help preserve the region's natural qualities in an economically sustainable way. The ethic of helping to provide resources and expertise to young people to achieve a full slate of community goals stretches the concept of regional support to a new and exciting new place. Project Native represents a chance for the region to reinvest in some of its most dynamic and creative young people through an innovative project that will help stimulate and support other initiatives directly at the farm and indirectly through its outreach activities.

Will this project meet Massachusetts Sustainable Development Principles?

(See enclosed/attached sheet from the Office for Commonwealth Development).

Name/Signature of Applicant: Erik Bruun

Date: 5/24/2004