

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: The Lenox Shops

Community: Lenox, MA

Project Sponsors: Lenox Gateway, LLC

Project Sponsor(s) Contact Person: David Case / Tim Geller, Tri-Corner CDC

Phone: 644-9132 / 329-2324

E-Mail: david@caseenterprises.net / tgeller@bcn.net

Municipality Sponsor (Contact): Lenox, Greg Federspiel

Phone: 637-5500

E-Mail: townmanager@townoflenox.com

Location of Project (Street Address): 55 Pittsfield Road, Route 7, Lenox, MA

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:

Redevelopment of mostly abandoned commercial real estate
 addition of 70-80 housing units, approximately 30-40% affordable
 smart growth, mixed use village

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

Ready for Construction

Site Control: check:

Public

Private

Non-Profit

Planning Stages

Completed

Underway

Needed

Feasibility or Planning Studies:

Preliminary engineering plans:

Financial & Cost estimates:

Marketing study:

Permitting:

Organizational/Management Plan:

Partners and project sponsors: Identified

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:

The property was purchased in May 2003, consisting of 64 acres of land and 82,000+/- sf of existing buildings. 50% of the bulidings have been leased to local tenants, which include a successful organic restaurant, and a thriving European chocolate shop. Other shops cater to both local and tourist bases of consumers including furniture, handcrafted goods, clothing, and sports equipment. All environmental studies have been completed.

In 2003, the Town of Lenox received \$30,000 in planning funding from the Mass. Housing Partnership Fund and the Mass. EOAC for this site, generating the Lenox Gateway Study. The developer has worked closely with the Town towards realizing a development plan that addresses the issues targeted in this study.

70 units of housing have been designed, 40 ownership and 30 rental. Financing for the commercial development is in place; financing for market rate housing has been informally agreed to; an alliance with the non-profit Tri-Corner Community Development Corporation has been established for potential affordable housing development.

Public funding would be used for public infrasctructure needs: water, sewer and roadway to the housing component.

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: 60 Jobs retained:

Skills or education level required for new jobs created: minimum high school education except for managers, advanced skills required for artisans, chefs, health practioners

Labor Force expected to be drawn primarily from: (list below)

Communities: Central Berkshire County Number: 40

Sub-Regions (North, Central, South) North & South Berkshire, Columbia County Number: 20

Wage levels (range):

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.

In addition to the many retail jobs that we anticipate will be created as the shops lease up fully, this project, because of its philosophy (and low rents) is nurturing many new, local, start-up businesses bringing financial stability to area residents.

A highly successful farmers market was inaugurated in May 2004 beginning with 21 vendors of locally produced agriculture and artisanal foods, with more vendors inquiring every week.

The redesign of the present commercial units has created ongoing work for many contractors in the area.

The building of new housing units will create 3-4 years of construction jobs, and provide long term affordable housing so people can live and work in the same community.

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

This site is one of the most centrally located and high profile projects in Berkshire County. Because the commercial units were unoccupied for a number of years after having been a thriving retail community for almost 20 years, there is tremendous enthusiasm from the town leaders as well as local residents to support this project.

In 2002 the Town of Lenox commissioned a planning study called Lenox Gateway. This project is modeled after that study which called for a smart growth, mixed use design.

Will this project meet Massachusetts Sustainable Development Principles?

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

Name/Signature of Applicant: Tim Geller

Date: 5/21/04