

DLTA 11 Project Selections

During the first quarter of work on its 2011 District Local Technical Assistance grant, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission:

- Issued a solicitation for projects,
- Received 21 responses to that solicitation,
- Used the attached evaluation criteria to select the following 18 projects,
- Sent out award and rejection notification letters to applicants,
- Developed a staffing plan and budget for each project, and
- Began conversations with communities on project deliverables and timeframes.

Projects, including recent and planned work highlights, are summarized below by funding area. All of BRPC's \$158,461 grant allocation has been awarded to the selected projects. A second solicitation for projects will not be necessary.

LAND USE/SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SELECTED PROJECTS

Twelve projects were selected in this funding priority area constituting 52% of the total DLTA funds received by BRPC.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Great Barrington Master Plan

The town of Great Barrington initiated its master planning effort in late 2010 with the assistance of BRPC via a DLTA10 project. Around the same time, BRPC was notified of its successful application for a HUD Sustainable Communities Planning Grant to develop a regional plan. The town made the determination to align its planning process with the regional effort. The two plans will have separate but coordinated planning processes with some joint public events. This project will achieve the "above and beyond" public process and meeting attendance and coordination of BRPC to successfully achieve this contemporary planning process alignment.

North Adams Comprehensive Plan

The city of North Adams decided to move forward with its first new Comprehensive Plan in 40 years as a result of its DLTA10 long-range planning strategy project. The city, like the town of Great Barrington, plans to sequence its planning process with that of the regional plan. Due to limited staffing and resources at the City, this project will include materials preparation in addition to the public process and meetings to support the successful development of a new plan for the city.

MUNICIPAL BYLAWS

Adams Wind Bylaw

The town of Adams has requested assistance to develop a Commercial-scale Wind bylaw. Adams has already been approached by a wind developer to develop a major commercial wind farm on the eastern ridge of the town. Anticipating a formal wind development proposal, the town would like to develop a bylaw to have in place to help guide the proper siting, access, and development of such facilities.

Becket Wind Energy Bylaw

The town of Becket wishes to continue adding to its list of renewable energy bylaw of community-scale wind and large ground-mount solar, both as-of-right, with a new commercial-scale bylaw. Several major employers and private property owners have come together to support the creation of a commercial-scale wind bylaw. BRPC will work with the town to develop an appropriate commercial wind bylaw to meet the needs and address any concerns of the town and residents.

Egremont Village Center Bylaw

This project will develop a Village Center District (VCD) Bylaw for the town of Egremont. Historically a farm community, the town has begun to see rural sprawl or rural-suburban develop encroach and replace once productive agricultural fields. This has placed increased emphasis in the town on the desire to keep rural areas rural while focusing new infill and mixed use development in its traditional village centers. The one zoning district that currently applies to the entire town, however, does not reflect the existing or desired development patterns and densities in these two areas. BRPC will work with the town to

finalize draft village center boundaries and develop a tailored VCD zoning bylaw for the town.

Lanesborough Zoning Rewrite

The town of Lanesborough has requested review assistance of its zoning rewrite. The town has completed most or all of the revisions and seeks an expert reader to suggest any additional edits or improvements before the Planning Board finalizes its draft to bring forward to town meeting for adoption.

Lee Zoning Revisions - Mill Reuse

The town of Lee has requested assistance with a number of zoning revisions to facilitate the reuse of Eagle Mill, a 43D site of the town. The town has developed an Eagle Mill reuse strategy that will require several zoning changes to successfully implement. BRPC will assist the town with the revisions and through the town meeting adoption process.

New Marlborough Village Center Bylaw

The town will receive technical assistance to develop a new bylaw for Village Center District zoning. This land use tool called for in the recently completed town Master Plan supports numerous smart growth and sustainable development principles. The bylaw will tailor zoning in historic village centers to allow compatible mixed use and infill development to retain and support the traditional village-rural development pattern of the town.

Peru Wind Bylaw

The town of Peru has requested assistance to develop a commercial-scale wind bylaw. Peru is a rural hilltown with a high degree of wind energy generation potential. Anticipating wind development proposals, the town would like to develop a bylaw to have in place to help guide the proper siting, access, and development of such facilities in the town.

Sheffield Accessory Apartment Bylaw

The Sheffield Housing Committee will work with BRPC and the Planning Board to develop Accessory Apartment bylaw provisions. The town struggles with housing affordability issues. This bylaw will facilitate the addition of apartments to increase the number of affordable housing units in the town.

Stockbridge Green Communities

The town of Stockbridge recently completed the Green Communities Technical Assistance process and is now set to meet the criteria and seek designation in spring 2011. The town requests assistance with the

bylaw revisions to its Manufacturing district to meet the as-or-right criteria for R&D/Manufacture of renewable energy technologies. The town also seeks public education and outreach assistance on the Stretch Energy Code in preparation for the Annual Town Meeting vote.

Washington Solar Bylaw

The town of Washington recently developed a Small Wind bylaw with the assistance of BRPC. The town now wishes to add a solar bylaw to its zoning code. BRPC will work with the town to develop a solar bylaw to address the installation of ground-mounted solar PV systems.

REGIONAL/MUNICIPAL COORDINATION

Six projects were selected in this funding priority area constituting 39% of the total DLT A funds received by BRPC.

GE Rest of River Cleanup

Overview

The towns have requested assistance to work with GE to negotiate “rest of river” economic restoration as part of the “rest of river” cleanup. GE has completed the initial phases of work to remove PCBs from the Housatonic River and is negotiating the final phases of work. The towns anticipate economic impacts to their communities as a result of this cleanup and would like to negotiate the creation of a fund to help local economic development and to develop a strategic plan of projects that the fund could go to support.

Participating Communities

- Lee
- Lenox
- Great Barrington
- Stockbridge

Permitting Software

Overview

BRPC will work with a number of towns to select and implement permitting software to streamline workload and improve service in the county. This request was made by a collaborative of Town Managers/Administrators.

Participating Communities

- Adams
- Becket
- Dalton
- Egremont
- Great Barrington
- Lee
- Lenox
- Monterey
- New Marlborough
- Richmond
- Stockbridge
- West Stockbridge
- Williamstown

Regional NPDES

Overview

The three municipalities are subject to new EPA rules for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit coverage. Each jurisdiction

will be required to submit an NOI within 90 days of the issuance of the final permit to obtain coverage and will be required to revise and update their Stormwater Management Plans within 120 days of the issuance of the final permit. As a number of the requirements are the same, and because of limited staffing will make meeting the deadlines very difficult without assistance, they have proposed to work together to gain some economies of scale and achieve their NPDES permits.

Participating Communities

- Pittsfield
- Lanesborough
- Dalton

Regional Wastewater

Overview

The city of Pittsfield and town of Lenox has requested BRPC to complete a feasibility study to determine the pros and cons of regionalizing their wastewater treatment. A steering committee will be formed to help review the details and analysis and determine a course forward.

Participating Communities

- Pittsfield
- Lenox

Tritown Shared Service Study

Overview

BRPC will continue the study began in FY2009 to look at each department of Lee, Lenox, and Stockbridge to identify potential shared service arrangements that could offer enhance service, cost savings, or both. Public Safety services were reviewed last year; this year will focus on remaining departments and would coordinate peer review of study by DOR and others who have performed similar studies. This request was made by the three towns.

Participating Communities

- Lee
- Lenox
- Stockbridge

Tyringham Regional Housing

Overview

BRPC will work with the town to complete their Housing Production plan and then continue discussion with the state about how the town could take a regional approach to affordable housing production. The small town of Tyringham is also one of the most expensive with a highly limited land supply due to a high proportion of land under

permanent conservation. Despite these constraints, the town has been eager to meet its required affordable housing production units. Having exhausted all available options to date, the town was interested when the state proposed a more regional approach. The town's Housing Committee is ready to work with BRPC and the state to identify additional neighboring towns who may wish to participate in a regional approach and to begin sketching out what such a program could look like. Housing affordability is a critical concern in southern Berkshire County.

Participating Communities

- Tyringham
- Outreach to be conducted to other south-central towns.