



# Common Ground

Volume 9, Issue 3 November / December 2002

Berkshire  
Regional  
Planning  
Commission

## Special Event: Maintaining a Sense of Place in the Berkshires

"Sprawl is not inevitable and people can take actions to prevent it" are the words of Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Under the leadership of Richard Moe, the National Trust has become an outspoken and effective advocate of controlling sprawl. More than any other national organization, the National Trust

**Maintaining a Sense of Place**  
Saturday, November 16  
10:00 - 12:30  
Springlawn Mansion, Lenox  
For reservations call Joellyn  
at 442-1521.

has launched efforts to demonstrate and document the effectiveness of preservation as a tool for community revitalization. On Saturday morning November 16, 2002,

Richard Moe will be in the Berkshires to present and answer questions on how Berkshire residents, preservationists, planners and professionals can positively make steps to combat sprawl in their communities. The forum will take place from 10:00 - 12:30 at Springlawn Mansion, on Kemble Street in Lenox.

This is the first in a series of forums over the next several months where we will examine the barriers to sprawl control and identify ways to overcome those barriers that we will advance to our newly elected Governor.

More than any other region in Massachusetts, the Berkshires can still take effective actions to control sprawl. Richard Moe, as a Williams College graduate, is intimately familiar with the Berkshires and its unique assets. Please join with other supporters to make a commitment toward identifying the main ways to combat sprawl in our region. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. To register, contact Joellyn Warren at (413) 442-1521.

## Also Inside this Issue:

Learn more about ANR development, zoning exemptions, or the process of protecting open space.  
see *Continuing Education*, Page 2

**Berkshire Transportation Forum** to be held at BRPC, Thursday, November 7 @ 7:30PM  
see *Transportation Update*, Page 3

\$10,000 Grants available for Preservation of Historic Records  
see *Programs, Projects, & Grants*, page 2

## Charles Cook Announces Retirement

With almost thirty years of public service to the Berkshires, BRPC Transportation Manager Charles Cook has decided to take advantage of the State's new early retirement offer to spend his time windsurfing and snowboarding (makes it sound like he's just getting out of college doesn't it?). Charlie has been the transportation planning expert for the region since starting with BRPC on April 2, 1973. Over Charlie's tenure, the BRPC staff has



grown from 3 to 17 and the budget has grown from less than \$200,000 to \$1.3 million. The transportation complexities have similarly grown. During his career, Charlie developed a personal computer-based regional traffic simulation model

for the Berkshires. It was one of the first such rural models in the country. He also refined the process for determining regional transportation construction priorities. This process is now a model for the other regions of the Commonwealth.

Charlie will be retiring on December 31, 2002. On behalf of the Commission and its staff, we wish him all the best in his retirement. He has been dedicated to working in the best interests of this region and its citizens throughout his career in a thoroughly competent and professional manner. Charlie has provided a consistent approach and the institutional memory through 42 full-time BRPC employees, four office moves, and 5 MassHighway District Engineers. We will miss his technical expertise, not just in transportation matters but a host of other Commission projects and functions. Personally, I will greatly miss Charlie's depth of knowledge and the guidance and background he has willingly provided over the years.

- Nat Karns

## Programs, Projects and Grants

### \$100,000 Available for Historical Records Preservation

The Mass. Documentary Heritage grant program has available \$100,000 to fund projects that promote and result in the documentation, preservation, and use of historical records. A maximum of \$10,000 may be requested for a single project.

Two grant application workshops will be held in western Mass. – Nov. 26th at the Jones Library in Amherst and Dec. 19th at the Lenox Library at 55 Pittsfield Road (Lenox House Shops complex).

To register for a workshop or receive more information, contact Bill Milhomme at 617-727-2816 or [william.milhomme@sec.state.ma.us](mailto:william.milhomme@sec.state.ma.us). Also visit [www.state.ma.us/sec/arc/arcaac/aacintro.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/sec/arc/arcaac/aacintro.htm). Past Berkshire communities that have received grants are Clarksburg, North Adams and Sheffield.

### Continuing Education

Stay informed and serve your community by learning more about specific planning, zoning, conservation and land use issues. Opportunities to learn are occurring in your community. The following training sessions will be held in the next few weeks:

Thursday, November 7th at 7:00 PM

Citizen's Planner Training Collaborative Workshop

Topic: Zoning Exemptions

Speaker: Donald Dubendorf, Esq., Grinnell, Dubendorf and Smith LLP

Location: Specialty Minerals, 260 Columbia Road (Rte 8.), Adams

Thursday, November 14th at 7:00 PM

Topic: Introduction to Subdivision Control Law and Approval Not Required

Speaker: Denis Superczynski, Senior Planner, PVPC

Location: Cummington Community House, Cummington, MA \$10/person

Tuesday, November 19th at 7:00 PM

Highland's Communities Initiative Training

Topic: Local Conservation & The Process of Protecting Open Space

Speaker: Alexandra Dawson, Environmental and Land Use Attorney

Location: Chester Village Gallery, Chester, MA Free Admission

### Mass. Preservation Projects Fund for Renovating Historic Structures

The Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) is a state-funded 50% reimbursable matching grant program to support the preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites (cultural resources) listed in the State Register of Historic Places. This program is often referred to as the "mortar and bricks" grant program because it funds actual construction activities to maintain or repair historic structures or landscapes. Grant funds can also fund the acquisition of properties that are imminently threatened with inappropriate alteration or destruction. The Ventfort Hall Assoc. in Lenox has had much success with this program. Application deadline is Dec. 6, 2002. Go to [www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc](http://www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc) or call 617-727-8470 for more information.

Contact: *Lauren Gaherty*



Late Autumn along the Housatonic River

### Waivers from Federal Stormwater Regulations

As you know from reading *Common Ground*, new federal stormwater regulations a.k.a. NPDES Phase II, apply to seven Berkshire communities (Pittsfield, Dalton, Hinsdale, Cheshire, Lanesborough, Richmond and Lenox). Waivers from this program may apply to communities meeting the following criteria:

- The population within the urbanized area in the town is less than 1000; AND
- The stormwater drainage system (MS4) is not contributing substantial loads to an interconnected regulated MS4; AND
- The MS4 has no discharge to an impaired water [303(d) list], or if there is discharge to impaired water a TMDL has determined that storm water controls are not needed.

To apply for a waiver, send a letter verifying these criteria to: Thelma Murphy, Storm Water Coordinator, Region 1, 100 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02114. The request should be signed by a person with signatory authorization for the municipality (Mayor, Town Manager, etc.).

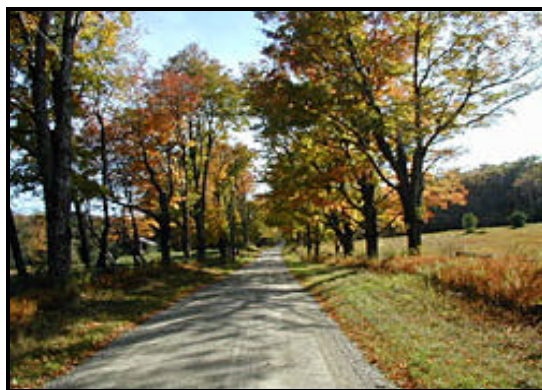
For information on Berkshire urbanized areas and help on the NPDES Phase II program, call Amy Pfeufer.

## Transportation Update

### Transportation TidBits

- We were off by a week—the **Berkshire Transportation Forum (BTF) meeting** discussed for October will be held on Thursday, **November 7<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30 PM in the BRPC 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room. If you are on the BTF mailing list you will have received materials. They are also available at libraries, town halls, and [www. BerkshirePlanning.org](http://www.BerkshirePlanning.org), or contact Zoe Neaderland.
- The main data gathering for the much-needed **Origin-Destination Study** is complete and analysis is underway. This data will be available for planning purposes and used to improve the regional traffic model.
- We expect to be evaluating alternatives for the **Great Barrington Traffic Circulation Study** by the time this newsletter arrives. If you are interested in participating, please contact Charlie Cook.
- Based on comments, the Recreation section of the [Bicycling & Walking Transportation Plan](#) will include a map with a draft conceptual **north-south bike route**. The long-term idea is to largely have multi-use paths, although some of it will be on roads. Any group seeking to actually build a bike path would usually pursue extensive planning meetings and discussions with potentially affected landowners. This general map is intended to encourage regional discussion among the various organizations and people interested in the subject and to ensure that individual elements can fit together into a complete system. Copies of the draft map are available from the web site or Zoe Neaderland. People interested in bike paths are encouraged to contact an involved group such as the Berkshire Bike Path Council or Housatonic River Restoration, Inc.

Contact: Zoe Neaderland



## GIS Update



Sample Pictometry Image of Park Square in Pittsfield

### Pictometry Comes to the Berkshires

BRPC has recently received the Pictometry software and images for our region through a state agreement with MassHighway. The images are color aerial images taken at an oblique angle. The software allows the user to take horizontal and vertical measurements of any object in the image. Assessors, Police, Fire, and DPW's have found the software and images to be extremely useful for tasks such as event planning, building code enforcement, and planning for fieldwork.

The software and images are available for free from BRPC for any department of any municipality in our region. BRPC can assist a community on setting it up and provide additional training and technical assistance for a fee. Non-profit agencies that serve the public good may be eligible to obtain the software and imagery, but are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For-profit groups and those that are not associated with a municipality are not eligible for the software and images.

Municipalities who choose not to participate in the Pictometry program can still obtain printed and digital copies of the images for a fee, with the first seven (7) hours worth of time free under our LTA policy. Non-municipal agencies and private companies may also obtain prints of images from BRPC for a fee. More information will soon be available on our website. To learn more or to schedule a demonstration, contact Mark Maloy.

### Transportation Term of the Month: Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

This is the guiding document for all transportation planning efforts, with a twenty-year horizon. The Berkshires must have an approved plan, updated every three years, in order to be eligible for federal transportation funding. This Plan guides its implementing document, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a multi-year listing of scheduled projects.

## Clearinghouse Reviews

The following comments were submitted by the BRPC under the direction of the Clearinghouse Review Committee between 8/30/02 and 10/20/02.

- Stockbridge Sewer Extension and Improvement Project (Stockbridge). Comments on this ENF were submitted to MEPA on 9/30/02.
- West Stockbridge Sewer Extension Project (West Stockbridge). Comments on this ENF were submitted to MEPA on 9/30/02.
- Proposed Silk Mill Dam Removal (Becket). Comments on this ENF were submitted to MEPA on 10/15/02.

Contact: Amy Pfeufer



## BRPCconnections

Web Site

[www.berkshireplanning.org](http://www.berkshireplanning.org)

Electronic Mail

[BRPC@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:BRPC@berkshireplanning.org)

Chair

Samuel Haupt

Executive Director

Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP

Staff:

Assistant Director

Thomas Matuszko, AICP

Transportation Manager

Charles Cook

Senior Planners

Joellyn Gregory

Bryan Boeskin

Zoe Neaderland, AICP

Amy Pfeufer

Lauren Gaherty

Melissa Jette

Planner

Mark Maloy

GIS Coordinator

Raymond Wong

Traffic Planner

Dan McCue

Associate Planner

Kate McNulty-Vaughan

Planning Associate

Bookkeeper

Carolyn LeBlanc

Secretary

Debbie Polito

Office Administrator

Joyce McGuire

Planning Interns

Blaine Yatabe

Rebekah McDermott

## Date CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Weds– November 6– BRPC Executive Committee Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 3:30 PM

Thurs– November 7– Berkshire Transportation Forum - BRPC Conference Rm - 7:30 PM

Thurs– November 7 - CPTC Workshop: Zoning Exemptions- Specialty Minerals, Rt. 8 Adams- 3:30 PM

Sat – November 16 - Forum on Historical Preservation and Sprawl with Richard Moe

Springlawn Mansion, Kemble St, Lenox - 10:00 AM

Weds– November 20 - BRPC Regional Issues Committee Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 3:30 PM

Thurs– November 21 - BRPC Full Commission Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 7:30 PM

Weds– December 4 - BRPC Executive Committee Meeting - BRPC Conference Rm - 3:30 PM

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
1 Fenn Street, Suite 201  
Pittsfield, Massachusetts 01201

Common Ground

Presorted  
Standard  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 4  
Pittsfield, MA