

Smart Growth Alliance

At the invitation of the Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance, an initial meeting was held in October at the BRPC office to discuss the possible formation of a Berkshire Smart Growth Alliance. Along with two Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance representatives, participants included members of the BRPC Regional Issues Committee, the regional housing trust working group, and a few other interested individuals. The State Alliance has brought together disparate stakeholders to discuss what "Smart Growth" is and to promote specific policy changes that promote growth which respects the need for economic development and housing, while preserving sensitive environmental resources. A second meeting, expected later in the year, will include a broader set of interests. *Contact: Nat Karns*

Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning

BRPC has been asked to serve as the fiduciary agent for administering Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning grant funds from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Municipal Boards of Health have important roles preparing for and responding to natural or human-caused emergencies, especially related to infectious disease outbreaks, bioterrorism, chemical and radiological incidents and natural disasters. Equally important is the supporting role Boards of Health play with other first responders, such as Police and Fire personnel. Regional Public Health Coalitions, such as Berkshire County Boards of Health Association, have been formed to prepare an Emergency Operations Plan to guide responses in these incidences. *Contact: Thomas Matuszko*

New Town Liaisons

With the recent staff changes at BRPC, some Community Liaison assignments have been changed as well. Through the Community Liaison Program, a member of the professional Planning Staff at BRPC is assigned as a Community Liaison Planner to each of the 32 cities and towns in the Berkshires. Community Liaison Planners are the primary points of contact with Planning Boards, Selectboards, City Councils, Community Development Boards, and Mayors, and share information and discuss important planning topics with these officials. The updated staff assignments are listed below:

Nat Karns - Pittsfield, Williamstown

Tom Matuszko - Adams, N. Adams, Sheffield

Joellyn Warren - Dalton, Hinsdale, Lee, Lenox

Anuja Koirala - Cheshire, Windsor, Washington, Florida

Ethan Abeles - Savoy, Peru

Lauren Gaherty—Lanesborough, New Ashford, Richmond, Alford, Mt. Washington

Duane Nealon - Hancock, Stockbridge, Great Barrington, Clarksburg

Melissa Jette - Becket, Otis, Monterey, Sandisfield

Andrew Lenton-Tyringham, New Marlborough, Egremont, West Stockbridge



CDBG grant recipient West Automotive, pictured above, obtained a new sign and awning, brick repair and flower boxes.

CDBG in Action

Façade renovations were completed over the past few months on several businesses that were included in Dalton's 2004-2005 Community Development Block Grant program. Improvements include new signs, masonry, new lights and fresh paint. The whole community will benefit from this collaboration among business owners, the Town and BRPC, with funding from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *Contact: Joellyn Warren*

Clearing House Reviews

- ENF for Courtyard by Marriott (Lenox)
- Amendments to Title V Regulations
- Gilden Dam Breaching ENF (Williamstown)
- ENF for the William Stanley Business Park of the Berkshires (Pittsfield)

CALENDAR

November 2	Executive Committee	3:30 p.m.	BRPC
November 2	Agricultural Commission Training	7:00 p.m.	BRPC
November 10	Citizen Planner Training Collaborative	7:00 p.m.	BRPC
	Topic: <i>Non-conforming Structures and Vested Rights</i>		
November 17	Full Commission Meeting	7:30 p.m.	BRPC
December 7	Executive Committee	3:30 p.m.	BRPC

Water Budgets Data Development Grant

BRPC will update the water and wastewater infrastructure Geographic Information Systems data throughout the county, as well as update a Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) database on water and wastewater systems. Some of the data that will be collected includes water sources, capacity, usage, and rates. Funding for this work comes from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) as part of a larger effort by EOEA to assess the water resources of communities and to help them plan for the sustainable management of these resources. *Contact: Mark Maloy*

Grant Announcements

Pre-disaster Mitigation Grants provide funding to reduce risks to people and structures from disasters. This funding is the culmination of regional hazard mitigation planning. Grants can fund up to 75% of project costs. Applications are due to the Mass. Emergency Management Agency by December 20, 2005. *Contact: Lauren Gaherty*

Mass. Turnpike Authority is accepting grant proposals for tourism projects along and contiguous to the Mass. Turnpike. Deadline is December 21, 2005. Details at www.masspike.com.

Upcoming Projects along the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway

BRPC will implement amenity improvements along the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway (also known as Route 2). Projects include the creation of a trailhead parking area for the Mahican-Mohawk Trail and a canoe launch on the Deerfield River. Informational kiosks, scheduled for Florida and Charlemont, will inform tourists about the many attractions found along the trail. The projects also includes the completion of an Access Management Plan for the commercial strip of Route 2 that runs between North Adams and Williamstown.

In addition, an extension of the Ashwillticook Trail between North Adams and Williamstown is planned. These projects are funded by the National Scenic Byway Program. *Contact: Andrew Lenton or Lauren Gaherty*

South Street Alternatives Study

A South Street Alternatives Working Group meeting was held on September 29th focusing on ways to reduce traffic congestion, and improve the regional north-south mobility on South Street.

A public meeting about the identified alternatives is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 29th at 7 PM at the City Council Chamber, Pittsfield City Hall**. Broad input is greatly needed so please plan to attend. *Contact: Anuja Koirala*

Brownfields Work to Begin

BRPC recently received grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct site assessments on properties suspected of contamination from petroleum products and hazardous substances.

On October 25th the Berkshire Brownfield Committee held their kickoff meeting to review sites presented to date, meet with EPA officials, and select a Licensed Site Professional to conduct site assessments. The top ranked firm, TRC, was chosen for Phase I and Phase II site assessments. Sites are still sought so please contact BRPC with any potentially hazardous areas for consideration by the Committee. Work is to begin this fall. For information about Brownfields visit <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>
Contact: Joellyn Warren

Dalton Takes DIF Lead

District Improvement Financing (DIF) was introduced in the Commonwealth less than a year ago, yet already the Town of Dalton is actively pursuing this innovative tool. DIF allows municipalities to use future incremental taxes collected in a defined geographic area to finance infrastructure improvement in that area. If DIF approval is granted by the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council, the Town of Dalton may turn an underutilized industrial area into a new industrial business park. *Contact: Jennifer Kenny*