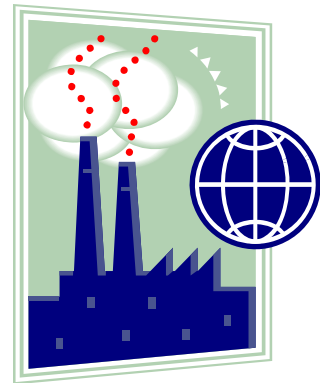

2007 ANNUAL REPORT



Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
July 2007

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BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
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JOHN P. HICKEY, Chair
SARAH HUDSON, Vice-Chair
JAMES MULLEN, Clerk
CHARLES P. OGDEN, Treasurer

NATHANIEL W. KARNS, A.I.C.P.
Executive Director

November 8, 2007

Comments from the Chair:

The past year saw the agency staff hard at work supporting the unique needs of the Berkshire communities, fulfilling the goals and objectives of our mission.

Professional staff assists all BRPC communities. In Adams, Dalton, Lenox and Great Barrington the additional commitment of providing a staff member as an outsource planner, to augment local planning efforts, is an example of this commitment.

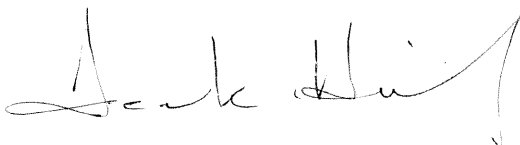
The past year saw the reimplementation of the 5th Thursday meetings. This was series of dinner meetings, hosting planning volunteers from Berkshire communities and featuring an expert speaker, who spoke on a planning issue of interest to local planning and zoning board members, and providing an opportunity to network with peers.

The Brownfield program continues to be successful and highly thought of. The federal EPA chose it as one of only 10 in the entire country to receive a \$1 million revolving loan fund to be used to assist in the economic redevelopment and preservation of some of these sites.

The commitment to developing a comprehensive bike trail system is an example of how the region's human, natural and manmade resources continue to be fostered by a creative staff.

A concerted and successful effort has been made to engage the Berkshire Legislative delegation explaining the unique needs of our region and communities and exploring ways that we can help them help us.

Our challenge as an agency remains to build on these past successes, encourage balanced growth and development consistent with the needs of our communities as we preserve our precious natural resources.



John "Jack" Hickey

Chair

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Delegates & Alternates

FY 2007

<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Delegate</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
Adams	Sandra Moderski	Edward McDonald
Alford	Mary Poole	Billie Best
Becket	Gale LaBelle	Stephen LaBelle, Sr.
Cheshire	Roger Goodreau	Carol Francesconi
Clarksburg	Dave Delano	Michael Canales
Dalton	Stuart Sargent, Jr.	Thomas Burgner
Egremont	Helen Krancer	Charles Ogden
Florida	Tim Zelazo	Susan L. Brown
Great Barrington	Sean Stanton	Tony Blair
Hancock	vacant	John Anderson
Hinsdale	Richard Scialabba	Richard Roussin
Lanesborough	Aimee Thayer	Jack Hickey
Lee	David Durante	vacant
Lenox	Joseph Kellogg	vacant
Monterey	Maggie Leonard	vacant
Mount Washington	Mary Cane	Eleanor Tillinghast
New Ashford	Benjamin Glick	Kevin Flicker
New Marlborough	James Mullen	I. Douglas Newman
North Adams	David Babcock	Gailanne Cariddi
Otis	vacant	Clayton Chaffee
Peru	Samuel P. Haupt	Fran Biagini
Pittsfield	Sheila B. Irvin	Alfred S. Bradley
Richmond	John Vittori	Michael Kelly
Sandisfield	Randy Siddell	vacant
Savoy	Jamie Reinhart	Donald Phinney
Sheffield	Rene Wood	Bill Gillooly
Stockbridge	Barbara Cohen Hobbs	Craig Berger
Tyringham	Sarah Hudson	Mark Siegars
Washington	Marilyn Wiley	Michele Beemer
West Stockbridge	Stephen McMahon	Michael Kirchner
Williamstown	George Sarrouf	Anita Barker
Windsor	Frank Feigin	Arthur R. Needham

**Executive Committee
FY 2007**

John P. Hickey	Chair	Lanesborough
Sarah Hudson	Vice Chair	Tyringham
James Mullen	Clerk & Clearinghouse Review Committee Chair	New Marlborough
Charles P. Ogden	Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair	Egremont
Rene Wood	Commission Development Committee Chair	Sheffield
Anita Barker	Regional Issues Committee Chair	Williamstown
Samuel P. Haupt	Transportation Committee Chair	Peru
Sheila B. Irvin	Member-at-Large	Pittsfield

**BRPC STAFF
FY 2007**

Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP	Executive Director
Thomas Matuszko, AICP	Assistant Director
Joyce E. McGuire	Office Administrator
Alison Church	Transportation Program Manager
Mark Maloy	GIS Coordinator
Lauren Gaherty	Senior Planner
Melissa Jette	Senior Planner
Anuja Koirala	Senior Transportation Planner
Joellyn Warren	Senior Planner
Jamie Francomano	Senior Planner
Michael Hoffmann	Transportation Planner
Sarah Izatt	Associate Planner
Carolyn G. LeBlanc	Bookkeeper

2007 Interns

Cara Seabury	Columbia University
Jessie Wilson	Iowa State University
Andrew Koziol	Rutgers University
Jennifer Andrade	Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst

BRPC Activities – FY 2007

Commission Operations & Administration

- Legislation transferring BRPC employees to the state retirement system was approved and all employees were transferred.
- Commission met seven times with attendance of 9-13 communities at each meeting; during course of year, 22 of 32 communities participated; Lanesborough, New Marlborough, Tyringham, and Windsor were represented at every BRPC meeting.
- The Commission ended FY 2007 with revenues of \$1,412,171 and expenses of \$1,383,955, resulting in a fund balance increase of \$28,216 (unaudited).
- Six newsletters were produced

Local Technical Assistance

- Responded to 175 requests for technical assistance or information from 28 Berkshire municipalities
- Responded to 63 requests for information or assistance from regional organizations, state officials, local businesses, investors and individuals, and others

Local Planning Training

- Expedited Permitting Act
- Subdivision Rules and Regulations
- Setting Development Review Application, Review and Inspection Fees
- Subdivision Reviews and Approvals across Municipal Boundaries
- Housing Workshop on *Balancing Affordable Housing with Small-Scale Development*
- Relationship between Open Space Residential Development Bylaws and Subdivision Rules and Regulations
- Citizen Planner Training Courses on *How to Read a Subdivision Plan* and *Site Plan Review*
- Reinitiated 5th Thursday Dinners for Planning & Zoning Board Members – presentations by Bob Ritchie, Assistant Attorney General; Mark Bobrowski, Land Use Attorney

Clearinghouse Reviews

- South Street Reconstruction Project Environmental Notification Form (Dalton)
- Churchill Estates Residential Subdivision Environmental Notification Form (Pittsfield)
- Mount Greylock Historic Parkway Rehabilitation Notice of Project Change (Adams, North Adams, Cheshire, Lanesborough, New Ashford, and Williamstown)
- Residential Remediation Project on Hope Street Environmental Notification Form (Pittsfield)
- Berkshire School Master Plan Environmental Notification Form (Sheffield)
- Gateway to the Berkshires Expanded Environmental Notification Form (Lee)
- Great Barrington Sewage Treatment Plant NPDES Permit
- Donnybrook Country Club Golf Course Notice of Project Change (Lanesborough)
- Berkshire Gateway at Lee Draft Environmental Impact Report (Lee)
- Berkshire Biodiesel Environmental Notification Form (Pittsfield/Dalton)

State & Federal Legislation & Policies

- Wrote letters to the Governor, the Secretary of Administration & Finance, and the Director of the State Retirement Board regarding bill to **transfer BRPC employees into the State Retirement System**. The bill was approved by the Governor after a number of years of effort by BRPC.
- Held a forum for all **State Senate Candidates** at the September BRPC meeting
- Commented to the **Housatonic River Natural Resources Damages Trustees** upon the project scoring
- Commented to Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs regarding **funding for the Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant Program**
- Reviewed and provided comments on **proposed amendments to the Massachusetts Nonpoint Source Management Plan**
- Reviewed and provided comments on **proposed amendments to the Massachusetts Watershed-Based Plan**
- Reviewed and provided comments on **legislation allowing local governments and regional districts to join the State Group Insurance Program**
- Reviewed and provided comments on **proposed amendments to the Massachusetts Stormwater regulations**
- Participated in state-wide activities to develop a **streamline permitting model under Expedited Permitting legislation**

Community & Economic Development

- Continued work on Berkshires **Brownfields Assessment Project**
- Provided a consultant to **Adams** to assist Community Development Department with **development projects**
- Continued work on **Mohawk Trail Scenic Byways Facilities Improvement Project**
- Developed **CDBG grant application** for **Housatonic Village** improvements for Great Barrington
- Provided assistance with **Pittsfield Downtown Cinema Center project**
- Carried out a **Downtown Lee Slums and Blight Survey**
- Prepared successful application for **Priority Development Funding for Searles-Bryant School** developer solicitation for Great Barrington
- Provided assistance to **Dalton** to update industrial zoning and to redevelop the former **Beloit facility into a business park**

Emergency Planning

- Continued to provide guidance to various towns with **Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning and grant applications**
- Continued to develop **Critical Facilities Inventory, Resource Directory and Mutual Aid** Components for the Western Massachusetts Regional **Homeland Security Planning Initiative**
- Continued **Fiduciary** responsibility for the **Berkshire County Boards of Health Association** for Emergency Preparation Planning

Environmental Planning & Programs

- Continued operation and expansion of the **Berkshire Conservation Agent Program** which is utilized by over half of the Conservation Commissions in the Berkshires
- **Pittsfield Watershed Implementation Project**
- Funding for **Adams Flood Control Restoration Project**
- **Windsor Reservoir Project** for the Dalton Fire & Water District
- Continued to Assist Franklin Regional Council of Governments with the **Deerfield River Watershed Assessment project**
- Continued to administer **geochemical study of Kampososa Bog** in Stockbridge
- Initiated **Low Impact Development** project
- Continued to develop the **Pontoosuc Watershed-Based Plan**
- Provided design consultant for improvements at **Onota Lake dam**
- Continued to assist **Dalton** with its **Non-Point Discharge Elimination System** permit requirements
- Initiated project to establish **water quality protection bylaws** for **Becket**
- Initiated administrative assistance to **Pittsfield Unkament Brook water quality project**

Geographic Information Systems & Data Services

- Hosted workshops for local officials on the **Local Address Review program for the 2010 Federal Census**
- **Critical Facilities Inventory & Mapping** for Homeland Security Planning
- **Outsource GIS Planning Support** for Town of Adams
- Maps for **Downtown Lee Slum & Blight Survey**
- Continued to provide **abutters labels** for **Lenox** land use applications
- Developed new **Zoning Map** in GIS format for **Great Barrington**
- Developed new **Zoning Map** in GIS format for **Sheffield**
- Provided **Open Space Plan maps** for **Becket, Dalton, Hinsdale, Lanesborough and Lenox**
- Providing **mapping** for **Becket Department of Public Works Feasibility Study**
- Provided mapping analysis and final maps for **Pittsfield 40R Zoning District**
- Updated **Pittsfield's Eligibility Map** for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development programs
- Provided mapping analysis to determine total **potential for wind turbines in Savoy**
- Provided **aquatic survey maps** of **Pontoosuc Lake**
- Provided mapping for **Ashuelot Business Park** study in **Dalton**

Local Planning Program

- Assisted **Adams** by drafting new **Downtown Zoning** and **Residential Zoning** standards
- Continued to assist **Becket** with **Zoning Revision** assistance
- Assisted **Becket** with feasibility study for new **Department of Public Works facility**
- Developed updated **Becket Open Space and Recreation Plan**
- Developed first **Dalton Open Space and Recreation Plan**
- Initiated project to assist **Dalton** to develop possible **ridge/hillside protection bylaw**
- Provided **Outsource Planner** to **Great Barrington** for community development and planning work

- Assisted **Great Barrington** in updating its **Open Space & Recreation Plan**
- Assisted **Great Barrington** in updating its **Subdivision Rules and Regulations**
- Assisted **Great Barrington** in preparing new **Open Space Residential Development** bylaw
- Developed updated **Hinsdale Open Space and Recreation Plan**
- Developed new **Lanesborough Open Space and Recreation Plan**
- Provided **Outsource Planner** to **Lenox** for community planning work and permit reviews
- Initiated **Neighborhood Zoning Analysis** project for **Lenox**
- Assisted **Lenox** in implementation activities from its **Open Space and Recreation Plan**
- Initiated project to assist **Monterey** in developing **Master Plan**
- Provided **Pittsfield** with support in developing new **Master Plan**
- Assisted **Pittsfield** with development of updated **Open Space and Recreation Plan**
- Provided assistance and consultant for **Pittsfield** for potential **40R Zoning District** and application to the State
- Drafted new **Sign Ordinance** for **Pittsfield**
- Prepared scope for **traffic study** for redevelopment of **Pittsfield Plaza** in Pittsfield
- Reviewed and provided comments on draft **Wind Turbine bylaw** to **Savoy Planning Board**
- Continued to assist **Sheffield** with **Master Plan Implementation**
- Assisted **Williamstown** in drafting possible **Open Space Residential Development Bylaw**

Transportation Planning

- Adopted the **2007 Regional Transportation Plan**
- Completed the **South Street Alternatives Study** in Pittsfield which was approved by the MPO
- Consultants managed by BRPC on behalf of the City of Pittsfield completed the **Downtown Pittsfield Transportation Study** which was approved by the MPO
- Prepared the **2007-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
- Prepared the **2007 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**
- Continued work on **Lee Traffic Study**
- Collected **traffic counts** at 55 sites, including counts requested by the Towns of Dalton and Stockbridge.
- Performed **Pavement Management System** surveys to the Town of **Richmond**.
- Initiated **Mohawk Trail (Rte. 2) Corridor Access Management Study**, including preliminary designs at two sites, in North Adams and Williamstown
- Initiated **Mohawk Trail Multi-Use Path Feasibility Study** to determine route for extension of Ashuwillticook Trail between North Adams and Williamstown
- Continued work on **Corridor Plan for Rte. 8** between **Adams and North Adams**
- Provided consultant to work on **bike path feasibility study** for extension of Ashuwillticook Trail south into **Pittsfield**
- Developed region's first **Public Transit-Human Services Coordinated Plan** as required under new federal transportation law, resulting in award of \$230,908 to BRTA for continuation of their Rideworks program
- Assisted **Lenox** with **bike path feasibility studies** for possible southward components of county-wide bike path
- Prepared **parking study** for **downtown Lee**