

**BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
1 FENN STREET, SUITE 201, PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01201  
TELEPHONE (413) 442-1521 · FAX (413) 442-1523  
[www.berkshireplanning.org](http://www.berkshireplanning.org)

SHEILA IRVIN, Chair  
KYLE HANLON, Vice-Chair  
MARILYN WILEY, Clerk  
CHARLES P. OGDEN, Treasurer

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

**MEETING NOTICE**

A meeting of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
will be held on:

Thursday, March 20, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Offices  
Pittsfield, Massachusetts

**Meeting Material:** All written materials for the meeting are posted on BRPC's website:  
[www.berkshireplanning.org](http://www.berkshireplanning.org). Click on the calendar date for the meeting and materials available  
will be listed.

**Please Note:** *In the case of inclement weather on the day of the meeting, please call BRPC (413-442-1521, ext 15) to confirm if the meeting will still be held.*

**AGENDA**

**I. Opening (7:00-7:05)**

- A. Call to Order
- B. Introductions/Roll Call
- C. Approval of Minutes of January 16, 2014 Meeting

**II. Comments from the Public (7:05-7:10)**

*Members of the public may offer comments regarding topics which are on the agenda or other matters which they wish to bring to the Commission's attention. Comments are limited to no more than three minutes and are to be directed to the Commission.*

**III. Delegate & Alternates' Issues (7:10-7:15)**

*Delegates and Alternates may bring up any issue not on the agenda.*

**IV. Briefing on District Local Technical Assistance Projects for 2015 (7:15-7:30)**

*We will brief the Commission on the sixteen projects approved thus far for District Local Technical Assistance work in 2015. You may also find these on the BRPC website:  
[www.berkshireplanning.org](http://www.berkshireplanning.org).*

**V. Presentation of Great Barrington Master Plan (7:30-8:00)**

*Great Barrington Town Planner (and BRPC Alternate) Chris Rembold will present the new Master Plan for Great Barrington, which was adopted by the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen in October 2013. The full Plan can be viewed on-line at  
[www.townofgb.org/Pages/GTBarringtonMA\\_mstrcomm](http://www.townofgb.org/Pages/GTBarringtonMA_mstrcomm)*

(over)

**VI. Sustainable Berkshires – Consideration of Plan Adoption (8:00-8:30)**

*The Sustainable Berkshires Plan has been completely drafted and the required public hearing was held on March 6<sup>th</sup> with a very respectable turn-out and some thoughtful comments. By law, it will take an affirmative vote of no less than 17 delegates or alternates to approve the plan. To review summaries of each Plan element or full elements, go the [www.berkshireplanning.org/announcements](http://www.berkshireplanning.org/announcements). A copy is also available for review at the BRPC office or a cd can be provided upon request.*

**VII. Approval of Executive Committee Actions at March 6, 2014 Meeting (8:30-8:35)**

**VIII. Executive Director’s Report (8:35-8:40)**

- A. Departure of Senior Planner Amy Kacala
- B. Conservation Commission Training, March 29<sup>th</sup> & April 5<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., BRPC, Pittsfield
- C. “Think Regionally, Act Locally: Addressing Housing Needs in Western Mass. Communities” Workshop, Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m.- 3:30 p.m., Holyoke Community College
- D. Tennessee Gas Pipeline Northeast Expansion Project
- E. Termination of Various Federally Funded Wellness and Public Health Related Projects due to Federal Budget Cuts
- F. Other

**IX. Adjournment (8:40)**

Other interested citizens and officials are invited to attend.

City and Town Clerks: Please post this notice pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 39, Section 23B

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**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

**Thursday, January 16, 2014**  
**At the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Office**  
**1 Fenn Street, Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA 01201**

**I. Call to Order**

**A. The meeting is called to order at: 7:00 PM**

Chair Sheila Irvin reminded all per the open meeting law, BRPC records all meetings. Others may record the meeting after informing the chair. Any documents presented must be left with the chair at the meeting.

**B. Introductions/Roll Call**

The following Commission members are present:

Mark Holmes – Egremont Delegate  
Tom Brule – Florida Delegate  
Richard Roussin – Hinsdale Alternate  
Jack Hickey – Lanesborough Alternate  
Mark Smith – Lenox Delegate  
Wayne Burkhart – Monterey Alternate  
James Mullin – New Marlborough Delegate  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate  
CJ Hoss – Pittsfield Alternate  
Kate Fletcher – Stockbridge Delegate  
Marie Raftery – Stockbridge Alternate  
Holly Ketrom – Tyringham Delegate  
Sarah Hudson – Tyringham Alternate  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate

Staff Present:

Nat Karns - Executive Director  
Tom Matuszko – Assistant Director  
Marianne Sniezek - Office Manager  
Brian Domina – Senior Planner  
Mark Maloy - GIS, Data and IT Manager

Others Present:

Andy McKeever – iberkshire staff  
Dick Lindsay – Berkshire Eagle staff  
Paul Smernoft – Williamstown Resident

**C. Approval of Minutes of Commission Committee Meeting of November 21, 2013 Meeting**

Roger Bolton moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Jack Hickey. Unanimously approved with three abstentions.

**D. Approval of Minutes of Commission Work Session Meeting of January 6, 2014 Meeting - Not**

sent in the packet.

**II. Public Comments – none**

### III. Delegate & Alternate Issues –

All present wished Rene Wood, Sheffield Alternate, a speedy recovery from her fall and broken ankle.

Tom Brule from Florida was concerned with the possible introduction of a national forest in Northern Berkshire and Franklin County. He believed BRPC had a meeting with the legislative delegation.

Tom Matuszko explained to Tom that two public meetings have taken place to identify concerns. There will be more meetings in the twenty towns. The purpose of the meetings is to develop the working forest proposal. The proposal is to try to bring additional resources into twenty towns to improve forestry practices and sustainable forestry. This has been tried before with the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs and the national Forest Service but never advanced very far. Tom Matuszko explained to the Commission the new Forestry Partnership Project with Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

Below is the current Project description on BRPC's website <http://www.berkshireplanning.org>:

"Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), in partnership with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and the Franklin Land Trust (FLT) is conducting a planning and public outreach process to explore interest in a new partnership with State and Federal agencies for 20 towns in northwestern Massachusetts. The partnership could lead to a new designation by the State and U.S. Forest Service which could provide federal funds and technical assistance to expand forestry activities on privately owned land and to support tourism based businesses. This potential designation would focus on forest-based economic development like recreational tourism, forest management, and research on new forest related manufacturing technologies."

### IV. Briefing on BRPC Major Initiatives & Current Projects

Nat Karns presented an overview of the Major Initiatives and Current Projects on BRPC website. <http://www.berkshireplanning.org>

Nat explained Major Initiatives are ongoing year after year and have multiple components. Some of the major initiatives are Comprehensive Economic Developmental Strategy, Brownfields, Public Health, Transportation and the Regional Plan. Each major initiative page has on the side bar listing the documents, links to other organizations and possibly minutes.

Current Projects and Previous Projects list a brief description of each project and the project manager.

Kate Fletcher asked how many hours of Local Technical Assistance each community receives? Nat explained any local official/board from a community can receive up to 7 hours of local technical assistance for a specific request through the community assessment money the Commission receives from the communities.

### V. Passenger Rail Station Location and Design Project

Brian Domina presented an overview of the Passenger Rail Station Location Study.

#### **Purpose of the project:**

To conduct a passenger rail station needs assessment in order to determine the appropriate number and location of passenger rail stations including appropriate design characteristics and amenities.

#### **Overview of the project:**

##### **▪ Station Location Alternatives**

Conduct a tiered analysis in order to determine the locations suitable for a passenger rail station throughout the corridor and to identify the most advantageous locations in each municipality and in the region.

##### **▪ Railroad Operations Analysis**

Activities in this task to be completed by the Housatonic Railroad Company include:

- Description of existing track conditions.
- Identification of needed improvements
- Refinement of ridership forecasting for Berkshire County

### ▪ **Environmental & Community Impacts Analysis**

Once recommended station locations have been identified staff will conduct an analysis of the:

- Environmental impacts (completed during Tier 2 analysis)
- Community Impacts (traffic, noise/vibration, infrastructure, public services, etc.)
- Economic Impacts (existing businesses, property values, opportunity for investment, etc.)

### ▪ **Station Facility Design Recommendations**

- Staff will develop recommendations for station design, components and facilities.
- Staff will develop preliminary site plans, sketches and narratives for the initial recommended stations
- Staff will evaluate station ownership options and develop strategies to encourage private investment near the initial recommended stations

BPRC will be meeting with town officials and there will be public meetings to hear concerns and ideas. All the old railroad buildings are in need of renovation and the platforms are too low. Some of those locations will be looked at as well as other sites based on the tiered analysis. The train station locations should be 10 miles or more apart to ensure the shortest trip time. Proximity to retail locations, cultural attractions, parking, highways and traffic and will be considered. The locations chosen must make it easy to get to the service.

Questions can be directed to Brian at [bdomina@bershireplanning.org](mailto:bdomina@bershireplanning.org)

## **VI. Long-Term Population Projections**

Mark Maloy presented an overview of the long-term population projections for our region based on trends.

The region's population is changing due to natural changes, less births and more deaths. Migration is the other change, fewer people are moving into the region those leaving. Berkshire County has an older population than the state and the United States.

### **What does our future hold based on current trends?**

Future forecast of births, deaths and net migration by age cohorts.

- Births mostly occur from the population in their late teens to late 30's
- Deaths occur mostly after 65, but some occur throughout (rising rate from teens on)
- Migration occurs throughout, but mostly occurs late teens (in), twenties (out), early thirties (out), late thirties (in), late sixties (out), seventies (in).

**\* Note: These are projections. If anything changes, these projections will be wrong.\***

### **What does the next 50 years look like?**

Decline slow to begin, but accelerates after 2030

Estimated population of 80,695 in 2060

Loss of 50,524 from 2010 to 2060

### **Impacts - 2030**

- Population – reduced by 12,420
- School age children – reduced by 28%
- Educational Attainment – reduction in amount with college degrees (especially advanced degrees)
- Workers – reduction by 25%
- Seniors – increase of 69%
- Housing – continued demand in South County due to seasonal residence. High vacancies in North County.

### **What can we do as a region to slow the decline in our population?**

- Only long term solution is to change migration patterns
- Need approximately 800 more people migrating in each year
- Attracting young adults helps sustain the population due to them having children
- Attracting older citizens may slow the decline slightly, but we will still experience the same magnitude decline by 2060

- Stop the exodus after school

Immigrants coming to the region help reduce the decline but it is not enough to stop the decline. Immigrants are often undocumented so there cannot be an analysis done.

Employers have stated they have trouble attracting employees or retaining employees. Education is lacking in the region. There are no advancement opportunities once employers attract employees. Jobs here have lower pay compared to other areas. This is a statewide issue in Vermont and Maine and rural areas in the United States. This problem is not unique to Berkshire County.

Downtowns and village centers need to be attractive and inviting to young people. We need to send the message to children in schools there are thousands of manufacturing jobs in this region where the starting salary is \$40,000.

Questions can be directed to Mark at [mmaloy@bershireplanning.org](mailto:mmaloy@bershireplanning.org)

## **VII. Consideration of Comments Regarding Electric Interconnection Agreement Issues**

Jamie Mullen explained the Regional Issues Committee met with the EOEAA agency staff and members of the New England Clean Energy Council to review the committee questions and concerns regarding problems of significant delays in interconnection agreements for renewable energy projects from utilities. What came out of the meeting were comments that are included in the draft letter to EOEAA Secretary Sullivan. Jamie asked for consideration of approval of the letter.

Nat explained the recommendations.

Jack Hickey moved to approve the draft letter; seconded by Sarah Hudson. Unanimously approved.

## **VIII. Approval of Community Assessments for FY 2015**

Nat explained the Finance Committee recommended a 2 1/2% increase.

Sarah Hudson moved to approve a 2 ½% increase; seconded by Wayne Burkhart. Unanimously approved.

## **IX. Approval of Executive Committee Actions at the December 5, 2013 and January 9, 2014 Meetings**

Jamie Mullin moved to approve; seconded by Wayne Burkhart. Unanimously approved.

## **X. Executive Director's Report**

### **A. Telecommunications Deregulation Bill (H.2930)**

### **B. 2014 District Local Technical Assistance Program**

### **C. Department of Public Utilities Berkshire Public Meeting on Wind Siting Best Practices – Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 5-8 p.m., Berkshire Community College**

### **D. Fifth Thursday Dinner for Planning & Zoning Boards – Community Preservation Act – January 30<sup>th</sup>, ITAM Lodge, Pittsfield – Nat encouraged all to sign up.**

### **E. Berkshire Conservation Commission Training Program**

### **F. Lee Brownfields Assessment Grant Application**

### **G. Great Barrington/Sheffield Community Development Block Grant Application'**

### **H. Other – The State released its 5 year Transportation Capital Improvement Plan. The program will include items to be funded from the new gas tax, implemented with the budget. There will be a referendum on the November ballot rescinding the inflation adjusted gas tax increases which, if passed, would negatively affect the 5-year plan.**

The program will be reviewed and presented at the joint MPO/TAC meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. at BRPC.

One item BRPC will be reviewing:

#### "Rail and Transit

- \$35 million for the Housatonic Railroad, including the rehabilitation of tunnels, track and signals in advance of eventual acquisition of the rail line by the Commonwealth. "

The full plan is available on the MassDOT website, and is highlighted with a link at

[www.BerkshirePlanning.org](http://www.BerkshirePlanning.org) in the announcements section. MassDOT will convene a series of six public meetings. The Berkshire meeting is in the Berkshire Athenaeum on Monday, February 3rd from 6-8 p.m.

**XI. Adjournment**

Jamie Mullin made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Mark Smith. Unanimously approved.  
Adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Materials distributed or presented during this meeting:

Meeting Agenda  
Draft Meeting Minutes  
Approval of Executive Committee Actions Memo  
Executive Director's Report  
Draft letter Re: Interconnection Agreement Issues for Renewable Energy Projects in the Berkshires  
Proposed FY2015 Community Assessments  
Best Practices for Wind Energy Siting  
5<sup>th</sup> Thursday Invite  
Passenger Rail Presentation  
Population Projections Presentation

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP, Executive Director  
**DATE:** March 13, 2014  
**SUBJ:** *Sustainable Berkshires* – Consideration of Plan Adoption

As the Commission is well aware, we are at the very final stages of the process of adopting an updated regional plan, *Sustainable Berkshires*. It takes an affirmative vote of at least half of the municipalities' representatives on the Commission to adopt a regional plan, so seventeen "aye" votes. Given that at a "typical" Commission meeting we have 12-15 communities represented, we will be making a special effort to make sure that we have well over half the communities represented on Thursday evening.

It is important to note what a regional plan can accomplish and also what it does not do, at least in most of Massachusetts (the Cape and Islands are all exceptions). *Sustainable Berkshires* analyzes the region and whether we are "sustainable", economically, socially, and environmentally for the next 20-30 years. As we have tried to impart, particularly economically and socially, we are not sustainable and will continue to see a decline such as we have experienced over the past forty years, only accelerating, unless we take very positive actions to modify existing trends and to adapt. The Plan lays out a large number of goals, policies and strategies to make the adjustments and changes needed. The intents are that these will:

- Inform the activities of BRPC, including in establishing policies and taking positions, in developing programs, and supporting projects;
- Inform and catalyze actions by a wide variety of other interests in the region, be they local governments, community and non-profit organizations, private businesses and business interests, a wide variety of educational institutions, and the state and federal governments.

The various actions called for in the plan are certainly not an exclusive list of actions that need to be taken and there are undoubtedly a wide variety of other actions that are not explicitly called for that are supported by the plan's various visions, goals and policies. It is also important to note that BRPC has no power to require that anyone do anything. We can educate, we can attempt to provide support for actions that are in accord with or support the plan, and we can try to persuade. However, we cannot force a community or any other entity to do what the plan says. Using as an example the development of affordable housing, the plan clearly shows based on analysis where new affordable housing is most needed. However, if one of the communities that is shown to need new affordable housing chooses not to try to get more affordable housing built, there really is nothing that BRPC can do about that.

We have attached the various comments we have received about various components of the draft plan or the plan in its entirety, primarily since it was available for public review but in one case dating back to

January. These include a summary of the comments received at the required public hearing which was held on March 6<sup>th</sup>. There was very respectable turnout at the hearing, with approximately 36 people in attendance and nine people had either questions or comments which are summarized. We deliberately did not identify the speakers, other than to note which communities they came from.

With the Commission's permission, we will deal with the word smithing and purely editing comments after final Commission action. There are a few very substantive issues which have been raised; attached is a list of those with a staff response. The Commission should consider these comments and instruct staff of changes in the final document you would like incorporated.

#### Potential Actions Tonight:

After discussing the relatively few substantive comments we have received, the following actions could be taken by the Commission at your meeting:

- 1) Move to adopt *Sustainable Berkshires* as presented, allowing the staff to incorporate purely editing and non-substantive changes in the final document; or
- 2) Move to adopt *Sustainable Berkshires*, to be modified by staff to incorporate the substantive changes agreed to by the Commission and also to incorporate purely editing and non-substantive changes in the final document; or
- 3) Move to table to the next meeting (perhaps a special April meeting), allowing staff to incorporate the substantive changes agreed to by the Commission and also to incorporate purely editing and non-substantive changes, prior to final Commission action; or
- 4) Move to table indefinitely (in reality to set the draft plan aside and continue to rely upon the 2001 *Regional Plan for the Berkshires*).

#### Attachments:

Email from Jane Winn, Berkshire Environmental Action Team, January 3, 2014  
Email from Chris Rembold, Great Barrington Town Planner, March 4, 2014  
Email from Katherine Gundelfinger, March 6, 2014  
Email from Jane Winn, Berkshire Environmental Action Team, March 7, 2014  
Email from Kenneth Egnaczak, March 13, 2014  
Public Hearing Questions and Answers (March 6, 2014)  
BRPC Staff Response to Comments Received as of March 14, 2014

**From:** Jane Berkshire Environmental Action Team [mailto:jane@thebeatnews.org]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 03, 2014 11:47 AM  
**To:** Lauren Gaherty  
**Subject:** Re: FW: Sustainable Berkshires meetings dates, times, place?

Hi Lauren,

I am so glad that expanding Nat Gas hasn't come up. I'd like to make sure it doesn't happen.

Thank you so much for sending the snapshot to me! It raises a lot of questions in my mind. I put the list below together to help me get my thoughts straight, but I thought I'd share it with you as well.

Electricity-

- Electricity adding so much CO2 - I am amazed. I would like to know more about how this was figured. ISO New England Elec emissions are declining - moving strongly away from coal and doing well with conservation. Unfortunately adding Nat Gas.
- Still using much more peak electricity in summer than winter.
- Conservation still the biggest bang for the buck - should change our regulations to strongly encourage Net Zero buildings for both new and remodeling.
- Our biggest renewable for electricity in use is hydro. I am amazed that there isn't a push to install small turbines or run of the river generators - and perhaps closed-loop pump storage.
- Small distributed wind should received R&D.
- We need to fix our grid in downtown Pittsfield to allow rooftop generation.
- The flywheel storage facility in Stephentown seems to still be providing peak power (but not to us I guess). Also sounds like battery works more economically than flywheel for peak power.
- Pittsfield Generating is a huge CO2 emitter in the Berkshires. It is a very old, very inefficient peak-power plant. Is there a way to replace it with ideally something non-polluting like battery?

Transportation

- What effect would it have on emissions if we could instantly switch all our transportation to electricity?
- There seems to me to be a clear need (in addition to getting high speed internet to everyone) for education on how to video conference - and perhaps having a way to do that from BRPC for a fee? So instead of all of us driving to Boston for a meeting, those of us in the Berkshires drive to BRPC and video conference our group into their group. I have had a very hard time selling this to the Boston environmental groups. Highstead at Harvard Forest does this all the time. (Bill Labich has been in charge of video conferencing for the Wildlands and Woodlands project - He uses Adobe Connect and a small video camera for the meeting, plus a speaker phone so the whole audience can hear the person speaking from the distant location.)

Thank you so much for helping me get my head around some of this!

*Jane*

--

Jane Winn, Executive Director

[jane@thebeatnews.org](mailto:jane@thebeatnews.org), 413-230-7321

**BERKSHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION TEAM (BEAT)**

BEAT, 29 Highland Ave, Pittsfield, MA 01201-2413 [www.thebeatnews.org](http://www.thebeatnews.org)

*Working with you to protect the environment for wildlife*

You make our work possible - [Please donate now!](#)

**From:** Chris Rembold [<mailto:crembold@Townofgb.org>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 04, 2014 12:32 PM

**To:** Amy Kacala

**Cc:** Tom Matuszko BRPC

**Subject:** Sustainability Plan comments

Hi Amy et al,

I cannot make it to the public hearing, but I will be at the 3/20 Commission meeting. Anyway, I wanted to register a few comments I noted as I gave the Sustainability Plan a very quick review (based on the chapters posted on the BRPC website for public review.)

In general, job well done! The layout is useful, colorful, and engaging for both professionals and the public. The use of headings and subheadings keep a huge topic well organized. The maps and photos are also excellent, representing information clearly and also showing a wide variety of the Berkshire towns. Overall you have responded to the unique strengths, weaknesses and challenges of all of Berkshire, large and small municipalities, so I think you have succeeded in making this a truly regional plan.

Also, I know how much effort you put into the public process for each element. Topics were open to the public through forums, but there were also focused sessions for engaging decision makers and the key people on each topic. It was a very strong process and I commend you!

Now, a few comments, which I am sure you will love reading:

#### Population:

- You have prepared in this context and for the CEDS some excellent analysis and detailed statistics, however they are not to be found in these chapters available for public review. The trends in population, income, households, education, workforce, etc. need to be clear. Will that be included as a separate chapter? Will you just include the CEDS report? Without it the plan cannot be considered complete.

#### Economy

- This is very light. Only has the goals and strategies and not the meat or statistics. The work was done for the CEDS but it's not here.

#### Land Use

- P. 15 Future Land Use map. Can you show this also as three maps, one each for North, Central, and South county, so that the details are a little easier to see?
- P. 43 the Subtitle: Mill Building should be plural "Mill Buildings"

#### Housing

- This is also very light and seems to not be completed yet.

#### Historic preservation:

- p. 34 I believe there are 5 CPA communities in Berkshire (Becket, GB, Lenox, Stockbridge, Williamstown)
- p. 38 chart – same comment applies (GB adopted in 2012 which is maybe why you missed it)
- formatting of the implementation chart is a little funny (some policies are highlighted and some are not. The 0 (zero) in the timeline looks more like an O.

#### Climate and Energy

- p. 38 the main paragraph refers to "Euclidean" language. Use a different term, since most people will not know what this means.
- Implementation chart formatting, where the 0 looks like an O. Also it still needs to be completed

## Open Space and Recreation

- On the SUMMARY 4-pager:
  - First page, left column, third bullet, a word is missing. Should say “In a recent visitor survey scenic beauty...”
  - Second page under Hunting: “Hunting is allowed on all state-owned conservation land except for certain designated areas, and on many land-trust and non-profit lands...” (BNRC often allows hunting for example on land that it owns) – same comment applies to OSR page 79
- p. 20, 23, 63 lots of “NOTE” referring to other elements – don’t forget to go back and make sure they are accurate cross references
- p. 49, first full sentence, “storm” should be plural.
- P. 62 2.3.1, strategy A: where is the town of Franklin?
- OSR (chapter 2) especially, and particularly the Goals section, should mention the section 319 nonpoint source pollution and 604b grant programs, used successfully in Great Barrington and many places in Berkshire
- P. 80 water based recreation: unfortunately there are relative few “official” canoe/boat launches along the rivers
- P. 82 has a “NOTE” refers to Transportation Element but I don’t think there is such an element – is it in the Infrastructure element? P. 97 has the same note as well
- P. 83 on-road cycling: you should know that Housatonic Heritage helped develop some bike maps for the southern towns: see <http://www.upperhousatonicheritage.org/index.php?catId=2&subCatId=57>
- P. 91 I think that GB Trails & Greenways deserves mention here. See [www.gbtrails.org](http://www.gbtrails.org) It is a model organization. Non-profit. Collaborative. They have maps, brochures, education programs, and work with a lot of different groups including schools, youth, Town, health groups, trail groups like AMC, etc. They also have a wonderful vision map.
- I suggest a County-wide Scenic Mountains Area regulation map if you have it

## Food and Agriculture

- In general I think this Element is very strong
- P. 33 there is a blank **highlight** that needs to be filled in

## Infrastructure

- Implementation chart needs to be completed

Sorry for the quibbles!

Best,  
Chris

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### Christopher T. Rembold, AICP

Town Planner  
Town of Great Barrington  
334 Main Street  
Great Barrington, MA 01230  
Ph: (413) 528-1619, x. 7  
[www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org)

From: KatherineGundelfinger [hugo35@netzero.com]  
Sent: Thursday, March 06, 2014 2:40 PM  
To: NKarns@berkshireplanning.org  
Subject: Good Luck

Hi Mr. Karns,

I wanted to come tonight but I've been invited to have dinner with Pema and Tulku Tenzin Rigsang before the Pittsfield Meditation Sangha. It's my Birthday so I'm looking forward to the Sangha tonight..

Here's the beginning of my plan-

Gunny's Master Plan for a Peaceful Pittsfield 1.Traffic a. A revised circular speed plan. See attached sample.

I'm drafting one but haven't finished it yet!

North St 15 MPH 1st St 15 MPH, East St past 4th 35 MPH Valentine Rd 45 MPH  
Strictly enforce posted speeds and revise and enforce following to closely law- make it a greater distance.

b. A new interest in keeping older cars on the road indefinitely, to reduce manufacturing, depletion of natural resources and use of space.

2.Health

a. To reduce incidence of addiction and disease; grocery stores will have only one isle with candy at checkout. Candy at checkout will be placed higher than five(six?) feet to prevent marketing to children under the age of at least 5 and will be clearly marked in advance.

3.Radio Programming

One local station will offer 90 minutes a day to each nation wishing representation in international music only, no talk, except to introduce songs.

Good luck tonight!

Katherine

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Never Eat This Carb

Literally Never! 1 Easy Tip to Increase Fat Burning, Lower Blood Sugar

<http://thirdpartyoffers.netzero.net/TGL3231/5318cf6d9aa5d4f6d1175st01duc>

**From:** [jwinn2jwinn2@gmail.com](mailto:jwinn2jwinn2@gmail.com) on behalf of [Jane Winn](#)  
**To:** [Amy Kacala BRPC](#); [Lauren Gaherty BRPC](#)  
**Subject:** problem with solar measurements  
**Date:** Friday, March 07, 2014 6:05:27 PM

---

Hi Amy and Lauren,

Maybe you have already taken this into account, but I think the energy portion of the Sustainability plan has a problem with accounting for solar energy's contribution. You say that even though there are lots of solar PV installations, they contribute very little to the electric grid. That isn't exactly right, I think, The energy that roof-top solar (and many other solar installations) generate is invisible to ISO-New England. That is, if the home or business uses most or all of that electricity that they generate, ISO has no way to measure how much energy is being produced and used.

If you know how much PV has been installed in the Berkshires - subtract out what ISO can see, you should come up with a way to estimate how much is produced and used invisible to ISO.

Also, solar hot water is not accounted for at all.

Have a great weekend!

Jane

--

Jane Winn

**BERKSHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION TEAM (BEAT)**

*Working with you to protect the environment for wildlife*

[jane@thebeatnews.org](mailto:jane@thebeatnews.org)

413-230-7321

From: KENNETH A [ksegnaczak@msn.com]  
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2014 11:47 AM  
To: akacala@berkshireplanning.org  
Subject: hydro help

It was good meeting with you yesterday. I was encouraged to find an organization that recognizes the value of hydro power in the county's renewable energy options list. As I said yesterday, the hydro power potential in the county can be significantly greater than what is shown on your hydro site map. In addition to the impoundment dam sites shown consider the diversion type of site where water is diverted from the river with a low dam ( with minimal or no impoundment) or even no dam and channeled ( by a head race) on a level plane to where the height difference (head) between the river and the head race is sufficient to generate the power needed. The mill site that we own is a diversion type. The dam is seven foot tall, has no impoundment, and the property has the potential of over twenty foot of head. You are welcome to look over the site or if you want a "guided tour" I would be happy to do so. Our site is located on Rt 8 in Cheshire at the Adams line. Another thing to consider is that hydro power is generated from the combination of the head height and the flow of the water, which means that you don't need a high dam to produce significant power if you have a lot of water flow. New England Hydropower from Beverly, Ma. offers a reportedly fish friendly Archimedes screw type water motor system ideally suited for high flow, low head sites. While on the subject of Massachusetts firms ready to help develop hydro power, check out Ron Macleod of Nautilus Turbine in Greenfield, a manufacturer of value priced small scale turbines and with decades of hydro experience to properly develop the complete system.

Of course the 400 pound gorilla in all of this is the prohibitively high \$ cost of environmental compliance. I believe that small scale hydro power should be exempt from environmental regulations like agriculture, logging, etc is. The environmental impacts from these sites is small, especially for existing sites, and the 24/7 consistent power can be significant. If the no cost option of changing the regulations is too difficult then grant money should be made available to cover the compliance costs.....there is grant money to tear dams down, how about money to do constructive work, at least with this there is the payback of clean, renewable power.

Hopefully you find merit in my proposals to promote hydro power and will communicate this to the leadership. If I can be of any help in this please call.

Ken Egnaczak  
413 743 9497

## Public Hearing Questions and Answers

**Q: (CHESHIRE) IMPLEMENTATION IS CRITICAL, HOW ARE THE IMPLEMENTATION MATRICES GOING TO BE COMPLETED?**

A: Subcommittees are currently filling those out, volunteering and/or helping to identify potential funding sources for specific actions.

Q: Is there going to be a follow-up? How is implementation going to be tracked over time?

A: BRPC has some metrics to watch

Q: Is BRPC going to finance and commit to maintaining it over time and updating it as items are implemented?

A: BRPC will be maintaining the plan over time.

**C: (LANESBOROUGH) THE PLAN IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION BECAUSE IT PROVIDES A UNIFIED GUIDELINE FOR THE COMMUNITIES IN THE REGION. HOW DO WE GET THE WORD OUT TO EVERYONE? I SUGGEST THAT WE GENERATE A MARKETING STRATEGY AND USE LOCAL CABLE STATIONS TO GET THE WORD OUT.**

**Q: (STOCKBRIDGE) I HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT HOUSATONIC RAILROAD EXTENSION, AND UNSURE ABOUT HOW THAT FITS INTO THIS REGIONAL PLAN. IS IT ADVOCATED FOR IN THE PLAN?**

A: The plan discusses rail connections as a very broad strategy that includes the proposed passenger rail expansion from Housatonic Rail as well as desired future east-west connections.

C: I don't believe Housatonic Rail's ridership numbers are accurate and think they need to be independently done by a transportation firm.

**Q: (WEST STOCKBRIDGE) I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING ABOUT HYDRO SYSTEMS OF DAMS.**

A: Yes, those are addressed in the climate and energy plan.

**C: (PITTSFIELD) IF THERE ARE COMMUNITIES INTERESTED IN BANNING TOGETHER, BRPC HAS THE LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EACH YEAR THAT COMMUNITIES CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TO HELP IMPLEMENT, PARTICULARLY THOSE WITH LITTLE TO NO STAFF.**

**C: (LENOX) WITH ALL THE DOOM AND GLOOM FROM EARLIER MENTIONED TRENDS, IS THERE ANY HOPE, WHAT ARE THE POSITIVES HERE TO BUILD ON?**

A: These are serious times and it's time to get serious. If we take the "all is rosy" approach then we'll keep going down the same road. The conditions here are not unique and there are things to

do to improve conditions or change the trends we're seeing. We have broadband, we have colleges, we have mills getting reused, and we have relatively affordable housing. This is not all doom and gloom, but there are challenges we need to address head on.

**C: (MCLA) THANK YOU FOR THE PLAN, A LOT OF HARD WORK, A LOT OF CONVERSATIONS. MCLA BRINGS OVER 300 YOUNGSTERS TO THE REGION EACH YEAR AND INTERSHIP FUNDING. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION AND HOW MCLA CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THAT THROUGH OUR OWN PROJECTS AND STUDENTS. WE WANT TO BE A PART OF THIS SUSTAINABLE EFFORT. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN WILL HELP MCLA BE SUCCESSFUL.**

**Q: (LANESBOROUGH) YOU'VE MENTIONED BRINGING NEW, YOUNG TALENTED PEOPLE HERE OR KEEP THEM HERE AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM. WHAT IS THE STRATEGY FOR JOB GROWTH AND BUSINESS ATTRACTION?**

A: Most of what is going to change our economy is small business growth and success. A key challenge in that is a skilled workforce and having a sustained workforce as baby boomers retire.

A: In addition to a focus on workforce development, we also have strategies on missing financial tools to help small businesses succeed based on input

There is also a business attraction and recruitment component of skilled people who are either from here or went to school here and to get back to the region

We are targeting investments to make sure sites are available for a wide range of entrepreneurs and businesses

We need to have the right spaces to foster innovation thinking

**Q: (PITTSFIELD) INTERESTED IN HOW THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE ADDRESSED HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

A: There is a whole element on historic preservation which is essentially a regional historic preservation plan. The region has not been too active with historic preservation since the 1980s. There are a number of tools and strategies in the plan including historic surveys, improving marketing historic sites and districts, and having the right tools – whether protective bylaws or revolving loan funds to support property improvements. This is also closely aligned with the management plan for the Upper Housatonic National Heritage Area which will be important as we move forward to implementation.

A: Historic preservation overlaps with a number of other sections of the plan including economic development, housing, and climate and energy. It also relates to emerging preferences of younger demographics who like downtowns with character.

**BRPC Staff Response to Comments Received**  
**as of March 14, 2014**

1. Email from Jane Winn, Berkshire Environmental Action Team, January 3, 2014

Several comments revolve around the issue of peak electricity use in the summer and how to reduce the impacts of those peaks. These peaks create both air quality and economic costs issues.

Staff suggestion is to add the following as a Strategy in the Climate Change and Energy Element:

Support measures which reduce peak electricity loads and impacts, including electricity conservation measures, feasible power storage technologies, and using efficient peak power generation as required.

Conservation still the biggest bang for the buck; change regulations to strongly encourage Net Zero buildings for both new and remodeling.

Staff response: Many of our communities have had serious concerns about even adopting the Green Building Code; Net Zero is considerably beyond that. We believe that the policies and strategies do call out maximizing energy conservation; we do not believe it is advisable to recommend regulations to require Net Zero Buildings.

Push to install small turbines or run of the river generators; perhaps closed-loop pump storage.

Staff response: Hydro is complicated by several factors including various water quality and quantity, fish, and permitting issues. We understand some of these to some extent but not as much as we would like. We suggest adding the following as a Strategy in the Climate Change and Energy Element:

Investigate newer hydroelectric technologies and incorporate appropriate ones into regional renewable energy programs.

Small distributed wind should receive research & development

Staff suggestion is to add the following as a Strategy in the Climate Change and Energy Element:

Support development of small distributed wind programs and projects in appropriate locations.

Fix our grid in downtown Pittsfield to allow rooftop generation

Staff response: This issue is not limited to downtown Pittsfield and actually affects the entire electric power grid. We recently dealt with it in the Commission's letter over delays

in getting interconnection agreements for a variety of renewable energy projects. Our suggestion for an additional Strategy in the Climate Change and Energy Element is:

Encourage the State, electric utilities and ISO New England to proactively plan for the incorporation of distributed renewable power generation in the local and regional power grids.

What effect would it have on emissions if we could instantly switch all our transportation to electricity?

Staff response: We don't know. The electricity would have to be generated somewhere, which obviously has its impacts. It would take a totally new infrastructure to power that many vehicles. We don't really have a strategy to suggest but would be a worthy research topic.

Promote video-conferencing as a way to reduce use of vehicles.

Staff suggestion is to add the following as a Strategy in the Climate Change and Energy Element:

Support increased usage of video conferencing and other internet-based methods to reduce the need for travel and resulting transportation emissions, taking advantage of the availability of symmetrical fiber broadband in the Berkshires.

2. Email from Chris Rembold, Great Barrington Town Planner, March 4, 2014

Many of Chris's comments are helpful editing and we are prepared to incorporate those. There are more substantive ones.

Incomplete Economic and Housing Elements:

Staff comment: These are the very final Elements to be completely drafted. Housing & Neighborhoods is now available in full draft form; it has been reviewed and edits are being completed prior to the Commission meeting. The Economic Element is in its final stage also and will be posted prior to the Commission meeting.

3. Email from Katherine Gundelfinger, March 6, 2014

Variety of general comments on need for traffic calming and speed enforcement; keep old cars running; reducing addiction and disease; availability of healthier foods; and need for radio programming of international music

Staff Comment: Traffic calming is called for in the Housing & Neighborhood Element; health issues are also raised in that section with strategies to address; Local Food and Agriculture Element speaks to healthier foods. We do not believe a regional plan is a logical place to raise radio programming needs, except in the context of the strategies to be a more open and welcoming community which the plan calls for.

4. Email from Jane Winn, Berkshire Environmental Action Team, March 7, 2014

Solar PV is not appropriately accounted for in plan.

Staff comment: We believe it is accounted for appropriately.

5. Email from Kenneth Egnaczak, March 13, 2014

Incorporate small scale hydro-power in the plan.

Staff comment: We believe with the new strategy suggested in response to Jane Wynn's January 3<sup>rd</sup> email, this is covered to some extent. There remains the issue of the overly burdensome FERC licensing process for hydro electric projects of all sizes. (A major new dam is treated the same way as a small scale in-stream hydro-generator). We suggest the following:

*Support a tiered FERC licensing approach to hydro-electric facilities in order to better reflect the relative differences in impacts from large versus small scale hydro-electric facilities and whether they are on existing dams or other facilities or newly proposed.*

6. Public Hearing Questions and Answers (March 6, 2014)

While all the comments are useful and thought provoking, it appears only one may warrant changes in the plan document.

Concern about the Housatonic Railroad extension.

Staff response: The plan, in the Infrastructure and Services element, does mention and endorse passenger rail service on the Housatonic rail line, as well as improvement east-west on the CSX line between Boston and Albany, via Pittsfield, as does the existing Regional Transportation Plan, upon which the transportation recommendations were built. The Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy also endorses this.

Specifically, on Page IS-42, "Transportation Goals and Objectives" states:

" . . . re-establishing passenger rail service on the Housatonic rail corridor and enhancing existing east-west Amtrak service . . ."

Further, on Page IS-56, a strategy is:

**Strategy A: Serve critical regional economic development needs.**

Overcome the region's lack of access to the Interstate highway system by planning an expedited access route from I-90 to Pittsfield and further north. Examine opportunities for intermodal freight transfers. Expand freight and passenger rail service and associated infrastructure requirements. Alleviate congestion on major freight routes.

The staff recommendation is to leave this language in. There is nothing in the language that supports a specific proposal; any proposal which requires significant public investment will

have to be very thoroughly vetted before it proceeds. We have given no comment on who should run the service, if feasible, or who should own the infrastructure. Recommendations to improve the availability of passenger rail service both towards New York City and east-west have been long-standing in regional planning documents and, prior to the 2001 Regional Transportation Plan when there really were no passenger rail recommendations, BRPC was criticized for not including such recommendations and being too highway-centric. The inclusion of the Housatonic Railroad project was strongly endorsed by the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee. If the Commission determines this language should be eliminated, we urge that this specific change be put out for additional public comment before finalizing the plan.

**BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**1 FENN STREET, SUITE 201, PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01201**

**TELEPHONE (413) 442-1521 • FAX (413) 442-1523**

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KYLE HANLON, Vice-Chair  
MARILYN WILEY, Clerk  
CHARLES P. OGDEN, Treasurer

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

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Delegates and Alternates, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP, Executive Director  
**DATE:** March 10, 2014  
**SUBJ:** Approval of Executive Committee Actions

In accordance with the bylaws, all actions taken by the Executive Committee on the Commission's behalf must be endorsed at the next Commission meeting.

**The Executive Committee took the following actions at its March 6, 2014 meeting:**

- Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to submit Technical Assistance Grant Application to U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration for Pipeline Assistance Project
- Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to submit Grant Application(s) to U.S. Food & Drug Administration for Assistance in Meeting Food Safety Standards
- Approved the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission to send the letter to the Department of Public Health Concerning Licensing of Medical Marijuana Facilities Serving Berkshire County (copy of letter attached)

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Executive Director

March 13, 2014

Ms. Cheryl Bartlett, Commissioner  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
250 Washington Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02108

RE: Process of Approving Medical Marijuana Facilities

Dear Commissioner Bartlett:

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission would like to express its concern regarding the process which has been used thus far in making determinations regarding the issuance of approvals for medical marijuana dispensaries across the Commonwealth in order to meet the will of the voters in the 2012 referendum. A committee of the Commission met with three of the four applicants from the county and listened to their concerns with the process. Your department was contacted and invited to attend as well but we did not receive a timely response. We find that unfortunate as we did not have opportunity to gain a better understanding of the process, both as it has evolved and as it will proceed.

Based on the information we do have, we have the following significant concerns:

- Unlike any procurement or licensing process with which we are familiar, the process appears to have shifted as it was going on, without fully notifying all applicants of those shifts. There is considerable confusion, even as we write, whether this was a procurement process or a licensing process, and to have such confusion is clearly flawed.
- It is standard in preparing an RFP for release to develop and provide to the applicants quantitative measures within each evaluation criteria. As an example, most highly qualified might be an entity that had been in a closely related health care field for ten years or more; a highly qualified one might have been in such a field for five years; an unqualified one might have no experience. The evaluation criteria used contained none of those objective measurements and thus are seriously flawed. It is typical to provide those measurements as part of the RFP as that gives the applicants the opportunity to provide the information in a format which can easily be compared across applications.
- It is clear from the fact that the four smallest counties in the state had no successful applicant that the evaluation criteria used favored much larger applicants from larger metropolitan regions. Due to population densities and numbers, as well as relative incomes in at least the two western Massachusetts counties (Berkshire and Franklin), a successful business model, and indeed size of facility, in the smaller, less dense counties will have to be substantially different than one serving a much larger region. It does not appear that the decisions made to date reflect that fact.
- The apparent use of a consultant who has no familiarity with the differences of geography and communities across Massachusetts to conduct all of the evaluation creates a significant problem in not being familiar with the critical differences there are in communities across the Commonwealth. It is also not apparent whether the consultant actually had any background in

running medical marijuana facilities or whether they understood the specific types or methods of growing/processing certain products, the operational concerns, the market demand, and other factors. The RFP had indicated that decisions would be made by a panel with wide experience; the fact that a single consultant was used is an apparent conflict with what was stated in the RFP and does not serve the Commonwealth well.

- There were apparent qualitative judgments made by the evaluator, for instance regarding the level of community support shown, which bear no semblance of consistency with the facts of given applications. As an example, one of the applicants based in the Berkshires showed considerable support from the local officials and yet rated only a 1 out of 5 potential points in that regard. The apparent lack of critical evaluation of objective standards is very troubling.

We also find it troubling that some applicants from other counties, who were not granted approval for their original applications in their original locations, have been invited to submit applications for the remaining un-served areas in the Commonwealth. Given the nature of the applications and many of the criteria which are of necessity place-based, that essentially is inviting those applicants to submit entirely new applications. It would appear that this same option of developing a modified application should be afforded at the same time and using the same process to the applicants who were not successful in the initial round. By not doing so, the process used preempts a full and competitive application process which is contrary to sound procurement rules and regulations.

For economic reasons and to better serve communities in the Berkshires with facilities that are appropriate for our region, we would prefer that approved facilities here be run by locally based operators and that they include cultivation, processing, and dispensing. As one of the most economically struggling regions in the Commonwealth, the full breadth of employment provided is more beneficial here than in most of the state and we are opposed to exporting dollars to another, more prosperous area when, in fact, we have the full capacity for those dollars and jobs to remain in the region.

A further concern is the number of dispensaries which may be licensed in Berkshire County. Due to the relatively long distances, coupled with lack of any reasonable level of public transit service, encountered in Berkshire County, if only one dispensary ends up being available here, there will be a significant hardship encountered by our population who needs the medical relief provided by medical marijuana. As an example, in order for a person living in North Adams or Great Barrington to get to Pittsfield to gain access to a facility, they will be on a bus for 1 ½ hours each way, and depending on exact location of their home and the dispensary, that can be even longer. Between the bus trip and an actual appointment or visit to a dispensary in Pittsfield, that one visit would take four hours, at a minimum, and fairly easily take all day if connections did not work perfectly.

We hope that the Department of Public Health will reconsider the process which it has used thus far to ensure that adequate medical marijuana facilities are available in Berkshire County. We believe that a more transparent and equitable process is needed in order to meet the needs of our region.

Sincerely,



Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP  
Executive Director

Cc: The Honorable Deval Patrick, Governor  
Mr. John Polanowicz, Secretary, Executive Office of Health & Human Services  
The Honorable Benjamin Downing, State Senator  
The Honorable Gailanne Cariddi, State Representative, 1<sup>st</sup> Berkshire  
The Honorable Paul Mark, State Representative, 2<sup>nd</sup> Berkshire  
The Honorable Tricia Farley-Bouvier, State Representative, 3<sup>rd</sup> Berkshire  
The Honorable Smitty Pignatelli, State Representative, 4<sup>th</sup> Berkshire

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Executive Director

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP, Executive Director  
**DATE:** March 13, 2014  
**SUBJ:** Executive Director's Report

Various items warrant mention:

A. Departure of Senior Planner Amy Kacala

We have had to give notice to Senior Planner Amy Kacala that she will be losing her job due to a shortage of future work. As many of you are aware, Amy has been focused on the *Sustainable Berkshires* plan and on local master plans in North Adams and, previously in New Marlborough. She has been heavily involved with the *Keep Berkshires Farming* initiative which is one component of the *Sustainable Berkshires* plan and also was involved with providing Green Communities technical assistance a couple of years ago. She will be here until mid-April at this point, wrapping up *Sustainable Berkshires* and completing the draft of the North Adams Master Plan and getting it through the public hearing there. The shortage of work which forced this difficult decision is fairly directly tied to the dropping back of the federal government from various programs which are used by our communities and the region. We wish Amy the best in the future; she is a very talented individual.

B. Conservation Commission Training, March 29<sup>th</sup> & April 5<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., BRPC, Pittsfield

With support from the Berkshire Environmental Endowment Fund at the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, BRPC, in partnership with the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, will provide free local training for conservation commissioners. This training will provide MACC Fundamental Units. The announcement and registration form are attached. Encourage your local conservation commission members to take advantage of this special and convenient opportunity. For further information, contact BRPC Senior Planner Lauren Gaherty at [lgaherty@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:lgaherty@berkshireplanning.org) or 442-1521, ext. 35.

C. "Think Regionally, Act Locally: Addressing Housing Needs in Western Mass. Communities" Workshop, Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Holyoke Community College

Attached is the announcement and registration form for a day-long workshop focused on housing development for suburban and rural communities in central and western Massachusetts. This is hosted by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership with support from BRPC, Pioneer Valley

Planning Commission, and the Franklin County Regional Council of Governments. For further information contact Carsten Snow at MHP, 617-330-9944, ext 252 or [csnow@mhp.net](mailto:csnow@mhp.net) or BRPC Senior Planner Pat Mullins at 442-1521, ext 17 or [pmullins@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:pmullins@berkshireplanning.org).

D. Tennessee Gas Pipeline Northeast Expansion Project

As you may well have seen in the local media, Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, aka Kinder Morgan, is moving forward with expansion of its existing pipeline in a portion of Berkshire County (Sandisfield) and with potential construction of a new 30" high pressure line running from Richmond, through portions of Lenox, Pittsfield, Washington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru and Windsor, and then through Franklin, northern Worcester and Middlesex Counties to Dracut on the New Hampshire line. The expansion project has raised concerns in Sandisfield and there are also concerns municipal officials have that we are aware of in Lenox and Pittsfield as the proposed route runs through their drinking water supply watersheds (in one case through the middle of a reservoir). It would also run across the Upper Housatonic Area of Critical Environmental Concern (with its PCB contamination) and through several state forests and other protected areas.

BRPC has submitted a technical assistance grant application, with the strong support of the four other affected regions (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Franklin County Regional Council of Governments, Montachusets Regional Planning Commission, and Northern Middlesex Council of Governments) and the entire federal legislative delegation (Senators Warren and Markey and Congressmen Neal and McGovern and Congresswoman Tsongas to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline & Hazardous Material Safety Administration to provide information to our local governments, which have almost no background in this topic area (nor does BRPC). The grant is intended to educate local officials across the entire pipeline route about the permitting process and the immediate and long-term responsibilities of their local governments, as well as the potential public safety issues involved and, within Berkshire County, to provide some environmental and safety assessment of the proposed route and to conduct a training exercise for our emergency responders. Unfortunately, we may well not know about the success of our application until late summer; in the meantime, we may be able to utilize our small amount of uncommitted District Local Technical Assistance funds to begin a discussion among the affected municipalities.

For further information, contact Senior Planner Melissa Provencher (442-1521, ext 22, [mprovencher@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:mprovencher@berkshireplanning.org)), GIS, Data, and Information Services Manager Mark Maloy (442-1521, ext 29, [mmaloy@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:mmaloy@berkshireplanning.org)) , or Executive Director Nat Karns (442-1521, ext 26, [nkarns@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:nkarns@berkshireplanning.org)).

E. Termination of Various Federally Funded Wellness and Public Health Related Projects due to Federal Budget Cuts

We have received official word from the Mass. Department of Public Health that the Centers for Disease Control has cut all federally funding from our FY 2015 District Incentive Grant for continued development of the Berkshire Public Health Alliance. We are operating under a presumption that the other half of the funding, \$25,000 from the State, will remain in place. The cut is entirely due to budget decisions in Washington and nothing to do with performance. We believe that other public health related programs, such as Community Transformation and Mass in Motion, which were also federally funded, are also impacted but have not yet received official confirmation of that (we are typically a subcontractor for these programs).

Attachments: MACC Fundamental Units for Berkshire County Conservation Commissioners  
"Think Regionally, Act Locally: Addressing Housing Needs in Western Mass. Communities"



## REGISTER NOW FOR **FREE** MACC FUNDAMENTAL UNITS FOR BERKSHIRE COUNTY CONSERVATION COMMISSIONERS

### **Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**

- Unit 3: The Wetlands Protection Act: Fundamentals, Process and Procedures  
(9:00 am – 11:30 am)
- Unit 4: Plan Review and Site Visit Procedures (includes field session)  
(12:30 pm – 3:30 pm)

### **Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**

- Unit 5: Wetlands Functions and Values  
(9:00 am – 11:30 am)
- Unit 6: Writing an Effective Order of Conditions  
(12:30 pm – 3:00 pm)

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) and the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) are teaming up to offer four units of MACC's Certificate Training Program, *Fundamentals for Conservation Commissioners*. **The trainings, including lunch, are being offered free of charge for Conservation Commissioners from Berkshire County communities.** Trainings will be held at the BRPC office at 1 Fenn Street in Pittsfield. Free parking is available at the First Street lot across from Pittsfield Common or the Mackay Street lot behind Berkshire Bank.

It is through the generosity of the Berkshire Environmental Endowment Fund, a fund of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, that these trainings can be offered at no charge to our Berkshire County communities.

**Pre-registration is required for attendance.** To register, please fill out the attached registration form and return to MACC by mail, email or FAX.

Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions  
10 Juniper Road  
Belmont, MA 02478  
Ph: 617.489.3930 Fax: 617.489.3935  
Email: [staff@maccweb.org](mailto:staff@maccweb.org)

For more information about this training series, visit  
[http://www.maccweb.org/edu\\_ct\\_fundamentals.html](http://www.maccweb.org/edu_ct_fundamentals.html)



# FREE TRAINING



## Fundamentals for Conservation Commissioners Units for Berkshire County Conservation Commissioners Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Commission/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_

Call 617.489.3930 if you have questions. To receive program credit, you must attend entire workshop.  
Fax: 617.489.3935 • Email: staff@maccweb.org

### Fundamentals for Conservation Commissioners

Each date free for up to 25 conservation commissioners from Berkshire County communities. Made possible through the generosity of the Berkshire Environmental Endowment Fund, a fund of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

CHECK CHOICES ✓

### Saturday, March 29

Unit 3 - The Wetlands Protection Act: Fundamentals, Process and Procedures \_\_\_\_\_

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission office, Pittsfield (c0580)

Check-in: 8:30 a.m. Class: 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Unit 4 - Plan Review and Site Visit Procedures (includes field session) \_\_\_\_\_

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission office, Pittsfield (c0581)

Check-in: 12:00 p.m. Class: 12:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

### Saturday, April 5

Unit 5 - Wetland Functions and Value \_\_\_\_\_

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission office, Pittsfield (c0582)

Check-in: 8:30 a.m. Class: 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Unit 6 - Writing Effective Orders of Conditions \_\_\_\_\_

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission office, Pittsfield (c0583)

Check-in: 12:00 p.m. Class: 12:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions  
10 Juniper Road  
Belmont, MA 02478  
Ph: 617.489.3930 Fax: 617.489.3935  
Email: staff@maccweb.org

# **“Think Regionally, Act Locally: Addressing Housing Needs in Western Mass. Communities”**

**Friday, April 25, 2014**

**Kittredge Center, Holyoke Community College**

**Holyoke, MA**

**9:00am – 3:30pm**

Massachusetts Housing Partnership, with the support of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), the Franklin County Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), will host a workshop focused on the basics of housing development for suburban and rural municipalities in central and western Massachusetts. This event is targeted to local public officials, planning and zoning board members, municipal staff, affordable housing developers and advocates.

Topics that will be covered include conducting a housing needs analysis, site and project feasibility, accessing financial and community resources, and fair housing laws and regulations, as well as a presentation from the western Massachusetts regional planning agencies on regional housing trends and opportunities.

**Come gain the fundamental knowledge you need to know to be proactive in tackling current and future housing needs in your community.**

*There is no cost for attendance, but registration is required. Registration instructions can be found [here](#).*

**Registration forms must be received by Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>.**

For more information, call Carsten Snow at MHP, 617-330-9944 ext. 252, or email [csnow@mhp.net](mailto:csnow@mhp.net).

This event is co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), and the Franklin County Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).



**MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING PARTNERSHIP**



## MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING PARTNERSHIP WORKSHOP

### “Think Regionally, Act Locally: Addressing Housing Needs in Western MA”

Friday, April 25

Kittredge Center Holyoke Community College

9:00am – 3:30pm

Registration opens at 8:30am

What do housing needs look like in Western Massachusetts? Where is housing headed, and what steps can you take to be a housing leader for your community and the region? This workshop is for local public officials, planning and zoning board members, and municipal staff working in this region. Session topics will include analyzing housing needs; site and project feasibility; accessing resources; fair housing regulations; and small-scale housing developments. Continental breakfast and a boxed lunch will be provided.

This event is co-sponsored by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), and the Franklin County Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

*There is no charge to attend this workshop, but registration is required.*

Directions to the Kittredge Center are attached or can be found [here](#).

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### **REGISTRATION: *The deadline to register is Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>.***

*Please fill in one form for each workshop attendee.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to:

**Massachusetts Housing Partnership**

**Attn: Carsten Snow**

160 Federal Street

Boston, MA 02110

Registration forms can also be e-mailed to [csnow@mhp.net](mailto:csnow@mhp.net), or faxed to **617-330-1919**.

If you have any questions, please call Carsten Snow at **617-330-9944 ext. 252**.

## Directions to Holyoke Community College:

### From the north:

I-91 South to Exit 16  
 Right onto Cherry Street (Route 202)  
 Left at first light onto Homestead Avenue  
 Right at flashing yellow light.

I-91 North to Exit 16

Left onto Cherry Street (Route 202)  
 Left at first light onto Homestead Avenue  
 Right at flashing yellow light

### From the east:

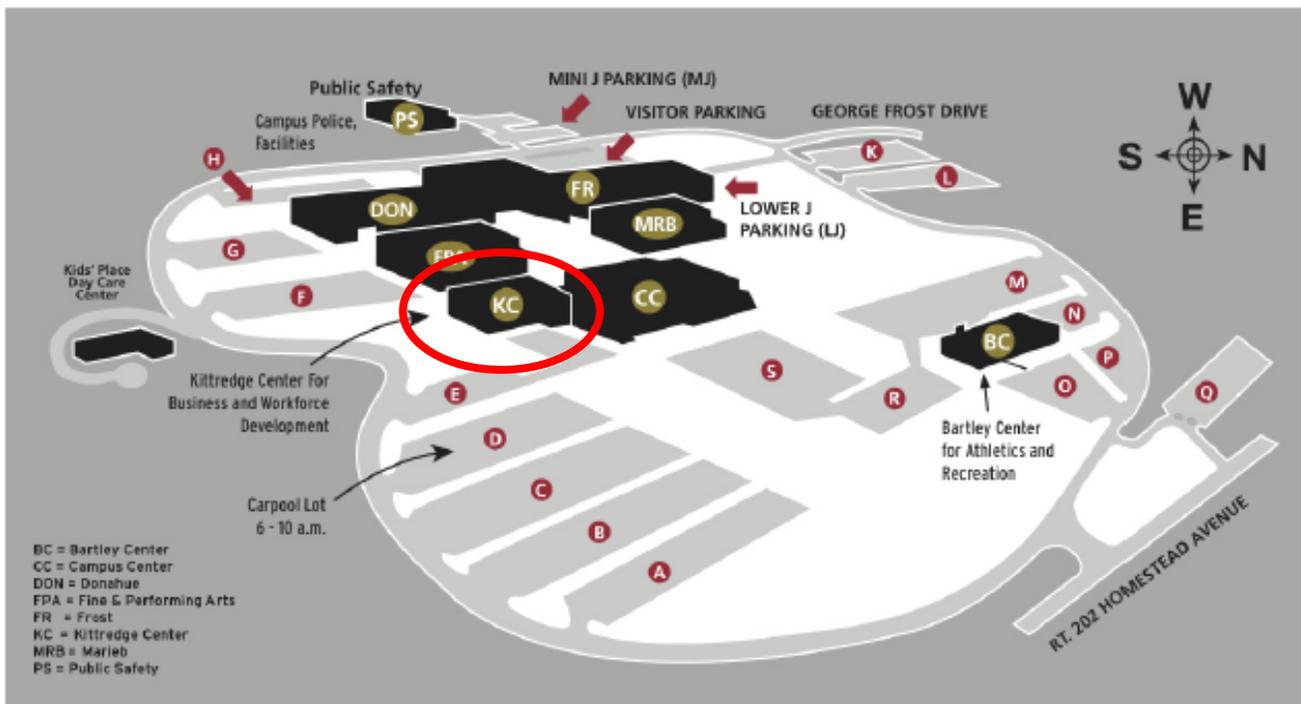
Route 90 West to I-91  
 I-91 North to Exit 16  
 Left onto Cherry Street (Route 202)  
 Left at first light onto Homestead Avenue  
 Right at flashing yellow light

### From the west:

Route 90 East to I-91  
 I-91 North to Exit 16  
 Left onto Cherry Street (Route 202)  
 Left at first light onto Homestead Avenue  
 Right at flashing yellow light

### From the south:

## HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE Parking Map



## Parking Lots

Students	Day Parking:	A, B, C, D, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S
	Evening Parking:	A, B, C, D, E, F, H, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S
Staff, Faculty	Day Parking:	A, B, C, D, E, F, H, M-J, L-J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S
	Evening Parking:	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, M-J, L-J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S
Visitors		E, Visitor's Lot (J)

**Students may not park in Visitor's lot at any time.**

Parking for persons with disabilities is available in the visitor's lot, G lot, F lot, and the E lot extension. A state plate or placard is required to park in any space designated "Handicapped Parking." Should you need special assistance while at the College, please call (413) 538-7000.