



MEETING NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

on Thursday, September 30, 2021 at **5:30** p.m.
(note meeting date and time change from norm)

This will be a **Virtual Meeting** as allowed by Ch. 20 of the Acts of 2021 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

Information to join the meeting is:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3926128831>
Meeting ID: 392 612 8831

Call in information: 312.626.6799, 646.558.8656, 301.715.8592, 346.248.7799, 669.900.9128

Meeting Material: All written materials for the meeting are posted on BRPC's website: www.berkshireplanning.org. Click on the Calendar of Events for the meeting and available materials will be listed.

Agenda

I. Opening (5:30-5:35)

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Approval of Minutes of the July 8, 2021 meeting

II. Comments from the Public (5:35-5:40)

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 and Alternate Issues (5:40-5:45)

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

IV. Executive Committee Action (5:45-5:50)

Executive Committee actions taken on the Commission's behalf at its July 8, 2021 and September 2, 2021 meetings are presented for discussion.

V. Appointment to the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority Board (BCRHA) of Commissioners (5:50-5:55)

The BCRHA has requested we appoint Jay Sacchetti, a resident of Pittsfield, MA, to an initial term of one year to their volunteer Board of Commissioners to replace their long time member and recent Board Chair, Richard Grillon, who unexpectedly passed away recently. (Resume attached.)

VI. Ratification of Committee Members (5:55-6:00)

The BRPC bylaws require the Commission to ratify members to various committees. We have added some new members since the last Commission meeting. The attached list contains the most recent membership.

VII. "Preparing for the Future of Work in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts" report presentation (6:00-6:20)

Senior Economic Development Planner Wylie Goodman will present a summary of the administration's "Preparing for the Future of Work in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts" which explores what the future of work could look like in Massachusetts as we emerge from the pandemic. The Executive Summary is included (the report itself is a large file size but can be reviewed here [download \(mass.gov\)](#)).

VIII. Executive Director's Report (6:20 – 6:25)

IX. Adjournment (6:25)

Other interested citizens and officials are invited to attend.

All times listed are estimates of when specific agenda items may be discussed.

City and Town Clerks: Please post this notice



DRAFT FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES **July 8, 2021**

This was a virtual meeting as allowed by Ch. 20 of the Acts of 2021 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

I. Opening

A. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM

Chair Kyle Hanlon stated that per the open meeting law, BRPC records all meetings. Others may record the meeting after informing the chair. Any documents presented must be provided to the chair at the meeting. Pittsfield TV was recording.

B. Roll Call

The following Commission members were present:

John Duval – Adams Alternate
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
James Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
CJ Hoss – Pittsfield Alternate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
René Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Nancy Socha – Stockbridge Alternate
Sarah Hudson – Tyringham Alternate
Don Gagnon – Washington Delegate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Roger Lawrence – Williamstown Delegate
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

Staff Present:

Thomas Matuszko – Executive Director
Marianne Sniezek – Office Manager
Kate Hill Tapia – Office Administrator

Others Present:

Brittany Polito – iBerkshire, Pittsfield Community Television,
Ken Smith – Sheffield Planning Board,

C. Approval of Minutes of May 20, 2021, Meeting

René Wood moved to approve the draft minutes of the May 20, 2021 meeting. Peter Traub seconded the motion. There were no comments or discussion. The minutes were approved with a roll call vote and three abstentions.

Yes:

John Duval – Adams Alternate
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
René Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Nancy Socha – Stockbridge Alternate
Sarah Hudson – Tyringham Alternate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

Abstained:

James Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate
Don Gagnon – Washington Delegate
Roger Lawrence – Williamstown Delegate

II. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

III. Delegate & Alternate Issues

There were no Delegate or Alternate issues.

IV. Executive Committee Actions

There were no questions or comments on Executive Committee actions at the June 3, 2021 meeting.

V. Election of BRPC Officers for FY 2022

The following slate of BRPC Officers for FY22 were proposed by the Nominating Committee:

Chair: John Duval, Adams Alternate
Vice Chair: Malcolm Fick, Great Barrington Alternate
Clerk: Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield Delegate
Treasurer: Buck Donovan, Lee Delegate

There were no nominations from the floor.

Doug McNally motioned to accept the slate of officers as proposed. Fred Schubert seconded the motions. The motion passed with a roll call vote and one abstention.

Yes:

John Duval – Adams Alternate
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
James Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
René Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Sarah Hudson – Tyringham Alternate
Don Gagnon – Washington Delegate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

Abstained:

Roger Lawrence – Williamstown Delegate

John Duval thanked outgoing Chair Kyle Hanlon for his service and appreciated how he runs meetings. John introduced himself by sharing that he is in his 10th year on the Adams Select Board and is currently its Chair. John is also a member of Adams's Town Meeting's Executive Committee. He was on the Adams Cheshire School Committee for 17 years. John took over as Chair of this meeting.

VI. Endorsement of Committee Chairs and At-Large Executive Committee Member Appointment for FY 2022

As required by the BRPC bylaws, the newly elected BPRC Chair, John Duval, asked the Commission to approve the following FY22 Committee Chairs and At-Large Executive Committee members:

- Environmental Review Committee – Roger Bolton, Williamstown
- Commission Development Committee – Rene Wood, Sheffield
- Regional Issues Committee – CJ Hoss, Pittsfield
- Berkshire Brownfields Committee – Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield
- Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee – Kyle Hanlon, North Adams
- Kyle Hanlon, At-Large, North Adams
- Sam Haupt, At-Large, Peru (Knowledgeable about transportation issues)

Malcolm Fick motioned to accept the committee chairs and at-large Executive Committee members as proposed by the new Chair John Duval. Kyle Hanlon seconded. The motion passed with a roll call vote and two abstentions.

Yes:

John Duval – Adams Alternate
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
James Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
René Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Nancy Socha – Stockbridge Delegate
Sarah Hudson – Tyringham Alternate
Don Gagnon – Washington Delegate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

Abstained:

Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Roger Lawrence – Williamstown Delegate

VII. Ratification of Commission Representatives to Related Groups

As required by BRPC's Bylaws, the Commission was asked to ratify the following appointments of members to special or standing bodies not under the jurisdiction of BRPC:

- Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee Representative: Marie Raftery (Stockbridge Non-Commission member)
- Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization Alternate: Sam Haupt, Peru

Kyle Hanlon motioned to ratify these appointments to special or standing bodies. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion. The motion passed with a roll call vote and one abstention.

Yes:

John Duval – Adams Alternate
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate
Pam Kueber – Lenox Delegate
James Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
René Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Nancy Socha – Stockbridge Delegate
Sarah Hudson – Tyringham Alternate

Don Gagnon – Washington Delegate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

Abstained:

Roger Lawrence – Williamstown Delegate

VIII. Authorization for Executive Committee to Act on Behalf of the Commission

Commission members were asked to authorize the Executive Committee to act in the name of and on behalf of the Commission. This is required annually by the BRPC bylaws. The vote needs to be in writing. The form sent in the meeting packet has a typo of FY21. A new FY22 form will be sent via email. Members may insert their vote into an email and/or return the voting form to officeassistant@berkshireplanning.org

VII. Recruitment to BRPC Committees

The Executive Director reviewed BRPC's standing and special committees' roles and gave examples of their accomplishments. Delegates and Alternates were encouraged to join committees that interest them. Lead staff members will confirm continuation of existing members and recruit new ones. Committee descriptions and membership is in meeting materials and on website.

VIII. Kusik Award Nominations

Commission members were asked to submit nominations for the Kusik Award that recognizes projects, groups, or individuals who have made outstanding contributions to planning in Berkshire County. The deadline is Thursday August 26th. The nomination form is in meeting materials and will be posted under News & Announcements on BRPC website.

IX. Full Commission Meetings

Recently adopted legislation allows public bodies to continue to meet remotely until April 1, 2022, as well as in person. Chair John Duval reported that the Executive Committee has decided to continue virtual meetings given the distance of the members. Commission members were asked to share their thoughts on meeting in person or remotely.

Sarah Hudson commented that something is lost by not meeting together, especially the sharing before and after meetings and the opportunity to network with people. However, she agreed a hybrid format is best to ensure more participation and access. There was general agreement from Commission members that the option to meet in person is best but hybrid is the best of both worlds. It was noted that for hybrid meetings Chairs need assistance to manage people coming into the meeting. It was also noted that Zoom meetings might be joined by telephone only so internet access is not required.

BRPC has begun to use the Owl device to give Zoom participants a better visual and oral experience. There are some lighting and delay issues to be worked out. Egremont is using the Owl successfully. Tom clarified that BRPC meetings do not use Chat. If a meeting's remote link were lost, the meeting would need to stop. The issue of "bombing" was discussed. BRPC uses a waiting room and admits clear names and local phone numbers. BRPC can ask for affiliation before admitting.

IX. Review of the BRPC Website

Tom gave a tour of the BRPC website to show the resources and information shown there and to get feedback on how BRPC may improve it to serve communities' needs.

X. Other

XI. Executive Director's Report

A. State Ethics Form

The State Ethics Commission requires that BRPC annually provide a copy of the Conflict of Interest Law and receive signed copies of an acknowledgement of receipt of said law from all Delegates, Alternates and Commission Committee members. Attached is a copy of the Summary of the Law, with the Acknowledgement of Receipt at the end. Please email the completed Acknowledgement of Receipt Form to officeassistant@berkshireplanning.org or by mail to BRPC. Where the form says "name of municipal dept" please enter Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Alternatively, you may send an e-mail acknowledging receipt of the summary of the Conflict of Interest Law to officeassistant@berkshireplanning.org.

B. Office Update

As of June 15, 2021, the BRPC office is open to the public. Staff is working in the office, according to the recently adopted telework policy, a minimum of 2 days per week. Anyone who is unvaccinated, including staff or visitors, must wear a face covering at all times until further notice. Those who are vaccinated do not have to wear a face covering. The main door to the building will remain locked at all times. There is an entry system at the door to the street. Staff have a key fob to open the door. Presently visitors must call the office to be admitted but a touchpad is being installed to ring to BRPC office where staff can buzz people in.

C. District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Funding

FY 22 funding for the District Local Technical Assistance Funding (DLTA) program is still mired in the legislative process. Similar to previous years, it was included in the House budget, but not included in the Senate Ways and Means budget. Hence, if it is to be approved this year it will need to be included by the Conference Committee. The state budget process is still in

the hands of the Conference Committee. BRPC does not know where DLTA funding stands.

D. US Census Differential Privacy Policy Update

At the last meeting, Susan Strate, the Senior Program Manager, Population Estimates Program at the Donahue Institute gave a presentation about the US Census Differential Privacy Policy, which proposes to distort census counts in some instances to protect privacy. Tom received a very brief update from Susan indicating that the process seems to be much improved with the intentional distortions much smaller.

E. Other

XII. Adjournment

Kyle Hanlon made a motion to adjourn; seconded by James Sullivan. Unanimously approved. Adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Materials distributed or presented during this meeting:

Meeting Agenda

Draft Meeting Minutes May 20, 2021

Executive Committee Actions Memo for June 2021

Authorization for Executive Committee to Act on Behalf of the Commission

BRPC Committee Descriptions

Kusik Award Nomination Form

Charles Kusik Background & Award Recipients

Summary of Conflict of Interest Law & acknowledgement of receipt

Executive Director's Report



MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
FROM: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director
DATE: September 24, 2021
SUBJ: Executive Committee Actions for July 8 2021 and September 2, 2021

In accordance with the bylaws, actions taken by the Executive Committee on the Commission's behalf are reported and presented for discussion at the next Commission meeting. The Executive Committee took the following actions at its July 8, 2021 and September 2, 2021 meetings.

Executive Committee Actions on July 8, 2021

Approval to Enter into Intergovernmental Agreements and Contracts with Municipalities

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to enter into intergovernmental agreements and contracts for services with municipalities on behalf of the Commission for the FY2022.

Approval to Submit a Grant Application to the Local Health Support for COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Program with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to submit a grant application, and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements, to the Local Health Support for COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Program with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The \$300,000/year application, with federal funds passed through the Department of Public Health, is to support required and ongoing Board of Health COVID-19 disease investigations. This two-year, renewable grant will allow the Berkshire Public Health Alliance to hire staff to ensure that 100% of all COVID-19 cases have comprehensive contact tracing, cluster investigations, isolation, quarantine, social service support as well as data collection and analysis to determine ways to mitigate infections. There is no BRPC required match.

Office Space

The Executive Committee choose the Cooper Center's office space lease proposal for BRPC's office space and authorized the Executive Director to enter into negotiations with the building owner and manager of The Cooper Center, LLC.

Executive Director's Performance Review

The Executive Committee approved a 3% merit increase for FY2021 after the Executive Directors performance review.

Executive Committee Actions on September 2, 2021

Approval to Enter into a Contract with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for Transportation Planning Services

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director sign a contract and related items with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for transportation planning services for FY22 as outlined in the Unified Planning Work Program. The amount of this FFY 2022 contract (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022) is \$615,413.

Approval to Submit a Grant Application to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) for a Planning Grant and Letter of Intent to Develop a Funding Application for an E-bike Incentive Program

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director to submit a grant application and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements with MassCEC related to a planning grant to support BRPC's engagement and participation in the application development process for the ACT4All Grant Program. MassCEC will provide a \$7,500 grant to cover the cost associated with developing an E-bike incentive program for low-income community members.

Approval to Submit a Grant Application to MassCEC's EMPower Innovation and Capacity Building Program

The Executive Committee authorized the Executive Director (after the fact) to submit a grant application to the MassCEC EmPower Innovation and Capacity Building Program and to sign any resulting contracts and agreements. Working with the City of Pittsfield, Berkshire Environmental Action Team, Center for EcoTechnology and Berkshire Community Action Council, BRPC is applying for \$23,018 to fund research on issues stemming from split incentives in Pittsfield, whereby tenants pay energy bills and so landlords have no incentive to make efficiency upgrades that would conserve energy and lower tenant's bills.

Kusik Award

The Executive Committee chose to recognize the unique countywide and collaborative efforts of two initiatives: The COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund for Berkshire County and The Berkshire Vaccine Collaborative



BERKSHIRE COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

Housing Counseling ~ Mediation ~ Consumer ~ Education Center

1 FENN STREET - PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01201

(413) 443-7138 FAX (413) 443-8137

www.bcrha.com



July 30, 2021

Thomas Matuszko
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
One Fenn Street, 3rd Floor
Pittsfield, MA 01201

RE: Board Appointment

Dear Mr. Matuszko,

Sadly, our Board Chair, Richard Grillon, unexpectedly passed away last week. Mr. Grillon served on the board for over 20 years and will be greatly missed. In light of his passing, BCRHA is in need of appointing a new member. I am writing to respectfully request your assistance in making an appointment to the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority's (BCRHA) volunteer Board of Commissioners.

As you already know, BCRHA drafted new enabling legislations in 2002, which allowed BCRHA's Board of Commissioners to remain viable after the elimination of county government. Pursuant to said enabling legislation, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission was granted the power to appoint two members to BCRHA's Board of Commissioners.

On behalf of BCRHA, I respectfully request that you appoint Jay Sacchetti, a resident of Pittsfield, MA to an initial term of one year. In the past, Mr. Sacchetti has served on the BCRHA Board of Commissioners and was a very effective member. With his scheduling freeing up some, he is able to dedicate his time once again. With this appointment, BCRHA will continue to remain a vital community service organization meeting the diverse housing needs of Berkshire County. Attached to this correspondence is his resume for your review.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, if you should have any questions regarding this request or other issues related to this agency.

Very Truly Yours,

Brad Gordon
Executive Director

Providing dispute resolution programming; comprehensive housing counseling, including legal and educational counseling services, loss mitigation/ anti-foreclosure counseling, homelessness prevention/ tenancy preservation services and homelessness resolution and housing search assistance; and anti-poverty resources TO ALL BERKSHIRE COUNTY RESIDENTS.

JAY A. SACCHETTI

69 Tanner Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
Home (413) 447-7053
Cell (413) 281-3382

CAREER PROFILE

Twenty four years of Executive Director and Senior Management positions in the human service field working with the Departments of Mental Health, Developmental Services, Public Health, Housing and Community Development, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Parole Board, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, Berkshire County Schools. Proven administrative ability to meeting state and federal program outcomes based on evidence based practices and regulatory compliance. Passed all licensing evaluations. A knowledge and collaborative approach to Berkshire County's human service agencies. Demonstrated commitment to the communities of Berkshire County and its citizens. Conducted and led union negotiations with the American Federation of State and Municipal Employees. **In 2009 successfully merged Meridian Associates with ServiceNet Inc.**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ServiceNet Inc. 2009-Present

129 King Street, Northampton, MA 01060

Vice President of Shelter/Housing, Substance Abuse & Berkshire Services

- Responsibilities include the Administration and supervision of contracts with the Department of Public Health, Developmental Disabilities, Parole Board and Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.
- Insure compliance with all local, state and federal regulations as required.
- Reduced program budget deficits by 90%
- Primary liaison to state agencies and community resources.
- Supervise 15 program directors and assist in managing staff performance.
- Managed the acquisition of Baystate Franklin Substance Abuse Services into the agency
- Expanded Shelter/Housing and vocational programs
- Participated in the establishment of agency Mental Health Clinic in downtown Pittsfield

Meridian Associates for Programs and Resources, Inc.

1988-2009

141 North Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Executive Director 1999-2009

- Oversight of agency fiscal and administrative functions
- Supervised senior level staff
- Successful compliance with all local, state and federal licensing requirements.
- Sound fiscal management of agency budgets. Ten successive years of profitability
- Conducted strategic planning in partnership with the Board of Directors.
- Created responsive compassionate services
- Fostered positive relationships with community and state stake holders to enhance the delivery of services
- Constructed 14 units handicapped accessible housing and improved agency housing stock
- Expanded the agencies revenue from 3 million to 6.5 million dollars

Associate Director 1988-1999

- Implemented Psycho-Social Rehabilitation model improving agency service delivery
- 60% of agency mental health clients attained employment compared to 5% statewide
- Closed 12 twenty-four supervised client residences moving individuals to their own homes gaining greater independence and less reliance on agency services
- Primary responsibility for compliance with state and federal regulatory requirements
- Assumed management of agency programs in Holyoke/Chicopee area and restored financial integrity.

Key Program Inc. Alternatives for youth

Program Supervisor 1982-1986

Outreach Caseworker 1980-1982

EDUCATION

- American International College 1982
MA Human Resource Development
- North Adams State College 1979
B.A. Sociology

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Vice-President Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority Board of Directors

2005- Present

Berkshire Housing Corporation Board Member

2010-Present

Big Brother / Big Sister of Berkshire County Board Member

1984- 2007

Berkshire County Employment Collaborative

2009-Present

Published article Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal Winter 1996

An Agency in Transition: The move from a "Milieu" structure to a

Psycho-Social Philosophy and Structure

Dr. Kevin Cahill, Dr. Raphael Ben-Dror and Jay Sacchetti M.A.

Volunteer Award: Boys & Girls Club Pittsfield 1994

BRPC COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP
FY 2022

July 8, 2021 – Approved Chairs

Executive Committee

Staff: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director

John Duval, Chair (Adams)
Roger Bolton, Environmental Review Committee Chair (Williamstown)
Malcolm Fick, Vice Chair (Gt Barrington)
Buck Donovan, Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair (Lee)
CJ Hoss, Regional Issues Committee Chair (Pittsfield)
Sheila Irvin, Clerk (Pittsfield)
Rene Wood, Commission Development Committee Chair (Sheffield)
Kyle Hanlon, At-Large (North Adams)
Sam Haupt, At-Large Transportation Expert (Peru)

Commission Development Committee

Staff: Marianne Snizek, Office Manager

Rene Wood, Chair (Sheffield)
Sarah Hudson (Tyringham)
Pedro Pachano (Gt. Barrington)
Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)
Doug McNally (Windsor)
John Duval, BRPC Chair (Adams) (Ex-Officio)

Environmental Review Committee

Staff: Melissa Provencher, Program Manager

Roger Bolton, Chair (Williamstown)
Malcolm Fick, Vice Chair (Gt Barrington)
John "Jack" Hickey (Lanesborough), (Non-Commission member)
Edward Holub (Dalton)
Mark Smith (Lenox), (Non-Commission member)
Eleanor Tillinghast (Mt. Washington) (Non-Commission member)
Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)
John Duval, BRPC Chair (Adams) (Ex-Officio)

Finance Committee

Staff: Marianne Snizek, Office Manager

Buck Donovan, Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair (Lee)
Sam Haupt (Peru)
Sheila Irvin (Pittsfield)
Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)
Malcolm Fick (Gt. Barrington)
Fred Schubert (Richmond)
John Duval, BRPC Chair (Adams) (Ex-Officio)

Regional Issues Committee

Staff: Laura Brennan, Senior Planner

CJ Hoss, Chair (Pittsfield)
Andrew Groff (Williamstown) (Non-Commission member)
Sheila Irvin (Pittsfield)
Chris Rembold (Gt Barrington) (Non-Commission member)
Eleanor Tillinghast (Mt Washington) (Non-Commission member)
Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)

John Duval, BRPC Chair (Adams) (Ex-Officio)

Berkshire Brownfields Committee Staff: Melissa Provencher, Program Manager

Voting Members

Sheila Irvin, Chair, (Pittsfield)
Jim Byrne, EPA
Marilyn Hansen, Lee Community Development Corporation
Nate Joyner, (Pittsfield)
Ben Lamb or Kevin Pink, 1Berkshires
Tom Matuszko, BRPC
Grant McGregor (Dalton)
Mike Nuvallie, (North Adams)
John Olander, Berkshire County Boards of Health
Chris Rembold, (Gt Barrington)

Non-voting Members

Caprice Shaw, MA DEP
Rich Griffin, MassDevelopment

Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee Staff: Laura Brennan, Senior Planner

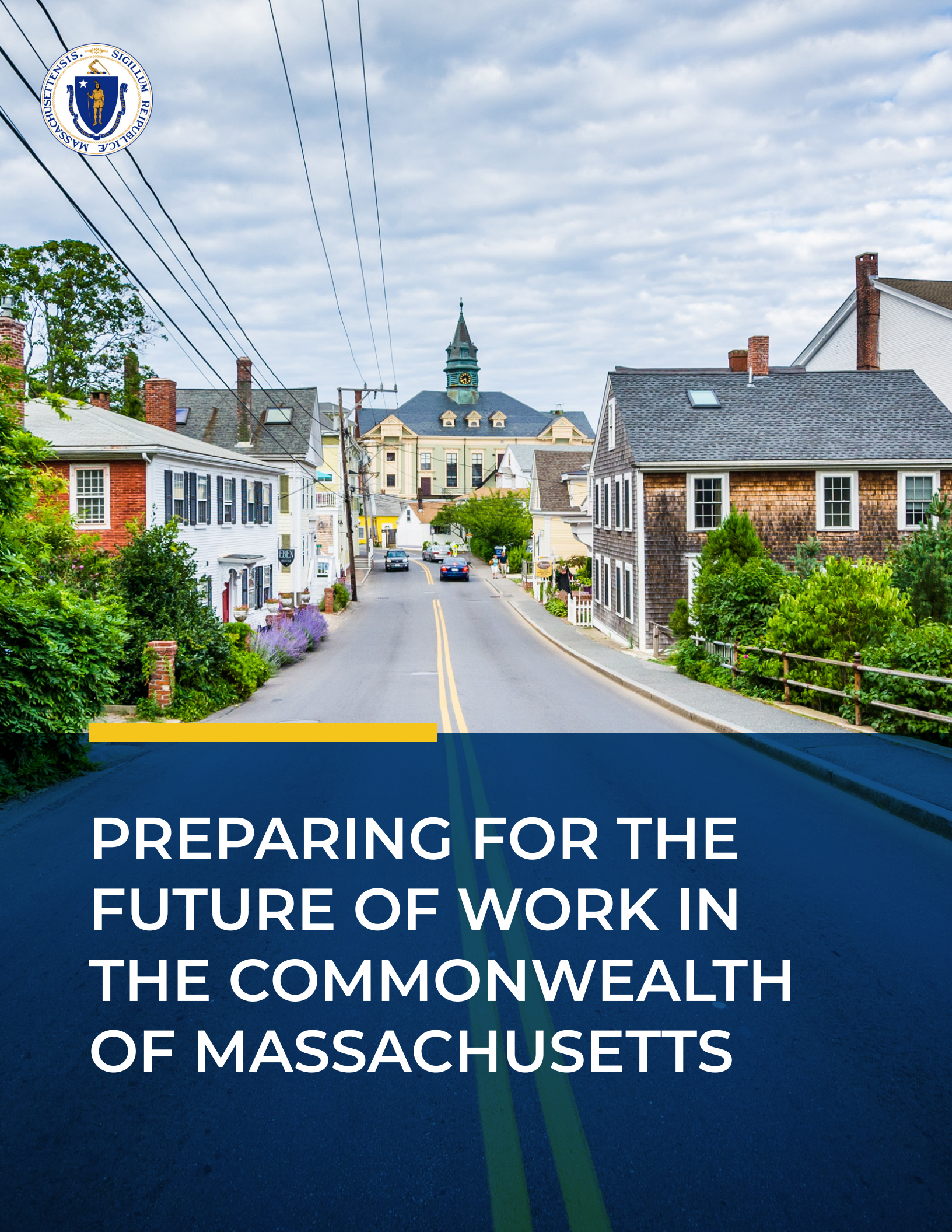
Kyle Hanlon, Chair, (North Adams)
Roger Bolton, Vice-Chair, BRPC Alternate (Williamstown)
Laurie Mick, PERC
Heather Boulger, MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board; Alternate Shannon Zayac
Keith Girouard, Mass Small Business Develop Center
Ben Lamb, 1Berkshire; Alternate Jonathan Butler
Jim Lovejoy, BRPC Alternate (Mt. Washington)
Mike Nuvallie (North Adams); Alternate Zachary Feury
Cynthia Pansing, Berkshire Agricultural Ventures
Ian Rasch, Alander Construction
Chris Rembold, Town Planner (Gt Barrington)
Deanna Ruffer, Dept of Community Development (Pittsfield); Alternate Michael Coakley
Ben Sosne, BIC – Berkshire Innovation Center
Lesley Herzberg – Berkshire History
Christina Wynn – Berkshire Community College

Commission Representatives to Related Groups:

Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee: Marie Raftery (Stockbridge, Non-Commission member)

Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization: Chair John Duval (Adams);
Alternate: Sam Haupt (Peru)

Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Board: Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)

A photograph of a quiet street in a small town. The street is paved with asphalt and has double yellow lines. On the left side, there are several houses, including a red brick one and a white one with blue shutters. On the right side, there is a large wooden shingle house. In the background, a church with a green steeple is visible. The sky is blue with some clouds. A yellow horizontal bar is positioned above the text.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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This report draws on extensive fact-based analyses, research and interviews conducted by McKinsey & Company.

01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has experienced vibrant economic growth in recent years, propelled by a talented workforce and good overall quality of life. The state has become a global leader in many disciplines, including healthcare, biotechnology, sciences, engineering, higher education, technology, and finance.¹ It is ranked as one of the most attractive states for citizens to live, and its per-capita personal income is the third-highest in the nation.² Among all 50 states, Massachusetts is ranked first in patents per capita, first in venture



capital funding per GDP, and fifth in the number of company headquarters per capita.³ Bloomberg's annual State Innovation Index ranked the state as "the most innovative state in America," thanks to its growing concentration of entrepreneurial start-ups over the past decade.⁴ Access to top-notch educational institutions and to highly skilled labor pools has attracted employers of all sizes and served as an important driver of Massachusetts' growth. Massachusetts benefits from a moderate tax regime and is ranked 21 in terms of overall tax burden by state.⁵ The state's public-school students place in the nation's top tier for academic performance,⁶ and the Commonwealth is home to 122 institutions of higher education.⁷

Despite these competitive advantages, the effects of COVID-19 have profoundly challenged the Commonwealth. COVID-19 was not only the worst public health crisis of the last hundred years, but also an economic calamity that caused 560,000 residents to become unemployed,⁸ and half of all small businesses to close at the pandemic's height in April 2020.⁹

As we emerge from the pandemic, the study outlined in this report, *Preparing for the Future of Work in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*, explores what work could look like in Massachusetts in both the near term (to 2025) and the longer term (to 2030). It explores what the implications might be for the Commonwealth and its residents across its regions, economic sectors, commercial centers, local downtowns, transportation, and public spaces.

This work aims to provide a fact base and assessment of current and future trends to inform any workforce and economic interventions that might be needed to address recent challenges and to prepare the state and its citizens for a successful future. Extensive research was conducted, including more than 60 analyses, discussions with business leaders, resident and business surveys, and expert interviews across

a broad range of topics and regions within the Commonwealth to inform perspectives in this report. In addition, an Advisory Council¹⁰ was convened, comprised of fourteen business and education leaders from the Commonwealth across diverse geographies and industries, to provide input and feedback on the emerging future of work impacts.

Many of the factors impacting the future of work (such as rising income levels and an aging population) are not new. However, COVID-19 and the substantial shifts in how Massachusetts residents work over the past year have accentuated and accelerated many of these factors (such as the use of e-commerce and the pace of adoption of automation). Moreover, new factors have emerged (such as the spread of remote and hybrid work at-scale and a reduction in business travel). The degree of change and resulting shifts in how Massachusetts residents live and work vary across regions, industries and occupations in the Commonwealth – as well as across gender and race.

To complicate matters, how these factors will evolve has real uncertainty; it is difficult to determine, for example, how structural the decline in business travel will be, or whether there will be a surplus of commercial real estate in urban areas, or how deeply the adoption of hybrid, work from home models will decrease public transportation ridership. With these uncertainties in mind, three potential scenarios were considered for how these factors may impact the future of work in the Commonwealth. Furthermore, the Commonwealth is not homogeneous, and this report explores seven regional archetypes to assess how the challenges and opportunities arising from the future of work could be experienced differently across the state.

This report is anchored in eight core insights that could cause the most critical shifts impacting the future of work in the Commonwealth. These are: (1)

reduced demand for office real estate as workers spend more time in residential areas due to hybrid work; (2) the need for affordable, flexible, childcare options that cater to the needs of the future; (3) ridership declines in public transit (particularly commuter rail) (4) reduced business travel; (5) a need for reskilling at an unprecedented scale and pace; (6) slowing population growth; (7) greater equity challenges; and (8) capacity-constrained housing options that meet the requirements of all. These eight insights are summarized into the four overall themes for the Commonwealth in the future that we highlight below.

First, changing ways of working – such as hybrid and remote work – may shift the center of gravity away from the urban core, further reinforced if business travel decreases.

Our analysis shows that around a third of Massachusetts residents can work remotely – a higher percentage than in most other US states, since the Commonwealth has a high share of jobs in sectors that lend themselves to remote work, such as technology and professional services. Surveys and interviews indicate that many remote workers could continue with hybrid work in the future. The impact to urban cores will depend on the extent of this hybrid work: a day of remote work per week could have modest impact, while an average of three days or more of remote work per week would have more significant impact. Previously, the urban cores in Massachusetts had a large commuter population (for example, approximately 245,000 workers traveled into Boston from surrounding areas in 2019¹¹). A shift to remote/hybrid work and spending more time closer to home could have far-reaching implications on transit, urban vitality, housing (both where housing is needed as well as types of options on housing), local congestion and childcare needs. For example, parents in hybrid

work models may need more sporadic, part-time childcare that is closer to home, requiring the childcare business model to change and adapt to the new flexibilities in work schedules. Reduced business travel would also strongly affect Boston, as approximately 40 percent of Logan Airport traffic comprises business travelers¹² (compared to about 20 percent nationwide)¹³. Hybrid work and reduced business travel may also have second-order effects on businesses (and their employees) that depend on commuter and business travel– particularly in the retail, food and hospitality sectors. Our analysis suggests a significant challenge for commuter rail, which could experience a 15 to 50 percent loss of its pre-pandemic ridership base, depending on the extent of remote work adoption. Additionally, this analysis expects demand for office real estate to decrease by as much as 10 to 20 percent if remote / hybrid work trends continue. On a positive note, this shift could create more vibrancy in local downtowns, with more people working from home creating opportunities for businesses in these downtowns as well as inspire placemaking efforts that would improve the attractiveness of areas outside the urban core (placemaking defined as planning, design and management of public spaces such as creation of community parks and art installations).

Second, the pace, scale, and breadth of reskilling needed for job transitions must be much greater than before the pandemic; creating the workforce of the future will require extensive, thoughtful preparation.

COVID-19 accelerated automation, e-commerce and digitization as residents and businesses found these interventions useful as they worked to curtail physical proximity. If these trends continue, up to 400,000 job transitions may be needed by 2030, with 75,000 employees having to jump

multiple wage levels. This would require one of the largest reskilling efforts that the Commonwealth has ever undertaken. If done correctly, the effort could lead to a vibrant Massachusetts economy with new job creation absorbing the workforce released by automation trends. In particular, there could be substantial growth in healthcare (which could produce 210,000 to 235,000 more jobs by 2030) and in new economy sectors like artificial intelligence (AI), clean energy, and biotechnology. This growth could be held back, however, if reskilling is unable to supply sufficient talent of the right capability, or if population growth and in-bound migration slows growth in the available workforce.

Third, the pandemic has already exacerbated pre-existing inequities for many and as we look ahead the future of work will not be experienced equally across the Commonwealth.

For example, while many white-collar workers enjoyed the benefits of remote work, many women, ethnic and racial minorities, the relatively less educated, and younger populations experienced significant disadvantages. Unemployment in the Commonwealth peaked in April 2020 at 16.4 percent – more than 5.4 times pre-pandemic levels¹⁴ – and remains at 6.4 percent (2.1 times pre-pandemic levels) as of April 2021 with more than 240,000 workers unemployed in the Commonwealth.¹⁵ Black workers in Massachusetts faced unemployment rates that were approximately 13 percentage points higher than rates among other racial groups in 2021.¹⁶ Nationally, job recovery for women coming out of the pandemic is expected to occur about 18 or more months later than for men, and for those with less education or income, recovery could happen one to two years later.¹⁷ The picture is expected to be no different for the Commonwealth, and a lack of access to affordable, flexible childcare – a challenge even

before the pandemic - will likely exacerbate these problems. Beyond a slower economic recovery, as we look ahead, automation and reskilling needs are likewise expected to have greater impact on women, young people, people of color and people for whom English is a second language. For example, the automation of office work will likely affect women disproportionately, given that women represent about 85 percent of administrative occupations such as assistants, secretaries, payroll clerks and receptionists in the Commonwealth. Hispanic workers are more strongly represented in the food and hospitality occupations, which by 2030 are expected to experience significant job losses due to future-of-work trends.¹⁸ The Commonwealth maybe able to take advantage of opportunities to transition people into higher-paying jobs, and to address some of the longstanding inequities across the state – but without focused action it's likely that inequities will deepen.

Fourth, the risk of future job growth moving outside Massachusetts is rising due to the high costs of living and doing business in the state.

Remote work enables greater mobility for both employers and employees, thus lowering the barrier for jobs and residents to leave the state or for companies to place jobs and recruit talent elsewhere. To remain attractive, Massachusetts must double-down on the fundamentals, as validated in numerous surveys and conversations with residents and business leaders. In interviews with business leaders, regulatory burdens, the high cost and complexity of doing business, and access to talent came up consistently as key challenges that impact Massachusetts' competitiveness. Interviewees went as far as to say that they were considering looking at other states to expand their businesses or had heard of other peer, Massachusetts-based companies that were seeking to move their businesses to other states with a lower-cost of doing business. To capture new job growth, then,

the Commonwealth will likely need to address these challenges while also working to remain the nation's top hub for talent. In particular, the cost of living in the state is seen as a potential barrier to retaining and attracting talent. In our surveys, residents highlighted affordability as the top determinant when deciding where to live, especially in the context of remote and hybrid work. Massachusetts is among the lowest-ranked states for affordability and has some of the highest housing costs¹⁹ and most expensive childcare services²⁰. Our analysis highlights need for up to 125,000-200,000 additional housing units by 2030 to bring Massachusetts up to national vacancy benchmarks and 25,000-30,000 additional childcare workers to provide sufficient and flexible childcare. By investing in these fundamentals, addressing the challenges that businesses believe to be impeding Massachusetts' competitiveness, and continuing to maintain access to top-notch educational institutions and to highly skilled labor pools, Massachusetts can continue to win the fight for job and talent growth.

With vaccination well underway, the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic may soon be behind us. Massachusetts (like many states) now face a host of serious challenges – and opportunities – as residents and businesses adapt to the future of work. Remote and hybrid work offers employers and employees greater mobility in choosing where they want to work, but it raises the imperative for Massachusetts to remain competitive. This means leaning into its strength as a bastion for world-class talent by reskilling and equipping residents with the skills needed for future occupations and retaining them with improved affordability and meeting the fundamental needs of housing and childcare. It means ensuring Massachusetts remains an attractive state for employers to create future jobs. It means adapting to where people will spend time in the future and ensuring offices, business, leisure and retail adapt to these as well. And it means addressing head-on the rising inequalities that many of these trends are

fueling. Without proactive and focused action, Massachusetts risks losing population and job growth to more cost-competitive states. But if Massachusetts can rise to the challenge and accomplish these goals, the opportunity to create an inclusive economy that provides opportunities for everyone and remains an attractive place for businesses and residents could become the next chapter for Massachusetts.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Delegates & Alternates, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
FROM: Thomas Matuszko, AICP, Executive Director
DATE: September 24, 2021
SUBJ: Executive Director's Report

A. Office Update

Based on the recent uptick in COVID 19 cases, we are cautiously monitoring if new restrictions are required. The BRPC office is still open to the public, but the public must wear face masks. Staff members are still working in the office, a minimum of 2 days per week. Staff members must wear face coverings in common areas. The main door to the building remains locked at all times. The entry system at the door to the street is non-functional. Staff use a key fob to open the door. Visitors need to have a cell phone on them and call the Office Assistant who goes down and opens the door.

B. Western Railroad Stone Arch Bridges

The U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service (NPS) has recently approved the Western Railroad Stone Arch Bridges, (partially in Becket) as well as the Chester Factory Village Depot as National Historic Landmarks (NHL). The Western Railroad Stone Arch Bridges are surviving components of the Western Railroad, which connected Worcester, Massachusetts, with Albany, New York. When completed in 1841, the Western was the longest railroad constructed and operated in the United States by a single corporation and was one of the first four interregional railroads in the country. The innovative management hierarchy of the Western Railroad's corporate structure set a new standard that was subsequently copied by many American corporations. The railroad segment and bridges are nationally significant as the best representative works and highest achievement of George Washington Whistler (1800–1849), one of the country's leading practitioners of civil engineering in the early nineteenth century and a pioneering designer of railroads. They are also nationally significant as an intact segment of the first railroad in the United States—perhaps the world—to demonstrate the feasibility of moving trains across a mountain range using only traction, or the friction between the wheels of the train and the tracks, for propulsion and braking. To accomplish the mountain ascent, the Western Railroad, with Whistler as its lead engineer, built a group of ten large masonry arch bridges and made extensive cuts and fills to accommodate the roadbed within a winding three-mile section of the Westfield River Valley. As surviving components of that section of railroad, the Western Railroad Stone Arch Bridges, and the segment of Western Railroad Roadbed that connects them, exemplify the engineering accomplishment of the mountain crossing.

C. PILOT Payment Evaluation

Late last year the state Auditor's Office issued a report, "The Impact of the State-Owned Land PILOT and Solar Taxation Policies on Municipalities". This was a critical examination about how the program, as structured is unfair for most small and rural communities. Dr. Ben Tafoya from the Auditor's office recently presented at the BRPC Regional Issues Committee. The Auditor's office has co-sponsored legislation, S.1875/H. 2831, which seeks to address some of the problems with the program. I will be working with the Rural Policy Advisory Commission to prepare comments about and support for the legislation.