



# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

JOHN DUVAL, Chair  
MALCOLM FICK, Vice-Chair  
SHEILA IRVIN, Clerk  
BUCK DONOVAN, Treasurer  
THOMAS MATUSZKO, A.I.C.P.  
Executive Director

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## **MEETING NOTICE**

There will be a meeting of the  
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
on Thursday, July 14, 2022 at **5:30** p.m.

This will be a **Virtual Meeting** as allowed by Ch. 22 of the Acts of 2022 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20 until July 15, 2022.

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:** Written materials for the meeting are posted on BRPC's website: [www.berkshireplanning.org](http://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 May 19, 2022 meeting*
- II. Comments from the Public (5:35-5:40)**  
*Members of the public may offer comments regarding topics on the agenda or other matters 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. Commenters must state their names.*
- III. Delegate and Alternate Issues (5:40-5:45)**  
*Delegates and Alternates may bring up any issue not on the agenda.*
- IV. Executive Committee Actions (5:45-5:50)**  
*Executive Committee actions taken on the Commission's behalf at its June 2, 2022 meeting are presented for discussion.*
- V. Election of BRPC Officers for FY 2023 (5:50-5:55)**  
*BRPC Officers need to be elected for FY 23. The Nominating Committee proposed the following slate of officers for FY 2023:*  
- *Chair: John Duval, Adams Alternate*  
- *Vice Chair: Malcolm Fick, Great Barrington Alternate*  
- *Clerk: Sheila Irvin, Pittsfield Delegate*  
- *Treasurer: Buck Donovan, Lee Delegate*  
*Nominations will be taken from the floor.*
- VI. Endorsement of Committee Chairs and At-Large Executive Committee Member Appointment for FY 2023 (5:55-6:00)**  
*The BRPC bylaws require the Commission to approve the Committee Chairs as recommended by the BRPC Chair.*

- 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

The BRPC bylaws require the Commission to approve At-Large Executive Committee members as recommended by the BRPC Chair.

- Kyle Hanlon, At-Large, North Adams
- Sam Haupt, At-Large, Peru (Knowledgeable about transportation issues)

**VII. Ratification of Commission Representatives to Related Groups (6:00- 6:05)**

The BRPC's Bylaws require the Commission to ratify the appointments of members to special or standing bodies not under that jurisdiction of BRPC. The following people need to be ratified for the identified committees.

- Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization –Alternate: Sam Haupt, Peru  
Alternate 2: Kyle Hanlon, North Adams
- Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee – Representative: Marie Raftery (Stockbridge Non-Commission member) – (to be verified)
- Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Board - Open

**VIII. Authorization for Executive Committee to Act on Behalf of the Commission (6:05-6:10)**

The BRPC bylaws require the Commission to vote annually to reconfirm the authorization of the Executive Committee to act in the name of and on behalf of the Commission. See attached memo. BRPC staff will also send the poll via email.

**IX. Recruitment to BRPC Committees (6:10 – 6:20)**

The BRPC has several standing or special committees of the Commission. We will review the roles of those Committees and solicit new members to the Committees. See attached committee descriptions.

**X. Kusik Award Nominations (6:20 - 6:25)**

The Kusik Award recognizes projects, groups, or individuals who have made outstanding contributions to planning in Berkshire County. Please consider submitting a nomination using the attached form. A list of past award winners is in the meeting materials.

**XI. Berkshire Benchmarks and Indicators (6:25 – 6:55)**

The BRPC GIS, Data and IT Manager, Mark Maloy, will give a presentation about the revamped Berkshire Benchmarks data webpage as well as present on Indicators. Check the site out at [Home - Berkshire Benchmarks](#).

**XII. Executive Director's Report (6:55 – 7:00)**

**XIII. Adjournment (7:05)**

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



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## **DRAFT FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES** **May 19, 2022**

This was a virtual meeting as allowed by Ch. 22 of the Acts of 2022 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

### **I. Opening**

#### **A. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.**

Chair John Duval 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  
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate  
Malcolm Fick – Great Barrington Alternate  
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate  
Laura Mensi – Monterey Delegate  
Jim Lovejoy – Mt. Washington  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate  
Sari Hoy – Sheffield Delegate  
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Alternate  
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate  
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

Staff Present:

Thomas Matuszko – Executive Director  
Marianne Sniezek – Administration Program Manager  
Kate Hill Tapia – Office Administrator  
Anuja Koirala – Principal Transportation Planner  
Clete Kus – Transportation Program Manager  
Emma Doane – Community Planning Intern

Others Present:

Brittany Polito, iBerkshire; Pittsfield Community Television; Justine Dodds, City of Pittsfield Community Development Office; Eileen

Peltier, Berkshire Housing Development Corporation; Bob Malnati, Berkshire Regional Transit Authority

**C. Approval of Minutes of March 17, 2022, Meeting**

Roger Bolton moved to approve the draft minutes of the March 17, 2022 meeting. Kyle Hanlon seconded the motion. A correction: Sarah Hudson is Tyringham's Alternate, not Delegate. The minutes were approved with a roll call vote and one abstention.

Yes:

John Duval – Adams Alternate  
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate  
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate  
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate  
Laura Mensi – Monterey Delegate  
Jim Lovejoy – Mt. Washington  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate  
Sari Hoy – Sheffield Delegate  
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Alternate  
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate  
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

Abstained:

Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate

**II. Comments from the Public**

There were no comments from the public.

**III. Delegate & Alternate Issues**

Roger Bolton reported that the Environmental Review Committee did not see a need to submit a comment letter about the ENF for a bridge in Sheffield.

**IV. Executive Committee Actions**

There were no questions or comments on Executive Committee actions at the April 7 and May 12, 2022 meetings.

**V. Proposed Transportation Improvement Program for FFY 2023-2027**

The updated Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Berkshires was reviewed. It reestablishes which projects will receive the limited federal transportation funds. Anuja noted two new funding categories: the carbon reduction program (CRP) and PROTECT (Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient and Cost Saving Transportation). The Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will vote on its adoption on May 24, 2022. Chair John Duval represents BRPC.

Jim Lovejoy moved to instruct the BRPC Chair to vote to approve the proposed Transportation Improvement Plan for FFY 2023-2027 at the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting on May 24, 2022. The motion was seconded by Sheila Irvin and approved by a roll call vote.

Yes:

John Duval – Adams Alternate  
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate  
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate  
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate  
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate  
Laura Mensi – Monterey Delegate  
Jim Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate  
Sari Hoy – Sheffield Delegate  
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Alternate  
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate  
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

#### **VI. Proposed Transportation Unified Planning Work Program for FFY 2023**

The proposed Unified Planning Work Program for FFY 2023, establishing BRPC staff's transportation planning work for the coming year, was presented. It will go to the Metropolitan Planning Organization for approval on May 24, 2022.

Jim Lovejoy moved to instruct the BRPC Chair to vote in favor of the proposed Unified Planning Work Program for FFY 2023 at the MPO meeting on May 24, 2022. The motion was seconded by Kyle Hanlon and approved by a roll call vote.

John Duval – Adams Alternate  
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate  
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate  
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate  
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate  
Laura Mensi – Monterey Delegate  
Jim Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate  
Sari Hoy – Sheffield Delegate  
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Alternate  
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate  
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

**VII. Presentation by Berkshire Regional Transit Authority**

BRTA Administrator Bob Malnati reviewed approved service changes and the reasoning behind them.

**VIII. Presentation by Berkshire Housing Development Corporation**

BHDC CEO/President Eileen Peltier discussed the corporation's work and how it might assist communities with housing development projects.

**IX. Adoption of the BRPC FY 2023 Budget**

Per the BRPC bylaws, the Commission reviewed and voted to adopt the annual budget for the fiscal year 2023 as recommended by the Finance Committee. Tom recognized Marianne for her work preparing the budget.

The motion was made by Roger Bolton, seconded by Douglas McNally, and approved by a roll call vote:

John Duval – Adams Alternate  
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate  
Mary McGurn – Egremont Alternate  
Pedro Pachano – Great Barrington Delegate  
Buck Donovan – Lee Delegate  
Laura Mensi – Monterey Delegate  
Jim Lovejoy – Mt. Washington Alternate  
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate  
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate  
Sari Hoy – Sheffield Delegate  
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Alternate  
Amanda Hamilton – Tyringham Delegate  
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate  
Doug McNally – Windsor Delegate

**X. Report of the BRPC Nominating Committee – Officers for FY 2023**

The Nominating Committee proposed the following slate of officers for FY 2023. It will be voted on at the first BRPC Full Commission meeting after July 1.

John Duval, Chair  
Malcolm Fick, Vice-Chair  
Sheila Irvin, Clerk  
Buck Donovan, Treasurer

**XI. Executive Director's Report**

**A. EPA Brownfields Award**

BRPC received two EPA Brownfields awards. One for \$500,000 to continue assessment work. The second for \$2,500,000 re-capitalizes the Revolving Loan Funds. Tom recognized the good work that Energy and Environment Program Manager Melissa Provencher has done leading the Brownfields Program.

## **B. Grant Workshop Series**

In collaboration with the Western Mass Legislative Delegation, the three Western Mass regional Planning agencies have convened a series of grant workshops. Three have occurred. The next one is Tuesday, May 24, 3:00 – 5:00, featuring the Mass Historical Commission, Mass Cultural Council, and the Division of Local Services. Representatives will explain their grant programs and offerings. Register once for any/all sessions at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtd--spzoqHtW1GeGR6z0iyrmhqzIQCNSO>. Session recordings can be found at Grant Information - Berkshire Regional Planning Commission ([berkshireplanning.org](http://berkshireplanning.org)).

## **C. Berkshire Benchmarks**

BRPC's Berkshire Benchmarks program maintains a website with extensive regional data. It now includes indicators tracking how Berkshire County is changing. Berkshire Benchmarks has prepared a State of the County Report in collaboration with the Berkshire Leadership Impact Council. An inaugural release of the report will take place on May 23, 2022, 9:00 am – 11:00 am at the Berkshire Innovation Center. Register at <https://bit.ly/Benchmarks22>

## **D. Office Space**

Improvements to the BRPC office are almost complete, and staff has been moved. It has taken a year. Tom appreciated the efforts of Administration Program Manager Marianne Sniezek for her good and persistent work.

## **E. Other - none**

## **XII. Adjournment**

Pedro Pachano made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kyle Hanlon, and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.



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THOMAS MATUSZKO, A.I.C.P.  
Executive Director

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
FROM: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director  
DATE: July 8, 2022  
SUBJ: Executive Committee Actions for June 2, 2022

Per 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 June 2, 2022 meeting.

### **Executive Committee Actions on June 2, 2022**

#### **Approved the minutes of the May 12, 2022, BRPC Executive Committee**

#### **Approved the May 2022 expenditures report**

#### **Approved the submission of a grant application to the M.I.I.A. Wellness Program**

The Executive Committee approved the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (M.I.I.A.) Wellness Grant "A Great Place to Work" program. It also approved the Executive Director to enter into any resulting contracts and agreements. BRPC's application will be for healthy snacks and desktop Sit-to-Stand units or risers.

#### **Approved a revision to BRPC's Telework Policy**

The Executive Committee approved revising BRPC's Telework Policy to extend it another fiscal year on a trial basis.

#### **Approved the submission of a grant application to the Regional Food System Partnerships Program with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

The Executive Committee authorized, after the fact, the Executive Director to submit a grant application to the USDA's Regional Food System Partnerships Program and authorized the Executive Director to enter into any resulting contracts and agreements. The implementation and expansion of the "Strengthening the Berkshire County Regional Food System with Locally-Sourced Mobile Farmers Market to Serve Low Access Populations" (Berkshire Mobile Farmers Market) project will build on prior and ongoing collaborative efforts to expand local food production and delivery systems and bring the benefits of fresh and healthy locally grown food to underserved communities and individuals. The total amount requested is \$645,193.86. The required cost share or match of \$227,678.33 will be mostly provided by the project partners, with BRPC's share coming from existing funds in the Public Health Program. Public Health Program Manager Laura Kittross, lkittross@berkshireplanning.org is project lead.





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THOMAS MATUSZKO, A.I.C.P.  
Executive Director

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Delegates and Alternates, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Thomas Matuszko AICP, Executive Director  
**DATE:** July 7, 2022  
**SUBJ:** Authorization for Executive Committee to Act on Behalf of the Commission

The BRPC bylaws stipulate that the Delegates (or, in the absence of a Delegate, the Alternate) must vote annually whether to authorize the Executive Committee to act on the Commission's behalf. Such authorization requires approval by a two-thirds ballot vote of the delegates (22 affirmative votes must be received). The authorization for the Executive Committee to act on the Commission's behalf is limited to:

1. Disbursement of Commission funds based on a warrant;
2. Borrowing funds in anticipation of revenue and authorizing the Treasurer to give the Executive Director the authority to borrow funds when needed;
3. Establishing personnel policies;
4. Hearing and resolving personnel grievances;
5. Authorizing applications for federal, state, and local aid;
6. Seeking contributions;
7. Entering into contracts;
8. Approving comments on proposals of a regional or inter-community nature;
9. Approving submittal of comments for projects undergoing state or federal agency review;
10. Establishing policy regarding requests for planning-related technical assistance;
11. Authorization for planning services;
12. Approving submittal of comments on legislation or regulations which affect the region or member municipalities; and
13. Acting on routine transportation matters (excepting adoption of plans, programs, or endorsement of specific projects).

All actions of the Executive Committee are presented for review and discussion at the next Commission meeting. A simple majority vote may revoke this authorization at any Commission meeting. The Commission retains sole authority to act on:

1. Adoption of regional plans or policies;
2. Adoption of BRPC annual assessment and budgets;
3. Election of officers and approval of At-Large Executive Committee members and all committee chairs;
4. Confirmation of appointments to all committees;
5. Approval of Transportation Improvement Program;
6. Endorsement of specific transportation projects;
7. Modification of the duties of the Executive Director; and
8. Adoption or amendment to the bylaws.

Please complete the ballot one of the following ways:

- Web-based poll: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NF3NJQQ>
- Return form via mail
- Respond via email to [officeassistant@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:officeassistant@berkshireplanning.org)

Thank you.

The Executive Committee of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

\_\_\_\_\_ should be authorized

\_\_\_\_\_ should not be authorized

to act on behalf of the Commission for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate's name(printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Community represented

## **BRPC COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**FY 2023**

**July 14, 2022 – Updated 7/8/2022**

### **Executive Committee**

Staff: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director

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

### **Commission Development Committee**

Staff: Marianne Sniezek, Office Manager

Rene Wood, Chair (Sheffield)  
**Sarah Hudson (Tyringham)**  
Pedro Pachano (Gt. Barrington)  
Buck Donovan (Lee)  
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)  
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 Sniezek, Office Manager

Buck Donovan, Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair (Lee)  
Sam Haupt (Peru)  
Sheila Irvin (Pittsfield)  
Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)  
Malcolm Fick (Gt. Barrington)  
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)  
Eleanor Tillinghast (Mt Washington) (Non-Commission member)  
Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)  
Christine Rasmussen (Stockbridge)  
**Malcolm Fick (Williamstown)**  
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  
Thomas Matuszko, BRPC  
Grant McGregor, (Dalton)  
Mike Nuvallie, (North Adams)  
[John Olander, Berkshire County Boards of Health](#)  
Chris Rembold, (Gt Barrington)  
[Rebecca Ferguson \(Adams\)](#)

**Non-voting Members**

Caprice Shaw, MA DEP  
Rich Griffin, MassDevelopment

**Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee** Staff: Laura Brennan, Program Manager

Kyle Hanlon, Chair, (North Adams)  
George Ambriz, Berkshire Community College  
Roger Bolton, Vice-Chair, BRPC Alternate (Williamstown)  
Michael Coakley, Business Development Manager (Pittsfield); Alternate Justine Dodds  
AJ Enchill, Berkshire Black Economic Council  
Keith Girouard, Mass Small Business Develop Center  
Lesley Herzberg, Berkshire History  
Ben Lamb, 1Berkshire; [Alternate Kevin Pink](#)  
Jim Lovejoy, BRPC Alternate (Mt. Washington)  
[Paul Mattingly, MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board; Alternate Heather Boulger](#)  
Laurie Mick, Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation (PERC)  
Thomas Matuszko, BRPC  
Mike Nuvallie (North Adams); Alternate Zachary Feury  
Ian Rasch, Alander Construction  
Chris Rembold, Town Planner (Gt Barrington)  
[Debra Sarlin, Berkshire Community College; Alternate Peter Farkas](#)  
Ben Sosne, BIC, Berkshire Innovation Center  
Shannon Smith, Berkshire Agricultural [Ventures; Alternate Ciana Barnaba](#)  
John Duval, BRPC Chair (Adams) (Ex-Officio)

**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) Alternate 2: Kyle Hanlon (North Adams)

[Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Board:](#)



# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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berkshireplanning.org

## **Committee Descriptions**

An integral feature of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is the work done by the standing committees of the Commission. BRPC currently has the following committees, comprised of delegates, alternates, and, in some cases, members from outside BRPC.

### Standing Committees

#### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is responsible for oversight of the business affairs and formulates general programs for the Commission in accordance with specific needs, plans and goals of the Commission. It reports its actions at the next Commission meeting. The Executive Committee has the following powers: disbursement of Commission funds based upon a warrant approved by the Executive Committee; borrowing funds in anticipation of revenue; authorizing signatory authority on checks; hearing and resolving personnel grievances; establishing personnel policies; authorizing applications for federal, state and local aid; seeking contributions; entering into contracts; approving comments on proposals of a regional or inter-community nature; approving submittal of comments for projects undergoing state or federal agency review; establishing policy for responding to requests for planning related technical assistance; authorizing planning services; and approving submittal of comments on legislation or regulations which affect the region or member municipalities.

#### **Environmental Review Committee**

The Environmental Review Committee reviews projects requiring state or federal environmental permits. It may also review requests for funding assistance from state or federal agencies and local land use actions for potential regional impacts and compliance with adopted regional plans. The committee advises the Commission or the Executive Committee regarding its recommendations and requested conditions before a given project or action is approved or denied by state, federal, or local authorities.

#### **Commission Development Committee**

The Commission Development Committee considers Commission education, membership, structure, and process, including periodic evaluations of the performance of the Commission. Periodically, the Committee also reviews the Commission's bylaws to determine whether amendments are needed to enhance the operations of the Commission. A nominating subcommittee of this committee recommends a slate of officer candidates to the Commission for the next fiscal year.

### **Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee oversees the Commission's financial operations and reviews the annual audit. It recommends the per capita assessments of the member cities and towns for the next fiscal year to the Commission for approval no later than February. It also recommends a full budget for the next fiscal year for Commission action before the beginning of the next fiscal year.

### **Regional Issues Committee**

The Regional Issues Committee provides recommendations to the Commission identifying regional issues facing Berkshire County, provides recommendations on proposed state or federal legislation or regulations, makes recommendations to the Commission concerning requests from municipalities for policy or guidance on regional issues and studies regional issues and policies.

### Special Committees

The **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee** oversees the planning process for ongoing regional economic development efforts focused on identifying regional economic goals and priorities, identifying strategies for and facilitating implementation, and measuring regional progress. The result of this ongoing planning process is the development of a 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region and accompanying annual progress reports, which are sent to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to maintain the region's eligibility for EDA investments.

The **Berkshire Brownfields Program Committee** oversees site assessments, reuse and cleanup planning, a revolving loan fund for cleanups, and site-specific cleanup projects. It also assists with community outreach. This program is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and allows Berkshire County to reclaim land that may be contaminated and underutilized.



# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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## **Background on Charles Kusik**

The BRPC inaugurated the Kusik Award in 1996. This annual award is named in honor of the late Charles Kusik, a resident of the Town of Richmond, who for over three decades placed his expert imprint on the zoning bylaws of nearly every town in the Berkshires. He retired at age 82. He and his wife lived in Richmond until shortly before his death at age 91 in 1992.

Charles was an Estonian Diplomat who first came to the U.S. with his parents in 1921. He held a Master's Degree from New York University and, in 1931 completed all of the course requirements for a Doctorate from Columbia University Business School. He served as Estonia's Consul General in New York from 1931 to 1939 and was also in charge of the Washington legation during those years. He returned to Estonia and was working as First Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when Soviet Troops invaded in 1940. He fled with his wife, Mary, who was also of Estonian descent, and two children. In need of a job, they moved to Richmond, where he bought a chicken farm on West Street. That provided him with a second career while they raised their family. He became very active in Richmond Civic affairs, most notably serving for 28 years on the Planning Board, where he was instrumental in passing Richmond's first zoning bylaw in 1954.

From the formation of the Commission in the mid-sixties, Charles was an active Delegate. In 1967, the Commission consisted mostly of the two cities and the larger towns – that needed Regional Plans to become eligible for sewer and water grants and loans. Smaller towns with no central water supply or sewer systems were slow to adopt zoning and subdivision controls. Many had no Planning Boards until the late sixties. Tyringham was the last town to establish a Planning Board in 1978. The small towns had only rudimentary zoning, and some had none at all. The Commission quickly became a resource for people in the Berkshire towns that wanted to plan to control growth. Charles began his remarkable career as a "Citizen Planner." He worked as a volunteer and then as the Commission's only paid traveling consultant. (This was a third career, as he happily retired from chicken farming.) He spent countless evenings at Planning Board meetings helping towns to craft Zoning packages that could get through Town Meetings which had been notably resistant to any regulation that came from the outside. But Charles was one of their own, and his extensive knowledge and endless patience helped nearly all Berkshire towns adopt or amend their zoning and subdivision regulations. He'll quickly say that what local Boards needed most was a basic "How To" guide for their activities, and so he wrote a large number of manuals, including:

- How a Zoning Board of Appeals Operates
- Non-Conforming Uses
- How to Conduct a Public Hearing

- Notice Requirements
- Special Permits and Variances
- Procedures for Adopting Bylaws

He devised a basic template for a one-district zoning bylaw – usually with one-acre zoning (no map required), several by right uses, and a number more by Special Permit. Those bare-bones have been fleshed out or replaced in many towns, but many remain reluctant to adopt more complicated bylaws. Because Charles knew first-hand how towns work, he was able to help Boards get their bylaws adopted and help them administer them, almost entirely with a local planner and staff.

For many towns, he **was** the Regional Planning Commission and what they saw as the reason for belonging to it, as all communities did by 1979. Charles could talk knowledgeably to Board members and lawyers about zoning problems and questions, and there were few cases in the field that he didn't know by heart.

He was honored nationally for his work, receiving a "Citizen Planner" award from the National Planning Professional Association. Charles was a night owl, and local Board members knew they could call him as late as midnight and find him working and happy to talk with them. He and his wife had a nap and an early dinner, and he was set to work far into the night.

He never lost his Estonian accent, and when he spoke, he often failed to use articles so that he always spoke about "power of Planning Board" – a power he believed in firmly. He encouraged Planning Boards to stand up for what they believed was right even when it was often very unpopular. He taught Boards that they needed town plans and to participate in Regional Planning activities. When asked after the passage of the first Richmond Zoning Bylaw if he thought people knew what they were voting on, he said, "no, of course not, or they wouldn't have voted voluntarily to restrict their freedom of action concerning their land, but they will learn that Richmond community will be a much better place with what they voted for tonight." He and the Richmond Planning Board continued to refine that bylaw, but you can still see the bare bones they set for in the 1954 Bylaw.

Berkshire County is far different in outward appearance and inward beauty than if Charles had not lived.

The Richmond Civic Association originally underwrote the cost of the Kusik Award.



**CHARLES KUSIK AWARD RECIPIENTS**  
**Berkshire Regional Planning Commission**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient(s)</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1996	Mayor John Barrett, III	Reuse of Old Mill Buildings – MassMOCA
1997	Rachel Fletcher & Timothy Gray	Housatonic River Reclamation Efforts
1998	Rep. Peter J. Larkin	Economic Revitalization Efforts – Brownfields Legislation
1999	George S. Wislocki & Tad Ames  Mayor Gerald S. Doyle, Jr. & Thomas E. Hickey, Jr.	Preserving Natural Resources  Economic Development Efforts – GE Settlement
2000	Donald R. Dubendorf, Esq.	Berkshire Connect
2001	Leslie Reed-Evans	Agricultural Preservation
2002	Southern Berkshire Housing Coalition & Community Development Corp. of So. Berk.	Affordable Housing
2003	Robert Race	Lake Preservation
2004	Congressman John Olver	Regional Leadership & Support
2005	No award granted	
2006	Peter Lafayette	Affordable Housing
2007	Don Schmidt	Guidance to Local Planning Officials
2008	Sally Bell, Esq.	Continuing Legal Service to Communities
2009	No award granted	
2010	Marjorie Cohan	Berkshire Bike Path Council
2011	Daniel Bosley  Donald Goranson	State economic development  35 years on Great Barrington Planning Board

<b>2012</b>	<b>Aimee Thayer</b>	<b>Outstanding contributions to Planning in Berkshire County</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>Mayor Richard Alcombright</b>	<b>Support for planning in North Adams</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>Eleanor Tillinghast</b>	<b>Protection of natural resources of the Berkshires</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>Donna Cesan</b>	<b>Support for planning in Adams</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>Benjamin Downing</b>	<b>State Senator 2007 - 2016</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>Robert "Bobbie" Orsi</b>	<b>Initiation and leadership of Age Friendly Berkshires</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>Barbara Zheutin</b>	<b>Support for Berkshire Grown and farmers</b>
<b>2019</b>	<b>Kristine Hazzard</b>	<b>Berkshire United Way leadership and its community impact work</b>
2020	No award granted (COVID)	
<b>2021</b>	<b>Berkshire Vaccine Collaborative</b>  <b>COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund for Berkshire County</b>  <b>Berkshire Public Health Nurses</b>	<b>For leadership to protect Berkshire County from the impact of COVID-19</b>



# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

JOHN DUVAL, Chair  
MALCOLM FICK, Vice-Chair  
SHEILA IRVIN, Clerk  
BUCK DONOVAN, Treasurer  
THOMAS MATUSZKO, A.I.C.P.  
Executive Director

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## NOMINATION FORM

### **Charles Kusik Award for Outstanding Contributions to Planning in Berkshire County**

The Charles Kusik Award was instituted to recognize projects, groups, or individuals who have made outstanding contributions to planning in Berkshire County. Employees, Delegates, and Alternates to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission are not eligible for the award.

I nominate the following for the Charles Kusik Award:

I believe that this project, group, or individual deserves the award because:

Please send to the attention of the Executive Committee via mail, fax, or email to Tom Matuszko: [tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:tmatuszko@berkshireplanning.org)

Deadline: **Thursday, August 4, 2022.**



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates & Alternates  
FROM: Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director  
DATE: July 8, 2022  
SUBJ: July 14, 2022, Commission Meeting

### **D. Berkshire Flyer**

The Berkshire Flyer Service between New York City and Pittsfield via Albany-Rensselaer, NY had a successful beginning last Friday.

### **E. Northern Tier Passenger Rail Study**

The Northern Tier Passenger Rail Working Group met on June 22, 2022. The main topic was a review and discussion of existing conditions in the study area. There is a virtual public information meeting Thursday, July 14, at 6:00 PM where the study team will also provide an overview of the study's background, review the existing conditions analysis, and garner feedback on issues and opportunities along the corridor, [Northern Tier Passenger Rail Study - Public Information Meeting #1 | Mass.gov](#). For more information about this Study and to submit a comment or question go to <https://www.mass.gov/northern-tier-passenger-rail-study>.

### **F. Open Meeting Law**

The status of the provision to allow public meetings to be held virtually past July 15, 2022 is still very much unknown. The Senate voted on a provision to extend the provision to allow virtual meetings until December 15, 2023. The House voted on a different set of provisions, one of them being to extend until March of 2023. The two laws are different. I am not clear on the process going forward. It may be that the two laws would go to a conference committee and would then need to be voted on by both branches. Given that the two legislative branches are meeting only infrequently, July 15<sup>th</sup> is a week away, and the Governor has 10 days to veto legislation, it is likely that public meetings will need to be held in person starting July 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **G. DLTA Funding**

Unfortunately, and disappointedly, consistent with what has happened over many years, DLTA funding for FY23 is not included in the Senate version of the budget. It is included in the House version, which seems to understand the importance of this program. This means that if there is to be a DLTA program starting Calendar year 2023, it will need to be added into the final budget. The Conference Committee members has not released it version of the budget, hence we do not know the status yet.

## **H. Draft Regulations on Stretch Energy Building Code**

The Department of Energy Resources recently filed draft language for state building code changes that it hopes will encourage builders to shift away from fossil fuel heating in favor of electrification by updating the existing stretch code and creating a new net-zero specialized stretch code for cities and towns to adopt. A public comment period on the latest draft will be open until 5 p.m. on Aug. 12. Comments can be emailed to [stretchcode@mass.gov](mailto:stretchcode@mass.gov) with the words "BUILDING CODE COMMENTS" in the subject line or mail to Ian Finlayson, Department of Energy Resources, 100 Cambridge St., Suite 1020, Boston, MA 02114. The new code language will also be subject to three public hearings on July 22 at the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife field headquarters in Westborough, Aug. 2 at Thomas Crane Public Library in Quincy and Aug. 8 via a virtual meeting platform. [Stretch Energy Code Development 2022 | Mass.gov](#)

## **I. Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2025 and 2030**

The Baker Administration release the Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2025 and 2030 as required by the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008 and the 2021 Climate Law (An Act Creating a Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy). The Plan prioritizes actions to close the gap between current emissions and future emissions targets. These initiatives include the implementation of the California vehicle emissions standards to advance the electrification of cars and trucks; increasing electric vehicle charging infrastructure while expanding investments in the public transportation system; pursuing recommendations from the Commission on Clean Heat to transform how homes and businesses are heated; doubling the state's efforts to conserve natural and working lands; and significantly expanding tree planting, especially in environmental justice neighborhoods. Additionally, the Plan aligns with the Baker-Polito Administration's efforts to foster, support, and invest in the clean energy industry, which is anchored by offshore wind generation. [download \(mass.gov\)](#)



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## SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FY2023

### Commission & Executive Committee Meetings

Commission	Executive Committee
Thursday, July 14, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.	Thursday, July 14, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, September 29, 2022 - 5:00 p.m.* <i>Annual Meeting and Dinner with Select Board Association</i>	Thursday, September 1, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.
	Thursday, October 6, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, November 17, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.	Thursday, November 3, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.
	Thursday, December 1, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, January 19, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.	Thursday, January 5, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
	Thursday, February 2, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, March 16, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.	Thursday, March 2, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
	Thursday, April 6, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, May 18, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.	Thursday, May 4, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
	Thursday, June 3, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.

**\*Annual Dinner 6:00 p.m.**

The following committees meet as needed:

- **Berkshire Brownfields**
- **Commission Development** (and Nominating Subcommittee)
- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**
- **Environmental Review**
- **Finance**
  
- **Regional Issues Committee** usually meets at 4:00 p.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the Month.