



CEDS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

September 21, 2022

Committee Members Present

George Ambriz, Berkshire Community College
Roger Bolton, Williams College (Retired)
Kyle Hanlon, BRPC, CEDS Chair
Lesley Herzberg, Berkshire County Historical Society at Arrowhead
Ben Lamb, 1Berkshire
Jim Lovejoy, Town of Mt. Washington
Paul Mattingly, MassHire Workforce Board
Debra Sarlin, Berkshire Community College
Mike Nuvalle, City of North Adams
Shannon Smith, Berkshire Agricultural Ventures
Ben Sosne, Berkshire Innovation Center

Committee Alternates Present

Justine Dodd, City of Pittsfield
Kevin Pink, 1Berkshire

Not Present

Mike Coakley, City of Pittsfield
John Duval, Town of Adams/BRPC Commission Chair
A.J. Enchill, Berkshire Black Economic Council
Keith Girouard, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network
Laurie Mick, PERC
Tom Matuszko, BRPC Executive Director
Ian Rasch, Alander Construction
Chris Rembold, Town of Great Barrington

BRPC Staff Present

Laura Brennan, Economic Development Program Manager
Wylie Goodman, Senior Economic Development Planner

Guests Present

Nico Dery, North Adams Chamber

I. Call to Order

Kyle H. called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and recorded attendance via roll call.

II. Approval of Minutes from July 13th, 2022

Roger B. made a motion to approve the minutes from July 13, 2022. Ben L. seconded. The minutes were approved by roll call vote. Justine D. abstained.

II. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

IV. EDA CARES Act Grant Update - *Agility & Resilience in Berkshire County: Public and Private Sector Preparedness*

a. Project Support – BIC Manufacturing Academy approved

Ben S. shared an update about the recent funding of the BIC Manufacturing Academy in collaboration with Mass Tech Collaborative and MIT and local industry and academic partners. The two-year program's official start date was August 1, 2022, with initial programming rolling out soon. EDA intends it as a spark to grow beyond the grant parameters and connect with people across the Commonwealth. A recent article in the [Berkshire Business Journal](#) attached to the calendar invitation goes into detail about the grant funding. The focus now is about spreading the word and ensuring strong participation. The idea is to complement what BCC does in their programs and have all components fit together. Future EDD funding will be instrumental to continuing the work. Our EDA liaison has spoken highly of Laura B. and her work as well as the Berkshires generally. The grant is for \$915K with an additional \$330K coming from a local and state match. MIT's involvement will be as a sub-awardee of the project. They will receive \$400K-plus over 24 months for designing and running programs related to technology implementation and upskilling young employees. MIT wants to demonstrate how an apprenticeship model that is industry-led can work so that they can use this model in other communities.

b. Technical Assistance & Capacity Building – small business resiliency template

Laura B. shared that we will also be developing a resiliency planning tool that small businesses and nonprofits can use to look at their existing assets, vulnerabilities, and partners, to determine what they need to do to respond to future disruptions. Ben L. and Kevin P. connected BRPC/1Berkshire with the sub-contractor who will lead the 3–4-month process. The template will be shared at a future meeting. The project will address industry-specific supply chain issues, among other resiliency factors.

V. 2023-2027 Berkshire County CEDS

a. Revised schedule for public review and comment period

Laura B. shared the timeline for the CEDS public comment period that we initially set for September that will now begin in October but will still allow us to stick to the initial close-out plan, with November 17th remaining as the date for Commission endorsement and submission to EDA in December.

b. Priority Projects –approval of remaining submissions

Laura B. led the group through projects to re-approve and new ones recently submitted. Laura B. grouped them thematically so that ones that are inter-related or rely on one another can be combined under larger headings with introductory language. We have traditionally grouped projects according to geography, either across the region as a whole or via sub-regions (North, Central, South). This year, there was general support for instead using a thematic cross-cutting approach versus by municipalities. Deb S. suggested highlighting the lack of structures in some regions of the county, especially around food security. Laura B. explained the benefit of naming projects even though this is not required in the CEDS because it helps us pursue long-term funding (e.g., BIC and Greylock Glen). The themes she presented are Workforce and Industry Support; Food Access and Security; Housing; Tourism, Hospitality, and Outdoor Recreation; Municipal Facilities; Site Redevelopment; and Services and Support (Programmatic). Ben L. made a

motion to accept the thematic format for Priority Projects. Roger B. seconded. Jim L. abstained. The thematic format was approved by a roll call vote.

Remaining Projects:

Municipal Facilities

Previously Approved: Springside House, Williamstown Fire Station, Harriman and West Airport, Hoosic River Flood Control Modernization

Ben L. suggested that Public Safety be considered as an alternative theme, noting the breadth of needed projects county-wide, including ones not submitted. Laura B. stated she is open to having a few additional Priority Projects proposed and voted on at the October 26 meeting. Introductory language at the start of each theme can better explain the rationale behind the chosen categories.

Pittsfield Police Station: Ben L. made a motion to approve. Lesley H. seconded. Jim L. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

BAMTech: This project was previously approved. Mike N. made a motion to approve. George A. seconded. Ben L. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Berkshire Blueprint 2.0 Implementation: This project was previously approved. Roger B. made a motion to approve. Deb S. seconded. Ben L. and Jim L. abstained. The project was approved through a roll call vote.

Berkshire Film and Media Collaborative+: This project was previously approved as Kemble Street Studio. The project is related to workforce development for film and is currently in the works in terms of fundraising and feasibility in Lenox. Roger B made a motion to approve. Deb S seconded. Jim L abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Site Redevelopment

Previously Approved: Brownfields Program, Spinning Mill Project in Adams (mixed-use), Blackinton Infrastructure, Columbia Avenue Summer Street Parking Garage, William Stanley Business Park Site 9, Columbia Mill, Greylock Mill, Eagle Mill, Curtis Paper Redevelopment

Greylock Works: This project was previously approved. Ben L. made a motion to approve. Ben S. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

New Projects for CEDS 2023-27:

Digital and Tech-Enabled Economy: Ben L. shared a summary of the project, which is a joint effort of 1Berkshire, Olly, and the BIC, which have been working for a few years on building the digital and tech-enabled economy. Deb S. made a motion to approve. Ben S. seconded. Jim L. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Black Business & Entrepreneur Center: The project was submitted by A.J. Enchill under the auspices of BBEC. Ben L. made a motion to approve. Mike N. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

BIC 2.0: Ben S. shared that the BIC is growing quickly and running out of space. They have had preliminary conversations with the Baker Administration about more space for companies that initially

incubated in 800 s.f. that need more space to grow. There are also events they cannot handle without space. The City has a master plan that includes the William Stanley Business Park Site 9, which will hopefully be filled with projects. In the interim, the BIC wants to expand its footprint and set up smaller nodes in North and South County due to access issues. Berkshire County is the second largest county by square mileage in the Commonwealth and this makes it hard for students and business owners to get to the BIC central location in Pittsfield. Ben L made a motion to approve. Roger B seconded. Ben S. abstained. Jim L. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Food Access and Security

Previously Approved: Growing the Berkshires Innovative Food Economy

Farm to Food Access Program (Berkshire Grown): Ben L. made a motion to approve. Shannon S. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Farm Access and Conservation (BRNC): Ben L. made a motion to approve. Mike N. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Shared Cold- and Freezer Storage (1Berkshire and BAV): Roger B. asked about the request for 20 acres, which Ben L. explained was related to the entire site for which they have control and would not all be used for this facility. Ben L. said there will be additional edits to the narrative related to value-added production. Roger B. asked about the goal of the project. Ben L. explained that there is no good at-scale freezer facility in the Berkshires for people producing meat. This makes the cost of getting meat to and from storage spaces expensive. Those that do exist within a 250-mile proximity are raising prices and transportation costs are high and travel back and forth is not “green.” The facility can be used for local food storage for food banks and for restaurants that could benefit in terms of price sustainability. Deb S. made a motion to approve. Ben S. seconded. Ben L. abstained. Shannon S. abstained. Jim L. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Housing

Previously Approved: Wright Building, White Terrace, Berkshire Cottages, 20 East Street Redevelopment

Union Block Redevelopment – Dalton: Ben L. made a motion to approve. Deb S. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Dowlin Building – North Adams – Roger B. made a motion to approve. Jim L. seconded. Ben L. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Tourism, Hospitality and Outdoor Recreation

Previously Approved: Adventure Trail, Greylock Glen, Adams Theater Redevelopment

Wahconah Park - Pittsfield: Ben L moved. Mike N. seconded. Justine D. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Explore Northern Berkshire Digital Tourism Office: Nico D. from North Adams Chamber provided background about local businesses frustration that there is no central place for visitors to find out about the region (i.e., restaurants, hospital, retail, hiking). The project would create a central website for people to find information along with an app that would present curated offerings. People would be able to choose your own adventure related to themes such as art, food, etc. People from the area would be high-quality writing about things people can do (e.g., a Lonely Planet for the digital age). Roger B. suggested

there be a section for children. Deb S. suggested that the project describe how it will be updated. Roger B. made a motion to approve. Lesley H. seconded. Ben L. abstained. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Municipal Facilities

Laura B. recognized Ben L.'s suggestion that there be a possible public safety sub-theme that could be separated or having a different title. Other projects in this category previously voted on include the Pittsfield Police Station and Springside Housing.

Williamstown Fire Station: Ben L. made a motion to approve. George A. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Harriman and West Airport: Roger B. noted that the project is related to a restaurant and not the airport itself. Ben L. made a motion to approve. Mike N. seconded. The project was approved by roll call vote.

Hoosic Flood Control Modernization: Ben L. made a motion to approve. Ben S. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

Services and Supports

Previously approved in July: YMCA

Volunteers in Medicine Berkshire Facility Expansion Proposal: Roger B. made a motion to approve. Ben L. seconded. The project was approved by a roll call vote.

c. Goals and Strategies

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

VI. Adjournment

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, October 26th at 1 p.m. Roger B. made a motion to adjourn. Ben L. seconded. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.