



CEDS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

October 9, 2024

Committee Members Present

Roger Bolton, Williams College (Retired)
Malcolm Fick, BRPC Chair (ex-officio non-voting member)
Kyle Hanlon, BRPC, CEDS Chair
Bryana Malloy, MassHire Berkshires
Tom Matuszko, BRPC Executive Director
Laurie Mick, PERC (Pittsfield Economic Development Corporation)
Mike Nuvalle, City of North Adams
Chris Rembold, Town of Great Barrington
Shannon Smith, Berkshire Agricultural Ventures

Committee Alternates Present

Jayne Bellora, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center
Kevin Pink, 1Berkshire

Committee Members Absent

Mike Coakley, City of Pittsfield
A.J Enchill, Berkshire Black Economic Council
Lesley Herzberg, Berkshire County Historical Society
Ben Lamb, 1Berkshire
Ben Sosne, Berkshire Innovation Center

BRPC Staff Present

Laura Brennan, Assistant Director & Economic Development Program Manager

Guests Present

Jeffrey Cohen, Eagle Mill Redevelopment Principal
Hari Kumar, Convivo
Alex LaValley, 1Berkshire
Mike Wynn, Greylock Glen Executive Director

1. Call to Order

Kyle Hanlon called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. This meeting was conducted via Zoom as allowed by Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30 Section 20 until March 31, 2025. Laura Brennan conducted roll call.

2. Acknowledgement of Guests/non-Committee Members

Kyle Hanlon and Laura Brennan welcomed guests Mike Wynn, Executive Director of the Greylock Glen project, Jeffrey Cohen, Eagle Mill Redevelopment principal, and Hari Kumar.

3. Approval of Minutes from May 8, 2024

Chris Rembold made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2024 meeting. Roger Bolton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Abstentions:

Kyle Hanlon

4. 2023-2027 Berkshire County CEDS – Year 2 Performance Progress Report

Laura Brennan said that the second annual progress report is due to EDA in June 2025. BRPC staff have begun outreach and data collection activities. A solicitation to submit new priority projects for consideration is now available on the BRPC website. Committee members are encouraged to submit any projects they know of or inform project proponents of the solicitation. Once projects are submitted, the Committee will hear updates from new and existing priority projects, review them, and vote on inclusion in the report. Data collection on economic conditions such as unemployment, per capita income, and workforce age will begin late November/early December once the 5-year American Community Survey data is released. The Committee will also review the SWOT analysis included in the original 5-year document and note any changes in the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats over the past twelve months. The report will also include a so-called "summary of accomplishments". These are representative activities that are moving the region towards one or more of the five stated CEDS goals. Committee members should send Laura Brennan any information they have on such activities. The Committee will review and proofread report drafts in the second half of the fiscal year. Proposed future meeting dates are January 15, 2025, March 12, 2025, and May 7, 2025.

5. Guest Speakers – presenting updates on current CEDS Priority Projects

Mike Wynn – Greylock Glen

Mike Wynn said that the Greylock Glen is preparing for the grand opening of its \$10m outdoor center this weekend. The Glen has gone through successive development attempts since the early 20th century. The current project is based on a 2004 master plan and began with a lease signed in 2014. The outdoor center is the second of six components. The first component was the existing hiking and biking trail network. The next component will be a campground. The Glen has signed a development agreement with a campground developer. The fourth component will be the "Lodge" – a hotel and conference center. The fifth component will be an outdoor performing arts center. The sixth component will be an outdoor environmental sculpture garden.

Kevin Pink asked Mike Wynn to share some details regarding the outdoor center. Mike Wynn said that the opening is taking place in phases. The initial and principal purpose of the center is to serve as a public gathering place. Hikers and bikers can meet at the center before going out on the trails and regroup at the end of the day. This space can also be converted into an event space for small business conferences or weddings. The center also has an outdoor recreation element with some indoor and outdoor classroom space. The Glen has partnered with Mass Audubon to provide educational programming. There is also space for a food establishment. The Glen is in the process of negotiating a lease with a restaurant operator. There is also a small retail space that may serve as a gift shop/outdoor equipment rental shop. Finally, there is a hall that hosts an exhibit on the importance of forests in mitigating climate change.

Jeffrey Cohen – Eagle Mill Redevelopment

Jeffrey Cohen said that the Eagle Mill site ceased operating in 2008. The current owner, Eagle Mill Redevelopment, took possession in 2012. Eagle Mill Redevelopment went through the long process of working with the Town of Lee to devise a program of development that would work with its adaptive reuse goals and securing 40R designation. The project has also received around \$10m of tax credits from the Massachusetts Secretary of State. The first phase of the redevelopment is the renovation of two historic mill buildings, which date back to 1805. This phase began last year with the demolition of seven existing homes on West Center St. for parking space. Site remediation and exterior demolition is nearly complete. After four to six more weeks of interior demolition, framing will begin. The two buildings were originally meant to be completed by the end of 2025 but will likely take a few months longer to complete. The two mill buildings will contain 56 apartments, 70% of which will be affordable, 25% of which will be workforce housing, and 5% of which will be Section 8 housing. Eagle Mill Redevelopment will apply for tax credits for the second phase of development in December. This phase consists of the construction of a new building on the eastern portion of the site that will contain 43 apartments. These will also be divided into 70% affordable, 25% workforce housing, and 5% Section 8 housing units. This phase may or may not include renovation of the historic machine shop. The machine shop was originally meant to be a mixed-use structure containing retail and office space but was changed to additional housing after the pandemic. The third phase of the project will be the construction of 23 market-rate condominium units. There are also preliminary plans to construct an additional 57 housing units across the street from the main site. All phases are anticipated to be complete in five or six years. The expected cost of the project has risen significantly due to materials and labor cost increases during the pandemic. Higher-than-expected remediation and site costs have also increased the total cost.

Laura Brennan asked if the changes to the mixed-use element of the project affected the state tax credits in any way. Jeffrey Cohen said that they did not. However, the project suffered some damage to its credibility due to these changes and he regrets that they are no longer possible. There may be some retail space in the structure across the street from the main site.

Chris Rembold asked what sorts of people are expressing interest in the residences. For instance, local businessowners, local employees, etc. Jeffrey Cohen said that Eagle Mill is working with Hearthway to do a lease-up.

Roger Bolton asked if there will be any space reserved for exhibiting and celebrating the history of paper manufacturing in Lee and Berkshire County and its importance for early industrial development. Jeffrey Cohen said that there will be some such exhibit, but the extent is not currently known. Most of the mill machinery was scrapped by a previous owner.

6. Adjournment

Kevin Pink made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Roger Bolton seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Next Meeting –January 15, 2025

Documents & Exhibits Used:

Minutes from May 8, 2024

CEDS 2025 Annual Report Timeline