

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

February 2017

Vol. 23 - No. 2

Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Project Advisory Committee

On February 1, 2017 the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Project Advisory Committee (PAC) held their initial meeting. The project involves constructing a new bridge across the Connecticut River between downtown Brattleboro, VT and Hinsdale, NH. At its first meeting, the PAC approved the project Public Involvement Plan and designated Town Manager Peter Elwell (Brattleboro) and Town Administrator Jill Collins (Hinsdale) as PAC co-chairs. For more information, please visit <https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/hinsdalebrattleboro12210/> or contact J.B. Mack of Commission staff.

Peterborough Economic Vitality Forum

On February 2, 2017, Commission staff participated in the Town of Peterborough's Community Economic Vitality Forum that gathered input from businesses and citizens to guide economic development planning for the Town and provide assistance in updating the Economic Vitality Chapter of the master plan. Forum attendees learned about recent trends in economic development and initiatives undertaken by Peterborough's Economic Development Authority to strengthen the Town's economic vitality. Attendees also heard about themes identified during recent interviews conducted with local business community members. These themes include improving workforce housing options, having an all-inclusive community, supporting downtown vitality, thinking regionally, assisting local entrepreneurs, and attracting a quality workforce. Participants brainstormed actions to address opportunities and challenges related to the themes and helped prioritize the actions. For additional information, please contact Raul Gonzalez of Commission staff.

Spofford Lake Watershed Management Initiative

The Planning Commission was recently awarded a grant by the NH Department of Environmental Services to develop a watershed-based management plan for Spofford Lake. Staff will work closely with the Spofford Lake Association to develop priorities to include in an action plan that will reduce stormwater runoff and other pollutant sources in order to maintain the water quality of the lake. A septic survey and outreach campaign will be conducted to provide educational material to property owners, town officials, and lake users. The project is scheduled to begin this spring. For additional information, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

Rural Business Development Grant

On February 15th, Commission staff submitted a Rural Business Development grant application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture to support economic development activities for Southwest New Hampshire. If successful, grant funds would be used to build the skills and capacity of economic development practitioners, implement economic development programs and projects, and spur job retention and creation. For more information, please contact Raul Gonzalez of Commission staff.

MAST Launches New Website

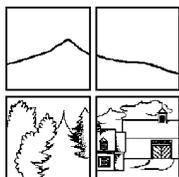
In an effort to improve outreach and communication, the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST) has launched an updated version of their website. The website, which can be accessed at www.mastnh.org, includes information about MAST's recent activities, current news and events related to transportation in the Monadnock Region, how to get involved, and more. In addition, the website continues to offer resources for citizens, educators, employers, and municipalities on strategies for increasing the use and availability of transportation alternatives. To learn more, please visit www.mastnh.org or contact Mari Brunner of Commission staff.

LCHIP 2017 Grant Round Announced

The NH Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) has announced its 2017 grant application round. LCHIP provides matching funds as a resource to communities and others in helping to preserve the State's highest quality natural, cultural and community assets. Over the years, several worthy conservation and preservation initiatives in Southwest NH have benefited from the program. During the 2016 cycle, the following projects received financial awards from LCHIP: Chase's Mill in Alstead (\$100,000), Cheshire County Courthouse in Keene (\$118,000), and Jaffrey Meetinghouse (\$54,600). Important dates for the 2017 grant application round are as follows:

- May 1st – Grant round opens
- May 4th – Grant workshops (mandatory for those intending to apply)
- May 19th – Intent to apply forms due
- June 23rd – Applications due by noon

Although there is time prior to the official opening of the 2017 grant round, it is not too early to begin getting organized in order to prepare a competitive application. For general information, contact the LCHIP office at (603) 224-4113; for details regarding the 2017 grant application round visit <http://www.lchip.org/index.php/for-applicants/2016-grant-schedule>.



The Local Crowd Monadnock Launch Party

The Local Crowd (TLC) Monadnock Launch Party, hosted by Stonewall Farm in Keene will take place on Saturday, March 18, 2017 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. TLC Monadnock is a locally based crowdfunding platform that empowers individuals to support the businesses, organizations and initiatives that grow wealthier and healthier communities in the region. Crowdfunding, or the practice of raising funds to support a project from a large number of people, offers another alternative to help in boosting economic activity. This project is part of a two-year effort funded by a USDA Small Business Innovation Research grant to gauge this platform's effectiveness in rural areas. SWRPC joins other partners in servicing as the TLC Monadnock Leadership team. To learn more, please visit <http://monadnocklocal.org/tlclauch> or contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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