

# SWRPC

## Commission Highlights

April 2015

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### **Annual Meeting set for June 16, 2015**

The Southwest Region Planning Commission's Annual Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2015 at Keene State College, Mountainview Room, Young Student Center in Keene, NH. Our featured presenter will be Dennis Delay, an economist at the NH Center for Public Policy Studies. The program includes a social beginning at 5:00 p.m. to be followed by dinner, a business meeting, and our guest speaker. Look for invitations in the mail. For additional information or to register, please contact Becky Baldwin of Commission staff.

### **New Projects Accepted in Brownfields Assessment Program**

During its meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Brownfields Advisory Committee (BrAC) accepted two new nominations for brownfields candidate sites as follows:

- Central Plating is located in Walpole Village, nominated by a local business owner and supported by the Town of Walpole's Board of Selectmen. The property was most recently occupied by an electroplating business and a new office building is currently envisioned for the site. A Phase II environmental site assessment has been authorized by BrAC for the site.
- 42-46 Grove Street is located in downtown Peterborough and was nominated by the Town. These two parcels on the Contocook River near Depot Square are on former railroad land and are envisioned as much needed additional parking for the downtown area. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment has been authorized by the BrAC, with a contingency that the Town of Peterborough voters approve related warrant articles at Town Meeting scheduled for May 2015. The warrant articles are to reconfigure the town's tax increment financing district and use funds to pay off a bond to purchase and develop the site as a municipal parking lot and extend Peterborough's Common Pathway to connect to the lot.

For more information about the brownfields program, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

### **Safe Routes to School Field Work in Keene and Marlborough**

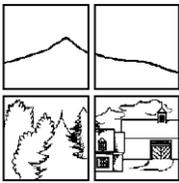
During April, Planning Commission staff began coordinating with elementary schools in Keene and Marlborough in collaboration with Healthy Monadnock 2020 in an effort known as the Partnership to Improve Community Health (PICH). This work involves developing Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Action Plans. A component of SRTS, a national effort to create safe and convenient opportunities for children to bicycle and walk to and from schools, is evaluating the safety concerns of parents, school staff and students. A first step in our work with Marlborough, Wheelock and Fuller elementary schools is surveying students on their current modes of travel, and parents on their level of interest in the factors that impact their decision to allow children to walk or bike to school. Staff are also conducting field reviews of each school during the arrival and departure times, and collecting data on traffic volumes, speeds, and accidents on the roads near the schools. This data will be used to help inform discussions with the schools about strategies to improve safety conditions along the routes leading to and from school. The PICH initiative intends to expand its reach to include additional schools in Cheshire County in future years. For more information, please contact Tara Germond of Commission staff.

### **CDBG Application Submitted**

During the month of April, Planning Commission staff assisted the Town of Winchester in preparing and submitting a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application. The proposed project is a study of the water infrastructure needs of the Jones Road neighborhood in the Town of Winchester. The Town would use the funds to secure a firm to conduct the study and determine the feasibility of a future implementation grant. SWRPC will act as grant administrator on the Town's behalf should funding be awarded. For more information, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.

## Roads Scholar Workshop on Pavement Preservation

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Commission staff attended a pavement preservation workshop conducted by the University of New Hampshire Technology Transfer Center (UNH T2). Pavement preservation refers to any program employing a long-term strategy to extend pavement life, primarily through non-structural treatments. The course, led by former NH Department of Transportation Maintenance Engineer Steve Gray, summarized the evolution of pavement preservation and highlighted techniques that have been used throughout New Hampshire. A panel discussion, composed of municipal staff with pavement maintenance responsibilities, discussed how preservation candidate sites were selected, funded, and completed. Industry experts described the value of a “network approach” to minimize treatment costs and maximize the useable life of a given surface. For more information, please contact Henry Underwood of Commission staff; to learn more about educational opportunities offered by UNH T2 Local Technical Assistance Program, please visit [www.t2.unh.edu](http://www.t2.unh.edu).



## Vermont Yankee Coordination Meeting

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Commission hosted a meeting of state and local officials to discuss issues related to the closing of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power facility located in Vernon, VT. The purpose of the meeting was to update attendees on information and developments since the group last gathered in 2014. Representatives from the City of Keene and the Towns of Hinsdale, Winchester, Chesterfield, and Swanzey attended the meeting. Other attendees included staff from the NH Division of Economic Development and NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Items discussed included SWRPC’s recently launched informal webpage on the Vermont Yankee closure impacts [www.swrpc.org/vermontyankee](http://www.swrpc.org/vermontyankee), job growth projections recently released by the NH Department of Employment Security, and a summary of the UMass Donahue Institute Report on the Economic Impacts of the Vermont Yankee closure. For more information, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.

**Southwest Region Planning Commission**

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