

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

June 2017

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2017 Annual Commission Meeting

The Planning Commission held its 2017 Annual Meeting on June 20, 2017 at the Courtyard Marriott in Keene. The event featured the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and what it has meant to Southwest NH over the past 30+ years. A panel of local stakeholders reported on the success of the program through their direct experiences followed by a keynote address provided by Taylor Caswell, executive director of the NH Community Development Finance Authority which oversees the State's CDBG program. The event also included the approval of the Commission's work program budget as well as the election of directors and officers for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017. For more information, please contact Becky Baldwin of SWRPC staff.

EPA Brownfield Assessment Award

During June, SWRPC was notified that it has been awarded a \$200,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct brownfields assessment activities at the former Kingsbury Corporation site located in Keene, NH. The grant is scheduled to become effective starting in October 2017, and will support staff activities including program oversight and community involvement as well as cover costs to hire environmental consultants to conduct site assessment activities to understand the degree to which contamination may be present on the property. The grant may also cover remediation or cleanup planning if necessary. Kingsbury Corporation was once one of Keene's largest manufacturers employing over 1,000 people at its peak. After closing its doors in 2011, the former Kingsbury Corporation site and the surrounding neighborhood has benefitted from a great deal of public involvement planning by the City of Keene resulting in proposals for new zoning that will accommodate commercial development, housing, green space, and transportation improvements. SWRPC applied for the grant in order to assist the City of Keene in getting closer to its aspirations to catalyze revitalization efforts in this Southeast Keene neighborhood. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff.

Walpole Complete Streets Demonstration

On June 22nd - 26th, the Town of Walpole worked with SWRPC to conduct a temporary Complete Streets demonstration project on Main Street and Westminster Street in Walpole Village. Temporary changes included adding shared bicycle lane markings, a bicycle lane, a painted walkway, and pavement markings near the fountain at the Main Street intersection with Westminster Street. The goal of the demonstration was to give drivers, walkers, bicyclists, and other users of the roadway a chance to experience the changes first-hand and provide feedback, as well as to build awareness of and support for safer streets that accommodate all users of all ages, abilities, and mode of travel. For more information, please contact Mari Brunner of SWRPC staff.

Climate and Health Adaptation Plan

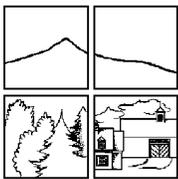
While assisting the Greater Monadnock Public Health Network (GMPHN) to better understand our region's exposure to weather-related health hazards, the subject of extreme precipitation events and flooding was identified as an important priority. For example, it is expected that southern New Hampshire will experience a two-fold increase in the number of events that accumulate 4 inches of rain in 48 hours by 2040-2069. Steps taken today can better prepare us for these anticipated changes, as well as the health hazards already apparent to us today. On June 12th and June 19th, SWRPC assisted GMPHN staff at two emergency preparedness training opportunities entitled: *Stay, Leave, Connect: A Personal Preparedness Plan For All Emergencies*. Sessions were hosted at Bentley Commons and the Keene Senior Center and featured instruction by Chris Goshea, GMPHN Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. The Public Health Network will consider these pilot training sessions and other strategies, consistent with the Community Health Improvement Plan, to help protect our health. For more information, please contact Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates

SWRPC will soon begin working with the Town of Langdon to update their hazard mitigation plan. Plan updates are required every five years to remain eligible for mitigation grants that fund projects intended to improve safety and reduce the risk of injury and loss of property in the event of a hazardous event. Throughout the update process, SWRPC staff conducts a series of meetings involving local officials. Meetings are posted on SWRPC's website at www.swrpc.org under *Upcoming Events* and are open to the public. SWRPC is nearly finished with updates for the towns of Alstead and Fitzwilliam and has recently completed updates for the towns of Gilsum, Hancock, Harrisville, Roxbury, and Winchester. For additional information, please contact Lisa Murphy of SWRPC staff.

Walpole-Charlestown Public Informational Meeting

On June 28th, SWRPC staff attended a public informational meeting on an upcoming highway reconstruction project on NH Route 12 in both Walpole and Charlestown. The federally-funded project will address deteriorated pavement, erosion issues, and a crash history associated with lack of shoulders and a clear zone between the road and the adjacent railroad and Connecticut River corridors. This project is included in the NH 10-Year Transportation Improvement Plan. For additional information, please visit www.nh.gov/dot/projects/walpole14747 or contact Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff.



Arts & Economic Prosperity

During June, a report was issued which quantifies the economic impacts of the arts and culture in the Monadnock Region. The ArtsAlive! initiative participated in the Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 national economic impact study conducted by Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and art education. According to the study, the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$18.5 million in annual economic activity in the Monadnock Region, supporting 659 full-time equivalent jobs and generating \$1.9 million in local and state government revenues. For more information about this report, please visit <http://www.monadnockartsalive.org/aep5>

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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