

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

May 2014

Vol. 20 - No. 5

Annual Meeting set for June 17, 2014

The Planning Commission's Annual Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 17, 2014 at Keene State College, Mountainview Room, Young Student Center in Keene, NH. Our featured speakers will be Dr. Anne E. Huot, President of Keene State College and Dr. Alicia B. Harvey-Smith, President of River Valley Community College. The program includes a social beginning at 4:30 p.m. with dinner served at 5:30 p.m. For additional information or to register, please contact Becky Baldwin of Commission staff.

Brownfields Assessment Grant Funds Awarded to SWRPC

SWRPC has been selected for an award of \$400,000 in brownfields assessment funds by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. SWRPC has successfully administered a brownfields assessment program since 2003, helping make possible a number of key projects around the Region such as the Park Theatre in Jaffrey, the "Railroad Land" re-development and Cheshire County Courthouse Annex in Keene, and the Peterborough Community Center. It has helped communities create green space and recreational space such as the former Avilite property in Marlborough, and the former Wilder Thermometer Factory property and Monadnock Country Club in Peterborough. In addition, it has helped with the clean-up of several former and existing commercial properties around the Region in Chesterfield, Keene, Jaffrey, Richmond, Surry, Stoddard, Troy, and Winchester. Brownfields assessment funds provide opportunities for cleaning up the environment, addressing blighted property, revitalizing downtowns and village centers, creating jobs, and new community centers or spaces. For more information about this program or to nominate a brownfield property, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

NH Broadband Conference

SWRPC staff attended the NH Broadband Conference on May 16th at the Grappone Center in Concord. The event was well attended by representatives from the local government, business, education, health, and public safety sectors. It featured a wide array of workshops on initiatives to improve broadband access and utilization in New Hampshire. The keynote speaker for the event was Senator Kelly Ayott, who spoke about her efforts to ensure the equitable distribution of federal funding to rural areas, including NH, for broadband expansion efforts. During the Conference, SWRPC staff led a session describing the state's regional broadband planning initiative. For more information, please visit www.iwantbroadbandnh.com/program or contact Tara Germond of Commission staff.

Local Solutions: Northeast Climate Change Preparedness Conference

SWRPC staff attended the Northeast Climate Change Preparedness Conference on May 19th and 20th sponsored by Antioch University New England and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Speakers included Governor Maggie Hassan, EPA Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe, Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin, environmental author Bill McKibben, and others. Sessions focused on planning and process, natural environment best practices, built environment best practices, and community engagement and communication. Conference content will help inform a range of SWRPC activities such as the Monadnock Region Future initiative. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

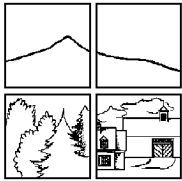
Monadnock Public Health Network Hazard Vulnerability Assessment

SWRPC staff participated in a Hazard Vulnerability Assessment workshop at Cheshire Medical Center on May 29th. The assessment was conducted to assess hazard impacts on the Region's health care, behavioral health, and the public health systems, and preparedness to adequately address them. Participants were given scenarios for various types of weather-related and man-made hazards that could require a range of emergency services. A follow-up meeting will be held in June to identify improvement strategies that could reduce the impacts from future hazards. For more information, please contact Rebeckah Bullock or Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

Community Development Block Grant Activities

- SWRPC staff attended a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Implementation Workshop on May 20th hosted by the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA). The workshop covered topics including use of the online grants management system, municipal adoptions/approvals, environmental reviews, subrecipient agreements and monitoring, procurement, financial management, construction management, municipal responsibilities, housing rehabilitation, acquisition and relocation, and job counting.
- For towns thinking about applying for the July 2014 round of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, now is a good time to start the application process. Housing and Public Facilities CDBG funding is available to municipally-sponsored projects in January and July of each year. Eligible projects can receive grants of up to \$500,000 for infrastructure or housing projects with a direct benefit to low and moderate income individuals and families. CDBG funding is also available for municipally-sponsored economic development projects year-round on a first come, first served basis starting in January. Up to \$500,000 is available for economic development projects that help create job opportunities for low to moderate income individuals and families.

For more information, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.



Planning Commission Welcomes Student Interns

During May, SWRPC welcomed two interns that will assist staff with transportation-related field work, data collection, and other ongoing projects throughout the summer. Dylun Clark and Samantha Gaudette are currently enrolled at Keene State College. They are both pursuing undergraduate degrees in Geography which includes coursework featuring a variety of human and environmental topics as well as map-making, research methods, and other studies. Dylun expects to graduate this coming winter and Samantha expects to graduate next spring. They are each eager to apply their knowledge and skills towards local and regional planning in Southwest New Hampshire. Please welcome Dylun and Samantha.

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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