

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

September 2012

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Broadband Public Forum

A Broadband Public Forum sponsored by the Southwest Region Broadband Stakeholder Group was held September 27th at the Dublin Public Library. SWRPC staff as well as Carole Monroe, from NH Fast Roads, gave presentations on the planning efforts in the Region and on what is currently happening to bring broadband to local communities. Approximately 40 people attended the forum, which was designed to educate the community and better understand the broadband needs of the Monadnock Region. For more information, please contact Tara Germond or Steve Waleryszak of Commission staff or visit www.iwantbroadbandnh.org.

Air Quality Education and Outreach Campaign

During September, the Planning Commission began work in partnership with the NH Department of Environmental Services, the Greater Monadnock Public Health Network, Cheshire Medical Center, the City of Keene, and Keene State College on educating the public on the effects of wood burning relative to air quality. Low-lying valley areas such as Keene are susceptible to temperature inversions which causes air particulates from wood smoke to be trapped in the valley resulting in poor air quality and negative impacts to human health. The goal of the campaign is to enhance awareness and promote burning the right fuel, using the right stove, and burning the right way. For more information contact Jamison Cook of Commission staff.

Travel Planning in Peterborough

September marked the beginning of the Planning Commission's assistance to the Peterborough Safe Routes to School Task Force in developing Safe Routes to School Travel Plans for the Peterborough Elementary School and the South Meadow Middle School. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national program that enables community leaders, schools and parents to improve safety and encourage more children to safely walk and bicycle to school. The Travel Plans will identify measures to improve the walking, biking and safety conditions of travel routes within a two-mile radius of each school. Part of SWRPC's work on this project involves:

- collecting data on and observing existing traffic patterns on roadways near each school;
- facilitating Task Force meetings;
- assessing the conditions of primary routes to/from neighborhoods and school;
- analyzing student and parent surveys about current methods of travel to school; and,
- conducting community meetings in the Fall of 2012 and Spring of next year to discuss potential safety improvements to the five way intersection of High, Vine, Elm, Union, and Main Streets.

For more information about this project and the SRTS Program, contact Tara Germond of Commission Staff.

Community Planning Grants Awarded

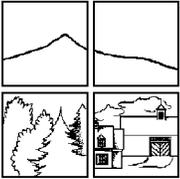
Five communities in the Southwest Region were recently awarded planning grants. The Community Planning Grant Program was created by New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority in collaboration with several public agencies and state wide institutions to help communities improve their land use regulations and create more resilient local economies. Funding is provided through a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The communities receiving these awards include: Greenfield, Keene, Peterborough, Rindge, and Temple. SWRPC staff is providing technical assistance to the Towns of Greenfield and Temple to complete a review of their land use regulations under this program. For additional information, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

Staff Attends Davis-Bacon Wage Rates Workshop

On September 11th, SWRPC staff attended the *Interviewing Workers Covered by Davis-Bacon Wage Rates* workshop, which was hosted by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) at their offices located in Bedford, NH. The presenter was Bill Pickett, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Regional Labor Relations Officer from the Boston HUD office. The training covered the following topics: types of Davis-Bacon Wage Rate interviews, rules of interviewing, confidentiality, and preparing interview statements. For more information about the workshop, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.

SWRPC Web Site: Regional Data & GIS

During August and September, Planning Commission staff began updating the region's demographic, economic and housing data. This information, including historical and current unemployment figures by region, state, county, and town have been added to the Regional Data & GIS section of our web site. Over the next couple of months, additional items will be updated. For more information, please contact Steve Waleryszak of Commission staff.



Planning Workshop Scheduled

On October 27th, the NH Local Government Center is hosting the second annual fall workshop titled *Fundamentals for Planning Boards and ZBA's*. This half-day workshop will cover the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment as well as the mechanics of good decision making. This is a great opportunity for new board members or as a refresher on the basics. The workshop will be held at the Local Government Center, 25 Triangle Park in Concord from 9:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. The cost for this event is \$45 and space is limited. Please visit www.nhlgc.org for more information or call 800-852-3358 ext. 3350. On-line registration is available at www.nhlgc.org/pbzba.

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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