

Town Planner Update

August 8, 2022

The Planning Board has entered into a DLTA contract with BRPC, in an effort to update the Housing Chapter of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The Board will be receiving some data and a Housing Needs Assessment from BRPC. At this point, the Planning Board will begin to formulate a Housing Action Plan. Both of these documents will shape the Housing Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Board of Appeals has requested stricter guidelines on my part when receiving application information. A few incomplete applications were submitted over the past months. Moving forward, the Board of Appeals application requirements will be more thorough.

The Dalton Redevelopment Authority has been on a hiatus following Town Meeting. The DRA plans to have a fall kick-off meeting at the Stationery Factory. Steve Sears emailed the Authority asking if they would be interested in visiting the new home of LympeDivas. LympeDivas will be moving into the Stationery Factory on February 1, 2023. Following this, the Authority plans to resume their previous regular monthly meeting schedule.

The Green Dalton Committee is working closely with Pat Pettit to obtain all of the necessary engineering work to become eligible for a Fall 2023 Green Communities Grant. Work is planned to be focused on the library at Town Hall. An engineering study will determine the route which the committee takes. This will be either installing a "hot roof", or installing split-heat pumps, based on the feasibility of the engineering study. Additionally, the Green Communities division at DOER has announced a Climate Leaders 2.0 program. This program calls for some increased participation and planning. The program seems great to become a part of after doing a bit of organizing.

The Conservation Commission has held regular meetings and continues to be responsive and informative to residents seeking information or seeking to file notices of intent or follow up on items which were never closed out. The commission has been contacted recently by Eversource to provide locations for an off-site mitigation project, relating to the clearing of 50 feet of tree line nearby an existing transmission line Right-of-Way.

As a part of the coordination of a MassTrails application, The Open Space and Recreation Committee has begun organizing Clean-Up days at The Pines. The Open Space and Rec Committee has been approached by BNRC for off-site mitigation requests. In this case, the request stems from work BNRC completed at the Old Mill Trail Parking Lot. Special thanks to chairwoman Taylor Staubach for being in communication with BNRC, leading to the organization considering locations in Dalton for off-site mitigation. The Housatonic Heritage Walks series will make its way through Dalton on 9/4 (The Pines) and 9/10 (Wahconah Falls Park). The hikes are in the morning, so you won't miss any football and it will be an active and educational experience for yourself and the family.

Additionally, a team of two BRPC interns have been completing the majority of the stormwater mapping, required as part of the Town's MS4 requirement. I have been of assistance on Fridays and can report the operation is smooth. I will be confident in the accuracy of BRPC's output data. Bud Hall has received data relating to StreetScan, which will be reviewed with a team from StreetScan in a week. CAI Technologies has begun work on our public "AxisGIS" system. The system should be up and running by mid-August.

Dalton has been included, as a partner in a regional culvert assessment application lead by the partnership “Berkshire Clean, Cold, Connected”, a team of employees from BRPC and the Housatonic valley Association. The partnership has entered into a three-year Cooperative Agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) to support healthy aquatic systems and address climate change in Berkshire County. I believe the partnership aims to serve as a connective tool to identify needs and accomplish projects which span across multiple communities, or which have multiple stakeholders. This project aimed to represent communities Farmington, Housatonic, and Hoosac watersheds in the application.

Bud Hall and I were on a site visit at which locations for Green Infrastructure retrofits were evaluated. We were joined by ERG and a team from the University of New Hampshire. The UNH team will be delivering preliminary design, with initial funding being covered under the Housatonic Watershed project. The implementation is planned for 2023 and may be a good fit for the previously mentioned off-site mitigation projects.

We have submitted an application to the One-Stop for Growth, specifically the MassWorks infrastructure program. The application includes funding requests for drainage and re-paving of the road. Award notifications should come shortly.