

Southwest Region Planning Commission Report - 2009

I am pleased to provide this as a general report of activities of the Southwest Region Planning Commission over the past year. The Planning Commission includes a service area of 35 municipalities in Cheshire, Hillsborough and Sullivan Counties and is one of New Hampshire's nine regional planning agencies established by the State Legislature and the Region's towns. We continue to provide planning-related assistance to member communities and to represent the Southwest Region in state and federal programs. Our work program covers activities including local planning assistance, natural resources planning, regional information systems & mapping, transportation planning, community & economic development, and emergency management planning. We are funded through multiple sources including local membership dues. For each dollar in local dues, we've succeeded in leveraging eight additional dollars to assist in addressing planning needs of the Region and its municipalities. Highlights of Commission activities for the past year include:

- Assistance to the Planning Board in updating the Land Use chapter of the Walpole Master Plan;
- Conducted numerous traffic volume, directional and turning movement counts on Main Street, Rt. 12 and Rt. 123;
- Began work on a Rt. 12 Transit-Paratransit study that will continue well into 2010;
- Participated in the Rt. 12 Walpole-Charlestown contact sensitive solutions evaluation;
- Continued oversight in work toward completing a project to facilitate business expansion for the Andrus Associates, LLC located in Walpole through the use of a federal Community Development Block Grant;
- Guidance to Planning Board members regarding the Economic Development chapter of the Walpole Master Plan and information on performance guarantee bonds and site review building design guidelines;
- Participated in the Monadnock Community Conservation Partnership program in which Walpole is a beneficiary;
- Continued operation and administration of the Southwest Region Brownfields Assessment program including outreach efforts to identify and nominate potential sites located in Walpole;
- Assisted the Town in updating the Walpole Emergency Operations Plan;
- Participated in public hearings regarding the interests of the Region's transportation infrastructure in the State's 10-Year Transportation Plan;
- Continued maintenance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southwest New Hampshire including the preparation of the 2009 Annual Report;
- Focused on ways to implement the recommendations of the NH Climate Change Action Plan;
- Conducted forums on energy efficient development and the Brownfields program;
- Sponsored several workshops including the Right-to-Know law, new requirements relative to Workforce Housing, and use of the NH Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook;
- Secured funding to support an inventory of Broadband infrastructure in the Region and the State, and
- Worked with Walpole officials who serve on our Board of Directors, Transportation Advisory Committee and Natural Resources Advisory Committee.

Looking forward to 2010, we continue to be available to assist you and the towns of the Southwest Region in planning-related activities. Thank you for your continued support and participation with the work of the Planning Commission.

Sincerely,

Tim Murphy
Executive Director