



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee

Regional Council of Governments

Date:	May 28, 2015
Time:	4:30 p.m.
Location:	12 Olive Street, Greenfield, MA
Duration:	1 hour
Facilitator:	Gary Dillensneider, Chair

CEDS Committee Attendees:

- Gary Dillensneider, Chair, Franklin County Community Development Corporation
- Art Schwenger, Town of Heath
- John Ryan, Town of New Salem
- Martha Field, Greenfield Community College
- Robin Sherman, Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority
- Jeannie Schermesser, Town of Erving
- Andrea Buglione, Town of Athol
- Mike McCusker, Town of Buckland
- Walter Ramsey, Town of Montague
- Larry Jutres, Town of Greenfield
- Heather Hutchinson, Town of Leverett
- Jerry Wagener, Town of Northfield
- Pat Crosby, Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board

FRCOG Staff:

- Peggy Sloan, Planning Director
- Jessica Atwood, Economic Development Program Manager
- Gretchen Johnson, Planning Grant Administrator

Guests

- Ethel Dillensneider, Resident
- Sam Lovejoy, Resident TM

1 – Welcome and Introductions: Gary Dillensneider, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m. by Chair G. Dillensneider. A round of introductions followed.

2 – Vote to Approve the April 28, 2015 CEDS Minutes

A. Schwenger MOVED to approve the April 28, 2015 minutes. J. Wagener SECONDED. The motion PASSED.

3 – Review Draft 2015 Revisions and Vote on Final Draft of 2015 CEDS Plan: Jessica Atwood, FRCOG

J. Atwood gave a PowerPoint presentation on the revised Final Draft 2015 CEDS Plan. Copies of the Final Draft were passed around. The CEDS program is funded through the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) program. Completing the CEDS process maintains the region's eligibility for certain EDA funding opportunities. The process is overseen by the CEDS Committee. The CEDS region includes the 26 towns in Franklin County, plus Amherst, Athol and Phillipston.

The 2015 CEDS Plan is a five-year plan. New guidelines were released by the EDA in January 2015, which are reflected in the CEDS Plan. The CEDS Plan is due to the EDA on June 1, 2015, not June 30th as in previous years.

J. Atwood reviewed by chapter the changes made to the Final Draft CEDS Plan, since the last meeting.

Chapter One: An Economic Development Roadmap

J. Atwood read the updated mission statement and vision statement. Discussion ensued.

Chapter Two: The Region

- Pulled out the two cornerstone approaches into a separate text box
- New Transportation and Infrastructure subsection was added
- Noted that increases in labor force size, while there was not a population increase, indicates more working age people re-entering the workforce
- Added Living Wage Calculator data
- Added a table to summarize key industries and clusters
- Added more information about the Resilience Capacity Index

Chapter Three: SWOT Analysis

- Weakness – Need for more job opportunities and job opportunities that pay a competitive living wage.
- Opportunities - Availability of former Northfield Campus for redevelopment as an academic institution or similar campus site
- Added MLPs or municipal light plants to list of acronyms

Chapter Four: Strategies and Actions

- 1 Respond to market opportunities by ensuring access to basic and sector-specific skills training for adults and youth
 - Added a pull out box, including a note about MSMI
- 2 Build collaboration within the region to enhance capacity and better support economic and business development
 - No substantive changes were made
- 3 Build collaboration with neighboring regions to better leverage economic development opportunities
 - No substantive changes were made
- 4 Invest in infrastructure that supports business development in appropriate areas that are currently under utilized
 - Added industrial park inventory update

- Invest to maintain the existing transportation network and to expand alternative transportation options and related support facilities
- 5 Increase the amount of functional space available to foster the growth of small business
 - Moved Greenfield Parking Garage project to another section
- 6 Accelerate business development and sustainability through direct support
 - Expanded actions of 6.C.
- 7 Support the ability of individual establishments and the economy to be resilient in case of future economic disruptions
 - Added Community Organizations Active in Disasters to list of partners
- 8 Enhance specific industry clusters through increased market understanding and asset development
 - No substantive changes were made

Chapter Five: Evaluation Framework

J. Atwood stated that there were no substantive changes made to this chapter.

J. Schermesser asked if including the goal of east-west passenger rail service should be included or if it were a longer term project. J. Atwood replied that that project is included in the Long Range Transportation Plan and is projected to be further than the five year time frame of this Plan. R. Sherman recommended including single parent family living wage as well as individual and family living wages. M. McCusker stated that the Olympic bid for Boston has a great potential economic opportunity for Western Massachusetts. It is possible that the bicycling and paddling events among others would be held in this area. The status of this Olympic bid should be monitored and possibly included as an opportunity in the SWOT analysis in next year's CEDS update.

J. Atwood stated that she will prepare an Executive Summary of the Plan in June.

A. Schwenger MOVED to approve the 2015 CEDS Plan as presented. M. McCusker SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED. A round of applause was given.

4 –Other Business and Adjourn


J. Atwood stated that the next CEDS Committee meeting will be held in September. Annual elections will be held at the meeting. J. Atwood asked that any suggestions for vacant seats be sent to her by email, jatwood@frcog.org.

J. Atwood stated that FRCOG has received the invitation to apply from the EDA for funding to continue the CEDS Program.

Copies of the handouts are available. Please contact Gretchen Johnson at gjohnson@frcog.org or 413-774-3167 x126.

R. Sherman MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 p.m. P. Crosby SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED.

Respectfully submitted by:


Gary Dillensneider, Clerk