



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Franklin Regional Planning Board— *MINUTES*

Date & Time:	Thursday, September 22, 2022 / 6:00 – 7:20 p.m.
Location:	Virtual Meeting via Zoom – JW Olver Transit Center
Facilitator:	Jerry Lund, Chair - FRPB; Peggy Sloan, Planning Director - FRCOG

FRPB MEMBERS

- Jerry Lund**, Chair, Leyden, At-Large, FRPB Executive Committee
- Sam Birch**, Wendell At-Large
- Julia Blyth**, Clerk, Northfield At-Large, FRPB Executive Committee
- Brant Cheikes**, Whately Planning Board
- Marybeth Chichester**, Colrain Planning Board, FRPB Executive Committee
- Hannah Davis**, Whately Select Board
- David Dean**, Sunderland Select Board
- Barry Del Castilho**, Buckland Select Board
- Jennifer Gross**, 1ST Vice Chair, Wendell Select Board, FRPB Executive Committee
- Emily Johnson**, Deerfield At-Large, FRPB Executive Committee, FRCOG Executive Committee
- Ken Miller**, Ashfield Select Board
- Richard Nathhorst**, Leverett Planning Board
- Charles Olchowski**, Greenfield At-Large, FRPB Executive Committee
- Michael Shaffer**, Erving At-Large, FRPB Executive Committee
- Jane Shaney**, Ashfield Planning Board
- Don Sluter**, At-Large Whately, FRPB Executive Committee
- Joseph Strzegowski**, Conway Planning Board
- Alec Wade**, Orange Select Board
- Chuck Washer**, Shelburne Select Board, FRPB Rep. to the REPC
- Analee Wulfkuhle**, Deerfield Planning Board
- Tricia Yacovone-Biagi**, Shelburne Planning Board

FRCOG STAFF

Peggy Sloan, Planning & Development Director; **Jessica Atwood**, Economic Development Program Manager; **Kimberly Noake MacPhee**, Land Use & Natural Resources Program Manager, Climate Resiliency Specialist; **Liz Jacobson-Carroll**, Administrative Services Assistant.

1. Introductions and Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes	J. Lund, Chair – FRPB & FRPB Members
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J. Gross convened the meeting at 6:02 p.m., and J. Lund led it thereafter, beginning with a round of introductions and voting on the previous meeting minutes. **R. Nathhorst moved to adopt the 6/23/22 minutes, E. Johnson seconded the motion, and the motion passed with four abstentions (Davis, Dean, Shaney, Yacovone-Biagi).**

2. Presentation and Discussion on the FRCOG Regional Brownfields Program	J. Atwood, Economic Development Program Manager -- FRCOG
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Atwood provided a summary of the 20-year history of FRCOG’s Regional Brownfields Program, which has utilized \$3 million in competitive grant funds to assess or clean-up hazardous materials at over 70 sites in 22 Franklin County towns. Many Brownfield sites have been redeveloped for new uses including the Transit Center and the parking garage. Multiple rounds of both the EPA Brownfields Assessment Award and the Clean-Up Revolving Loan & Subgrant Fund have been overseen by the Brownfields Steering Committee, whose members represent local municipalities, banks, economic development and social service organizations, and state and federal environmental agencies. Atwood attributed the success of the program, in part, to the strength of these relationships, developed over many years. With the aid of local examples and photos, she then described phases involved in this type of environmental assessment: historical research, site reconnaissance, preparation, subsurface investigation, hazardous building materials investigation, and the development of remediation plans.

Currently, all EPA funds have been obligated and the latest Brownfields assessment contract is closed out. FRCOG staff will be submitting an application for another EPA brownfields community-wide assessment grant in November, but Atwood noted but it is an extremely competitive program. She encouraged members to contact her to discuss any properties in their towns where potential contamination may be hindering development/re-development as these will be considered for future projects.

3. Presentation and Discussion of the Clesson Brook Watershed Climate Resiliency Plan	Kimberly MacPhee – Land Use & Natural Resources Program Mgr. & Climate Resiliency Specialist -- FRCOG
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MacPhee provided attendees with data and examples of the climate change context, regionally and locally, in which FRCOG staff in coordination with the Town of Buckland, have begun the Clesson Brook Climate Resiliency Plan project. The towns of Hawley and Ashfield are partners in the project as both towns have land in the watershed of Clesson Brook. The project is funded by a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program *action* grant awarded to Buckland and a MassDEP 604b Water Quality Management Planning grant awarded to FRCOG. The project addresses recommendations in the Buckland MVP Plan that was developed with funding from a MVP *planning* grant in 2018. Staff will research the impacts of continued climate change, gather community input from residents, engage high school students, and create an on-line “story map.” The project goals include conducting a fluvial geomorphic assessment, preparing a hydrologic and hydraulic model, developing a database of road-stream crossings, prioritizing parcels for conservation, identifying nature-based restoration opportunities and completing a watershed-based plan.

Currently, a consultant from Field Geology Services is walking the length of the brook to identify fluvial erosion hazards. Next steps include additional landowner site visits and the incorporation of the assessment into a hydrologic and hydraulic model and final watershed plan. A community open house will present the findings. MacPhee noted that this comprehensive and well-received project may serve

as a model for work in other Franklin County communities, almost all of which have received MVP *planning* grants and are thus eligible for complementary *action* grants. Discussion topics included the difficulty of securing FEMA funds for towns with limited population and infrastructure, the dovetailing and prioritization of culvert replacement and watershed resiliency work, and the iterative process that led the Clesson Brook watershed to be targeted. MacPhee encouraged members to contact her whenever a watershed issue in their town comes to their attention.

4. Brief Update on FERC Relicensing Process	P. Sloan , Planning Director -- FRCOG
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Sloan indicated that confidential negotiations regarding erosion mitigation related to the FERC relicensing of facilities at Northfield Mountain and Turners Falls have begun. FirstLight is aiming to finish these by the end of October, and all negotiations pertaining to the relicensing by the end of December.

5. Other Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting/Adjourn/Public Comment	J. Lund, Chair - FRPB
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Sloan indicated that Citizen Planner Training Collaborative classes for the fall will be announced soon and that members are invited to take any of the virtual classes, regardless of regional sponsorship. Jacobson-Carroll will distribute the flyer once it is available.

C. Olchowski moved to adjourn the meeting. J. Strzegowski seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Documents Distributed / Presentations Viewed:

- Agenda
- FRPB Minutes, June 23, 2022 – DRAFT
- FRCOG Regional Brownfields Program, Sept 22, 2022, Jessica Atwood
- Building Climate Resiliency in the Clesson Brook Watershed, Sept 22, 2022, Kimberly Noake MacPhee

The next meeting will be held on November 3, 2022. Copies of all documents are available. Please contact Liz Jacobson-Carroll at ljc@frcog.org or 413-774-3167 x101.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Blyth, Clerk - FRPB