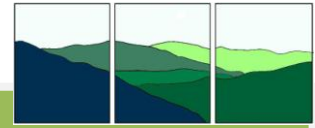


December 2011

## NWCT Regional Planning Collaborative Newsletter

Plan Locally. Act Regionally.



Take a quick break from your holiday prep to read some good news for the New Year! We look forward to continuing our working with all of you in 2012.

All the best to you & yours,

Jocelyn Ayer, Senior Planner

Chris Wood, Planning Director

**NWCT Regional Planning Collaborative**

*"The Collaborative's track record of consensus-building and regional cooperation gave our committee great confidence in funding this challenging but desperately needed program."*

-Kimberley Parsons-Whitaker Associate Director, CT Main Street Center

### Collaboration takes the stage at our annual meeting

TriArts Sharon Playhouse was the perfect setting for the Collaborative's annual meeting on the evening of December 5th.

Representative Roberta Willis (who we are happy to report now represents all our member towns) shared information about the new Main Street Investment Fund bringing \$5 million a year to small towns like ours. These funds can be used to help make improvements to town commercial centers to attract small businesses, promote commercial viability and improve aesthetics and pedestrian access. We look forward to working with Roberta to bring these needed resources to our towns.

Representatives from our member towns shared what they have learned over the last year working on issues including Low Impact Development regulations in Goshen, village center signage and incentive housing zones in Sharon, wind energy regulations in Canaan, and Town Plan updates in Falls Village, Kent, Norfolk, and Salisbury. We also got an update on the regional [HouBike](#) project and other regional initiatives through the NWCT COG and LHCEO.

Chris and Jocelyn presented the new housing and economic development resources we have brought to our towns over the last year and what's to come. To see Chris's slide presentation with a summary, [click here](#).

## Homeownership counseling now available in Sharon



Litchfield County residents can now take advantage of new housing resources including free first time home buyer courses, down payment & closing cost assistance, and homeownership counseling. Please refer anyone interested in becoming a first time homebuyer or needing homeowner counseling to these new services.

These services are provided by Housing Development Fund which has established a satellite office space in Sharon, CT at the Foundation for Community Health offices with the assistance of HousingUs, an initiative of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. For a copy of a flyer on these services with contact information, [click here](#).

## Collaborative awarded new \$13K grant to support local economic development groups

In November, the Collaborative applied for a \$10,000 Preservation of Place grant and was thrilled to be awarded even more than we had asked for, a grant of \$13,237!

This funding will be used to support each of our towns' economic development committees to take the critical next steps needed to keep our village center businesses vital.



This funding will allow us to meet with existing economic development entities groups in our member towns to identify organizational and resource needs (technical assistance, funding, and partnerships), near and long term goals, and local business development priorities. In member towns which do not currently have a local economic development group, we will assist in getting one started. We can then help to coordinate the efforts of these local organizations for the economic benefit of the whole region.

This grant is from Connecticut Main Street Center and the 'Preservation of Place' program in cooperation with the State Historic Preservation Office with funds from Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut.

## **OUR SUPPORTERS**

Our work would not be possible without the critical financial support from the following:

**Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation**

**CL&P- Yankee Gas Services**

**Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut**

**Connecticut Main Street Center**

**CT Office of Policy & Management**

**National Iron Bank**

**Salisbury Bank & Trust**

**Union Savings Bank**

**Our member towns**

**Thank you!**

*We hope to have more good NEWS to share with you in the New Year. (STEAP grant announcements coming soon!)*

Happy holidays,

*Jocelyn Ayer*

NWCT Regional Planning Collaborative