

**NORTH COUNTRY
COUNCIL
PLANNING
REGION
COMMUNITIES**

- Albany
- Bath
- Benton
- Bartlett
- Berlin
- Bethlehem
- Campton
- Carroll
- Chatham
- Clarksville
- Colebrook
- Columbia
- Conway
- Dalton
- Dummer
- Easton
- Eaton
- Ellsworth
- Errol
- Franconia
- Gorham
- Groton
- Harts Location
- Haverhill
- Jackson
- Jefferson
- Lancaster
- Landaff
- Lincoln
- Lisbon
- Littleton
- Lyman
- Madison
- Milan
- Monroe
- Northumberland
- Pittsburg
- Plymouth
- Randolph
- Rumney
- Shelburne
- Stark
- Stewartstown
- Stratford
- Sugar Hill
- Thornton
- Warren
- Waterville Valley
- Wentworth
- Whitefield
- Woodstock

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Pre-sort Standard

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS...**

December 16, 2009, **Transportation Advisory Committee**, 3-5:00 p.m., NCC Offices.

January 20, 2010, **NCC Board Meeting**, 3-5:00 p.m., NCC Offices.

February 3, 2010, **CEDS Meeting**, 2-4:00 p.m., NCC Offices.

February 17, 2010, **Transportation Advisory Committee**, 3-5:30 p.m., NCC Offices.

March 17, 2010, **NCC Board Meeting**, 3-5:00 p.m., NCC Offices.

April 7, 2010, **CEDS Meeting**, 2-4:00 p.m., NCC Offices.

May 19, 2010, **NCC Board Meeting**, 3-5:00 p.m., NCC Offices.

DID YOU KNOW?
**OUR NEWSLETTER IS
NOW AVAILABLE VIA
OUR WEBSITE**
WWW.NCCOUNCIL.ORG



North Country Council
Regional Planning Commission

POINTS NORTH

A Regional Report From The North Country Council

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December 2009

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Inside This Issue

<i>Around the NCC Region</i>	
• Public Meetings, Public Notice, Public Hearing	2
• NCC Welcomes New Planner	2
• DRTC Expansion	3
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	4

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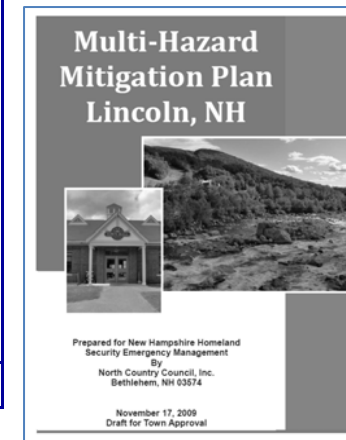
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Multi-Hazard Mitigation Continues!

Article by: June Garneau



Since March 2009, NCC staff have held a total of 75 meetings to assist fourteen North Country towns proceed through the eleven step hazard mitigation planning process. Travelling from as far north as Errol and to the more southern towns of Benton and Albany, the planning process has led to a great understanding of the region's communities and an appreciation for their individuality and unique character. With a combination of hard work by town officials, good humor and exceptional participation, it is anticipated that all fourteen plans will be complete by June 2010. The towns involved in the current round of FEMA funding include: Stark, Dummer, Errol, Milan, Whitefield, Lancaster, Lincoln, Benton, Haverhill, Lisbon, Albany, Easton, Landaff and Carroll. On target for 2010 are Littleton

and Northumberland. A Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan is a tool to use to reduce future losses from natural and man-made hazards as required by the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000. The DMA requires local governments to prepare and adopt local hazard mitigation plans as a condition to receiving Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) project grants. Once a plan has received final FEMA approval, local governments are required to review the plan annually or after a disaster and to update the plan every five years. Funding for mitigation planning is provided through NH Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM); there is no cost to the community.

The Multi-Hazard Mitigation planning process results in important cross-talk regarding all types of natural and man-made hazards; team participation and "brainstorming" provide the best information available to create a local and unique plan. The process covers a variety of natural hazards and also addresses the history and likelihood of wildfire disasters and the risks of building in flood zones. In addition, with collaboration from the US Forest Service (USFS), North Country Resource Con-



Dummer 1998 Ice Storm

servation and Development

(NC RC&D) and NH Forests and Lands (DRED), the plan is written to gain acceptance as a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to be approved by DRED.

New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) has been awarding North Country Council and area towns funding to assist in developing these plans for many years. If you wish to have your community participate in this process please contact June Garneau at 444-6303 ext 13.



Lisbon Ammonoosuc River Floodplain

Planner's Corner

Article By: Community Planning

Public Meeting? Public Notice? Public Hearing?

Each year North Country Council (NCC) planners hold two training sessions around the region for planning board members. These sessions provide basic training on procedures for new members, and serve as refreshers for experienced members. The focus is on state requirements for subdivision review procedures (RSA 676:4) using a mock planning board meeting approach. This approach enables participants to ask questions on a wide range of related topics. "Twenty years ago I gave my first presentation on planning board procedures, at a podium in front of an audience. Like me, the audience was already drowsy from sitting still and listening to the previous presentations.. After that I developed this 'active-learning' approach to keep things lively and engage participants," explains NCC Planning Director Tara Bamford.

Each year a common source of confusion is: When is only a public notice required vs. a public hearing? What is a public meeting vs. a public hearing?

NCC Welcomes New Community Planner

North Country Council is pleased to welcome Carole Bont to our staff as our new Community Planner. Carole has been working in the municipal field since 1983. She brings with her a wealth of experience in municipal gov-

Public Meeting

All business of the planning board must take place at a public meeting. This means, for example, that members cannot discuss a proposed subdivision before or after the meeting or at a chance meeting at the post office. The planning board must hold at least one regular meeting per month. Chapter 91-A contains the laws about public meetings such as notice requirements, minutes, nonpublic ("executive") sessions. It can be found at <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/vi/91-A/91-A-mrg.htm>.

When a meeting is not a public hearing, it is up to the chair to decide whether or not to allow the public to participate in the discussion, make comments or ask questions. The public does however have the right to hear what is being said and see items being discussed.

TIP: Make sure your meeting space, seating arrangement and approach to the business before the board makes the public feel welcome and informed.

Public Notice

Public notice is required for all public meetings. In addition, notice to abutters and the public at large is required before the planning board can review preliminary plans, called the "design review" phase of the subdivision process, or accept a final application to review it for completeness per 676:4 I(c)(1). This is different than a public hearing. The public notice is about the right to know only - the chair does not have to allow the public to participate in these discussions.

TIP: Even when it is not required, it is often beneficial to allow the public to exchange information with the board as long as it can be done in a fair and orderly manner. Abutters may have special knowledge of features of the landscape that are not readily apparent to the board, such as wetlands or drainage issues. The earlier this information is brought out, the smoother things will go for both the applicant and the board.

Public Hearing

A public hearing is required during the planning board's review of a final subdivision application. This means both

public notice AND opportunity for public testimony are required.

TIP: All comments and questions should be addressed to the chair. Some chairs invite comments in a certain order based on "for" or "against." This creates a divisive atmosphere from the start, and is irrelevant to the job at hand, review of the application for compliance with the town's regulations. Consider instead inviting people with comments or questions to sign up and then use the sign-up sheet to call on them in order.

North Country Council planners are available to answer procedural questions from planning board members in member communities by phone at 444-6303 or by email to:

tbamford@nccouncil.org for Planning Director Tara Bamford or:

cbont@nccouncil.org for Community Planner Carole Bont.



ernment. She will assist with municipal planning and zoning-related issues. Carole has an AA from Simon's Rock Early College at Bard in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, a BA from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, and a JD from Vermont Law School. She currently resides in Woodsville, New Hampshire. Please join us in welcoming Carole to the North Country Council.

DRTC Expansion

Article by: Michael King



North Country Council along with its partners-the Grafton County Economic Development Council and the Dartmouth Regional Technology Center-is expanding its incubator. This is a major addition to the already very successful DRTC incubator.

The Dartmouth Regional Technology Center (DRTC) was formed in 2004 to assist start-up businesses, providing support programs and a 32,500 square foot mixed-use technology incubator to foster the development of high-growth technology start-up companies in New Hampshire. A business incubator is an economic development tool designed to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial companies by providing an array of business support resources and services. A business incubator's main goal is to produce successful firms that will leave the program financially viable and freestanding.

The DRTC facility opened in Centerra Resource Park, Lebanon, NH in 2006. Construction was financed by

\$3.15 million in grant funding from the US Department of Commerce, \$2.0 million from the State of New Hampshire, and \$3.2 million in debt financing from a four-member regional bank group.

The land on which the facility is located was donated to GCEDC and NCC by Dartmouth College in 2004. The NCC, GCEDC, Dartmouth College and the State of New Hampshire's Department of Resources and Economic Development created the Dartmouth Regional Technology Center, Inc. as a non-profit corporation to operate the business incubator facility, to promote and stimulate economic development, and to advance business educational services. Operation of the facility, business development services, and entrepreneurial education programs are performed under a management contract with Dartmouth College's "Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network" (DEN) office. Reporting, recruiting and outplacement of tenants into the community are performed under service contracts with

GCEDC and NCC. Accounting and bookkeeping are performed under contract with GCEDC. Maintenance and services at the DRTC facility are performed under various contracts with local service providers. The DRTC has no employees. Fiduciary and operations oversight is provided by the board of trustees of DRTC, Inc.

Since its inception the DRTC has facilitated the development or growth of over 38 high growth technology orientated companies and created over 150 jobs. The demand for laboratory space is high and given the availability of recovery funding it seems like this is a perfect time to expand our facility to meet this demand. The Economic Development Administration is providing \$4.33 million to the project and Community Development Block Grant Funds from the Community Development Finance Authority will be providing \$1.0 million in funding to individual companies to fit up company space. This new 28,000 square foot addition will continue to be a regional driver for economic development in Northern and Western New Hampshire and is a priority in our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region. If you have any questions on this project please feel free to call Michael King at North Country Council (603) 444-6303.



*Holiday Greetings From
The
North Country Council*



The North Country Council extends warmest wishes to you and your family during the holiday season. We would like to thank all of our towns and communities, officials and volunteers who continually strive to improve the quality of life not only in their immediate communities but in the North Country Region as well. It is a pleasure to work with you and for you.

Happy Holidays to All and a Healthy, Prosperous New Year.

