



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Terry Martino

FROM: Brian Grisi

DATE: January 9, 2012

RE: 2011 Year End Report for Local Government Services

In 2011, Local Government Services staff responded to over 625 inquiries from local officials on land use issues. While many inquiries from local governments were in response to implementation of an Agency-approved land use program, staff also provided assistance and guidance to many other Adirondack towns and villages on land use issues, assistance with comprehensive planning efforts, and other local initiatives. All of which serve to improve local planning efforts and provide additional protections for the character and resources of the Park.

The Local Government Services unit participated in nineteen meetings with town officials which served to provide information on Agency programs, explore planning and zoning actions, or which provided specific training on land use topics. Included in these activities were regular program reviews with many town officials administering Agency-approved local land use programs. In addition, training workshops for town board members and code enforcement officers were regularly scheduled throughout the Park. While these outreach programs provided training and land use information, the discussions always served to foster an open dialogue and bring a better understanding of the shared role of the Agency and local municipalities in protecting the resources of the Park.

The largest outreach program sponsored by the Agency is the Adirondack Park Local Government Day Conference. The event is planned in collaboration with the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages, Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board, NYS Department of State, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Empire State Development Corporation. This 14th year of the annual conference featured a Tuesday afternoon session with a panel of prominent state and local leaders offering their views on the challenges facing

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governmental organizations in 2011, the opportunities for change, and the future for the Park's environment, economy and communities. A forum-style question and answer session followed with the panel and with senior staff from state agencies which provided opportunities for 120 people in attendance to participate. On Wednesday, a full day of informational and training sessions attracted 238 people representing 45 Adirondack towns and villages, and 53 additional organizations. Dede Scozzafava, Deputy Secretary for Local Government at the NYS Department of State provided the keynote address. David Mason and Jim Herman, co-directors of the Keene Town-Wide Broadband Internet Project received the conference recognition award for their efforts with the Town of Keene in extending broadband internet network to ninety percent of homes and businesses within the Town and providing important access to the local school and its students.

The local planning staff also participated in two other conferences. In early March, staff coordinated with the Northern Adirondack Code Enforcement Officials Association 15th Annual Educational Conference. Two hundred and twenty-five CEOs attended the four-day training with another 75 fire and safety officials attending specific program sessions. Nine Agency professionals from Planning, RASS, Regulatory Programs and Enforcement divisions took turns staffing an informational display and responding to a variety of questions involving Agency process and procedures, land use planning and resource analyses. In all, staff had 67 contacts with CEOs from 36 towns and villages during the conference.

In June, staff maintained a vendor booth at the Adirondack Camp and Home Show held in Old Forge, NY. The show had a door count of over 1000 attendees for the Friday-Saturday-Sunday event. In addition to answering questions about the Agency with individual landowners and contractors, Agency staff along with the local code enforcement officer, presented a one-hour program on local and Park-wide land use regulations.

The local planning staff also represented the Agency at several conferences and meetings including the Regional Economic Development Councils, Great Sacandaga Lake Advisory Council, Lake George Watershed Coalition, Adirondack Research Consortium, Adirondack North Country Association & Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages.

The administration of the Agency-approved local land use programs requires the majority of staff time and attention.

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During 2011, nine zoning amendments proposed by towns with an Agency-approved local land use program were approved by the Agency. In addition, amendments from eight other towns were reviewed by planning and legal division staff and are in various stages of completion. Staff also reviewed two Comprehensive Plans for towns with an approved program. The local zoning amendments and comprehensive plans required a thorough review to insure concurrence with Agency statutory program requirements. The Agency also received eighty-four variances referrals from towns with approved programs for review, of which, thirty-one involved shoreline provisions, two involved density provisions and two were reversed.

Local planning staff continue to look forward with initiatives to improve administration of the approved local programs and for land use planning in the Park. In June the Local Government Services committee presented a concept for a conceptual map amendment that would allow towns to receive Agency approval to amend the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan map in their community when prescribed infrastructure improvements are in-place. This will serve to provide potential development a pre-approved outcome so investment in a project can proceed without the uncertainty of any future Agency action. 2012 offers at least one project where this could prove beneficial.

In closing, attached is a summary sheet of the Local Government Services Program accomplishments in 2011.

BFG:lhb

Attachment

cc: James Connolly

Robyn Burgess