

**Brighton Smart Growth Grant Committee
Meeting Notes
October 27, 2008**

Meeting held at Brighton Town Hall from 4:00-5:15 pm
Attendees: Rebecca Buerkett (F. X. Browne, Inc.), Robyn Burgess (resident), Sheila Delarm (Brighton Board), Leslie Karasin (Wildlife Conservation Society).

Telecommunications

Rebecca attended the [Common Ground Alliance Conference](#) on Oct. 14 to learn more about what is happening in the region with respect to improving access to high speed internet. The Common Ground Alliance is a coalition of local leaders seeking to identify and improve key issues for the park. The three core issues identified during the summer conference were property taxes, energy, and telecommunications/ high speed internet, so those were the three issues addressed at this conference. Rebecca attended the telecommunications/ high speed internet sessions, as described below.

Two groups, the [Development Authority of the North Country](#) (DANC) and [CBN Connect](#), are wholesale "carrier's carriers" providing broadband infrastructure in the North Country. DANC is located in central New York and CBN Connect is in the process of creating infrastructure throughout the Clinton, Essex and Franklin tri-county region. They will be seeking providers to service the area, hoping to encourage multiple providers and therefore better pricing through competition. CBN Connect will be constructing broadband infrastructure down the Route 86 corridor in Brighton by the end of next year and possibly up Route 30 in the future. However, this won't help many of the Brighton residents that need connection for the "last mile" from the main road to their houses. According to Howard Lowe of CBN Connect, these services could be provided by individual wireless networks. The Saranac Lake Chamber of Commerce is in the process of developing a coalition to look into wireless networks, and a Franklin County pilot project is being planned. We looking at ways we can work together with the SL Chamber on this issue.

Local Government Grant Program

Rebecca attended a workshop for the [NY Local Government Efficiency Shared Services grant program](#) administered through the New York Department of State. The program is geared more toward funding shared municipal services like highway departments, fire departments, etc. and couldn't be used to fund telecommunications shared services or studies.

Survey

Rebecca expressed concern about the ability to reach all of the interested small business owners and residents within the town to gather information about green building purchasing, small businesses cooperatives, high-speed internet access, and other issues related to smart growth. We discussed the possibility of doing a town-wide survey to gather information on issues related to the smart growth grant. The goal is not a scientific survey of resident perceptions, but rather a method for soliciting interest and facilitating connections between residents and businesses within the town. Because a paper survey would be time-consuming and expensive, we decided that an online survey using <http://www.surveymonkey.com/> would be more appropriate. We

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would post the survey for one month (cost \$20), and advertise the survey to residents via an ad in the newspaper, signs at the stores and post offices in town, email lists, and word of mouth. We may also be able to provide computer access at the town hall for the purpose of completing the survey in order to reach residents that don't have computers or broadband. The survey results will be compiled into a report by SurveyMonkey. Rebecca will look into the logistics and will discuss the survey at the next Town Board meeting.

VIC

Rebecca had a discussion with Mike Brennan from the ADK Park Visitor's Interpretive Center about how the VIC and the town can work together to improve economic development. Mike said that he would like to see more collaboration between the VIC and the town. He was also very interested in the brochure being designed as part of this project as it will provide VIC patrons with information about dining, lodging, and attractions in the town that they frequently ask for. Mike believes that there are definitely opportunities to increase tourist traffic in the town by encouraging VIC patrons to stay for other activities. He says his patrons would be particularly interested in visiting craft studios, historical buildings, and great camps. Mike brought up the idea of initiating a town-wide historical tour using low-frequency receivers. Visitors could drive around with an MP3 player listening to interpretive information at various stops around town. Such a program could possibly be funded by a grant. The committee members liked the idea and Rebecca will look into grant and logistical options. Mike Brennan also provided average monthly visitor data from the VIC, which will be useful in planning for tourist numbers in the town.

Environmental Risk Assessment

Leslie provided the committee with an outline of the environmental risk assessment that the WCS is initiating (see attached). The committee reviewed and approved the outline. We discussed whether or not to include soils in the analysis, but decided against including it in the mapping because of the limited soils data available for the town. The WCS will include a narrative discussion of the soils in the town as it pertains to the environmental risk assessment.

Transition Town

Leslie attended the [Transition Town](#) meeting in Saranac Lake, and reported back that the group is still getting organized and at this point is focused more on Saranac Lake, but she will continue to attend meetings with Brighton smart growth interests in mind, and will report back to the committee on the progress of the group. Transition Town Saranac Lake is a "small, time limited, local group, formed in response to imminent economic and climatic changes, and the steady decrease in readily available, inexpensive fossil fuels (either by increased worldwide competition for these resources or the decline of accessible reserves, or both). Based upon these realities Saranac Lake Transition Town is exploring ways to partner with all the members of this vibrant and creative community to establish a stable and sustainable future."

Smart Growth Project Action Items:

1. Rebecca will post the list of Brighton businesses at local stores and the Town Hall in order to gather information from residents to create a more up-to-date list.
2. Rebecca will prepare a list of survey questions for approval at the next grant committee meeting.
3. Rebecca will continue meeting with stakeholders.

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4. Rebecca will provide the Town Board with an update at the next regular Town Board meeting.
5. Rebecca will submit minutes from this meeting and the September meeting to Hilary for posting on the Town of Brighton website.
6. Leslie will keep the grant committee informed about developments with the Transition Town group.
7. Leslie will provide the committee with draft environmental risk assessment data.
8. Sheila will contact the Saranac Lake Chamber of Commerce to touch base about the telecommunications access issue.

Next meeting: November 17, 4:00 pm, Town Hall.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rebecca Buerkett