



The City of Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Department of Community Development

Deanna L. Ruffer
Director

James M. Ruberto
Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: File
FROM: Department of Community Development Staff
DATE: November 2, 2011
SUBJECT: Master Plan Implementation Progress

On October 19, 2011, the Department of Community Development presented an overview of progress made by the City in relation to the implementation of the strategies and substrategies of the Master Plan since the adoption of the document in April 2009. Significant progress was highlighted in the areas of economic development, housing, parks and open space, and transportation and public services/facilities.

Based on the progress made over the past 2 ½ years since the adoption of the Master Plan, the Department of Community Development staff identified areas that need to be addressed in the near future. Specific next steps largely addressed development regulations and policies, such as recodification, unification of the downtown zoning districts, a design guide for development applicants, an updated sign ordinance and subdivision regulations. Additionally, staff recommended taking on the West Housatonic Corridor study proposed by the Master Plan, parking requirements, several neighborhood efforts and continued efforts.

While the Master Plan Advisory Committee members applauded the progress that has been made to date, especially in downtown, and agreed with the proposed next steps, they also provided several suggestions of other issues the City needs to take on, including:

- Bring together parks and recreation based volunteer groups to develop long term parks and recreation needs.
- Review and streamline the laborious sidewalk café permitting process.
- Address the provision of sidewalks in the City, especially in areas lacking pedestrian facilities in West Pittsfield.
- Create more pedestrian/bike facilities City wide, especially in relation to roadway construction projects.

In addition to the several items above, the Master Plan Advisory Committee stressed that the City encourage more involvement in future planning activities to ensure that public needs are met. This memorandum and the package distributed to the Master Plan Advisory Committee will be posted to the City's website as part of this process.