

GroWashington/Aroostook
Sustainable Development for the Future

Meeting Minutes
Brownfield and Economic Renewal Lead Team
Thursday, June 21, 2012
1:00 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Lead Team began with introductions. Team members present include: Carl Flora, Tony Levesque and Jeff Packard. NMDC staff present include: Jay Kamm, Senior Planner, Connie Akerson, Environmental Planner, and Brian Longstaff, Program Director.

2. Overview of the Washington-Aroostook Regional Plan

NMDC is working with our counterparts in Washington County to create a regional plan for sustainable development that helps our communities deal with shared problems in 16 different, yet, related focus areas, including housing, water infrastructure, climate changes, transportation and Brownfields, workforce and economic development, telecommunications, water quality and renewable energy, to name a few.

The best way to explain what we are trying to do a plan, similar to a comprehensive plan, for Aroostook County and we are looking at a number of regional components. In the end there will be a “GRO-Washington/Aroostook Plan”, which municipalities can either adopt or utilize in some form.

The Brownfield component will tie into a number of other of the programs ... housing, transportation, etc. We want to make sure that municipalities and the public are aware of Brownfield redevelopment and how to plan for it. In the end there will be a document, a plan that municipalities will utilize in some form. A workable document... something Planning Boards or economic developers can use.

We hope to vision “big” to really figure out to best serve the people that live here. We are from here; we have children and parents that live here. We know what our communities are in need of. The HUD grant will allow us to do some visioning and planning to figure out how to best serve our communities. NMDC was recently awarded a Brownfield Assessment Grant from EPA, so after the planning and visioning stages, if any of the properties that we have identified during those stages when developing the plan, we actually have funding to perform assessments funds to help move the projects along. It is local people doing the visioning, the meetings are all open to the public and we are really trying to work with as many people as possible to find out what our communities really need. Let’s dream big and see what we can come up with.

Washington County has their own Brownfield Lead Team, conducting their own visioning for their communities. As we get going in the planning process, we will be sharing information with them during the process.

3. Discuss Brownfield Workplan Tasks

We are still working out some final details of the work plan... for example the videos...we are not sure the exact content of this task.

In the workplan, one of the tasks is to identify barriers to redevelopment ...what are the barriers? Why aren't these properties being redeveloped? Is it local ordinances, state regulations, lack of clean-up funds? We will look into these issues. We will meet, develop a draft plan, and have public hearings on the draft plan. Take the feedback and incorporate it into the plan.

After the kick-off meeting, Jay and I are going to start work on the first task in the work plan, which is to, "ID and map redevelopment opportunities relative to disadvantage populations." We will be sending a survey to all municipalities to determine what exactly they have for potential Brownfield sites, so we will know roughly how many and where they are. From there, when we meet in October, we will have list of Brownfield sites, and we can start getting public input in order to plan for what could be developed on those site to best suit the community. ...what is here for infrastructure, what is limiting the redevelopment on the properties, and how we can leverage other funds to get the project up and running?

What is next:

- The survey from last year will be updated and sent to municipalities.
- If you know of plans, for example Comprehensive Plans or a Redevelopment Plans, that might have identified a Brownfield site or redevelopment project on a potential Brownfield site that a municipality would like to undertake, let us know.

4. Kick-Off Meeting

The 16 Lead Teams and the public are invited to attend the HUD Sustainable Planning Kick-Off meeting in Aroostook County to be held on July 29th at the Caribou Inn. Please RSVP to Judy Dinsmore at jdinsmore@nmdc.org or by calling 498-8736 if you plan to attend.

5. Open Discussion

Put a section the survey about NMDC past results in regards to the Brownfield Program and let them know about the funding...assessment and the Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund.