



Region Matters

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Merrimack Valley
Planning Commission
plan • develop • promote

Fall 2017

MVPC Announces Executive Board

With the change in seasons comes a change in leadership for MVPC. Commission Chairman Robert Lavoie is stepping down at the end of 2017 in his roles as Amesbury Town Councilor and MVPC Commissioner, and as such a new slate of officers was recently elected. Theresa Park, Planning & Development Director and MVPC Commissioner for the City of Lawrence, is our new Chairperson.



Theresa Park
Chairperson



Robert Lavoie
Commissioner

Rowley Commissioner and Vice Chairperson for the Board of Selectmen Robert Snow is now serving as Vice Chairperson, having most recently served as Treasurer for a number of years. Newburyport Commissioner and ZBA Chairperson Ed Ramsdell continues in his role as Secretary and Boxford Commissioner, retired housing and community development professional Jim Barnes, was elected to act as Treasurer.



Robert Snow
Vice Chairperson



Ed Ramsdell
Secretary

Welcome to the new slate of officers!

2017 Pictometry Imagery Arrives

*- Article written by Jerrard Whitten
GIS Program Manager*



This past spring you may have seen a small plane flying in a grid pattern over our region. Don't be alarmed - this was actually Pictometry imagery being acquired by the Eagleview company (new owners of Pictometry). In the fall of 2016 MVPC organized a seventh regional imagery acquisition on behalf of 16 participating communities. This provided nearly 100% coverage of the northeastern part of Massachusetts. From property evaluations and assessments within the Assessor's Offices to emergency response planning, Pictometry imagery provides a unique ability to view any location from 4 separate directions as well as to conduct measurements and analysis. Included with the imagery is access to the cloud-based version of Pictometry known as 'Connect Explorer'. Those communities participating in both the MIMAP program and Pictometry enjoy the advantage of being able to connect to Pictometry imagery directly from their MIMAP application.

The new 2017 Pictometry image library is now available and MVPC has organized two training sessions in early October to ensure users are making the most of the imaging system. Registration for the on-site training is now full and a webinar training session has been scheduled for October 24th from 9am to 11am. The class is limited to 12 participants.

[Click Here to Register](#)



Sunflowers—Newbury
Photo by Steven Perlmutter

Essex Heritage Announces 2017 Photo Contest

For more details

<http://essexheritage.org/photocontest>

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“It’s easy to come up with new ideas; the hard part is letting go of what worked for you two years ago, but will soon be out of date.”

- **Roger von Oech**

Green Crabs Go Culinary

- Article written by Peter Phippen
Coastal Coordinator



The partnership of the Green Crab R & D Project and the Eight Towns and the Great Marsh Committee, received a grant from Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries to help develop a sustainable culinary use for the highly invasive green crab which is wreaking havoc in the Great Marsh. Early in the summer the Team was focused on determining conditions and signs that lead to green crab molting habits in order to predict molting for subsequent soft shell crab culinary preparations.

Several tastings were held for the Great Marsh legislative delegation as well as restaurateurs at festivals and restaurants to show case the green crab stock as well as deep fried and sautéed soft shelled green crabs. Late summer the team has begun to experiment with using green crab to make “She Crab” soup using crab stock and roe. Once the roe season is fully upon us in early fall, the Team will begin more widespread tastings and marketing of the soup.



Merrimack Valley Feels Like Home

- Article written by Angela Vincent
Economic Development AICP Planner

What a summer! MVPC has been hard at work attending **Community Housing Needs Workshops** throughout the region. These workshops are part of the development of the first *Merrimack Valley Regional Housing Plan*. Here are some of the accomplishments from this summer:

- **12 Community Needs Workshops in 60 days** - presentations can be found [here](#) under *Community Workshops*
- **Over 250 participants engaged at the Community Workshops**
- **300+ ideas on housing needs in communities in the Merrimack Valley in person and on coUrbanize!**
- **Over 130 people participating on coUrbanize**

Included in this article are some snapshots of the stakeholders who attended the workshops. Thank you to all who participated!



MVPC Executive Director, Karen Conard, oversees the Housing Visual Preference Board with MVPC Commissioner from North Andover, Rick Byers.

In addition to gearing up for the Regional Open House, we are finalizing the needs assessments for each community's housing plan. These needs assessments include a plethora of data on income, household type, home sales, poverty, and other data sets that are helping us determine housing issues in the region. MVPC is working collaboratively with Jennifer Goldson to conduct these assessments. Many thanks to Jenn and her team for all of their great work!

Next up on the MVPC Housing Team's docket: organize the second round of Community Workshops. In October and November, MVPC will be working with planners to schedule local workshops focused on housing goals and strategies. A schedule for those events is posted on the [Get Involved](#) page. We hope to see you at the upcoming local workshop in the next couple of months!



60+ people attended the Haverhill Community Housing Needs Workshop on July 18th at Haverhill High School.



Making it in the Merrimack Valley

- Article written by Angela Vincent
Economic Development AICP Planner

The Merrimack Valley has a long history of manufacturing, which is still very much alive today. According to the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, manufacturing is the 6th largest employer in the U.S. In fact, in this region, it is the 2nd largest employer in the Merrimack Valley, just behind Education and Health Services. It is no surprise, then, that this was one of the emerging issues discussed at our April CEDS meeting, and is why we chose to focus our August CEDS meeting on this topic.



We invited the Urban Manufacturing Alliance (UMA) to present the latest statistics on manufacturing including wages, current trends, branding, challenges, and how social equity principles need to be incorporated into growth of this industry sector. UMA is a national collaborative of non-profit, for-profit and governmental stakeholders working together to grow urban manufacturing, create living wage jobs and catalyze sustainable local economies. MVPC became a member of UMA after their Summit in Boston in May. We have been collaborating closely with them to receive ongoing technical assistance to boost and support manufacturing in this region, especially around textile manufacturing.

After UMA's presentation, the MV CEDS Committee members were split into three groups. The goal was to brainstorm projects/policies that will support local manufacturers and advance equity outcomes in your community, and identify potential opportunities and barriers for implementation. The three breakout categories were: Branding, Land Use Policy and Workforce Development. Conversation included ideas such as:

- Use story-telling as a way to empower manufacturers to communicate their missions and background
- Identify entrepreneurial manufacturers that we want to see, or existing businesses in the Merrimack Valley that we would like to grow, and strategize next steps: where can they go? What do they need?
- Create a role models/mentors/ambassadors program to promote manufacturing as a profession: Dream It – Do It



A summary of the breakout group ideas and the presentation from UMA can be found on the MV [CEDS webpage](#). All of the ideas will be synthesized and brought forward as potential strategies for the final MV CEDS Strategy in 2018. If you are interested in participating in a Manufacturing Working Group to develop strategies for the Merrimack Valley, please contact Angela Vincent at avincent@mvpc.org.

Over the next 5 months, the MV CEDS Committee will continue discussing the major themes uncovered at our April CEDS meeting, dig into the strengths and challenges related to them, and begin developing a 5-year vision for economic development in the region. Our meeting on **Tuesday, September 26th**, focused on how our natural resources play an important role as economic drivers. If you would like to participate in future MV CEDS meetings, please email Angela Vincent at avincent@mvpc.org. Please check out the MV [CEDS webpage](#) for minutes, presentations and details about future meetings.

MVPC Offers Workshop for Planning and Zoning Boards

Roles and Responsibilities of Planning & Zoning Boards, Part 1 (MIA & CPTC)



Join us if you are a new Board member or building inspector. This program will launch you into your role as a local official, introduce you to the functions of the two boards, and teach you the main tools of planning and zoning. Cost of the workshop is \$30 per person. [Register online](#) Select Workshop #17

Date: November 13

Time: 6:30 - 8:30p

Location: MVPC Offices 160 Main Street Haverhill, MA 01830



Bicycling in the Valley

- Article written by Betsy Goodrich
Senior Transportation Planner

Lawrence Ciclovía

MVPC partnered with the City of Lawrence to organize the Lawrence Ciclovía again this year. The number of participants nearly doubled from last year! Lawrence opened sections of Essex and Common Streets to bicycling and walking. Partners included MassDOT, MassRides, MassBike, Groundwork Lawrence, YMCA and others. MassDOT’s Pete Sutton created a pop-up bike lane during the second event – the first for Lawrence. Other activities included a bike rodeo, the ‘Crazy Bike’, skateboarding lessons, volleyball, Zumba and face painting.

Rail-Trail Progress

The Merrimack Valley MPO has focused much of its energy helping our member communities implement their multi-use trail network. Here’s the scoop:

1. Bradford Rail Trail opened on June 24th to great fanfare. The City is already working on the second section.
2. Newburyport’s City Branch trail is under construction. Contaminants were found on the corridor, so MVPC provided a \$100,000 grant toward clean-up.
3. The MVMPO programmed six more sections of rail-trail in the TIP, including two sections in FFY 2018.

Bicycle Racks

MVPC partnered with MAPC to offer our member communities discounts on bicycle racks. Don’t miss this opportunity. Bicycle racks must be ordered by the end of the calendar year, however it is likely that the program will continue to next year. To learn more go to [MVPC Bike Parking Program](#).

MVPC Monthly Commission Meetings

Third Thursday of the month @ 7pm

2017	2018
September 21	January 18
October 19	February 15
November 16	March 15
December 21	April 19
	May 17
	June 21

*Meetings are subject to change



MPO Monthly Meetings

Fourth Wednesday of the month @ noon

* Meetings are subject to change

Check our website for Commission Meetings Agenda and Details on Upcoming Meetings & Workshops mvpc.org

Upcoming Meetings, Events, Workshops

October 18 MV Chemical Safety & Resiliency Training
 (For Municipal Facility Managers and Emergency Response/Public Safety Officials)
 Time: 8:30am—noon
 Location: Northern Essex Community College
 Hartleb Tech Center - Room A
[Register Online](#) [Click here for Survey](#)

October 24 Pictometry WebEx Training
 Time: 9am
 (Seating is limited to 12 participants)
[Register Online](#)

November 9 2017 Great Marsh Coalition Sea Level Rise Symposium
 Time: 8:30am - 3:15pm
 Location: **Woodman's, Essex MA**
 \$15 registration at www.greatmarsh.org

November 13 Roles & Responsibilities of Planning and Zoning Boards, Part 1 (MIIA & CPTC)
 Time: 6:30pm to 8:30pm
 Location: **MVPC Offices**
 160 Main Street Haverhill, MA 01830
[Register Online](#)



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