

# *Bethel Local Development Corporation*

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## **2015 BLDC Year-End Report**

### **Operating Projects and Activities**

#### ***Forest Reserve at Smallwood***

The Smallwood Golf Course property totaling 196 acres was purchased by the BLDC from Sullivan County in 2011 using funds borrowed from the Town of Bethel

The title for the 60 acre mining property was transferred to the town from the BLDC in June of 2014 by resolution of the town board. Subsequent negotiations led to a new agreement with Sullivan County regarding sharing in the mined road sand, and the marketing of several parcels that were reserved for potential development as part of the original plans for the property. This transfer resulted in a \$19,080 value to the BLDC.

The Town has agreed to extract road sand from the remaining 60 acres and to negotiate annual payments to the BLDC for the extraction of this sand. A mining permit was obtained in 2015 by the BLDC for this purpose. Sand mining will commence in the coming year.

The town pursued several avenues for potential development of the park property. Meetings were held with the NY-NJ Trail Conference on possible partnerships for trail development. The director has visited the location several times and trail construction is slated for 2016. Volunteer committees to assist with trail and signage in the park were formed and will be active in the coming year. With the assistance of a consultant a comprehensive development plan was submitted for state funding through the CFA process. This plan was once again not funded and it is unlikely that it will be re-submitted in the coming year. The document remains a good base for developing the park and for applying for future funding. A matching grant in the amount of \$5000 was obtained through the Sullivan County Department of Planning for signage. The connection with the SC Planning Department and the Trails Task Force continues to be beneficial to the park development.

## **Grant Activity**

### **2005 Main Street Grant – KLMS I**

2015 Annual Inspections were conducted and documented for each of five projects under this grant. For various reasons the final documentation was not completed until January of 2016. 2015 concludes the inspections for this grant. The Streetscape portion of the grant was also inspected. Because the Streetscape was not completed until 2010, inspections will continue through December 2017.

### **2008 NYS Main Street Grant – KLMS II**

In 2015 annual inspections on the projects funded under this grant were completed and documented. These inspections will continue through December of 2019.

### **2015 Sullivan County Plans and Progress Grant**

In June of 2015, a \$5000 matching grant was obtained from Sullivan County for signage in the Forest Reserve at Smallwood. These funds will be expended in the coming year as trails and other developments move forward.

### **2016 Sullivan Renaissance Municipal Partnership Grant**

Beginning in November of 2015 the Town of Bethel moved forward to apply for this grant. The BLDC is a partner organization in this effort. During the fall of 2015 the town moved forward with plans to put in a formal application. As of the beginning of March we were notified of our selection as one of the awardees. Initially \$15000 will be awarded for a series of initiatives in beautification, code enforcement and the building of a healthier community. The ultimate winner of this competition will receive a \$100,000 award in August of 2016.

### **2014 Bethel Corridor Beautification Grant**

This was the second year for this grant program, funded by a Sullivan Renaissance \$5,000 Community Enhancement grant, and was offered to business owners along the Route 17B corridor in the Town of Bethel. Nine applications were received. Six projects were approved and funded. One of these projects ultimately pulled out. Several projects were partially completed and were continued into 2015 for completion. At this point, one project still remains to be completed. A total of \$600 remained in the account for the Corridor Grant programs. This committed as a match for an additional project to be completed in the spring of 2016.

## **Administrative Activity**

### **Public Authorities Reporting Information System (PARIS)**

Under the Public Authorities Law (PAL) passed in 2005, the BLDC became subject to specific and detailed reporting requirements in 2010. These include an Annual Report (with several sub-reports) due each March and an Annual 5-year Budget Report due each October. These reports are submitted to the NYS Authorities Budget Office (ABO)

- The 2014 PARIS Annual Report was prepared and submitted in April of 2015.
- The 2016 PARIS Budget Report was prepared and submitted in November of 2015.

### **Golf Cart**

In 2014 a golf cart was purchased to act a shuttle for the Kauneonga Lake business district. It was by all accounts well received and the program continued successfully in 2015.

### **Bethel Business Association**

In 2015 a partnership was formed with the Bethel Business Association. Effectively, the local chamber of commerce, this group was in need of a strategic partner in order to continue its activities. After several meetings it was agreed by the BLDC board that the BBA should become a committee of the BLDC and operate under its auspices.

As a first fruit of this partnership the BBA has begun a cooperative marketing initiative with Bethel Woods Center for the Performing Arts. As of this date this project is close to successful completion. It is anticipated that this partnership will be working on several projects to enhance the economy and quality of life in the Town of Bethel.

### **Cultural District**

During 2015 the Town of Bethel began discussions with Bethel Woods Center for Performing Arts on the possible creation of a cultural district in the Route 17B – White Lake – Kauneonga Lake area. It was agreed that the town would explore the creation of such a district over the course of the coming months. It is envisioned that such a district could assist with the development of arts related businesses and overall development that would enhance the economy and quality of life in the town.

### **CEAP Program**

In discussions with Dr. Alan Abramson it was decided to re-activate the CEAP program due to the harsh winter in 2014. It was successful in 2014/15. This program continued in the fall/winter of 2015/16.

This Annual Report was approved at the BLDC Board meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016.