

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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Executive Director • Linda Dunlavy



NOVEMBER 2009

NEWSLETTER

CCT's Joyce Fulmer Wins Statewide Honor for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Work

On October 21st, the Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy presented their top honor for teen pregnancy prevention to Joyce Fulmer of the FRCOG's Community Coalition for Teens. Joyce has been working to prevent teen pregnancy in the North Quabbin region under a grant from the Department of Public Health. Joyce has employed a service-learning approach to teen pregnancy prevention and positive youth development, working with schools and community service providers to implement community service learning programs that have been shown to be effective in reducing teen pregnancy, decreasing school dropout, and increasing school success. She has also convened and coordinated a diverse group of stakeholders and service providers interested in teen pregnancy prevention and youth development in the form of the North Quabbin Teen Pregnancy Prevention Task Force, and she has led this group through strategic planning and the successful implementation of a variety of youth development and teen pregnancy prevention strategies. During the course of her work with the FRCOG, Joyce has also been honored by Athol High School's Student Government with their Community Service Award, and by the North Quabbin Community Coalition with their Community Builder Award.



Joyce Fulmer gives award acceptance speech at Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy's Annual Conference as Massachusetts Alliance Executive Director, Patricia Quinn, looks on.

Watch for the Franklin County Bikeway Signs ~ Coming to a Roadway near You

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments is pleased to announce that Franklin County Bikeway logo and directional signs will soon be installed along the approximately 44 miles of the shared roadway section of the Franklin County Bikeway. The signs have been procured and are currently being fabricated. Once the signs are installed the Franklin County Bikeway will be completed. The Franklin County Bikeway is a regional bicycling network that travels through eight towns in Franklin County. This bicycle network consists of both off-road and shared roadway facilities, and provides access to employment, educational, cultural and recreational sites. The Bikeway travels through the towns of Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Greenfield, Leverett, Montague, Northfield, and Sunderland.

For further information, please contact Senior Transportation Planner, Elizabeth Giannini, at 413-774-1194 ext. 104 or giannini@frcog.org.



Franklin County Bikeway Logo

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

East, Central & West Franklin County Bikeway Maps	2
Sunderland Scenic Turnout Area	2
National Scenic Byway Project Management Plan for the Wachusett Scenic Byway	3
Regional Transportation Plan	3
Traffic Counting Roundup	4
Connecticut River Scenic Byway	4
19 th Annual Youth Conference	5
2009 Teen Health Survey	5
Permitting & Development	6
2010 CEDS Program	6
FRCOG Leads Regional Broadband	6
New State Recovery Zone Bond Program	7
Green Communities Technical Assistance	7
Western Mass Evacuation Planning Study	7
Training by Dr. Denis Embry	8
Forums/ Meetings /Seminars	9
FRCOG Council Representatives for FY 2010	9

East, Central and West Franklin County Bikeway Maps will be Available in November

In November, new bikeway maps will be available for Franklin County. The FRCOG has created a series of bicycling maps for Franklin County. Eastern, Central and Western Franklin County Bicycling Maps highlight routes that are good for bicycling. These routes were identified during the process of updating the *Franklin County Bikeway Plan*. The maps recommend loops as well as point to point routes that access many of the town centers throughout the County. The maps also classify the routes as novice, intermediate or advanced in order to help bicyclists determine the most suitable route for their ability and physical fitness level. The FRCOG has also updated and reprinted the *Franklin County Bikeway Map* of the 44-mile Franklin County Bikeway network that travels through Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Greenfield, Leverett, Montague, Northfield and Sunderland on off-road and shared roadway bicycle facilities. The maps will be distributed through local bike shops, the Visitor's Center, the Chamber of Commerce or by request to Senior Transportation Planner, Elizabeth Giannini, at 413-774-1194 ext. 104 or giannini@frcog.org.

Sunderland Scenic Turnout Area Improvements



Construction Underway at the Sunderland Scenic Turnout Area

The reconstruction and improvement of the existing turnout area on Route 47 just south of Falls Road in Sunderland will be completed at the end of October. Taylor Davis Landscape and Construction completed the improvements to the turnout area and Northern Tree Service Inc. completed the vista pruning. Route 47 is part of the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway and this improvement project was included as a recommendation in the Corridor Management Plan for the Byway. Improvements include the resurfacing of the paved area of the turnout, improvements to the entrance/exit to enhance visibility, installation of signs specifying when the turnout area is open, installation of picnic tables, and the installation of an information kiosk. The project also included selective tree pruning in order to open up views of the Connecticut River from the scenic overlook area. The improvements were designed by Stantec and Urban Forestry Solutions. For further information please contact Senior Transportation Planner, Elizabeth Giannini at 413-774-1194 ext. 104 or giannini@frcog.org.

National Scenic Byway Project Applications Receive Funding

The FRCOG is pleased to announce that a total of \$1,363,035 in funding was awarded for three Scenic Byway projects in Franklin County. In February 2009, the FRCOG submitted applications for these projects through the national Scenic Byway program. The FRCOG was awarded \$748,800 for land protection along the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway, and \$416,000 for land protection along the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway. In addition, \$198,235 in funding was approved for the FRCOG, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to complete a Corridor Management Plan for the Route 116 Scenic Byway which travels through Deerfield, Conway, Ashfield, Plainfield, Savoy, Cheshire and Adams. For further information, please contact Senior Transportation Planner, Elizabeth Giannini, at 413-774-1194 ext. 104 or giannini@frcog.org.

Work to Complete a Corridor Management Plan for the Wachusett (Route 122) Scenic Byway to Begin

The FRCOG began work on the development of a Corridor Management Plan for the Wachusett (Route 122) Scenic Byway in Orange and New Salem. The study area includes Route 122 in the towns of Orange and New Salem and a ½ mile buffer on each side of the road from its intersection with Route 2A (the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway) in downtown Orange south east through New Salem and north of the Quabbin Reservoir. The project area ends at the town border of New Salem and Petersham.

On June 23, 2005, the Massachusetts Legislature designated Route 122 in the towns of Paxton, Rutland, Oakham, Barre, Petersham, New Salem and Orange as the Wachusett Scenic Byway. The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission completed a Corridor Management Plan for the section of the byway located in the towns of Paxton, Rutland, Oakham, Barre and Petersham.

The development of a Corridor Management Plan for the Byway is intended to help guide future Byway related activities and projects. Work will include the completion of inventories of historic, cultural, and natural resources; a scenic landscape inventory and assessment; an identification of heritage and recreational tourism-related attractions and support services; and an evaluation of the land use regulations and resource protection measures that are in place. In addition, an implementation strategy will be developed, which identifies and prioritizes potential projects and/or improvements for which funding may be sought through the Scenic Byway Program in the future. Through the development of a Corridor Management Plan and the accompanying public participation this project will seek to recognize, interpret, preserve, and promote the unique scenic, cultural, natural, and recreational resources of the Wachusett Scenic Byway.

At this time the Byway Advisory Committee is forming, if you would like to become a member, please contact Senior Transportation Planner, Elizabeth Giannini, at 413-774-1194 ext. 104 or giannini@frcog.org.

Update of the Regional Transportation Plan

The FRCOG has begun updating the Franklin Long Range Regional Transportation Plan. The plan is a comprehensive document which provides the basis for transportation planning in the region. The plan reviews all types of transportation services and infrastructure, including roadways, passenger rail, freight transport, airports, bus services, sidewalks, and on and off-road bike routes. For each topic, the plan details current conditions and identifies key issues and assets. The plan uses a 25-year time horizon to project future population trends, transportation needs, and financial constraints, and makes recommendations for future transportation improvements based on these forecasts.

Public input is an essential part of the creation of the Regional Transportation Plan, and the FRCOG wants to hear the public's ideas for transportation improvements in Franklin County. Public input is also used to establish the main recommendations of the plan and to identify the top three priority future transportation projects for the region. Over the next several months, there will be public information meetings on the plan to be held in different parts of the county, in which the public can comment on any aspect of the plan. Stay tuned for meeting dates. There will also be a countywide survey distributed in the coming months to gather additional public input.

For more information on the Transportation Plan or the upcoming public forums, please contact, Transportation and Land Use Planner, Megan Rhodes, at 413-774-1194 ext. 110 or mrhodes@frcog.org.



Route 2, Erving

Traffic Counting Roundup

The FRCOG has operated and maintained a rigorous traffic counting program since 1991. During that time, the FRCOG has sought to fulfill the data needs of Franklin County communities as well as provide support for further analysis. The FRCOG utilizes Automatic Traffic Recorders (ATR) to collect critical information on roadways about traffic volumes, travel speeds, gap (the spacing between vehicles) data, as well as vehicle classification information (i.e. the types of vehicles on the roadways). Every year, this information is compiled and logged into a database. From the database a Traffic Count Booklet is produced, listing all the counts conducted since 1991. This information can be found on our website at www.frcog.org under Transportation Planning.

In addition to ATR counts, the FRCOG has the ability to perform Turning Movement Counts (TMC) to gather traffic volume information at intersections. TMCs record the movements of vehicles at an intersection, recorded in 15 minute intervals. These counts are typically conducted during peak weekday periods (7:00-9:00 AM, 4:00-6:00 PM) and can be conducted year round.

This year, numerous traffic counts were performed around Franklin County and the results of these counts are being compiled. While ATR counts cannot be performed when snow is on the ground, municipalities can still request counts on a year-round basis and they will be performed as conditions allow. If you would like to schedule some counts for your community, please send a request in writing to the Transportation Planning Engineer, Stacy Metzger, at 425 Main Street, Suite 20, Greenfield, MA 01301 or by email to smetzger@frcog.org. If you have any additional questions, please contact Stacy at 413-774-1194 ext. 109.



The installation of road tubes on a roadway



Traffic Counter

The Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway Receives Designation as a National Scenic Byway

On October 16th, the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway was officially designated as a National Scenic Byway. This designation is recognition of the Byway's important historic and scenic qualities. The Byway travels 39 miles along Routes 47 and 63 through the Connecticut River Valley in the communities of Northfield, Erving, Montague, Sunderland, Hadley, and South Hadley. The designation recognized that the Byway is a journey through early American history and links a series of historic villages that were settled in Colonial times. Additionally, the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway traverses a beautiful pastoral landscape of riverside farmlands, historic village centers and vistas of the Connecticut River.

The Franklin County section of the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway was designated as a state Scenic Byway by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2000. The FRCOG partnered with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to compile the application for the nomination which was supported by all of the towns along the Byway. State level designation enables Byways to participate in the National Scenic Byway Program, but National designation provides additional benefits and a higher level of recognition. The benefits of the National designation of the Byway include: higher priority for funding; promotion of the Byway through the Federal Highway Administration's byway traveler website (www.byway.org); recognition and encouragement of the preservation of the resources along the Byway; recognition and encouragement of the importance of the establishment of partnerships; and inclusion in the America's Byways Map.

For further information on this designation, please contact Senior Transportation Planner, Elizabeth Giannini, at 413-774-1194 ext. 104 or giannini@frcog.org.

19th Annual Youth Conference planned for Friday, March 5



The Community Coalition for Teens is pleased to announce that the 19th Annual Youth Conference “Your Future, Your Choice” will take place on Friday, March 5, 2010 at Pioneer Valley Regional School in Northfield. Approximately 300 youth and adults from all over Franklin County, the North Quabbin, and beyond are expected to attend. The Youth Conference Planning Committee, composed of Pioneer students and led by Conference Coordinator and Pioneer senior Sarah Brault, is currently soliciting workshop proposals. The workshop proposal application is posted on the FRCOG website, or can be obtained by contacting Youth Conference Coordinator, Sarah Brault, at 413-774-1194 ext. 118 or youthconference@frcog.org or Coalition Co-Coordinator, Rachel Stoler, at 413-774-1194 ext. 116 or rstoler@frcog.org. The Committee welcomes all proposals for workshops that are of interest to teens. Proposals are due December 4, 2009. Please refer to the FRCOG website for information about last year’s conference.

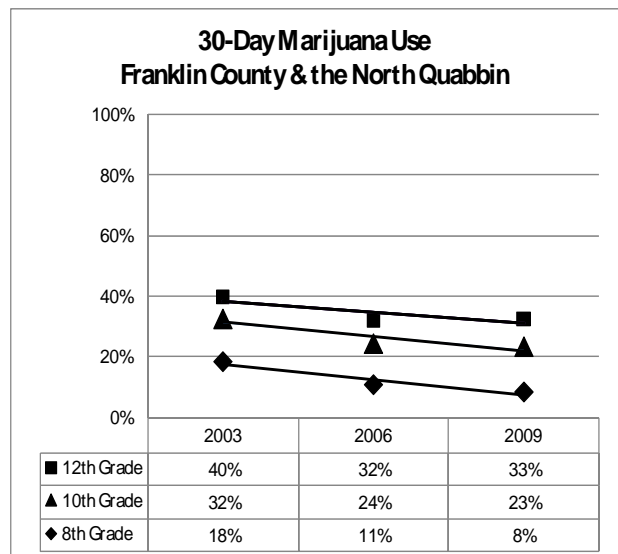
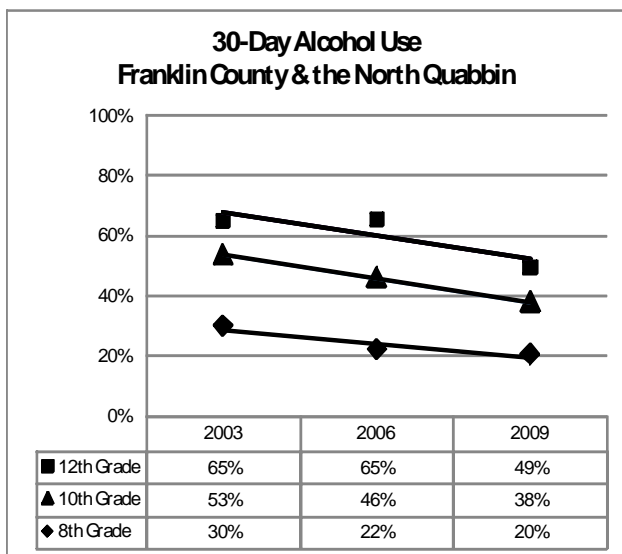
2009 Teen Health Survey Results

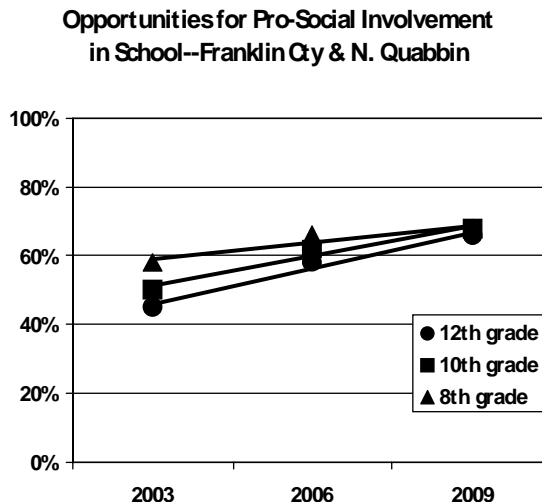
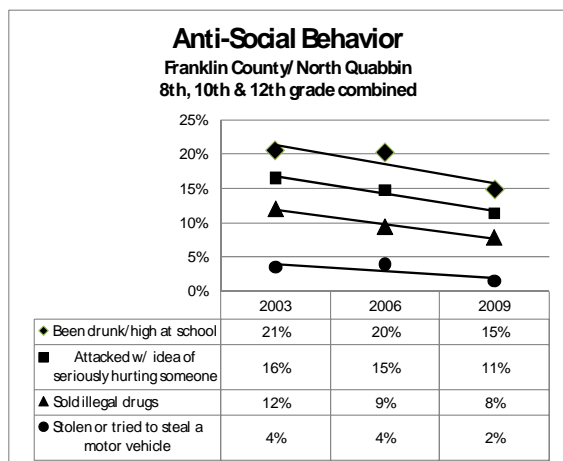
The Community Coalition for Teens, in collaboration with the Communities That Care Coalition, released the results of the 2009 Teen Health Survey in a press conference at GCTV on September 10. The Teen Health Survey is an anonymous survey of over 2,000 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students in 9 Franklin County and North Quabbin public school districts. The 2009 survey mirrors the survey taken in 2006 and 2003, and is a national survey called the Prevention Needs Assessment Survey (formerly the Communities That Care Youth Survey).

The data show two strong overarching trends: Teen substance use and antisocial behavior have decreased dramatically.

Our public schools have made significant and substantial improvements in providing an environment where young people are thriving. The full report is available at the FRCOG website at http://www.frcog.org/pubs/teen/surveys/Franklin_Co_Profile_Report.pdf.

Requests for additional data and further analyses may be directed to Evaluation Coordinator, Jeanette Voas, at 413-774-1194 ext. 119 or jvoas@frcog.org.





Permitting & Development Reference Materials

While the Chapter 43D: Local Expedited Permitting Program has been suspended due to state budget cuts, the Massachusetts Permit Regulatory Office (MPRO) continues to post resources online to support municipalities in their efforts to streamline the permitting process and to promote development of appropriate commercial and industrial sites. Sample permitting guides, regional market overviews, a site evaluation guide, and a permitting tracking database are some of the resources available online. Go to www.mass.gov/mpro for more information and to download these materials.

2010 CEDS Program Project Listing

The FRCOG has issued its [Project Profile Form](#) (*link to Word document*) for communities to submit projects for the 2010 CEDS Project Listing, which is a prioritized list of regionally significant economic development projects that is compiled every five years. This listing will be part of the 2010 CEDS Plan and is often referenced as funding sources become available or when region-wide economic development efforts are initiated. Projects must be on this listing to be eligible for select federal Economic Development Administration grant programs. Applicable regional economic development projects must relate to job creation, and include both private sector and public sector investment. The deadline for submitting projects is **Thursday, November 19th by 4:00 pm**. For more information, please contact Economic Development Planner, Jessica Atwood, at 413-774-1194 ext. 101 or jatwood@frcog.org.

FRCOG Leads Regional Broadband

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) targeted \$7.2 billion of federal funding to address the problem of broadband access and adoption in the nation. In July 2009, the guidelines for the first round of funding from these federal programs were announced. The [Massachusetts Broadband Institute](#) (MBI) led the effort to develop an application for federal infrastructure investment, proposing a \$125 million fiber infrastructure project in Western Massachusetts. At the same time, the FRCOG and [WesternMA Connect, Inc.](#) worked with 16 key partners throughout the region to submit two regional applications for greater broadband access and adoption projects in western Massachusetts. Announcement for grant awards are anticipated for late November or early December. For more information, check out the Connect website at www.pioneervalleyconnect.org or contact Economic Development Planner, Jessica Atwood, at 413-774-1194 ext.101 or jatwood@frcog.org.

New State Recovery Zone Bond Program

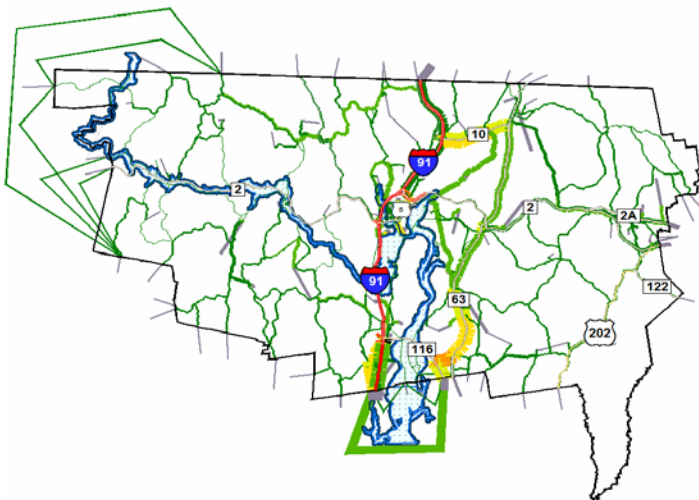
A new state program called “Recovery Zone Bonds” has just been launched by Governor Patrick. The Governor’s press release states that “The Recovery Zone Bonds, authorized through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, support both public and private development efforts by offering favorable borrowing rates for projects within areas designated as “Recovery Zones.” The Governor has selected Economic Target Areas as eligible “Recovery Zones,” which includes the 30 towns in the Greater Franklin County ETA Region. The press release further clarifies that “the state’s Recovery Zone Bond allocation is split between two programs: Economic Development and Private Facilities, totaling \$222 million and \$334 million respectively. Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds are taxable bonds that provide 45% interest forgiveness for municipalities to bond for public infrastructure improvements, site remediation or site acquisition to support economic development. Recovery Zone Facilities Bonds are tax-exempt and available to private entities for the construction, renovation and reconstruction of privately held facilities that will create new jobs.” For more information about this and other state economic development programs, please contact Michael Vedovelli, Regional Director of the Massachusetts Office of Business Development at 413-562-8780 or by email at Mike.Vedovelli@state.ma.us.

Green Communities Technical Assistance Update

The FRCOG planning staff will work with 16 towns in Franklin and Worcester Counties to provide technical assistance to communities working towards becoming a “Green Community”. As the provider of planning assistance to these communities (8 individual towns and 8 in Franklin and Worcester County that have come together as the North Quabbin Region), the FRCOG is working with all of these towns between now and June 2010 to develop Action Plans that describe how each of the Green Communities’ criteria will be met. To qualify to become a Green Community, a town must meet these five criteria within one year of receiving the planning assistance award. Municipalities which successfully fulfill these requirements and earn the designation of “Green Community” will be eligible to receive Green Community grants. Up to \$10 million will be available statewide annually for locally-based clean energy projects. For more information about Green Communities technical assistance, please contact the Director of Planning Development, Peggy Sloan, at 413-774-1194 ext. 105 or psloan@frcog.org.



Western Massachusetts Evacuation Planning Study



The FRCOG partnered with the UMass Transportation Center, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) to develop a method for evacuation planning that allows for community level planning as well as regional coordination. As part of the development of this evacuation planning process, five emergency scenarios were analyzed which included one scenario specific to Franklin County as well as a regional scenario which involved each of the planning agencies. This study has provided a critical framework for a better understanding of the transportation network in Franklin County in light of an emergency evacuation. For more information, contact the Transportation Planning Engineer, Stacy Metzger, at 413-774-1194 ext. 109 or smetzger@frcog.org.

Training by Dr. Dennis Embry

On October 30, the Community Coalition for Teens hosted a training with renowned researcher Dr. Dennis Embry entitled *Low-cost, Evidence-based “Kernels” of Behavior Change*. This training was sponsored by the Communities That Care Coalition and Regional School Health Taskforce with funding from the Office of Congressman John Olver. Dr. Embry has, through extensive research, identified small, low-cost or no-cost interventions that lead to positive behavior change in school and community settings. These interventions have been linked to improved classroom behavior, increased success in recovery programs, and reduced substance use. He presented to an audience of nearly 200, mostly school staff, at Mohawk Trail Regional High School in the morning, then to a group of about 100, primarily community-based service personnel at Turners Falls High School in the afternoon. Attendees were mostly from Franklin County and the North Quabbin, but all four counties of Western Massachusetts were represented.

Dr. Embry’s presentation inspired many participants to take action in their own classrooms, schools, community settings and families. Some of the “kernels” most likely to be implemented include:

The Good Behavior Game—uses positive reinforcement and fun to increase positive behavior in classroom settings.

Granny’s wacky prizes—rewards engaging in targeted behaviors

Random calling for class responses –increases student attention and participation

Non-verbal transition cues—cuts down on transition time by using a pleasant musical cue accompanied by a hand sign

Parents United Promise—reduces youth substance abuse through a pledge by parents to forbid youth substance use in their homes, and to communicate with other parents about it.

For more information on Dr. Embry and his work, please visit www.paxis.org. For information regarding local implementation of the “kernels,” please contact Coalition Co-Coordinator, Kat Allen, at 413-774-1194 ext. 115 or teens@frcog.org.



FORUMS/MEETINGS/SEMINARS

Date	Time	Title	Location	Contact Person
Nov 12	5:00 PM	FRCOG Executive Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Nov 12	5:30 PM	CCT Advisory Board	278 Main Street 1st Floor Greenfield	Rachel Stoler
Nov 21	8:00 AM	County-wide Emergency Dispensing Site Exercise		Thomas Williams
Dec 2	5:30 PM	FRCOG Joint Finance & Personnel Committees	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Dec 3	7:00 PM	Franklin Regional Planning Board	278 Main Street 1st Floor Greenfield	Peggy Sloan
Dec 7	4:00 PM	MAPHCO Steering Committee	278 Main Street 1st Floor Greenfield	Thomas Williams
Dec 10	5:00 PM	FRCOG Executive Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Dec 16	5:30 PM	FRCOG Finance Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Dec 17	5:30 PM	CEDS Committee & EDD Governing Board	278 Main Street 1st Floor Greenfield	Jessica Atwood
Jan 5	3:30 PM	REPC Quarterly Meeting	Sheriff's Training Room 160 Elm Street Greenfield	Thomas Williams
Jan 13	5:30 PM	FRCOG Finance Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Jan 14	5:00 PM	FRCOG Executive Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Jan 20	5:30 PM	FRCOG Finance Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Jan 21	5:30 PM	FRCOG Special Budget Informational Council Meeting	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Jan 28	5:30 PM	FRCOG Council Meeting	GCTV Studios 3rd Floor 393 Main Street Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy
Jan 28	6:00 PM	MAPHCO Steering Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Thomas Williams
Jan 28	7:00 PM	Franklin Regional Planning Board	278 Main Street 1st Floor Greenfield	Peggy Sloan
Feb 11	5:00 PM	FRCOG Executive Committee	Room 102 Courthouse Greenfield	Linda Dunlavy

FRCOG Council Representatives for FY 2010

Ashfield	Dave Deherdt	Montague	Patricia Allen
Bernardston	Stanley Garland	New Salem	Jennifer Sandova
Buckland	Stefan Racz	Northfield	Nick Fleck
Charlemont	Winston Healy	Orange	Rick Kwiatkowski
Colrain	Mark Thibodeau	Rowe	Geoffrey Bagley
Conway	Tom Spiro	Shelburne	John Payne
Deerfield	John Paciorek	Shutesbury	F. Ellen McKay
Erving	Thomas Sharp, Chair	Sunderland	Tom Fydenkevez
Gill	John Ward	Warwick	Frederick Abbott
Greenfield	William Martin	Wendell	Vacant
Hawley	Philip Keenan	Whately	Lynn Sibley
Heath	Thomas Lively	FRPB Rep.	Sam Lovejoy, Secretary
Leverett	Gordon Fretwell	Reg. Elected	Ann Banash
Leyden	Michele Giarusso, Vice Chair	Reg. Elected	Bill Perlman
Monroe	David Nash		