



**Windham Region Brownfields Reuse Initiative (WRBRI)
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2023
4:00 p.m.
WRC Zoom Call**

Attendees: Gabby Ciuffreda Chair, Elizabeth Bridgewater, Cheryl Kaufman, Bonnie North, Sue Fillion and Stephen Dotson

Absent: Robin Sweetapple, Ralph Meima

Staff: Susan Westa, WRC

Gabby Ciuffreda Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm with a quorum present. All attendees joined the meeting by Zoom.

Amendments to Agenda

Gabby said that this should be an item on all agendas. Susan Westa requested to add a discussion about the process to prequalify Qualified Environmental Professionals. This discussion will be added after the review of projects below.

Minutes Approval

The Minutes of April 12, 2023 were approved unanimously with a motion by Bonnie North and seconded by Sue Fillion, with a revision to a sentence about the Brattleboro site.

Status of WRBRI Funds

Susan said that in May we received approval from EPA of \$500,000 for assessment work and \$2 million for cleanup work. WRC will also receive \$50,000 for assessment work from the State of Vermont and if we use those funds we can request more.

Susan also reviewed the current status of the funds below. She noted that we probably won't be able to use the \$584 remaining in the current VT Assessment grant which closes at the end of June. Susan will also determine how we can use the remaining EPA Assessment funds.

FY '19 EPA Assessment Grant Funds
▪ Hazardous Substances = \$955

Vermont Assessment Funds
▪ \$584

RLF Loan/Grant Funds (Haz)
▪ Loans = \$160,493
▪ Grants = \$0
▪ Consultant Services = \$5,312

RLF Loan/Grant Funds (Petro)
▪ Loans = \$41,603
▪ Grants = \$0
▪ Consultant Services = \$500

RLF Funds Revolved available for Loans, Grants and staff time
▪ \$267,513

FY '22 Supplemental RLF Loan/Grant Funds
▪ Loans = \$250,000
▪ Grants = \$0
▪ Consultant Services = \$16,000

WRBRI Applications

- Newfane FEMA Buyout Project – Susan reviewed the project status and noted that last month we approved \$500 to support the town’s application to BRELLA, which was approved. Now they are ready to conduct a Phase I ESA. The town of Newfane has applied to FEMA for buyout funding for this property that was previously a general store with a gas station. There is an underground storage tank onsite. She said that site is located within a floodplain and has been repeatedly damaged over the years. The Committee reviewed the project matrix, below.

Bonnie North made a motion to accept the Newfane FEMA Buyout site into the WRBRI program and to approve funding for a Phase I ESA. Cheryl Kaufman seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

- The Gathering Place, Brattleboro – The Brattleboro Area Adult Day Services is requesting funding for a Phase I ESA. They are applying for a USDA loan to replace the building’s roof, windows and lights. USDA is requiring a Phase I as part of their loan approval process.

There are no know contamination issues. Prior to 2001 the site housed the Elks club. Sue Fillion is concerned about using funds for “non-brownfields” work. Susan Westa said that EPA allows us to do that. Elizabeth Bridgewater asked if we should discuss this as a policy question. Gabby has similar concerns and would like to have a policy discussion in future. Elizabeth agrees. Sue said that WRBRI previously didn’t approve projects that had no contamination issues identified or if there was no planned redevelopment. Susan will look at history of what we’ve approved and Bonnie agreed this was a good idea. The Committee reviewed the project matrix, below.

Bonnie North made a motion to accept the Gathering Place site into the WRBRI program and to approve funding for a Phase I ESA. Stephen seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

- Foodworks, Brattleboro - Groundworks is requesting funding as a prospective purchaser for a Phase I ESA for a site located at 141 Canal St. This site is the current location of Foodworks, which is operated by Groundworks and is the most heavily utilized food shelf program in the region. They would like to purchase the site for continued use as a food shelf. A gas station was located on the site in the 1970's. The Committee reviewed the project matrix, below.

Elizabeth made a motion to accept the Foodworks site into the WRBRI program and to approve funding for a Phase I ESA. Sue Fillion seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- BDCC Industrial Site, Brattleboro – BDCC is requesting funding assistance as a prospective purchaser to develop a Phase II ESA for two parcels located in Brattleboro. This site is the current location of a manufacturing facility. BDCC plans to continue to lease to the existing facility and to develop two new buildings for industrial expansion. The new facilities would accommodate over 100 jobs.

LEE conducted a Phase I ESA and recommended a Phase II. They estimate that a Phase II might cost over \$100,000 but have not yet developed a work plan. BDCC is requesting up to \$50,000 for the Phase II work for now but may request additional funding in the future depending on the work plan. Elizabeth asked which funding source we would use. Susan suggested the VT assessment funds, if the project is BRELLA eligible. The Committee reviewed the project matrix, below.

Cheryl made a motion to accept the BDCC's site into the WRBRI program and to approve \$50,000 for a Phase II ESA. Bonnie seconded the motion and Elizabeth recused herself because she is on the BDCC Board. The motion passed unanimously.

- WW Building and Supply Warehouse, Wilmington - WheelPad is requesting funding to conduct a Phase I ESA as a prospective purchaser of a site located at 211 Route 9 West, Wilmington. This site is the current location of a WW Building and Supply Warehouse. The site was previously used as an office supply store, the VT SW Supervisory Union district offices and GS Precision machine parts manufacturing.

WheelPad intends to purchase the site to assemble their accessible bedroom and bathroom suites, for offices, a local labor training program, a maker space and storage. They will also use the site as a showroom for WheelPad models, as well as 6 units of accessible worker housing and public EV charging stations.

Cheryl asked if WW Building and Supply is still using the site and Susan said that she wasn't sure. Gabby said she assumed they don't need it anymore. Gabby asked if Susan talked to town about this which she hadn't done but WheelPad noted that they are working with Gretchen Havreluk, Wilmington's Economic Development Consultant and BDCC. Sue said she finds hard to believe the town wouldn't support this. Elizabeth noted that this is a growing need and innovative approach. The Committee reviewed the project matrix, below.

Stephen made a motion to accept the WW Building and Supply Warehouse site into the WRBRI program and approve funding for a Phase I ESA. Elizabeth seconded the motion which passed unanimously

- Daley Shoe Building, Brattleboro - Windham Windsor Housing Trust is requesting funding to assess the need to continue indoor air quality monitoring for their building at 68 Birge St. This building is the home of WWHT’s offices, as well as 29 affordable apartments. The building was previously the site of manufacturing and warehousing uses including Basketville.

Susan said that contamination issues were previously assessed and cleaned up. An SSDS system was installed to address vapor issues. They would like to know if continued operation of the SSDS system is needed and have worked with DEC and Atlas to develop a work plan. Susan said that Atlas is not on our prequalified consultant list so she will have to check with Karen Place on whether or not we could hire them or if we have to do an RFP with our prequalified consultants.

Sue Fillion asked if this could be considered cleanup planning and come out of RLF. There was a discussion about whether or not an argument could be made to use Atlas if they’ve previously worked on this project because then they would have gone through an RFP process. Elizabeth suggested that Susan ask Ed Bordas about this.

Elizabeth said the issue is that SSDS system’s motor is on its way out and it’s expensive to replace. Sue said this is a good use of our funds and we can figure out procurement later. The Committee reviewed the project matrix, below.

Bonnie made a motion to approve funding, \$12,605, to evaluate the vapor intrusion issues at the Daley Shoe Building site conditioned on an acceptable procurement process. Sue seconded the motion and Elizabeth recused herself. The motion passed unanimously.

Active Assessment Sites Update

Site	Update
21 O’Bryan Dr., Brattleboro	Phase II complete.
Bellows Falls Bike Project	ECCA/CAP work underway.
Bellows Falls Train Station	Working on grant loan agreement for abatement work.
Newfane Buyout	Accepted into BRELLA.
Thermal House, Brattleboro	CAP update underway.
Winston Prouty, Brattleboro	Site investigation underway. Accepted into BRELLA.

Public Comment – Elizabeth thanked Susan for laying out projects so clearly in the agenda.

Gabby suggested the we consider a policy on lender only eligibility or non-brownfields work at our next meeting and that we review that with the Committee's purpose and objectives statement.

Susan said that we need to prequalify QEPs for assessment work by the end of September when their current agreements run out. She said she learned about some different ways other RPCs administer their QEP process at the state's Brownfields Roundtable and would like to reconsider how we do our program. Gabby suggested a subcommittee that would meet in July to address this before issuing RFQ's. Elizabeth, Gabby and Sue agreed to participate on this committee.

Gabby would like to have the entire Committee review the RFQ's. Sue said that this is a lot of work. Susan said that she would develop summery chart for the Committee to review in September.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for August and Susan said she's already expecting a new project. Most of the Committee said that they will not be around in August, so we decided to meet in September instead. Susan will reach out to the Committee about what the best day is the second week in September.

Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 with a motion by Elizabeth and seconded by Bonnie.