



REVITALIZATION AND RENEWAL E-NEWS NEW YORK

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FROM THE CHAIR



Val Washington

Welcome to the Summer edition of Revitalization & Renewal, NPCR's eNewsletter.

Much has happened in New York to impact state brownfields policy in the past few months. The state is now fairly well set with a reconstituted menu of brownfield policy and funding options for the next decade. The exception is the Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program. While BOA did receive some meaningful support, including an increase in the tax credit bonus for developers who build consistent with a BOA plan, no new funding was included in this year's state budget. We will be working overtime in the coming months to rectify that oversight. For low- and moderate-income neighborhoods across New York, BOA remains a valuable and valued tool. Unfortunately, it is not well understood by many elected officials and government leaders because it is about revitalization, not, strictly speaking, a clean-up program. One reason we hope many of you will join us in Albany on December 2nd and 3rd for our BOA Summit is to help us address that knowledge gap.

Among state lawmakers who strongly support BOA are Sen. Tony Avella of Queens, and Assemblymembers Anthony Brindisi of Utica and John McDonald of Cohoes. We recognize and applaud Sen. Avella for spearheading successful passage of BOA reform legislation in the Senate, and Assemblyman Brindisi for introducing the same bill in the Assembly. Assemblyman McDonald, a former mayor of Cohoes, NY, was an early and enthusiastic supporter of the BOA streamlining bill, and one of at least 14 other Assemblymembers who joined Brindisi as co-sponsors.

The December Summit will be a chance for municipal leaders, community activists, BOA practitioners, state agency officials and legislators and staff to discuss transformative development in communities across the state attributable to work done through the BOA program. Mark your calendars and plan to join us in Albany on December 2nd and 3rd for this important conference.

Become a Member of NPCR

NPCR Membership provides access to resources and priority for multiple programs, networking and speaking opportunities, and much more. It also provides vital support to our efforts to advocate for policies, programs and funding for brownfields revitalization efforts in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods or communities of color. Be sure you are positioned to take full advantage of all NPCR's programs and services by becoming an NPCR member today.

Go to our website, www.npcr.net, and click on the membership page. If you have any questions, please contact NPCR's Administrator at Katherine.snow.robertson@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE

Plan to attend NPCR's Fall BOA Summit in Albany, NY

Wednesday, December 2, 2015
2:00 PM - Program
6:00 PM - Reception & Hors D'Oeuvres

Thursday, December 3, 2015
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM - Program
Agenda to follow.

Join colleagues, professionals and community leaders for a Day-Long Summit on New York's Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program. Get the latest Brownfields news! This NPCR-sponsored event will feature updates on New York's BOA program, proposed reforms to streamline and enhance community-based revitalization initiatives, dialogue with representatives of the state's Designated BOAs, and presentations by state officials. For the latest information and summit updates, visit: www.npcr.net



ALBANY REPORT

New York Moves Forward on Brownfields BOA still needs work

This year's State legislative session ended in late June with a great deal of progress on brownfield issues. Even as the changes in law are being implemented, NPCR is already focused on next year.

Most notable among this year's legislative enactments was the successful renewal for ten more years of the Brownfield Tax Credits (BTCs), which were set to expire, and the inclusion of a number of reforms to the state's brownfield programs.

The biggest changes were to the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) and the BTCs, which included many reforms long-advocated by NPCR. The Governor and the Legislature were explicit in their goal of targeting lucrative development (tangible) credits to where they are most needed and denying development assistance to high-end projects in economically dynamic markets where investment is likely without additional incentives. NPCR members are well aware of how difficult it is to ascertain and then define where incentives are critical to community success, having debated the question in many NPCR forums. The approach taken in the reform legislation is controversial: Upstate properties are presumed to be deserving of development assistance, and all will be eligible, while New York City developers must demonstrate need by meeting a series of criteria. The controversy is over the highly restrictive aspect of those criteria. To view NPCR's comments on proposed amendments, [click here](#).

Agreement was also reached to extend bonding authority for the state Superfund for another ten years, up to 10% of which will be directed to the Environmental Restoration Program (ERP), a popular and effective program created in the 1996 Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act to help municipalities clean up brownfield sites, mainly foreclosed properties standing in the way of revitalization efforts.

The Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program saw some benefit from the reform package. The tax credit for developers who build consistent with a designated BOA was raised from 2 percent to 5 percent. At the time of passage, there still were no designated BOAs, a constant point of criticism and source of misunderstanding about the program. However, in early April, shortly after budget passage, the Department of State announced the first 12 Designated BOAs, further changing the brownfields policy landscape and reinforcing the importance of the area-wide planning approach to neighborhoods plagued by multiple brownfield sites. And it is our understanding that more BOA designations are on the way. A more complete description of the brownfield program reforms can be found on the DEC website: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/101350.html>

The biggest failing of the reform package was the lack of additional funding for the BOA program. NPCR is urging Gov. Andrew Cuomo to correct this with an appropriation of at least \$10 million in next year's budget. Along with some proposed structural changes, this will allow existing BOAs to advance in the program, and some new BOAs to enter.

During the legislative session, NPCR also worked with legislative leaders to develop a bill that would streamline BOA, setting a timetable for certain certifications, along with other reforms. Foremost among them was a plan to drop the pre-nomination process, and redirect some funds to a post-designation phase that allows communities to begin to implement BOA plans and attract developers.

The legislation, introduced in the Senate by Tony Avella of Queens (S.5143), and in the Assembly by Anthony Brindisi of Utica (A.7970), passed in the

Vernice Miller-Travis Joins the Board



Vernice Miller-Travis

NPCR is excited and honored to welcome Vernice Miller-Travis to our Board of Directors. Vernice is a Senior Associate in the Community Planning and Design Group of Skeo Solutions. She provides technical expertise for collaborative planning and design services in area-wide brownfields revitalization, community sustainability and environmental justice. Vernice brings years of experience in brownfields and Superfund site redevelopment, community revitalization and collaborative problem solving to her work. Although Vernice now lives in Maryland, she has a long history with environmental and community revitalization issues in New York. In 1988, she was one of the founders of West Harlem-based WeAct for Environmental Justice. She is also one of the authors of Toxic Waste and Race, a founding document of the Environmental Justice Movement, published in the 1987 by the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ. With her close ties to the Environmental Protection Agency's brownfields programs nationwide, Vernice will provide NPCR with critical guidance and expertise as we work together to strengthen and improve New York's Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program. NPCR with critical guidance and expertise as we work together to strengthen and improve New York's Brownfield Opportunity Areas program.

2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2ND & 3RD, 2015

NPCR's Fall BOA Summit
9am-1pm
Albany, New York
(Downtown location to be announced soon)

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Get the latest Brownfields news!

This NPCR-sponsored event will feature updates on New York's BOA program, proposed reforms to streamline and enhance community-based revitalization initiatives, dialogue with representatives of the state's Designated BOAs, and presentations by state officials.

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About New Partners for Community Revitalization

Founded in 2001, NPCR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the revitalization of low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and communities of color that are disproportionately impacted by brownfield sites. NPCR is widely recognized as being instrumental in the conceptualization and creation of New York State's Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) program. To date, NPCR has helped secure \$46 million in BOA grants for over 125 communities across New York State to conduct pre-development planning and feasibility studies, and to get sites shovel ready for re-use. NPCR fosters beneficial relationships between nonprofit developers, for-profit developers, public officials, community development leaders, and environmental justice organizations.