

NCRPC NEWS

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Commercial Rehabilitation Program Offers Financial Help for Communities

Key downtown buildings in the cities of Concordia and Beloit have recently been restored with help from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Commercial Rehabilitation Program administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce.

The cities were each awarded CDBG funds for the projects in 2013. The City of Concordia received \$249,500 for its project to stabilize and repair a building constructed in 1888. The City of Beloit received \$162,693 to stabilize and repair a retail building constructed in the 1890s. Property owners also contributed substantial private funds to the projects.

The Commercial Rehabilitation Program began in 2013. According to Salih Doughramaji, CDBG Manager, the program helps communities rehabilitate buildings that foster commercial activity in the downtown districts of communities.

“The community benefits by having a vital building gain a new lease on life while the owner benefits



The exterior of this downtown Concordia building, located on the corner of 6th Street and Broadway, was recently restored.



The buildings located at 111-115 East Main in Beloit underwent renovations as part of a CDBG Commercial Rehabilitation project.

by having his or her building rehabilitated — thus becoming an asset instead of a liability,” Doughramaji says.

Dr. Monte Wentz and his wife, Nancy, purchased the Concordia building located at 101 E. 6th Street in 2011. A native of Concordia, Monte Wentz is passionate about renovating and preserving historic

(See Commercial Rehab, page 3)

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ABOUT US

Our Mission

Advancing rural Kansas through comprehensive planning and development services.

Our Vision

By 2024, communities in rural Kansas will favor choices that embrace innovation, increase prosperity and demonstrate resilience.

Contact Us

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Popular Movie Has Message for Community Representatives

It is January in a new year with winter reminders still in our fence rows and shady surfaces. “It’s a Wonderful Life” is easily my favorite film. Nationwide, it is a perennial late fall or near Christmas movie classic.

The movie was likely seen by millions this past December through various means. It is a worthwhile view for community leaders, civic club members, educators, law enforcement personnel, commercial lenders, parents, spouses and church members. If you are doing anything for your community, this 70-year old motion picture can speak to you.

As many of you know, the film tells the story of George Bailey, a young man whose dreams of college are disrupted just after high school graduation by the untimely death of his father. He appeals to the Board of Directors of his father’s savings and loan bank (S&L) to prevent it from being closed against a proposal made to dissolve it put forth by the town’s

VIEWPOINT



Doug McKinney has been NCRPC Executive Director since 2008.

unscrupulous business scion, Mr. Potter. The board agrees to remain in business, conditioned on George’s agreeing to join and run the bank.

Moving the story toward its conclusion, George’s uncle

inadvertently leaves a large cash deposit intended for the S&L at Mr. Potter’s office and that latter person elects to keep it dishonestly, instead of returning it to its rightful owner. The lost deposit turns into a major issue at the S&L and leads to the planned arrest of a very disillusioned George Bailey. The bank examiners ready to shut down the operations soon thereafter.

I will not spoil the ending. Simply put, good things are revealed and do happen amidst the trials and tribulations. To me, the movie clearly demonstrates rural or small town affections are valuable and caring attitudes can be given to residents and to those who serve in various roles in a community. The movie is a must-see merely for the impact each of us can have in our neighborhoods, townships and towns. After most disasters there is a rainbow of recovery. Withstanding the tumult and wave of despair is the challenge presented.

I strongly recommend sitting still for a couple of hours with some popcorn and a warm beverage this winter to watch the movie and observe how people pull together in the midst of crisis. Certainly ask yourself what kind of community representative you are — are you like George Bailey or Mr. Potter? Have a safe and prosperous 2016. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, January 28, 2016
Thursday, February 25, 2016
Thursday, March 31, 2016
NCRPC Executive Board Meetings
Beloit Office, 2 p.m.

February 16, 2016
Final FY 2016 [CDBG KAN STEP](#)
Applications Due

**February 23 and 25 &
March 1 and 3, 2016**
Community Board Leadership Series
sponsored by K-State Research and
Extension. It is offered in various host
sites from 6-8 p.m.
www.ksre.k-state.edu/boardleadership

Thursday, April 14, 2016
Capital Improvement Planning
Workshop for Local Government
803 Valley St., Concordia, KS, 9 a.m.
RSVP by April 11 at 785-738-2218
www.ncrpc.org/cipworkshop

Tuttle Named New Assistant Director

A new year brought change to the NCRPC as long-time staff member Todd Tuttle became the new Assistant Executive Director.

Tuttle has been with the organization since 1999 and is also responsible for the day-to-day technical operation of the North Central Kansas Community Network Co. (NCKCN), the region’s Internet Service Provider. He is a graduate of Fort Hays State University.

Heather Hartman, Executive Board Member and Mitchell County Community Development Director, says the board is pleased to have Tuttle in this leadership role.

“Todd’s years of experience with the Planning Commission will allow

him to be a valuable resource for the staff and the board of NCRPC,” Hartman says. “The energy and passion Todd has for the work he does is quite contagious.”

Doug McKinney, Executive Director, agrees.

“Todd is innovative and has the interest of rural communities in his nature,” McKinney says.

Deb Ohlde previously served as Assistant Director from April 2008 through 2015. Ohlde recently started a consulting company and working with Country Banker Systems LLC, an affiliate of the bank holding company of which the Ohlde’s own partial interest. She remains with the NCRPC in a special projects role. ■

(Continued from page 1)

structures and was pleased the CDBG Commercial Rehabilitation program could help restore this building.

“In a small town in particular, if you don’t reinvest in yourself, no one else is going to,” Wentz says. “The CDBG Program made a lot of the exterior restoration possible that I probably would not yet have been able to complete on my own.”

The recent work done on the historic Concordia building includes door and window restoration and repair, stained glass repair, repair and restoration of cast iron steps, painting, tuck pointing, electrical repair and roofing repair.

The Wentz’s intend to continue the building restoration in phases with long-term plans to refurbish residential units on the second floor and rehabilitate the lower level for another business. Two tenants currently operate businesses on the main level and another space is available.

Wentz says his best advice for others considering a commercial rehabilitation project is to have a thorough plan.

“Get a good plan in place and go into the project with realistic expectations,” Dr. Wentz says.

Improvements made to a retail structure located at 111, 113, and 115 E. Main Street have made a visible difference in downtown Beloit. The recent work done to repair and preserve the structure includes tuck pointing and preserving problem masonry areas, electrical repair and replacing alley guttering. In addition, the project included repair and replacement of roof materials, windows and four entry doors.

Gloria Homeier, who has owned the building at 115 E. Main in Beloit since 2001 where she operates A Full

House, says the benefits of the rehabilitation project will last for many years.

“It will help my business remain a strong, vital part of the community and help maintain downtown Main Street in Beloit,” Homeier says.

Homeier says the cost to restore the building was more than she could afford on her own.

“It was just cost prohibitive for me to replace such huge windows and tuck point a building of this size,” Homeier says. “This project made an amazing difference to the building.”

Jeff Roberg of NCK Properties owns the properties at 111 and 113 E. Main in Beloit and also participated in the project.

“In a small town in particular, if you don’t reinvest in yourself, no one else is going to.”

— Dr. Monte Wentz,
Concordia Optometrist and
preservation advocate

NCRPC staff provided project planning assistance and administration for both projects.

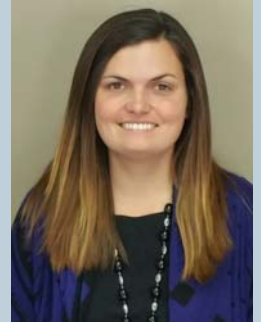
The next application deadline for the CDBG Commercial Rehabilitation program is June 1, 2016. The maximum grant amount per project is \$250,000. A new requirement is that applicants will need to have an asbestos inspection and contact the Kansas State Historical Society prior to submitting an application. All CDBG-funded projects must meet one of three national objectives. This program meets the objective of preventing or eliminating slums or blight.

For more information about the CDBG Commercial Rehabilitation Program, visit the website at www.kansascommerce.com/cdbg or contact the NCRPC. ■

Benedick Joins NCRPC

Emily Benedick joined the NCRPC staff in December as a community development representative.

A native of the Saint Louis, Missouri area, Emily graduated with a master’s degree in Landscape Architecture



Emily Benedick

from Kansas State University. She previously worked for Great Plains Landscape and Design in Beloit for four years and obtained knowledge of community planning through her experience working with Blue Star Studio out of Oklahoma.

In her spare time, Emily enjoys traveling, camping, painting and spending time with friends and family. She is married to Jesse, and has a daughter, Elenora. ■

Capital Improvement Planning Training Offered

Is your local government planning for the future? The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process takes time, but it offers a wealth of benefits.

Not sure how to begin? Join the NCRPC for a workshop presented on Capital Improvement for Local Government on Thursday, April 14, 2016 at 9 a.m. in Concordia. For more information, see the enclosed flyer or visit www.ncrpc.org/cipworkshop. ■



North Central Regional Planning Commission

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Sports Bar Offers Unique Dining Experience in Washington

Sports enthusiasts and people looking for a modern dining experience have a unique option in downtown Washington at GameTime Sports Bar.

The restaurant, which opened in July 2014, is located in a building that underwent extensive remodeling. Owner Nate Chapin says the renovations resulted in a modern, clean and fun atmosphere.

The restaurant has all new electrical, plumbing and flooring as well as a new kitchen and dining area. In addition to homemade food, it offers entertainment including a pool table, juke box, foosball area, free wifi and multiple televisions.

A second project in August 2015 created a lounge area for private

parties that can accommodate up to 30 people.

Chapin is a graduate of Washington High School and returned to the area with 10 years of food service experience in various roles and locations throughout the country.

Both projects were made possible with funding from First National Bank-Washington and investment by the owners. In addition, the NCKCN -Four Rivers Loan Program assisted with the initial start-up in 2014 and with the creation of a lounge area for private parties in 2015.



GameTime Sports Bar is located at 4th and Main in downtown Washington. (Photo Provided Courtesy of Washington County News)

For more information about the financing programs used, contact Debra Peters, NCRPC Business Finance Director, at 785-738-2218 or by email at dpeters@nckcn.com.

GameTime is open Tuesday through Sunday. For more about the business, find them on Facebook or call 785-510-6060. ■