



Published on *GazetteNET* (<http://www.gazettenet.com>)

Consultant hired for North Amherst/Atkins projects

By *smerzbach*
Created 03/09/2011 - 5:00am

amherstlocalnews

AMHERST - A Boston-based landscape design company working on plans for Kendrick Park will be undertaking planning and rezoning for the North Amherst and Atkins Corner village centers.

Town Manager John Musante announced Friday that The Cecil Group was selected to do the works following a recommendation from the Zoning Subcommittee. It will be paid up to \$40,000.

The planning project will begin in late March with several public meetings.

At Atkins Corner, the reconstruction of West Street and its intersections with Bay Road and West Bay Road will coincide with the building of a new loop road behind Atkins Farms Country Market. The idea is that the new road will serve as a means of creating a village center where various services would be available to nearby neighborhoods, such as the Applewood retirement community, and the Hampshire College campus.

In North Amherst, Cinda Jones, president of W.D. Cowls Inc., last year presented a proposal for an urban renewal plan that would rezone the land on which her company's former sawmill was located. It would create a mixed-use development in the "Dirty Hands District" and expand the existing village center.

"We're really excited the town has taken this important step toward implementing zoning changes prescribed by the master plan," Jones said. "We look forward to participating in the public process. We're eager to help initiate North Amherst village center revitalization.

Specific village center design plans and the necessary zoning for accomplishing these are expected to be completed by The Cecil Group in September and be ready for votes at fall special Town Meeting.

The design process is expected to be similar to the one that the Amherst Redevelopment Authority is using for the Gateway Redevelopment District between the University of Massachusetts campus and downtown.

Both projects are important to the implementation of Amherst's master plan, Musante said. That plan encourages the development of village centers and pedestrian traffic by providing services near existing housing.

Daily Hampshire Gazette © 2011 All rights reserved

Source URL: <http://www.gazettenet.com/2011/03/09/consultant-hired-north-amherstatkins-projects>