



The BOA (Brownfield Opportunity Areas) program is a grant program administered by the NYS Department of State Office for Planning and Community Development.

The Village of Philmont and the not-for-profit community-based organization **Philmont Beautification Inc**, formed a BOA project partnership to apply to the DOS for funding to assist them as project partners to conduct a community-based study to assess the feasibility of restoring Summit Lake, and redevelopment potential of former industrial buildings, mills, and other structures that have long been closed and abandoned and are negatively affecting the Philmont community by being empty.

Philmont has many of these buildings and mills, some of which have been vacant for over 70 years.

The BOA program can also provide funding to assist with community-based plans to redevelop things like waterfront parks, playgrounds, streets, green energy solutions, and historical artifacts as remains of prior industrial uses.

Philmont has many of these items that are in need of redevelopment to provide the community with revitalized buildings, mills, parks, bridges, parking lots, waterfront boat launches, playgrounds and improved streets. By assembling redevelopment plans for these sites, they will help attract additional funding, bring new businesses to the village, and by doing so, raise the quality of life and amenities for those wanting to live, work and play in the community, thereby creating a local living economy.

To apply for redevelopment funding and before building permits and other permits can be issued, each site requires a set of working architectural and/or engineering drawings that are additionally supported by community master planning elements like market and land ownership studies, surveys, zoning analysis, building evaluations and testing for toxic substances.

How does the Summit Lake fit into this picture? Summit Lake is no different from a building in this regard. It is 170 years old, and it is suffering due to its natural evolution and extreme weather conditions, such as torrential rains. It needs a make-over and face lift. It has silt buildup, it has invasive plant growth, it has a delta island that has grown up in the last 10 years, and it is suffering because many of the wetlands which reduced the nitrogen entering the lake have been removed from the watershed. It has elevated levels of lead and nickel in the sediment, and high levels of nitrogen, producing low water clarity which prevents people from taking a safe swim. Summit Lake, like a building or a mill, needs an engineering

plan and an environmental maintenance plan for the Village to obtain the permits from DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) and the assistance of the EPF (Environmental Protection Fund) to advise and possibly provide funding for the restoration of the lake.

For an engineer to draft a plan for the lake's make-over and face lift, and for the Village to make a convincing proposal for funding the restoration, studies were required to measure the silt build-up, to determine the cause of the delta island, to study the invasive species, to test for the lead, nickel, and other chemicals that are in the water body, and assess the overall environmental condition of the lake. These preliminary studies have been accomplished with BOA Step 2 funding. We now need to create a community-based lake maintenance plan, draft a Lake Protection Ordinance, and conduct regular water testing as a component of the BOA Step 3 process.

How does all of this get done with BOA assistance with funding?

The BOA program has three steps:

Step 1 –Previous Plans: Philmont submitted to the DOS the 2003 Philmont Comprehensive Plan for this step. The Comp Plan tells the story of the community. It also contains over 200 suggestions from the community for revitalizing the Village. It's a good snapshot of what the Village looks like. But it's only a snapshot.

Step 2 -Area Study: This is the planning study document, "**Summit Lake and Its Watercourse BOA Step 2 Nomination,**" completed in April 2018 and approved by the DOS. The study builds on the 2003 Comp Plan to provide a more in-depth look at the area around Summit Lake and the downtown by assessing community assets. These include the people living and working in the village, as well as buildings, mills, streets, current businesses, land ownership, zoning, etc.

In the case of Summit Lake, the Step 2 provided BOA funding for the Village to hire engineers to assess the water quality through testing, produce a map of the silt build up, a study to address the high levels of nutrients, lead and nickel and other chemicals found in the water, and an assessment for reintroducing the use of hydro-power to generate net zero green energy.

Philmont now has a 173-page planning study with appendices. It's like a tool box full of information the Village will need to be able to move to Step 3 of the BOA. The study has a total of 17 sites selected by the community for redevelopment. The sites were selected to act as neighborhood catalysts, that when improved would encourage other redevelopment and restorations. Summit Lake is listed as Site #1.

Step 3 -Implementation Strategy: This step produces the required implementation strategy that provides a description of the full range of techniques and actions; ranging from those actions and redevelopment of site(s) that can be undertaken immediately to those which have a longer time-frame, that are necessary to implement the Step 2 area study. For example, some sites may be ready to start redevelopment immediately, other sites may require architectural and engineering plans, designs, and drawings before building permits can be obtained, other sites may require a site brochure to attract private investment, and some sites may require financial packages and state funding proposals. Step 3 is like a large checkerboard consisting of Step 2 sites selected for redevelopment, actions, and recommendations that require community support, engagement, private investment capital, which combined make up a whole plan for private/public investment.

During the process of Step 3 – the Village will apply to the DOS for a Designation of the BOA area. The designation is the " Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval " signaling the Village

has met all planning requirements of the BOA Step 2 and that the plan has the support of the community. If the Designation is awarded by the state, future funding applications submitted by the Village or by PBI to various state funding agencies to assist redevelopment of selected sites and other elements of the BOA Step 2 plan may gain priority status.

The BOA Designation allows participants in the NYS Brownfield Clean-up Program (BCP) to claim an additional 5% bonus to the redevelopment tax-credit incentive for BCP-eligible sites located within the “Summit Lake and Its Watercourse BOA Step 2 Nomination” study area.

Additionally, owners of income-producing properties listed on the State and on the National Register of Historic Places may be eligible for a 20% state and a 20% federal income tax-credit up to a total of 40% for the substantial rehabilitation of historic and in some cases non-historic properties. The final dollar amount is based on the total cost of the rehabilitation. These tax-credits, combined with other state, federal, and county redevelopment financial incentives can play a significant role in the calculation of the costs involved to redevelop an income producing property.

Where are we in the BOA step process? We are at Step 3 – Implementing the BOA Step 2 study. Two sites are actively in pre-development stages. The Canal Street Mill is in process of redevelopment to become a downtown theatre, and predevelopment discussions are underway with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) aimed at the restoration of Summit Lake.

The Village of Philmont, in partnership with Philmont Beautification, Inc., continuing as Project Manager, are assembling new community working groups to predevelop the 17 sites identified in the “Summit Lake and Its Watercourse BOA Step 2 Nomination” to accomplish the study goals, vision, and recommendations, and an implementation strategy.

What does this involve? The working group(s) will each have a scope of work that is aimed at helping to prepare each of the 17 sites as shovel-ready for redevelopment. In the case of buildings and sites privately owned, the working groups assisted by Philmont Beautification, Inc., will engage the owners to talk through their plans for redevelopment.

In the case of properties publicly owned by the Village of Philmont, like Summit Lake, the Community Center / park/playground, the lakeshore waterfront, and the Canal Street Mill and parking lots, the working groups will accomplish a similar scope of work assisted by Philmont Beautification, Inc., facilitating in partnership with the Village.

Each site will require a full analysis by the Philmont Planning Board, and possibly the ZBA, to obtain building permits. In the case of Summit Lake, the process is the same, but the permitting will also require permits from the DEC and possibly engineering plans requiring approval by the EPF (Environmental Protection Fund.)

You can download the “**Summit Lake and Its Watercourse BOA Step 2 Nomination**” from the Village of Philmont web site www.philmont.org or the Philmont Beautification, Inc., web site www.pbi.org/summit to read about the 17 sites, the market study for Philmont, land ownership maps, the conceptual plans for the Community Center and Elm St. parking lots, and more. The study is also available at the Village Office.

How can you help and be involved? Join one of the working groups, attend the public events that will take place in the community regarding the progress made, or contact the Village of Philmont or PBI to receive more information about becoming involved.