

News Release

REALTOR® ASSOCIATION OF PIONEER VALLEY



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Realtor® Association of Pioneer Valley

Awarded Placemaking Micro-Grant to Help Improve Agawam



Check Presentation: From Left (ADOG Cmt): Scott Milliken, Dennis King, ADOG VP, Ben Scranton, RAPV CEO, Barbara Lussier, Deborah Sanchez, ADOG President, Cheryl Barnhart, ADOG Sec'y, Sue Drumm, RAPV Board of Directors, Anna Beard, Mary Ellen Kennedy.

Springfield, MA (June 24, 2014) – The Realtor® Association of Pioneer Valley has received a \$2,100 Placemaking-Micro Grant from the National Association of Realtors® to help make Agawam a better place to live and work by transforming an unused public space into a vibrant community destination. The grant is intended to help Realtor® Associations partner with others to plan, organize, implement and maintain placemaking activities in their communities.

The Realtor® Association of Pioneer Valley will use the funds to support the Agawam Dog Owners Group (ADOG) a volunteer group dedicated to fundraising for the park. ADOG, along with Christopher Sparks, director of the Agawam Parks and Recreation Department, will oversee building of the park on formerly unused municipal property.

The mission of ADOG is to create a fenced-in, off-leash dog park where well-behaved canine citizens can exercise in a clean, safe environment without endangering people, property, or wildlife. The

park will be open to dog owners and non-dog owners alike. Currently there is nowhere in the Agawam area for people to bring their dogs to run free, socialize and exercise.

Deborah Sanchez, president of the Agawam Dog Owners Group, said the project received a \$245,000 grant in 2013 from The Stanton Foundation. “The funding represents 90 percent of the hard construction costs,” she said. The Stanton Foundation is a private foundation known for its donations to dog-related public projects. \$14,000 will come from Community Preservation Act funds, unanimously approved by the Agawam Town Council in October 2013.

Sanchez said ADOG has been conducting some of their own fundraising by selling calendars and sponsoring field trips. “We are thrilled to receive support from the Realtor® Association,” she said. “It puts us one step closer to seeing our dream a reality. We are most appreciative,” she added.

“Realtors® live, work and volunteer in their communities and take immense pride in working to improve them,” said Patrick Nolan, President of the Realtor® Association of Pioneer Valley. “The concept of Placemaking is one where citizens can gather. It can help foster healthier, more social and economically viable communities. It creates places where people feel a strong stake in their neighborhoods and are committed to making things better.”

“This grant will allow us to address areas in our community that are in need of improvement or redevelopment and create a place where friends and neighbors can come together,” said Sue Drumm, a member of the Realtor® Association of Pioneer Valley Board of Directors and a driving force behind securing funding from the Realtor® Association.

Placemaking grants are awarded to local and state Realtor® associations to help them and their members initiate placemaking projects in the community, like turning a parking lot into a farmer’s market or a vacant lot into a playground. Realtor® associations and their Realtor® members are actively engaged in the community and know the neighborhoods and the properties that would benefit most from these improvement efforts.

“As the Agawam area becomes more attractive and welcoming, nearby properties may also increase in value,” Nolan added.

For more information on the Dog Park placemaking initiative, visit www.AgawamDogPark.com
To find out more about National Association of Realtors® placemaking grants visit, realtoractioncenter.org/Placemaking.

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About the REALTOR® Association of Pioneer Valley:

Organized in 1915, the REALTOR® Association of Pioneer Valley (RAPV) is a professional non-profit trade organization with more than 1,600 members in the Pioneer Valley of western Massachusetts. RAPV covers 68 cities and towns in Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden counties. RAPV is one of 1,500 local chapters of the National Association of REALTORS®. The term, REALTOR®, is a registered trademark for use exclusively by members of the National Association of REALTORS®, whose members subscribe to a strict Code of Ethics.

Mission:

To be the business and public policy advocate for REALTORS®.

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