

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes Draft – January 2014**

1 **Date:** January 15, 2014
 2 **Time:** 3:00-5:00pm
 3 **Location:** CVB/Chamber of Commerce
 4

5 **Attendees:**

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
Anne Gossen	✓	Arts-Culture	John Spence	✓	CAP, Non-Voting
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large	Bruce Stoff	✓	CVB, Non-Voting
Anthony Hopson	✓	Ithaca College	Dwight Mengel	A	Transportation, Non-Voting
Christy Agnese	✓	At-Large	Gary Ferguson	A	DIA, Non-Voting
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture	Jean McPheeters	✓	Chamber, Non-Voting
Ian Golden	✓	Recreation	Martha Armstrong	✓	TCAD, Non-Voting
John Gutenberger	✓	Cornell	Will Burbank	✓	TC Legislature, Non-Voting
Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large	Beverly Baker	A	Associate Member
Miriam Musco	E	At-Large	Jon Reis	A	Associate Member
Lynnette Scofield	E	Lodging	Tom Knipe	✓	Staff
Rick Adie	✓	Lodging	Jennifer Turner	✓	Staff
Rita Rosenberg	A	Agriculture			
Stephen Nunley	✓	At-Large			
Steve Hugo	✓	At-Large			
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large			
Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture			
Sue Stafford	✓	TC3			
Susie Monagan	E	Arts-Culture			

Also in attendance: Ronda Roaring, (Ilovethefingerlakes.com), Christine Lam (TCAD), Kelly White (Illume Projects)

15 **Agenda**

- 16 Welcome New STPB Members and County administrative staff
 17 Approval of November 2013 Minutes
 18 Privilege of the Floor
 19 Nominating Committee – vote to elect 2014 officers
 20 Chairs Report
 21 STPB process improvement next steps – **Ethan Ash**
 22 City of Ithaca Parking Manager Presentation – **Frank Nagy**
 23 Tompkins County Priority Trails Strategy Presentation – **Tom Knipe**
 24 CVB Report
 25 Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan Presentation – **Tom Knipe**
 26 Spring 2014 Tourism Grants – **Tom Knipe**
 27

28 **Discussion**

29 **The meeting was called to order** at 3:00 PM.
 30

31 **Welcome** new members Ian Golden (Recreation), Anne Gossen (Arts/Culture), John Gutenberger (Cornell representative) and Jennifer Turner administrative assistant to the Tompkins County Planning Department.
 32

33 **November 2013 STPB meeting minutes** were approved with the change of one sentence that was updated at the request of Jean McPheeters.
 34

35 **Nominating Committee** Anthony Hopson made a motion to nominate Rick Adie to serve as Chair and Sue Perlgut as Vice Chair. Christy Agnese seconded the motion. Rick Adie and Sue Perlgut were elected by unanimous vote as chair and vice-chair of STPB for 2014. Rick Adie and Sue Perlgut abstained from voting.
 36 There were no votes of opposition.
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44 **Chair's Report:** Jean McPheeters is retiring from the Chamber of Commerce. Tiffany Gallagher has left her
45 position as associate member. The Holiday Inn will now be "Hotel Ithaca". Beverly Baker, Jon Reis and
46 Stuart Stein are appointed as associate members. Stuart Stein will be working on a new project on behalf of
47 the STPB that will be discussed further in the next couple of months. The BASS Tournament moved its
48 location to Auburn and Union Springs. The Budget Committee will be conducting a meeting in February to
49 look at year end numbers and reallocations that may need to be done in regards to the Ticket Center. There
50 is a tourism grant workshop that will be taking place from 2-3:30pm at the Chamber of Commerce on
51 January 22nd; board members are invited and encouraged to attend. The Legislature changes are Mike
52 Lane as the new Chair and Jim Dennis is the Vice Chair. Sue Stafford spoke regarding the TC3 Farm to
53 Bistro grant from the Regional Economic Development Council. She thanked the STPB for the letter of
54 support. She is hoping to gain approval by the foundation board in the next week. They were awarded 2.3
55 million dollars for the entire project. A draft of 2014 STPB committee assignments was passed out. Sue
56 Perlgut encouraged feedback regarding the assignments and mentioned the desire for one more person to
57 join the Membership Committee. Tom Knipe passed out conflict of interest forms to be filled out and
58 elaborated further on what it means and when it can apply to members.
59

60 **Strategic Priorities** - Rick Adie mentioned the strategic priorities and the four recommended actions for the
61 board brought forth by the P&E Committee in November 2013 this year. **Action 1** - is deconstructing the
62 failure of the Finger Lakes Wine Center for lessons learned for STPB and staff. An initial investigation will
63 be conducted by the county staff to be followed by STPB. **Action 2** - convening the Ag and Culinary
64 Tourism Working group beginning in mid-2014 to develop a 5 year culinary tourism strategy and
65 implementation plan. **Action 3** – convene a Heritage Tourism working group to encourage implementation
66 of heritage tourism related actions. **Action 4** – convene a Higher Education Tourism Working Group with its
67 proposed specific focus in 2014 to be increasing the presence of visitor information. More focus on the
68 implementation of these groups will occur in February. Rick Adie went over salient points from member
69 phone interviews done by Sue and Rick in December and suggested having informational sessions for
70 prospective members. Sue mentioned some of the suggestions which included touring Rita's Farm B&B,
71 receiving a presentation from Susie Monagan about her recent work in Ireland and having the STPB do a
72 campus tour of Cornell.
73

74 **STPB Process Improvement Next Steps** – Ethan Ash laid out a proposal to facilitate a process
75 improvement exercise for the STPB at the February STPB meeting. He has provided similar services to a
76 Schuyler County group and would offer this support pro-bono to STPB with his business partner Kelly White.
77 He asked for a sense of the board's interest in pursuing such an exercise and solicited input on what
78 outcomes STPB members would want if the February STPB meeting were used as a working session.
79 STPB Officers will work further with Ethan, Tom and the P&E Committee to define an agenda.
80

81 **City of Ithaca Parking Manager Presentation** – Frank Nagy gave a presentation on his task to make
82 parking sustainable in the City of Ithaca. An important component of this is getting downtown workers and
83 long term parkers into the parking garages so that more on-street spaces are available for visitors and
84 business patrons. He is working on implementing new payment systems that will both capture more
85 revenues and enhance payment options. He is also working to reframe the parking attendant job to
86 "Ambassadors" and mentioned some of the successful Ambassador programs in other communities. He
87 suggested the board may have interest in learning about these programs in order to up-scale the existing
88 Ambassadors programs. Sue Stafford and Bruce Stoff briefly described some of our existing Ambassador
89 efforts through the hospitality Star Program and the CVB.
90

91 **CVB Report** – The governor announced the BASS tournament moved from Ithaca. The year finished around
92 50k under budget. The Downtown Visitor Center is working with Community Arts Partnership on a
93 partnership to operate the Center with the DIA. It is the 8th year for Teachers' Winter Recess. Bruce voiced
94 his concerns that the event is not the best use of CVB's time. He would like to keep this event alive while
95 moving it outside of the CVB, and will be exploring options for partnership with an outside agency. The
96 Marketing Advisory Committee will be reinstated this year. The travel guide redesign is going to press next
97 week and will achieve savings of \$50,000 a year which will be reinvested in other marketing areas. 2013
98 traffic for both visitors' centers was down 9%. Web statistics showed 446,000 visits which generated 1.7
99 million page views. This is up from the previous year's 323,000 visits. The mobile site doubled in traffic over
100 the past year.

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101 **Tompkins Priority Trails Strategy Presentation** – Tom Knipe presented the Tompkins Priority Trails
102 Strategy and requested STPB's endorsement. He has worked on the document with the Creating Healthy
103 Places Project and the Tompkins County Ad-Hoc Trails Advisory Group in order to support implementation of
104 the trails-related Critical Action in the Strategic Tourism Plan. The paper describes a vision for completing
105 and connecting four multi-use trails in Tompkins County, along with the Finger Lakes Trail. When developed
106 this will enhance our region's draw as a destination for outstanding trail-based recreation and transportation.
107 The next stop will be the Planning Committee of the Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council; a goal
108 there is to have this strategy placed into the ITCTC's long range transportation plan which will help guide
109 future transportation investments in the County. Tom will also bring it to TCCOG and the County Legislature.
110 Tom received feedback from STPB members regarding emphasizing the economic development story
111 behind this and the overall value to economic development and quality of life. He also further described his
112 role in providing leadership for this effort.

113
114 **Spring 2014 Tourism Events** – Tom Knipe introduced the Google calendar of events for upcoming events
115 funded by the tourism program. The calendar will feature committee meeting dates, STPB meetings and
116 other workshops. He welcomed suggestions on other ways to use the calendar or event ideas to include.
117 Spring tourism grant applications are due on February 21st. There will be two upcoming meetings, one for
118 orientation to the new grant software and grant review process and the other will be a meeting to go over the
119 applications. The Tourism Marketing & Advertising, New Tourism Initiative and Tourism Project Grant
120 applications are now being hosted online.

121
122 **The Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail presentation** was tabled to a later meeting.

123
124 **Priority Trails Strategy Action Item** - Martha Armstrong made the motion to endorse the Priority Trails
125 Strategy. Anne Gossen seconded it. There were 11 votes in favor. Anthony Hopson abstained and there
126 were no votes in opposition. The motion passed.

127
128 With no further business the meeting adjourned shortly after 5pm.

129
130 **Next Meeting Scheduled**
131 Wednesday, February 19, 2013