

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Meeting Minutes – August 2012

Date: August 15, 2012
Time: 3:00-4:30pm
Location: Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large	Sue Perlgut	exc	Arts-Culture
Anthony Hopson	exc	Ithaca College, Vice-Chair	Sue Stafford	✓	TC3
Beverly Baker	✓	At-Large	Susie Monagan	✓	Arts-Culture
David Sparrow	✓	At-Large, Chair	Tim Joseph	✓	At-Large
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture	VACANT		At-Large
Gary Stewart		Cornell	Brett Bossard	✓	CAP, Non-Voting
Jon Reis	exc	Arts-Culture	Fred Bonn	exc	CVB, Non-Voting
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large	Gary Ferguson	✓	DIA, Non-Voting
Paul Tatar	✓	Recreation	Jean McPheeters	exc	Chamber, Non-Voting
Rick Adie	✓	Lodging	Martha Armstrong	exc	TCAD, Non-Voting
Rita Rosenberg	✓	Agriculture	Will Burbank		TC Legislature, Non-Voting
Scott Wiggins	✓	Lodging	VACANT		Transportation, Non-Voting
Stuart Stein	✓	At-Large	Tom Knipe	✓	Staff

Also in attendance: Andrew Defran, Rhonda Roaring, Kathy Wilsea (Tompkins County Planning Dept.)

Agenda

Finger Lakes Museum Presentation
 Approval of minutes for June and July, 2012 STPB meetings
 Chair's report
 Recommend Adoption of 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan
 CVB Report for June & July
 Membership and Bylaws Announcement
 Community Celebrations Program Update
 Announcements

Discussion

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 PM by the Chair, David Sparrow. Visitors were introduced: Rhonda Roaring of ilovethefingerlakes.com, Andrew Defran recently employed by Merrill Lynch in Ithaca and looking for a volunteer opportunity in public sector economic development, and John Adamski from the Finger Lakes Museum.

Finger Lakes Museum Presentation – John Adamski, President of the Board of Trustees and Executive Director of the Museum, described the origins of the Museum project and the plan for its creation. He wrote an article four years ago for Finger Lakes magazine about having a museum in the Finger Lakes. A poll was conducted on the magazine's website and response was very positive. This museum would showcase Finger Lakes culture and natural history. Their *Imagine A Place* video was shown (available on their website: www.FingerLakesMuseum.org). In the discussion period, John said they will probably open in 2015. They have purchased the former Branchport Elementary School, which will be an education center and collaborative space. They received some funds from New York State, and have been invited to apply again. Startup is expected to tally over \$30 million. They are currently working with over 90 volunteers. Sustainable funding is not all in place yet. This project is intended to be regional, not for Keuka Lake or Yates County, to impact all 14 counties in the Finger Lakes Region. This museum is expected to serve as a hub to send visitors to other sites, too, as well as draw visitors from the entire region. They

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Meeting Minutes – August 2012

have established a partnership with the Rochester Museum & Science Center and expect other partnerships. The anticipated annual operating budget is \$2.5 million. John will be contacting other regional tourism projects and also interacting with Native American groups. In the first phase, the aquarium will be the main feature, and the 19th century winery, wildlife exhibits, interactive displays and Gallery of Lakes are also planned to be completed early. There will also be rotating exhibits. John welcomes ideas for interacting with other groups in the region.

June and July (special budget meeting) minutes were approved unanimously. In the first sentence of the July draft minutes, “agenda” was changed to “budget”.

Chair’s Report – David Sparrow reported that the 2013 budget was approved by the Legislature’s PDEQ Committee.

Strategic Tourism Plan – Tom Knipe discussed the changes that led to the revised draft document, and the next steps for adopting it. STPB’s Planning & Evaluation Committee met to review public comments and address other final changes. Next steps: STPB recommends to PDEQ, which recommends to the County Legislature. Overall goals were incorporated and photos changed to include more winter shots and shots showing our diversity. An Executive Summary will be crafted, and that would become a hand-out brochure that would include a web address. Tom has been meeting with lead agencies for the Critical Actions. Thanks were extended to Brett Bossard for design work. Brett said Anthony Hopson has indicated Ithaca College is willing to print copies of the document. Fred Bonn has volunteered CVB resources to create an online flip-book version of the Plan. The Committee’s presentation of the Plan constituting a motion, it was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Convention & Visitors Bureau Report – Fred Bonn was absent from today’s meeting, but his report was included with the agenda. David reported Fred will introduce the CVB’s new Integrated Marketing Manager next month. CVB staff member Bruce Stoff is leaving, and Paul Tatar suggested extending our thanks to him, as he was instrumental in the success of Teachers Week and other initiatives. A letter of appreciation will be sent.

Tourism Partner Awards – Rick Adie reported for the committee. Three awards have gone through the Legislature, and two more have been recommended but not finalized by the Legislature (Highway Superintendents and Dragonboat Festival). The committee recommends an award for Jane Miller and the Cayuga Lake Triathlon, which passed by unanimous voice vote. Engraved paving stones will be prepared for the trailhead of the Cayuga Lake Waterfront Trail at the CVB. Mary Rachun (CVB) has expressed interest in planning a reception/media event when the stones are unveiled.

Community Celebrations Grants – updated guidelines – Tom Knipe reported the fall round has been announced through a press release and distribution of information to tourism partners. The committee met to review guidelines and create a scoring scheme so the guidelines can be easily implemented. New guidelines regarding diversity and sustainability have been added. The fall round will cover events in January – April 2013. This is the only grant program that retained funding to use in a fall round, and Tom expects 6 to 8 applications. David expressed thanks to the committee for its work. Gary Ferguson said the guidelines are now very clear for all applicants.

Announcements –

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
Meeting Minutes – August 2012**

- Paul Tatar announced a canal conference will be held in Oswego, and registration is online. Stu Stein said this is a group of non-profit organizations that operate along the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor.
- Rita Rosenberg thanked members who shared information on the Gad!Zukes event last month. Cooperative Extension also helped with organization and publicity. The event was successful, with about 50 to 75 total visitors who selected sites to visit, so different sites had different attendance numbers. Next year they will make sure they have more things for kids to do.
- Brett Bossard extended thanks to all who helped with the Ithaca Artists Market. 68 artists and approximately 16 organizations participated.
- Tim Joseph said he attended a meeting of the Hydrilla Task Force this morning. The big concern is the possible invasion the south end of Cayuga Lake by Hydrilla. The Task Force is monitoring the Inlet and has selected 1600 sites for sampling. So far, 1200 have been checked and all have no growth.
- Stu Stein asked if we had a report on the Dragon Boat Festival. Tim said they expected lower attendance this year, as the dates were near the dates of the world championships. They are part of a circuit, so the date is assigned and can't be changed locally. Tom Knipe will be meeting with a festival staff person tomorrow, and will suggest more sponsorships.
- Tom reported that the NYS Secretary of State attended a ribbon cutting ceremony in Ithaca for Phase 3 of the Waterfront Trail two weeks ago.
- The Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail plan is being implemented with the award of the consultant contract to Alta Planning and Rick Manning Landscape Architects.
- The Museum of the Earth has received a \$145,000 federal grant for its glacier exhibit.
- Sue Stafford expressed thanks to STPB for making the TC3 Hospitality Program work. The fall semester at TC3 starts 8/23, and on-campus housing is full (capacity 800). This fall the program is hosting international business students from France, who will be touring the area to learn about our wine production. She also thanked STPB for support of the Hospitality Star program, the most successful to date.
- Beverly Baker announced she became an honorary grandmother on 7/31.
- David Sparrow announced the next STPB meeting will be held on 9/19 in the Borg Warner Room of the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce Building.

With no further business, the meeting David declared the meeting adjourned at 4:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Department

Approved by STPB on September 19, 2012

Next Meetings Scheduled

Wednesday, September 19 – 3pm
Wednesday, October 17 – 3pm