Tompkins County
Strategic Tourism Planning Board

May 21, 2014
3:00 pm – 4:50 pm
STATE THEATRE OF ITHACA

Meeting Agenda

Presentations on the Big Screen	**Minutes**
1. State Theatre Presentation– Doug Levine	15
2. Airport Presentation – Ewan Barr	20
3. Downtown Ithaca Presentation – Gary Ferguson	20

STPB Business
Move to seating on the State Theatre Stage

4. March Meeting Minutes	2
5. Privilege of the Floor	3
6. Chair's Report – Rick Adie	5
7. Staff Report – Tom Knipe	5
8. CVB Monthly Report – Bruce Stoff	10
9. STPB Budget Committee Report	5
10. Coltivare Update	5
11. Ag & Culinary Tourism Task Force Report – Rita Rosenberg-Barber	5
12. Special STPB Committee to review ACOD program - FYI	5
13. Member comments on recently attended funded events	5

STPB Social to Follow at Lot 10, 106 S Cayuga St

Agenda Packet

- Draft April 2014 STPB Meeting Minutes
- CVB May 2014 Report

Next Meeting June 18, 2014

MISSION:
The Strategic Tourism Planning Board is charged by the Tompkins County Legislature with providing oversight and strategic direction for tourism initiatives that ***promote economic development*** and ***enhance the quality of life*** in Tompkins County.

CVB Report
May 2014

CVB 2015 Budget Forecast

In its guidance for 2015 budgeting, the County requested room-tax funded organizations to decrease budget requests by 3.5 percent from 2014. The CVB plans to comply with this request and expects minimal impact to programing. Cost savings will come from the smaller travel guide (introduced earlier this year) and the previously planned elimination of Winter Recess. One note: Admin costs will rise with inflation so the share of budget devoted to administration will rise as a percent of overall budget.

Sales: Group Tours

Last month, the CVB Sales staff reported that it had already booked three motorcoach tours in 2014 representing roughly $60,000 in economic activity. We're happy to report that our increased outreach to the tour market continues to pay off; we now have seven tours in the works worth more than $100,000 in economic activity. Booking pace is well ahead of 2013.

Sales: Chinese Market

Groups from mainland China represent a major market opportunity. These groups routinely travel from NYC to Niagara Falls and require a midway stopover. Corning has been very successful attracting these visitors. We're taking a major step with this market next week. Sales Director Mary Rachun will attend the NAJ Conference in NYC which is the major marketplace for operators catering to Chinese tourists. We're pursuing key operators with a distinctive sales tool: a hardcover book in Mandarin and English telling the story of Ithaca. The goal is to turn an unknown place into a must-see stop between NYC and Niagara. (Sample provide)

Sales: Meetings & Conventions

We continue to pursue meeting sales, but as discussed previously, we're fielding objections based on price and facilities. The most recent example is the 2015 Wine Bloggers Conference (200 attendees, three night, June 2015). This piece of business has been in development several years and ran into cost/facilities problems going to contract at the end of April. While signed contracts have been difficult to come by, our lead generation/referral pace is ahead of last year.

Visitor Services Downtown Open House

Thanks to all the board members who attended the visitor services open house at the Downtown Visitor Center, May 6. The space is jointly operated by CVB, DIA and CAP making it cost effective way to support the missions of all three organizations. We used the occasion as a local PR opportunity with the unveiling of a large mural by local artist Dan Burgevin. Sample media: http://www.lansingstar.com/around-town/10677-giant-ithaca-mural-unveiling-marks-relaunch-of-downtown-visitor-center

Marketing Midweek Overnights
The CVB is launching a major digital marketing campaign this month designed to boost midweek overnights. Responding to STPB's request for transparency, the campaign is 100% trackable and is designed to yield clear measures of ROI. With an investment of approximately $100,000, It is the largest single advertising campaign ever launched by the CVB. We will present the campaign in detail next month.

PR
Ithaca and the Finger Lakes were featured in a major article in Hemispheres Magazine in April. Hemispheres is the inflight publication of United Airlines. Credit our regional PR campaign administered through Finger Lakes Regional Tourism Council.
http://www.hemispheresmagazine.com/2014/04/01/three-perfect-days-finger-lakes/

Ithaca was the focus of a glowing article in the Toronto Star by travel editor Jim Byers. Byers was a guest of the CVB, we arranged his itinerary with the help of Argos Inn.
http://www.thestar.com/life/travel_blog/2014/05/lovely_finger_lakes_of_new_york_and_cool_town_of_ithaca.html