

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Final Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2018

1 **Date:** January 17, 2018
 2 **Time:** 3:00-4:30pm
 3 **Location:** Hilton Garden Inn, Lower Level, 130 E. Seneca St., Ithaca, NY 14850
 4

5 **Attendees:**

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
David Blake	P	At-Large	Martha Armstrong	P	TCAD, Non-Voting
Brett Bossard	E	Arts-Culture	Peggy Coleman	P	Chamber, Non-Voting
Kelli Cartmill	P	Lodging	Gary Ferguson	P	DIA, Non-Voting
Josh Friedman	P	Arts-Culture	Dan Klein	E	TC Legislature, Non-Voting
Steve Hugo	P	At-Large		P	Transportation, Non-Voting
Ken Jupiter	P	At-Large	Dwight Mengel		
Anne Kellerman	P	At-Large	John Spence	E	CAP, Non-Voting
Doug Levine	P	Arts-Culture	Jennifer Tavares	P	Chamber, Non-Voting
Mike Mellor	P	At-Large			
Cara Nichols	P	Ithaca College	Ethan Ash	A	Associate Member
Stephen Nunley	P	At-Large	Jim Brophy	A	Associate Member
Barbara Romano	P	Cornell University	Carol Kammen	A	Associate Member
Sue Stafford	P	TC3	Jon Reis	E	Associate Member
Julie Swigart	P	Lodging	Mary Kate Wheeler	A	Associate Member
Baruch Whitehead	P	Arts-Culture			
Scott Wiggins	E	At-Large	Tom Knipe	P	Staff
Andy Zepp	P	Recreation	Kristin McCarthy	P	Staff
VACANT	N/A	Agriculture			

7 **Guests:** Ronda Roaring (ilovethefingerlakes.com); Rod Howe (History Center); Susan Holland, Pat
 8 Longoria (Historic Ithaca); Sarah Imes (CVB); Dan Fenton, David Holder, Bethanie Parker,
 9 Geraldine Guichardo (JLL)

10 Chair Kelli Cartmill called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm.
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 13 **Opening Remarks** – Kelli welcomed the group to the meeting and reminded them of the
 14 reception for Tom Knipe taking place afterward in Kilpatrick’s. Everyone was invited and
 15 encouraged to attend.
 16

17 **December 20, 2017 STPB Meeting Minutes**

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 19 **ACTION:** Cara Nichols moved to approve the December minutes. David Blake seconded. Motion
 20 carried.
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22 **Privilege of the Floor** -- Ronda Roaring shared a warm anecdote and thanked Tom Knipe for his
 23 contributions to tourism in Tompkins County.
 24

25 **Changes to the Agenda** -- None
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27 **2018 Officer Election – STPB Nominating Committee**
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29 **ACTION:** Cara Nichols moved to nominate Kelli Cartmill as Chair of the STPB. David Blake
30 seconded. Motion carried.

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32 **Chair's Report**

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34 Kelli continues to work on draft committee assignments and asked anyone who has not signed up
35 for a committee to do so at their earliest convenience. She also noted there are still vacancies for
36 a few committee chair positions.

37

38 **Heritage Tourism Implementation Update – Rod Howe and Susan Holland**

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40 Rod began the presentation by introducing Susan Holland, the new director of Historic Ithaca. Rod
41 and Susan gave a quick overview of the Heritage Tourism Implementation Plan, which a few
42 people in the audience helped write, as well as shared strategies the Heritage Tourism team
43 envisions implementing for 2019 and beyond. Rod reported that the County Legislature had
44 passed the grant proposal submitted by Historic Ithaca to help fund a staff position. The Ithaca
45 Heritage website lists the numerous tours available in our area, and meeting attendees were
46 encouraged to provide feedback on other tours they'd like to see take root in the County. Ideas
47 included the history of higher education, Underground Railroad, historic theaters tour, and barn
48 tours. Susan mentioned the PocketSites app and reported the Walk and Talk tours will continue
49 throughout 2018. Also, the Tommy Plane will fly on September 22. Rod said that a steering
50 committee will be forming to create a business plan for the Tompkins Center for History and
51 Culture, which is scheduled to open in 2019, and spoke about the Heritage Ambassadors program
52 launching this spring.

53

54 **Membership & Bylaws Committee Report – Kelli Cartmill**

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56 **ACTION:** Kelli Cartmill moved to recommend Monika Roth for the Agriculture seat. Sue Stafford
57 seconded. Motion carried.

58

59 Erica Frenay will be joining the STPB as an associate member.

60

61 **Planning & Evaluation Committee Updates – Ken Jupiter**

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63 Ken reported that the committee received three Letters of Interest for Strategic Tourism
64 Implementation Grants and they are recommending all of them. They included: \$30,000 for the
65 Town of Dryden for a preliminary design study to extend the Dryden Rail Trail across Route 13;
66 \$18,000 for the CVB for gap funding for the Agricultural Tourism Program; and \$9,000 for
67 Workforce Development to underwrite a new ambassador program.

68

69 **Outdoor Recreation Tourism Task Force Presentation of Draft Plan – Andy Zepp and Tom Knipe**

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71 Tom spoke for a few minutes about the background of the Outdoor Recreation Tourism initiative,
72 which features heavily in the Strategic Tourism Plan for 2020 and, according to the last Visitor

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73 Profile Study, is the second-largest draw to our community, after higher education. Andy next
74 spoke about the process that went into drafting the plan, including a small committee that
75 spearheaded the effort, a public workshop attended by roughly 60 people at the
76 Space@Greenstar, and outreach to various stakeholder groups. Tom then spoke about our area's
77 various natural assets, including lower-profile ones like the Emerald Necklace. Other projects Tom
78 mentioned included the Black Diamond Trail, Gateway Trail, South Hill Recreationway, Dryden
79 RailTrail, ithacatrails.org, various events at the Ithaca Children's Garden, Cayuga SUP CUP, and
80 Ithaca Bike Trail. Andy said the Finger Lakes Land Trust is coordinating with the Town of Ithaca on
81 developing a trail from Robert Treman State Park to downtown. Tom pointed out the Six Mile
82 Creek Gorge has a lot of potential to attract visitors, but for now it is not managed for recreation
83 and lacks necessary signage and other infrastructure. Possible structural changes included in the
84 draft plan are capacity building support to groups that would develop capital grant programs.
85 Andy added that it could be that such a group has yet to form. A second funding proposal is for a
86 capital reserve fund for outdoor recreation. A question-and-answer session followed.

87

88 **CVB Monthly Report – Peggy Coleman/Visitor Profile Study Update – Dan Fenton, David Holder,**
89 **Bethanie Parker (JLL)**

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91 Peggy asked if there were questions regarding the latest monthly report, which was included in
92 the agenda packet, especially regarding group sales because Sarah Imes, director of that
93 department at the CVB, was in the audience. Peggy added that each month a staff member from
94 the CVB will be joining her at the STPB meeting. She then yielded the floor to Dan Fenton, David
95 Holder, and Bethanie Parker from JLL, who were there to update the group on the Visitor Profile
96 Study. Through the study, Dan said they hoped to study the behavior not only of people who did
97 visit Tompkins County, but also of those who did not take the trip, to identify what is missing from
98 the area to entice them to visit. He encouraged the group to think of the survey in terms of what
99 it might reveal in terms of possible future initiatives, and in what we would like to learn. Dan also
100 asked the group for feedback on what sorts of questions they'd like to see included in the survey.
101 They strategized on key locations for their staff to perform visitor-intercept studies. They are
102 going to look at both those intercept studies and the broader survey results.

103

104 **Staff Report – Tom Knipe**

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106 In lieu of a staff report, everyone gave Tom a round of applause and headed downstairs for his
107 after-party. Josh Friedman thanked Kelli, the Hilton, and Kilpatrick's for the hospitality and said a
108 few remarks would be given on Tom's behalf at 5 pm.

109

110 The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 by Chair Kelli Cartmill.