

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Final Meeting Minutes

1 **Date:** January 15, 2020
 2 **Time:** 3:00-5:00pm
 3 **Location:** Tompkins Co. CVB/Chamber of Commerce, 904 E. Shore Drive, Ithaca NY
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Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation
Brett Bossard	P	Arts-Culture
Kelli Cartmill	P	Lodging
Laura Winter Falk	P	At-Large
Josh Friedman	P	Arts-Culture
Connie Kan	E	At-Large
Katie Kutz	P	Lodging
Doug Levine	E	Arts-Culture
Kelly Makosch	P	At-Large
Rick Manning	P	At-Large
Erin Marteau	E	At-Large
Greg Mezey	P	At-Large
Cara Nichols	E	Ithaca College
Todd Parlato	P	At-Large
Barbara Romano	P	Cornell University
Monika Roth	P	Agriculture
Deb Mohlenhoff	P	TC3
Steven Stull	P	Arts-Culture
Scott Wiggins	P	At-Large
<i>Peggy Coleman</i>	P	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>

Name	✓	Representation
<i>Gary Ferguson</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Anna Kelles</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>TC Legislature, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Heather McDaniel</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>TCAD, Non-Voting</i>
<i>John Spence</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>CAP, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Jennifer Tavares</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Scot Vanderpool</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>
<i>Ethan Ash</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Jim Brophy</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Erica Frenay</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Henry Granison</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Ken Jupiter</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Carol Kammen</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Michael Miller</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Jon Reis</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Wylie Schwartz</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Nick Helmholdt</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Staff</i>
<i>Kristin McCarthy</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Staff</i>

7 **Guests:** Ronda Roaring
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9 **Opening Remarks/Changes to the Agenda** – Chair Kelli Cartmill welcomed everyone to the meeting.

10 **Privilege of the Floor** – No one from the public chose to speak.

11 **Action: Approval of December 2019 STPB Meeting Minutes** – Scott Wiggins made a motion to approve the
 12 December 18, 2019 draft meeting minutes, which Doug Levine seconded. Motion carried.
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14 **Chair’s Report – Kelli Cartmill**

15 Kelli passed around the 2020 committee list for everyone to review and confirm their selections. The
 16 working committees should all try to meet in the coming weeks so that they are prepared to break into
 17 groups and set goals for the year at the February STPB meeting.
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19 **Staff Report – Nick Helmholdt**

- 20 • Distributed Conflict of Interest forms for 2020 to members to fill out and return.
- 21 • Draft Strategic Tourism Plan, 2021-2027, will be ready for final endorsement by the STPB, legislative
 22 Housing and Economic Development Committee, and full County Legislature in February.
- 23 • Shared highlights from 2019 Q4 Hotel Room Occupancy Tax Report: County collected \$2,909,407 in
 24 2019, which is \$25,593 less than the budget. Fund balance reserves are in place to cover the shortfall.
 25 Room tax collections will be monitored monthly with County Administration. Trend in growth paid by
 26 smaller establishments and high share of tax-exempt sales. Occupancy stayed flat; average nightly rate
 27 decreased. Kelli pointed out that budget was based on a supply increase, but the Hilton Canopy

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28 opened later than expected. Members discussed Airbnb voluntary agreement, and difference in room
29 tax rates for properties with more than 10 rooms (5%) and fewer than 10 rooms (3%).

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Conference Center Working Group Update – Gary Ferguson

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Gary Ferguson gave an update on plans for financing and development of a downtown conference center as part of the Green Street Garage project. To provide additional context, Peggy Coleman covered ins and outs of creating a tourism improvement district and talked about conference center working group's collaboration with consulting firm Civitas. Discussion covered topics such as need for more "Conference Center for Dummies" messaging about how it would benefit the local community (e.g. drive home loss in business and tourism revenue from missed conference opportunities; potential for job creation and increased sales and room taxes; have downtown business and restaurant owners speak in favor at public meetings with government officials; address resident concerns and misinformation regarding traffic and parking). Conference center working group is hammering out details of pro forma, and project will go before County Legislature, City of Ithaca Common Council, and Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency for review in early February.

Member Announcements

- Members shared news of upcoming events of interest.
- Monika Roth handed out postcards announcing the "Buy Local – Foods Within Your Reach." (buylocalfoodny.org) web directory, a project of Cornell Cooperative Extension.
- Chamber of Commerce is offering a 10-day cruise to Greece next October.
- The Finger Lakes region is a finalist in Frommer's "Best Places to Go in 2020" poll.

Chair Kelli Cartmill adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm.