

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)  
DRAFT Meeting Minutes – October 2013**

1 **Date:** October 16, 2013  
 2 **Time:** 3:00-5:00pm  
 3 **Location:** Convention and Visitor's Bureau  
 4  
 5

**Attendees:**

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large	Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large
Anthony Hopson	✓	Ithaca College	Susie Monagan	E	Arts-Culture
Christy Agnese	✓	At-Large			
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture	<i>John Spence</i>	✓	<i>CAP, Non-Voting</i>
Gary Stewart		Cornell	<i>Bruce Stoff</i>	✓	<i>CVB, Non-Voting</i>
Jon Reis	✓	Arts-Culture	<i>Dwight Mengel</i>	✓	<i>Transportation, Non-Voting</i>
Miriam Musco	E	At-Large	<i>Gary Ferguson</i>	✓	<i>DIA, Non-Voting</i>
Paul Tatar	✓	Recreation	<i>Jean McPheeters</i>	✓	<i>Chamber, Non-Voting</i>
Rick Adie	✓	Lodging	<i>Martha Armstrong</i>	✓	<i>TCAD, Non-Voting</i>
Rita Rosenberg	E	Agriculture	<i>Will Burbank</i>	✓	<i>TC Legislature, Non-Voting</i>
Scott Wiggins		Lodging	<i>Anne Gossen</i>		<i>Associate Member</i>
Stephen Nunley	✓	At-Large	<i>Beverly Baker</i>		<i>Associate Member</i>
Steve Hugo	✓	At-Large	<i>Ken Jupiter</i>		<i>Associate Member</i>
Stuart Stein	✓	At-Large	<i>Tiffany Gallagher</i>	✓	<i>Associate Member</i>
Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture			
Sue Stafford	✓	TC3	Tom Knipe	✓	Staff

7

8 **Also in attendance:** Dan Klein, Ronda Roaring (ilovethefingerlakes.com), Brandon Seager, Instructor of  
 9 Wine Marketing at TC3, and Mary Lou Szabol (Tompkins County Planning Dept.)

10  
 11 **Agenda**

- 12 Approval of minutes for September, 2013 STPB meeting
- 13 Chair's Report
- 14 Privilege of the Floor
- 15 Fall 2013 Tourism Grants
- 16 Tourism Partner Award Recommendations
- 17 Membership & Bylaws Committee Report
- 18 Beautification Program Annual Report
- 19 Ticket Center Ithaca Report
- 20 TC3 Culinary Tourism Initiative Presentation
- 21 Room Tax Revenues Report
- 22 AirBnB Report
- 23 Member Items
- 24 Announcements

25  
 26 **Discussion**

27 **The meeting was called to order** at 3:03 PM.

28  
 29 **September 2013 minutes were approved** unanimously without change.

30  
 31 **Chair's Report** – Rick turned the floor over to Jean McPheeters. Jean announced that Bruce Stoff has  
 32 been appointed as the new CVB Director.

33  
 34 **Fall 2013 Tourism Grants** – Jon Reis reported on the New Tourism Initiative Grants. Jon discussed the  
 35 merits of each applicant, amounts requested, amounts received and the decision process. The impact of  
 36 each event was discussed by reviewing different aspects including number of participants, disposable  
 37 income, room nights, seasonal tie-ins, destination events, underdeveloped demographics, sports/  
 38 adventure tourism, and local government support.

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39 Ethan Ash reported on the Tourism Marketing and Advertising Grants. Funding for The Cayuga Lake Wine  
40 Trail Annual Wine and Herb Festival supports agritourism, but funding is contingent on demonstration of  
41 formal partnership/ package with Tompkins County hotels. PRI/ Museum of the Earth's event, 2014 Family  
42 Fun with Dr. Scott from PBS's Dinosaur Train, has the potential to draw daytrippers and supports the  
43 merger of the Museum and Cayuga Nature Center. Package development with Tompkins County hotels for  
44 overnights is encouraged. Funding is contingent on more detailed marketing budget information.  
45 Motion to approve funding of \$10,040 for Fall 2013 NTI grants (individual amounts as recommended by the  
46 committee in the agenda packet) by Steve Hugo, seconded by Paul, and approved unanimously. Motion to  
47 approve funding of \$13,174 for TMA (individual amounts as recommended by the committee in the agenda  
48 packet) by Christy, seconded by Sue Perlgut, and approved unanimously.  
49

50 Sue Perlgut reported for Carol Kammen on the Community Celebrations Grants. Sue discussed different  
51 reasons for granting funding such as a historical/ cultural aspect, event in Groton (outside of Ithaca).  
52 Motion to approve funding of \$7,475 for Community Celebrations (individual amounts as recommended by  
53 the committee in the agenda packet) by Anthony, seconded by Sue Stafford, and approved unanimously.  
54

55 **2013 Tourism Partner Awards** – Rick Adie reported on the Tourism Partner Awards. Nominated are the  
56 NYS Veterinary Conference and the HEDW Conference. Motion to approve by Paul Tatar, seconded by  
57 Stu Stein, and approved unanimously.  
58

59 **Membership Committee** – Sue Perlgut reported that 5 people applied for 4 available seats. Ken Jupiter is  
60 recommended for an At-Large seat, Anne Gossen for an Arts/ Culture seat, Lynnette Scofield for a Lodging  
61 seat, and Ian Golden for a Recreation seat. Andy Zepp will be asked to do something specific for the  
62 board. Ethan Ash, Mike Mellor, and Christy Agnese are recommended to continue to serve in their  
63 respective seats and John Gutenberger will fill the Cornell University seat. Jon Reis has been appointed by  
64 the Chair, as an Associate Member. Recommendation to send the slate of new appointments to the EDC  
65 motioned by Ethan Ash, seconded by Sue Stafford and approved unanimously. Recommendation to send  
66 the slate of returning members motioned by Steve Nunley, seconded by Paul Tatar, and approved  
67 unanimously.  
68

69 **Beautification Program** – Jean McPheeters gave an update on the Beautification Program. Jean applied  
70 and received a grant for Wayfinding. Lauren Gilbert, a retired Cornell employee who worked in planning  
71 and also has a background in Landscape Architecture, was hired as the Wayfinding Coordinator and peter  
72 j. smith & company, in Buffalo, has been hired as consultant. They will be facilitating an evening public  
73 meeting on 11/7/13 at the Public Library, notices will be sent. A countywide plan will be created to  
74 determine what types of signs should be placed in certain locations and a list of where signs are needed.  
75

76 Dan Klein presented a slide show of plantings in various locations around the city. He spoke about the  
77 progress of previous plantings and also new plantings. Moveable wooden planters were constructed with  
78 the assistance of students from BOCES and are being used successfully on the Commons and can be  
79 used in other locations as well.  
80

81 Jean and Dan also mentioned rural grants to towns – towns appreciate the funds. Rick added that the  
82 results are fantastic and noticed by the tourists as they travel around. The volunteers' efforts are great and  
83 a story should go out.  
84

85 **Ticket Center Ithaca** – John Spence reported that the Ticket Center was closed as of Saturday 10/14/13.  
86 The final deal with Tickets.com got us out of the remaining 4 years at \$50,000/year, this went away entirely.  
87 So, CAP owed \$37,500 for 2013, which was reduced to \$25,000 by deducting CAP's first quarter payment  
88 and then (with the return of equipment - scanners and chargers) to \$18,500. The remaining \$18,500 was  
89 paid by check last Friday, 10/11/13 from CAP reserves.  
90

91 CAP Bookkeeper prepared a Profit/ Loss Statement that estimates a loss at year-end of \$16,800 for rent,  
92 supplies, and staff plus the \$18,500 for a total loss of \$35,300. This is on top of the \$33,000 that CAP  
93 spent on subsidizing the Ticket Center during the past 5 years. Reports are being produced for Ithaca  
94 College on ticket sales as well as for Hangar Theatre. Cayuga Chamber Orchestra has moved over to  
95 Brown Bag Ticketing. The message that the Ticket Center is closed has appeared in the Ithaca Journal.

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96 The Ticket Center's phone line is operative through November. Update on the space requested by Rick  
97 Adie – ongoing conversation, CAP is broke, looking for help with rent for space shared with Visitors Center  
98 and the Gallery. Spoke with Frost Travis, the landlord, who requested a proposal. People are interested in  
99 seeing the Gallery continue. CAP may be able to generate funds to help pay the \$2100 monthly rent by  
100 charging artists fees, group shows, and a variety of photography/ landscapes to sell. Conversation is  
101 ongoing and proposal will be sent to the landlord. CAP should not invest a lot of money in the space and  
102 discuss a month by month basis with landlord. Rick commended John for a masterful job of taking a  
103 \$250,000 liability and bringing it down to \$35,300. Tom Knipe agreed with Rick on John's accomplishment.  
104 We don't have the perfect solution yet on the remaining CAP debt. Small brainstorming last week with  
105 county personnel. The County will work with STPB to evaluate options for helping ease the financial blow to  
106 CAP. Any budget reallocation would come back to the STPB.  
107

108 **TC3 Culinary Tourism Initiative** – Sue Stafford introduced Brandon Seager, Instructor of Wine Marketing.  
109 TC3 did an enrollment market analysis which showed that there's a great need and interest in Hospitality  
110 Management. There are about 100 students in the program and TC3 has an International Hospitality  
111 Certificate in the Study Abroad program and a Wine Marketing Certificate. TC3 is adding 2 new programs:  
112 Sustainable Farming & Food Systems A.A.S. and Culinary Arts A.A.S. and will begin in the Fall of 2014. Sue  
113 discussed 3 required courses that speak to the strategic plans of STPB. These courses will talk about food  
114 distribution, food sovereignty, farmer's markets, local and global distribution; all of which are very important  
115 in Tompkins County.  
116

117 New initiative is called "Farm to Bistro". TC3 has purchased 43 acres next door to the main campus, will  
118 hire a farm manager, and grow vegetables, fruit, and herbs for the students' dining facility. The organic farm  
119 will be off the grid and funded by a NYSEDA grant. It will involve the college's entrepreneurship program,  
120 as well as business, biology and environmental science students. All participants will learn in this "Living  
121 Lab".  
122

123 COLTIVARE – Italian word for cultivate - global as the world, local as our food; the Culinary Center will  
124 include the following: an 1800 sq. ft. kitchen teaching lab, production kitchen, wine tasting room, meeting  
125 space to accommodate 120-200 people. The space will be a showstopper on the corner of Cayuga Street;  
126 construction will begin in the first quarter of 2014. Sue thanked the board for their letters of support.  
127

128 **Room Tax Revenues Report** – Tom Knipe reported that revenues were good for 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2013, up  
129 4.2% over 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2012, YTD is up 2.9% over last year at this time. Goal for the year was set at 3%  
130 and will be exceeded (3.25%) if we have the same results in 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter as in 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter. Rick added that  
131 October is usually one of the best months for hospitality. There were no rooms available within 30 miles of  
132 Ithaca this past weekend, Oct. 11-13, Ithaca College Homecoming/ Alumni Weekend.  
133

134 **AirBnB** – Tom Knipe reported on the website AirBnB and the concerns that some of the owners of the  
135 listed rentals are not registered and paying the Hotel Room Occupancy Tax. County Finance received a  
136 letter last month from the President of the local BnB Association; they were paying but protesting the  
137 negative impact of the rapid growth of AirBnB on their business; members of the Association are registering  
138 and following the local laws. The County's response has been to clearly articulate which types of properties  
139 and stays are subject to the room tax law, and this has to do with the definition of a "hotel" in the room tax  
140 law. The County is working to reach out to the community at large about the room tax law as well as to  
141 AirBnB hosts who may not be registered (with CVB assistance), and to make it easier to register.  
142

143 With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:03 PM.  
144

145 Respectfully Submitted,  
146 Mary Lou Szabol, Administrative Assistant  
147 Tompkins County Planning Department  
148

149 Approved by STPB on \_\_\_\_\_, 2013  
150

151 **Next Meeting Scheduled**  
152 Wednesday, November 20 – 3pm