

AGENDA – August 15, 2012

Strategic Tourism Planning Board Tompkins County

Wednesday, August 15th, 2012
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm, CVB

Agenda

- Finger Lakes Museum PRESENTATION – John Adamski – 15 minutes
- Meeting Minutes - 3 minutes
 - o ACTION – Adopt June minutes and July 9 special meeting minutes
- Chair's REPORT – David Sparrow - 5 min
- 2012-2020 Strategic Tourism Plan – 20 min
 - o ACTION – Recommend adoption
- June-July CVB REPORT – Fred Bonn – 10 min
- Tourism Partner Awards – 5 min
 - o ACTION – Recommend awards
- Membership and Bylaws ANNOUNCEMENT – 5 min
 - o Fall 2012 recruitment of new members and officers
- Community Celebrations Program UPDATE – Tom Knipe – 5 min
- Announcements

Attached (agenda packet):

1. June STPB meeting minutes
2. July 9 Special Meeting STPB meeting minutes
3. June-July 2012 CVB Report
4. Tourism Partner Award Program description and nominations
5. STPB Member list
6. Community Celebrations Grant updated guidelines
7. STPB Letters of Support for NYS CFA – July 2012
8. Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan – 2020 – *attached separately*



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.

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

Date: June 20, 2012
Time: 3:00-5:00pm
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	✓	Arts-Culture	Fred Bonn	✓	CVB, Non-Voting
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large	Gary Ferguson	✓	DIA, Non-Voting
Paul Tatar	exc	Recreation	Jean McPheeters		Chamber, Non-Voting
Rick Adie	✓	Lodging	Martha Armstrong		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: Philly DeSarno (City of Ithaca), Carol Kammen (Community Celebrations Committee Chair), Jennifer Kusznir (City), Svante Myrick (City), Diana Riesman (IMPP), Ronda Roaring (ILovetheFingerLakes.com), Rommia White (LaTourelle intern), Kathy Wilsea (Tompkins County Planning Dept.), Todd Zwigard (IMPP Architect)

Agenda

Approval of minutes for May, 2011 STPB meeting
 Chair's report
 Ithaca Commons Redesign Presentation
 IMPP Presentation
 2013 Tourism Budget Committee Recommendation – Discussion
 May CVB Report

Discussion

The meeting was called to order at 3:12 PM. Visitor introductions were made.

May minutes were approved unanimously without change.

Chair's Report was moved to the end of the meeting.

Ithaca Commons Redesign Presentation – Mayor Svante Myrick presented a slide show and spoke of the plans for the Commons. The mission is to strengthen the Commons as the core of the City by seeking more housing, hotels and people. The infrastructure is now under the middle of the Commons, but the fun things – trees, playgrounds, stages – are also in the middle. Changes would be made while infrastructure is updated. Moving the trees to the sides will provide a clear view down the center. Plans include one pavilion in Bank Alley at Seneca Street, a water play area, and improved signage. The Commons is important because it is a community icon, nationally known feature, central community gathering place, commercial and employment hub, transportation hub, and major visitor destination. Fred Bonn pointed out that visitors sometimes report they have been disappointed with their trip to the Commons, so he feels it is at a tipping point regarding living up to expectations. Mayor Myrick said development proposals for hotels, housing and mixed use will bring more visitors, and acknowledged that the Holiday Inn

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DRAFT Meeting Minutes – June 2012

renovations, which include a convention center, will bring visitors in the middle of the week. Funding is still needed for the Commons project, with the current gap at \$0.5 million. To be successful, the project needs broad-based community support and community participation.

During discussion, Mayor Myrick said that the City should find out soon, maybe next week, if federal funds are secured. Most applications are for transportation program funds. If sufficient funds are secured, groundbreaking will be in spring 2013. The City is also applying for funding through the current CFA round. A presentation has not yet been made to County Legislature members who represent City residents, nor to elected officials of towns. Mayor Myrick acknowledged the need to be clear to the public on infrastructure, aesthetics, and management plans. A design approval timeline will be determined when funding is approved. Cornell staff are helping with contacts with the Southern Tier Economic Development Council.

Ithaca Motion Picture Project Presentation – Diana Riesman provided a brief history of silent movies in Ithaca, and IMPP's plans for a museum in Stewart Park. Over 100 silent films were produced here at Wharton Studio in then-Renwick Park. The building is currently used for storage by the City, and is one of a handful of silent movie studios still in existence. Ithaca's Board of Public Works recently voted unanimously to support the plan of IMPP, and IMPP also has the support of many area businesses. They feel this museum can help revitalize Stewart Park. Todd Zwigart showed an architect's rendering of the design, which adds a second floor to the front of the building; creates an entrance, café and gift/book shop; provides natural light in the main space by adding dormers, and creates an iconic element to show modern use of a historic building by adding a digital marquee and programmable exterior screens. The plaza will also function as parking and fire lane.

2013 Tourism Budget Committee Recommendations – Committee Chair Rick Adie reviewed the process. At the STPB meeting last month, he spoke of projections for 2013. Program Administrators and Committee Chairs submitted requests to the Budget Committee through use of a uniform format which committee members found very useful. Submissions included priorities and what would be cut if the overall request was not fully funded. All program committee requests were included in the agenda packet, along with a summary chart. Rick reviewed the summary chart and stated that recommendations are scheduled to be discussed at PDEQ on July 11. The Budget Committee recommends a set aside of funds for implementation of the Strategic Tourism Plan and maintenance of 4.2% in reserves.

There was discussion about which side of the 60/40 New Tourism Initiatives are funded – Brett Bossard said he had not realized before that NTI funds come from the 60% marketing portion of the funds. Tom Knipe pointed out that many of our programs act on both sides of this split. Also, as indicated in the Strategic Tourism Plan, the STPB has indicated that they wish to revisit this formula, but not as part of the 2013 budget process. Fred Bonn asked for the Committee members' thinking on recommending CVB receive a 2% increase, as opposed to the 3.1% requested. Members responded that this is the largest overall amount in the budget, and commented on the Teachers' Winter Recess program. Also the amount of budget growth available in aggregate to existing programs (not including the County allocation) was 2.7%, even as the total budget increase was 3% (not including Strategic Tourism Plan Implementation). Scott Wiggins was supportive of providing adequate funding to the CVB as it is the resource that makes new hotels, festivals and programming successful. Fred expects to apply for some of the funds set aside for Strategic Tourism Plan implementation, and pointed out that media is costing more. He will soon hire an Integrated Marketing Manager with new baseline salary. The CVB recently performed a wage comparative analysis and determine that their wage structure is competitive. Tim Joseph pointed out that the work of the CVB is valued, but that some other programs got no

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increase from 2012. While the CVB didn't receive the largest percentage increase, it received the largest dollar increase. The Budget Committee has to make recommendations. A member could move to modify the budget prior to adoption. David announced STPB will vote on the budget at the July meeting. He also stated that large sum that is set aside for Strategic Tourism Plan Implementation could stream into some of these existing programs.

May CVB Report – Fred Bonn provided hard copies of his report. The Holiday Inn had a successful appeal to the Board of Public Works and the renovation project will advance. Fred expects to finish staff interviews and make a decision by 7/6. A new search engine provides the ability to separate mobile traffic from desktop version traffic for statistics, and actually shows growth when taken in this format. A group sales familiarization tour has been set for September. Hospitality Stars conference is taking place this week, with 30 registrants, which is the highest number to date. In operating the downtown kiosk, staff members have found themselves in a different environment. Although it's not really dangerous, an Ithaca Police officer is doing an in-service training to help them learn how to cope with the public on that level. According to the Tourism Economics study for 2011, Tompkins shows sustainable growth. Counties on the Pennsylvania border have stronger growth, because of gas drilling over the border. La Tourelle and August Moon Spa have provided a great package to be used as a prize. And despite not having a river, Ithaca is a nominee for Outside Magazine's Best River Town Ever.

Chair's Report – STPB Bylaws were adopted by the Legislature as a part of its Consent Agenda at the June 19 meeting. We are looking forward to a report from the Festivals Committee very soon, postponed this month because of our crowded agenda. STPB minutes and agendas are available at <http://www.tompkins-co.org/tourism/STPBinformation.htm>

Announcements – Rita Rosenberg invited all to the Caroline Farm & Garden Extravaganza on 7/28 and hopes they will spread the word. She provided promo cards to be shared. Jon Reis reminded members there are upcoming projects that were grant-supported: Scottish Games and Dragonboat Festival. Susie Monagan added the Shakespeare Festival. Scott announced a planting event on Saturday at Stewart Park around the flagpole. The next project for Stewart Park will be a children's playground, being designed with input of Discovery Trail partners. Tom announced the Strategic Tourism Plan is out for public comment through July 16, and asked members to share that fact.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Department

Approved by STPB on _____, 2012

Next Meetings Scheduled

Wednesday, July 18 – 3pm

Wednesday, August 22 – 3pm

**Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB)
DRAFT Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting July 9, 2012**

Date: July 9, 2012 Special Meeting
Time: 4:00pm
Location: Convention and Visitor’s Bureau

Attendees:

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large	Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture
Anthony Hopson		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	✓	Arts-Culture	Fred Bonn	✓	CVB, Non-Voting
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large	Gary Ferguson	✓	DIA, Non-Voting
Paul Tatar		Recreation	Jean McPheeters	✓	Chamber, Non-Voting
Rick Adie	✓	Lodging	Martha Armstrong	✓	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: Carol Chock (County Legislator), Kathy Wilsea (Tompkins County Planning Dept.)

Agenda

1. Approval of Draft 2013 Budget
2. Authorization of Letters of Support

Discussion

1. The draft agenda was presented by the Budget Committee at the June 25th meeting. Rick Adie moved to adopt it as the recommended STPB budget for 2013. Seconded by Stu Stein. Guest Carol Chock’s questions were answered by providing her with the chart that showed percentages of change and the amounts set aside for implementation of the goals of the Strategic Tourism Plan. Motion to adopt passed by unanimous voice vote. The budget will proceed to PDEQ and the County Legislature for adoption.

2. Coordinator Tom Knipe reported he has received requests from five tourism partners for letters of support for their NYS Consolidated Funding Applications. Those requesting support are the Ithaca Motion Picture Project, the Ithaca Commons Redesign, Black Diamond Trail, Stewart Park’s Cascadilla Boathouse capital project, and Cayuga Nature Center and PRI. A letter of support would not entail financial support by the Tourism Program but could indicate the proposed project is consistent with the draft Strategic Tourism Plan. This is support in principle only. The letter would describe the tourism program, similar projects previously supported, and mention target numbers for jobs and/or visitors. The letters are due next week. Jean McPheeters moved to have decisions on these letters of support and any in the future be made by the STPB Chair and go out under the Chair’s signature. Seconded by Jon Reis. Passed by voice vote: yes 8; no 0; abstention 1 (Wiggins).

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
 Tompkins County Planning Department

Approved by STPB on _____, 2012



Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)

Report to:

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board

Aug. 15, 2012

Submitted by: Fred Bonn, Director

MARKET UPDATE

Holiday Inn – For several months I have been reporting that the Holiday Inn Conference Center project was scheduled to commence this November. In the last month the ownership group, Hart Hotels, has decided to delay the project by one year. The project has received all of the necessary approvals from the City of Ithaca and the new timeline will have renovations of the 80 rooms in the tower begin in Nov. 2013. These rooms will re-open in April of 2014 with the entire project scheduled for completion March/April of 2015.

Summer 2012 Business – By all reports business is strong across the region and throughout New York State. The lack of rain is affecting travelers looking for a waterfall experience and our Visitor Information staff is working hard to explain why Taughannock Falls doesn't look as good in real life as it does in our brochures. State Park attendance is strong. Reports from Wineries are somewhat mixed.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Integrated Marketing Manager – Kristy Mitchell has her first day as our new Integrated Marketing Manager on Monday, Aug. 13. She has a wealth of experience in both emerging/digital media as well as in traditional media. She is a 2008 graduate of the Ithaca College/Park School of Communications with a degree in Integrated Marketing Communications. She comes to the CVB from Noyd Communications in Manhattan Beach, Calif., and has worked as Account Executive for such global brands as Sanyo, Mitsubishi and VIZIO. Get ready for that diamond vision "Ithaca Is Gorges" billboard in Time Square!

Bruce Stoff – Last week I met with Bruce Stoff who informed me that he was resigning in order to pursue other professional and personal interests. Bruce has been with our office for over six years and a great deal of our success as an organization are due to his efforts. At this time I will be holding off on an immediate job posting in order to train Kristy Mitchell and determine what gaps will need to be filled. We will be holding a farewell gathering at Agava at East Hill Plaza on Friday Aug. 17 from 4:30 to 6:00 and invite you to join CVB and Chamber staff and board members.

Updates to VisitIthaca.com – We are in the process of re-working the administrative side of VisitIthaca.com to allow our partners to update their respective profiles and to enable them to link to YouTube videos of their property. Any changes will require approval from our staff. We will also be launching a feature on our website that will link our events calendar, powered by IthacaEvents.com. Users will now see a scroll of free and ticketed events timed to the dates of their stay.

Finger Lakes Beer Trail – In July I worked closely with Theresa Hollister to submit a grant to fund a Feb. 2013 "For The Love of Craft Beer" promotion. The grant request was part of the Consolidated Funding Application process for the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council. Our office is the lead on the grant and if we are successful in receiving the grant, we will be partnering with Corning, Rochester, Binghamton, Syracuse, Tioga County, Ontario County and Cortland County in promoting the event. I am cautiously optimistic about receiving the grant.

Conversion Study Findings – The Marketing Advisory Committee received a presentation from WB&A Market Research on the findings from the Conversion study that was conducted for our office at the end of last year. I have attached the "Key Findings" portion of their report to this report. We are already acting on some of these findings as is evidenced by upgrades to VisitIthaca.com highlighting events, expanded advertising and promotion efforts in the Buffalo market and a

continued emphasis on culinary experiences on our Facebook page. Findings from this study will also be very valuable as we look to develop and implement our 2013 media plan.

Facebook – We just surpassed the 10,000 “likes” mark!

US Travel ESTO Conference – Kristy Mitchell and I will be attending this destination marketing conference hosted by US Travel next week in Boston.

Requests for Information and Travel Guide – We are continuing to see a large increase in requests for our travel guide from VisitIthaca.com as well as usage of the digital version of the travel guide that is also available online. The number of requests for our travel guide is impacting our budget with postage expenses running \$5,000 over budget YTD.

NY Jets Training Camp – As we did two years ago we purchased a sponsorship with Cortland organizers to have hotels and B&B’s closest to Cortland featured on their website (nyjetstrainingcamp.com). Quite honestly we are not seeing much interest in the Jets camp at either of our two info centers and referrals from their website are pretty much non-existent. There is some benefit with respect to building friendly relations with Cortland County but I’m not convinced it is generating much business. I will be surveying hotels in the Triphammer road area to see if they have seen any resulting business.

GROUP SALES

September Familiarization Tour for Group Tour Companies – SOLD OUT! - Mary and Louise in our office and several Director of Sales at local hotels have received commitments from 12 owners of motor coach companies that they will be attending our Familiarization Tour on September 24 and 25. This two day event will be attended by bus tour companies from Ontario, New York City, PA, NJ, MD and OH.

VISITOR SERVICES

Downtown Cart – All is going well with the staffing of the downtown cart. Of note: with all the heat this summer, overall foot traffic on The Commons is down from last year for many businesses.

NEW YORK STATE TOURISM – There is no significant activity to report.

EARNED MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS – Attached to my report are clippings from recent media stories that our office has had a hand in. With all of the heat this summer we’ve been able to leverage significant media attention for Ithaca based on pitches about swimming at Lower Treman.

World Café in Ithaca – Based on a very successful event in November 2009, we have negotiated to partner with WXPN and David Dye’s World Café to sponsor another get-away contest this September. The event will be built around a performance at the State Theatre by Josh Ritter that will include an interview by David Dye that will be recorded for national broadcast.

The Today Show – I Love NY asked cities across New York to submit a get-away contest packages for The Today Show. We worked with LaTourelle and Experience The Finger Lakes to put together a fantastic entry and we were selected to be one of two contests that will receive national exposure during their “Fan of the Week” segment in August after the Olympics.

Smith Travel Report for Tompkins County – June, 2012

Occupancy (%)	2012	Year To Date	
	Jun	2011	2012
This Year	75.3	56.6	58.1
Last Year	73.8	57.0	56.6
Percent Change	2.1	-0.7	2.7

Demand	2012	Year To Date	
	Jun	2011	2012
This Year	34,972	158,095	162,655
Last Year	34,162	159,204	158,095
Percent Change	2.4	-0.7	2.9

ADR	2012	Year To Date	
	Jun	2011	2012
This Year	139.05	130.05	135.17
Last Year	132.65	119.63	130.05
Percent Change	4.8	8.7	3.9

Revenue	2012	Year To Date	
	Jun	2011	2012
This Year	4,862,977	20,560,458	21,985,971
Last Year	4,531,444	19,046,042	20,560,458
Percent Change	7.3	8.0	6.9

Ithaca / Tompkins County CVB Dashboard – July 2012

Visitor Information Services – July 2012

Requests for information fulfilled in July: 3,166
 YTD Requests for information through July: 22,070

Visitor Center Traffic - July, 2012:

- East Shore Drive: 1895 (-7% over 2011)
- Downtown Visitor Center: 906 (-17% over 2011)
- DT Kiosk: 1040

VisitIthaca.com Stats - July 2012 & YTD July 2012

July 2012	Desktop	Mobile	Total	2011	Change
Visits	48,713	5,011	53,724	44,513	21%
Pageviews	170,306	3,057	173,363	181,901	-5%
Pages/Visit	3.5	6.1		4.09	
Avg. Time on Site	4:12	2:42		4:12	
YTD July 2012					
Visits	215,117	17,033	232,150	216,597	7%
Pageviews	766,004	101,549	867,553	831,125	4%
Pages/Visit	3.56	5.96		3.84	
Avg. Time on Site	3:59	2:39		3:47	

Facebook – as of 8/10/12

- Lifetime "Likes" – 10,017

Group Sales – May 2012

Leads Distributed	5
Prospects Generated	183 (Motor Coach FAM)
Sales Kits Distributed	3
Prospects converted to Leads	1
Groups Assisted/Service	5
Site Visits Conducted	3

Group Sales Lead Status Report – July, 2012

Lead sent date	Event account	Event status	Event start date	Event end date	Total Requested Room Nights	Multiplier	Economic Impact	Source
4/12/2012	Hornsby Wedding	Booked	7/12/2012	7/14/2012	30	353	\$10,590	Accommodation Referral
11/29/2011	Wechsler Wedding	Booked	7/13/2012	7/14/2012	100	353	\$35,300	Call-in
4/5/2012	Hunter Wedding	Booked	7/13/2012	7/14/2012	30	353	\$10,590	Accommodation Referral
10/25/2011	Taggart Wedding Reception/Guest Rooms	Booked	7/21/2012	7/22/2012	200	353	\$70,600	Local Referral
5/23/2012	Ithaca Shakespeare Co. Weekday Packages	Booked	7/25/2012	7/26/2012	20	260	\$5,200	Repeat Business
5/23/2012	Ithaca Shakespeare Co. Weekend Packages	Booked	7/28/2012	7/19/2012	20	260	\$5,200	Repeat Business
12/6/2011	Klippel Wedding	Booked	8/9/2012	8/10/2012	40	353	\$14,120	Call-in
1/12/2012	Barnes Wedding	Booked	8/17/2012	8/18/2012	200	353	\$70,600	Local Referral
5/3/2012	IC September Volleyball Tournament	Booked	9/7/2012	9/8/2012	84	260	\$21,840	IC Referral
12/8/2011	September 2012 legal Training	Booked	9/19/2012	9/24/2012	140	260	\$36,400	Repeat Business
11/21/2011	Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training	Booked	10/8/2012	10/11/2012	40	260	\$10,400	Email Request
4/11/2012	NYS Collegiate Tennis Tournament	Booked	10/12/2012	10/14/2012	192	260	\$49,920	IC Referral
4/16/2012	IC October Volleyball Tournament	Booked	10/12/2012	10/13/2012	53	260	\$13,780	IC Referral
3/26/2012	Princeton Soccer	Booked	10/26/2012	10/27/2012	28	260	\$7,280	Accommodation Referral
3/26/2012	Princeton Field Hockey	Booked	10/27/2012	10/28/2012	20	260	\$5,200	Accommodation Referral
1/26/2012	Turkey Shoot- Varsity Tournament	Booked	11/2/2012	11/4/2012	200	250	\$50,000	Repeat Business
1/26/2012	Turkey Shoot- JV Tournament	Booked	11/9/2012	11/11/2012	200	250	\$50,000	Repeat Business
1/27/2012	NYS PHSSA Girls Swimming/Diving Championships	Booked	11/15/2012	11/16/2012	300	250	\$75,000	Ithaca College
3/21/2012	Fulton County YMCA Flying Fish	Booked	3/15/2013	3/17/2013	65	260	\$16,900	IC Referral
3/23/2012	Saratoga Springs YMCA	Booked	3/15/2013	3/17/2013	120	260	\$31,200	IC Referral
6/6/2012	Liu/Jacob Wedding	Booked	5/17/2013	5/18/2013	20	353	\$7,060	Call-in
4/17/2012	Butterbaugh Wedding	Booked	6/15/2013	6/15/2013	40	353	\$14,120	Call-in
2/6/2012	NYS PHSSA Girls Swimming/Diving Championships	Booked	11/21/2013	11/22/2013	300	250	\$75,000	Ithaca College
4/20/2012	Engineering Dept. Forum	Booked	6/15/2014	6/18/2014	67	260	\$17,420	CU Referral
	Land Grant Conference	Definite	10/16/2012	10/19/2012	600	260	\$156,000	CU Referral
5/3/2012	IC Wrestling Tournament	Definite	11/1/2012	11/2/2012	200	260	\$67,600	IC Referral
3/20/2012	2013 YMCA Swimming Championships	Definite	3/15/2013	3/17/2013	500	260	\$130,000	IC Referral
	D'Amato Wedding	Definite	5/17/2013	5/18/2013	80	353	\$28,240	Call-in
2/2/2012	Mary Kay Sales Leaders 32nd Fall Retreat	Awaiting Client Response	10/5/2012	10/6/2012	80	260	\$20,800	Call-in
4/27/2012	High Peaks Audubon Society	Awaiting Client Response	10/19/2012	10/21/2012	81	353	\$28,593	CVB Generated
6/11/2012	ADG Leadership Forum	Awaiting Client Response	10/24/2012	10/25/2012	130	260	\$33,800	ESSAE
6/11/2012	NACUFS Fall Meeting	Awaiting Client Response	11/19/2012	11/20/2012	100	260	\$26,000	ESSAE
	Ohio Motor Coach Mystery Tour	Awaiting Client Response	6/17/2013	6/20/2013	200	353	\$70,600	CVB Generated
	Collegiate State Track Meet	Lead	2/21/2012	2/22/2013	800	260	\$208,000	IC Referral
	Fry Wedding	Lead	5/9/2013	5/11/2013	60	353	\$21,180	Call-in
	NYS Snowmobile Assoc.	Lead	4/24/2014	4/26/2014	1400	260	\$364,000	NewYorkMeetings.com
3/30/2009	NYS Public Employees Federation	Withdraw	10/11/2012	10/17/2012	240	260	\$62,400	CVB Generated
6/28/2012	NCAA Wrestling Regional Meet	Lost	2/28/2013	3/2/2013	600	260	\$156,000	IC Referral
8/30/2011	Medical Retreat	Cancelled	9/27/2012	9/28/2012	120	260	\$31,200	Email Request
12/1/2011	Carefree Capers	Cancelled	10/2/2012	10/5/2012	26	353	\$9,178	ABA

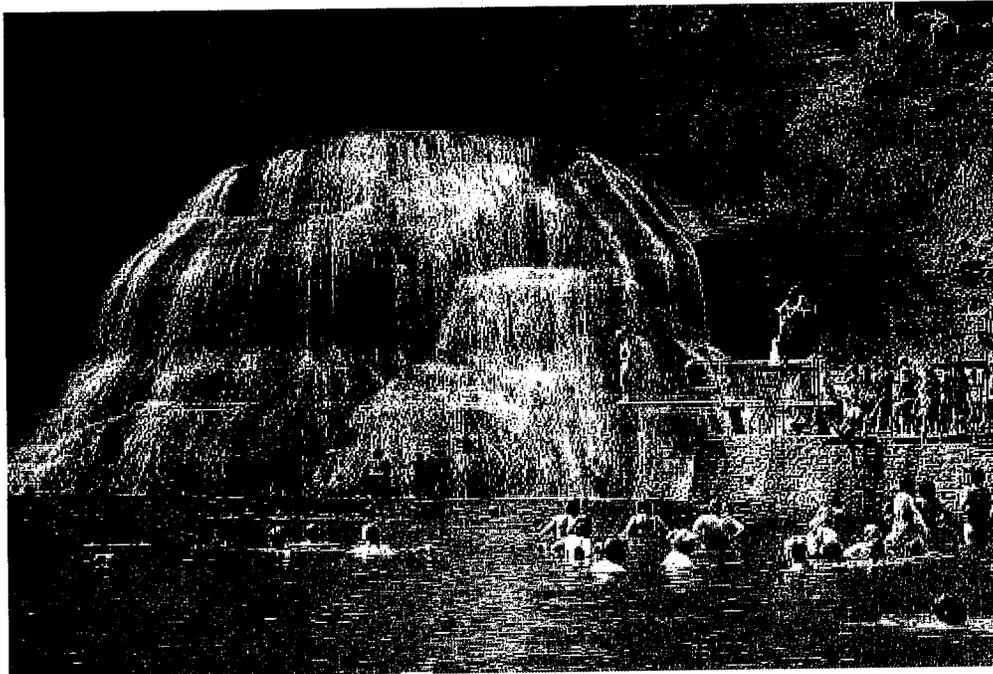
2 million monthly page views, 49,000 subscribers to e-newsletter

10 Natural Swimming Holes for Cooling Off

By Laura Kiniry

Aug 6, 2012

With record temps blanketing the U.S. this summer, finding a place to cool off is more important than ever. From Arizona to Puerto Rico, these natural swimming holes are scenic, refreshing -- and just what you need on a hot summer day.



Enfield Falls, New York

Where: Ithaca, the [Finger Lakes](#), New York

Robert H. Treman State Park's beloved swimming hole sits at the bottom of 70-foot-tall Enfield Falls (also known as Lower Fall). With its deep and shallow pools, diving board, and superb spots for sunning, the place is a magnet for families, couples, and college students looking to chill. If the crowds get too much, take in one of the park's gorge hikes or visit one of its 11 additional waterfalls.

How to Get There: There's plenty of parking (\$7 per vehicle) on either side of the park, and a short, wheelchair-accessible trail to the swimming hole. A lifeguard is on duty during designated summer hours.

More Info: www.nyfalls.com/treman.html

Photo Caption: Enfield Falls at Robert H. Treman State Park, Ithaca , Photo by [Carl M/Flickr.com](#)

Read more: <http://www.frommers.com/slideshow/index.cfm?group=1195&p=4#ixzz22y1LFOc7>



<http://www.aaahorizons.com/content.cfm?a=1182>

1.5 million print subscribers August Issue, Southern New England
 3.13 million online views monthly, Southern New England

Find wonders of nature right nearby

Published: Jul 26, 2012

By Juliet Pennington



Watkins Glen Area Chamber of Commerce

Watkins Glen State Park is full of caverns, caves and waterfalls.

They may not compare in size and scope to such well-known spectacles as Niagara Falls and the Grand Canyon, but there are many other natural wonders – including caves, canyons, gorges and waterfalls – closer to home that will connect visitors to Mother Earth in all her beautiful, bountiful and magnificent glory.

Here are just some of the marvels to savor; sites that will excite your senses and help you escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Tip: Don't forget to bring your camera!

1. Bash Bish Falls, Mount Washington, Mass. Located in Bash Bish Falls State Park, which is adjacent to the Mount Washington State Forest in the southwest corner of the state, these picturesque falls offer a dramatic, nearly 200-foot cascade through a series of gorges and over boulders and granite outcroppings that make for striking visuals. The nearby state forest offers 30 miles of hiking trails.

2. Coos Canyon, Byron, Maine. This scenic, rocky gorge is carved through bedrock by the Swift River, one of only a handful of rivers and streams in Maine known to harbor deposits of gold. Wade into the water to try your luck at panning for gold. Rent or purchase panning equipment from the Coos Canyon Rock & Gift Shop, or simply bring a perforated plate from home and give it a go!

3. Kent Falls, Kent, Conn. A series of waterfalls on this mountain stream provides the perfect backdrop for a lunch on the manicured lawn with picnic tables and barbecue grills at the foot of the falls. Take a short, scenic hike on a trail loop that goes to the top of the falls. While not a difficult or lengthy trek (it is only a quarter of a mile and there are plenty of lookout points at which to take breaks), it is steep.

4. Lost River Gorge & Boulder Caves, North Woodstock, N.H. Considered one of the Granite State's greatest natural wonders, this majestic site carved from the Ice Age features

jagged walls of rocks, huge boulders stacked like blocks, glacial caves and cascading waterfalls. Stay on the boardwalk or challenge yourself by venturing into the boulder caves with names like Dungeon and Lemon Squeezer.

5. Polar Caves Park, Rumney, N.H. Not only are caves figuratively cool, but these glacial formations are literally cool, too, with temperatures (and humidity) considerably lower inside than outside this time of year. Taking a self-guided tour through granite caves and passageways is a great way to spend a hot summer's afternoon. Walk along the nature trails, visit the petting and viewing zoo and try your hand at mining.

6. Purgatory Chasm State Reservation, Sutton, Mass. The chasm runs for a quarter of a mile between granite walls rising as high as 70 feet, with rock formations, caves and crevices bearing names like Devil's Coffin, Lover's Leap and Fat Man's Misery (you definitely need to turn sideways to get through this one). Pick up a trail map at the visitor center and explore one of the many trails – including Charley's Loop, Old Purgatory Trail and Little Purgatory – by the chasm.

7. Quechee Gorge, Hartford, Vt. Often referred to as "Vermont's Little Grand Canyon," this mile-long gorge, with the Ottauquechee River cutting through 165 feet below the viewing points along Route 4, is a sight to behold. The visitor center offers brochures as well as interpretive displays about the history of the gorge and about local flora and fauna. Don't forget to stop by nearby Quechee Gorge Village for some great shopping.

8. Robert Treman State Park, Ithaca, N.Y. A dramatic, rugged gorge and a dozen dazzling waterfalls (including the impressive, 115-foot cascading Lucifer Falls) await visitors to this beautiful park in the Finger Lakes region. Follow the miles of scenic hiking trails along the wooded gorge, called Enfield Glen, and wind your way down to the "Lower Falls," where you can swim beneath a waterfall and in a natural pool complete with a diving board and lifeguard during designated hours.

9. Sabbaday Falls, Waterville, N.H. This three-tiered waterfall, just off the Kancamagus Highway, is great for shutterbugs, with observation decks and bridges to bring visitors to all the best vantage points. It's a short hike to the falls and while it's uphill, it's not too steep and there are benches along the way for those wanting to take a break. Enjoy a relaxing lunch at one of the many picnic areas near the falls.

10. Watkins Glen State Park, Watkins Glen, N.Y. Another Finger Lakes treasure, this park intrigues visitors with awe-inspiring caverns and caves, nearly 20 waterfalls, picnic sites, a playground and a pool, as well as hiking, biking and kayaking. Rustic stone steps take hikers over, under and along the waterfalls, where a frequent mist cools them down on a hot day. The rim trails overlook the gorge and all its natural beauty. **8. Robert Treman State Park, Ithaca, N.Y.** A dramatic, rugged gorge and a dozen dazzling waterfalls (including the impressive, 115-foot cascading Lucifer Falls) await visitors to this beautiful park in the Finger Lakes region. Follow the miles of scenic hiking trails along the wooded gorge, called Enfield Glen, and wind your way down to the "Lower Falls," where you can swim beneath a waterfall and in a natural pool complete with a diving board and lifeguard during designated hours.

Photo by Kristian Reynolds, Ithaca Convention and Visitors Bureau

Visit: <http://nysparks.com/parks/135/details.aspx>



Best swimming holes across the USA

By Jamie Moore, SmarterTravel.com

July 25, 2012

In the dog days of summer, nothing beats a leap, wild and free, into a good old-fashioned swimming hole. Grab your swimsuit and head for the river. We've rounded up 10 refreshing pools where you can float behind plunging waterfalls, swan dive from rocky ledges, ride through chutes, and find skinny-dipping seclusion. C'mon in. The water's fine.



By Pat Shannahan, Arizona Republic

Havasu Falls' Caribbean-blue pool is for the most tenacious of swimming-hole devotees. There are only three ways to arrive: hire a helicopter, hike 10 miles, or ride a pack mule.

Sliding Rock, Pisgah National Forest

N.C.

Break out your old cutoff jeans shorts for this 60-foot natural waterslide just off the Blue Ridge Parkway near Asheville. Each minute 11,000 gallons of water pour over a huge, mostly smooth boulder and into a seven-foot plunge pool. If the ride doesn't take your breath away, the water temperature will. The cool mountain stream that powers this Sliding Rock ride is only about 50 to 60 degrees in summer. Sliders of all ages shriek, grimace, and tiptoe through it but come back for more, even when long lines snake down the entire rock face. Lifeguards supervise in summer, and small kids can ride in an adult's lap.

What's Nearby: To see an authentic slice of Appalachia, check out Brevard, which was named one of America's Coolest Small Towns by *Budget Travel* magazine in 2010. The woods and waterfalls of DuPont State Recreational Forest were the film set for the arena in *The Hunger Games*.

Hamilton Pool Nature Preserve

Dripping Springs, Texas

When summer temps hit 100, Austinites have plenty of great swimming holes to choose from, including Barton Springs right in the middle of town. But the legendary get-away-from-it-all spot is Hamilton Pool Nature Preserve, about 25 miles west of Austin off Highway 71. A quarter-mile trail descends to the canyon pool. Rimming one edge of the clear blue-green waters are a limestone grotto and a 50-foot waterfall; here you can play in the shower or find a shady seat on the rocks beneath its overhang. At the other end is a sunny beach. On summer weekends, when the 75-vehicle parking lot reaches capacity, preserve officials manage the one-in, one-out system, which is not such a bad thing once you're in.

What's Nearby: Preserve trails lead to scenic areas along the Pedernales River. At Pace Bend Park on Lake Travis, swimming and boating are popular.

Diana's Baths

Bartlett, N.H.

Once the location of a sawmill operation and now a protected historical site in the White Mountain National Forest, the Diana's Baths swimming hole is best on a warm, full-moon night. Locals say it's the most romantic spot in Mt. Washington Valley: secluded, private, and perfect for skinny-dipping under the stars. By day, the cascading falls and pools, waterspouts, and granite basins are a family favorite. An easy half-mile trail leads from the parking area to Diana's Baths just past Echo Lake State Park near North Conway.

What's Nearby: A drive to the top of the park's Cathedral Ledge reveals a great view of the valley. The ledge is also a popular rock-climbing area. Take the kids on a Conway Scenic Railroad train ride or to the sandy beach at Echo Lake.

Havasu Falls

Supai, Ariz.

This shocking Caribbean-blue pool—on the bottom of the Grand Canyon near the Native American community of Supai—is for the most tenacious of swimming-hole devotees. There are only three ways to get to Havasu Falls: hire a helicopter, hike 10 miles, or ride a pack mule. Plus, you'll need to purchase an entry permit, and, unless you're a hardcore trail runner, book a night at the Havasupai Lodge or campsite. But it's so worth it. Pancho Doll, who wrote two books on America's swimming holes, calls it the best in the world. After a long desert trek, even the mist from the 120-foot cascade is refreshing. Swimming behind the torrential falls or floating on your back and taking in the view is the real reward.

What's Nearby: Supai has a small grocery store and cafe. It's also one of two places in the country where U.S. mail is delivered by mules.

Lower Calf Creek Falls

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah

It's a parched land, Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. But the 126-foot Lower Calf Creek Falls are miraculously resilient, with a year-round flow into a lush oasis and pool. Set out early to beat the desert sun on the five-and-a-half mile round-trip trail. The loop, which starts at the Calf Creek Campground, cuts through a deep canyon and past Anasazi pictographs before coming to the falls. Here the water tumbles down and drenches the mineral-streaked Navajo Sandstone walls that surround a swimming hole too clear, cool, and inviting to pass up.

What's Nearby: See the monument area's sculptured slickrock and hoodoos at Devil's Garden or the petrified wood at Escalante Petrified Forest State Park. In the town of Escalante, grab an outdoor seat at Kiva Koffeehouse and take in the incredible view.

Whiteoak Canyon

Shenandoah National Park, Va.

For swimming-hole enthusiasts who think one is never enough, there's Whiteoak Canyon in Shenandoah National Park, 75 miles from Washington, D.C. Here, just off of Skyline Drive, you can go pool-hopping at the base of six different waterfalls that are linked by steep, rocky trails that wind throughout the canyon. Check out the trail map and envision working up a sweat on treks between plunges. The Upper Falls is the canyon's highest waterfall, but the huge pool at Cedar Run Falls makes a better end-of-day finale, with rocky ledges for jumping and, depending on the water level, a natural waterslide.

What's Nearby: In the park you can go trout fishing or arrange a guided trail ride on horseback. Explore heritage sites, including battlefields, presidential homes, and historical landmarks, on the Journey Through Hallowed Ground, a National Heritage Area along Route 15.

Baker's Bridge/Animas River

Durango, Colo.

In the 1969 film Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid's famous jump scene, bank robbers on the lam, played by Paul Newman and Robert Redford, make a death-defying leap into a steep river gorge. The jump was filmed on the Animas River in Durango, just upstream from a popular local jump spot: Baker's Bridge, off Highway 550. For kids who grow up in the area, a bridge jump is a ceremonial rite of passage. The crazy feat requires channeling the tough-guy nerve of old Western movies. Jumpers wait for calm waters on summer days and usually show up in old shoes to show off with backflips.

What's Nearby: Go whitewater rafting on the Animas River or warm up with a soak at Trimble Hot Springs. Durango is also a popular mountain-and road-biking destination with its great trail systems and events.

Enfield Falls

Robert H. Treman State Park, N.Y.

As this New York college town's popular green T-shirts proclaim, "Ithaca is Gorges." No doubt the landscape is stunning, but it also creates a picture-perfect backdrop for swimming holes. There are about 150 waterfalls within 10 miles of downtown, and Robert H. Treman State Park's Enfield Falls are a favorite among locals and undergrads. You can swim up and sit under a billowy curtain of water or soar from the cliffside diving board. Relax on a grassy patch or hike park trails to see 12 waterfalls, including the 115-foot Lucifer Falls.

What's Nearby: The parking pass (\$7 per carload) is valid all day at three Ithaca state parks: Treman, Buttermilk Falls (with waterfall swimming and gorge hiking), and Taughannock Falls (three stories taller than Niagara). There are more than 100 wineries in the Finger Lakes region. For food lovers Ithaca boasts more restaurants per capita than New York City.

Johnson's Shut-Ins

Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park, Mo.

A two-hour drive south of St. Louis, the East Fork of the Black River swirls around giant volcanic chunks at Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park, Missouri's favorite natural water park. You can scramble over the rocks, slip and slide through the chutes, and relax in your own private pool (or "shut-in"). Finding your footing can be tricky, so water shoes are a must. The hike to the shut-ins is only a quarter-mile, and non-swimmers in your group can watch from the observation deck.

What's Nearby: The popular Taum Sauk section of the 360-mile Ozark Trail runs through Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park. In Lesterville you can take a Black River float trip in a canoe, raft, kayak, or inner tube. Elephant Rocks State Park is only 15 miles from the shut-ins.

Firehole River Canyon

Yellowstone National Park, Wyo.

In Yellowstone National Park all of the geysers and hot springs fall under the look-but-don't-touch rule. But this warm swimming hole, fed by distant thermal features, is one of only two spots in the park where you're allowed to take a dip. Near the park's western entrance, the Firehole River Canyon pool hits the spot after a long day of summertime sightseeing. Adventurous swimmers like to work their way upstream a bit before jumping into the rapids for a ride through the canyon. The main pool is shallower and better for younger kids.

What's Nearby: Old Faithful is a short drive south along the main park road. The uncrowded, one-way Firehole Canyon Drive takes you past 800-foot-thick lava flows and the 40-foot-high Firehole Falls. You can camp at Madison campground near the West Yellowstone entrance.

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Of Gorges, Grapes, and Grains

Discovering Ithaca, New York

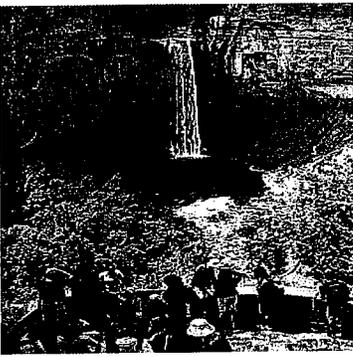
July 16, 2012 New York, Northeast



Story by Jeff and Stephanie Sylva

As we descended the narrow trail into Fall Creek Gorge we came upon a doe grazing on the steep hillside. After stopping a moment so as not to startle the deer, we continued our walk passing within less than ten feet of her. The doe, obviously aware of our presence, continued to graze unfazed by our interruption. After reaching the bottom of the trail, we spent about 20 minutes just enjoying the view of the cascades in the gorge and reflecting on the beauty of the scene and the experience of encountering the deer.

A scene such this is something that many people experience quite often when venturing into natural settings. The reason this experience was somewhat unique is that it occurred on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. Although we have seen many beautiful college campuses, we were very impressed that two beautiful gorges, the aforementioned Fall Creek Gorge and Cascadilla Gorge, are located on the Cornell campus. These are just two of the many gorges to be found in Ithaca.



Taughannock Falls

“Ithaca is Gorges”

The clearly-intended pun in the tourism tagline for the City of Ithaca clearly highlights some of the city and surrounding area’s main attractions – the many ice-age gorges and their numerous waterfalls and cascades. In the three days we spent in Ithaca, we tried to experience them all; but there are just too many, so we did our best to see as many as we could. We started with Buttermilk Falls State Park, hiking the 1.5-mile round-trip Gorge Trail. The ascent is somewhat strenuous, but the views of the waterfalls and cascades within the gorge make the trip well worth the effort. The park has a life-guarded swimming area in the natural pool below the falls. It looked very enticing, but we were there before the swimming season opened.

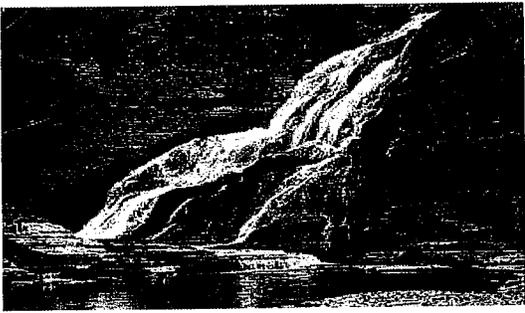
Two other state parks where we hiked the gorges were Taughannock Falls State Park– its 215-foot falls is higher than Niagara Falls- and Robert H. Treman State Park– impressive stonework on the trails built by workers in the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps is a highlight here.



The Upper Gorge Trail at Treman State Park

Both of these parks also have outstanding views of waterfalls and breath-taking scenes in the gorges. All three state parks have an excellent variety of trails of varying difficulty enabling hikers of all abilities the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful natural beauty of the area. Swimming and camping is also available at each of these parks. Visit the New York State Parks website at www.nysparks.com for more information.

If you should want even more waterfalls, there are plenty more in and around Ithaca. A favorite for locals seeking a momentary respite from a hectic schedule or a quiet spot for a bagged lunch is Ithaca Falls, an idyllic setting just minutes from downtown. Contact the Ithaca-Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau at 800/28-Ithaca (284-8422) or www.VisitIthaca.com for its Official Travel Guide and the “Waterfalls In & Around Ithaca” booklet.



Lucifer Falls in Robert F. Treman State Park

Outdoor adventure in Ithaca is certainly not limited to viewing gorges and waterfalls, not with 40-mile long Cayuga Lake around. Boating, sailing, kayaking, lake cruises, and fishing are great ways to get out on this member of NY's famed Finger Lakes. Hiking, biking, golfing, horseback riding, horseback riding, hot-air balloon rides, and even skydiving are other ways to experience Ithaca's outdoors.

Grapes Galore!

The Finger Lakes region of NY is well-known for its many wineries, and a visit to Ithaca puts one in close proximity to more than 25 wineries. You might begin your wine region tour with a stop at the Finger Lakes Wine Center in downtown Ithaca for some information and even a tasting. Be sure to pick up the Cayuga Lake Wine Trail Map & Guide. The Wine Trail is the first organized and longest running wine trail in America. With 15 wineries, 1 cidery, and 4 distilleries you're sure to find something to your liking. Many of the wineries offer dining options in wonderful settings both indoors and al fresco. Also check out the Vino Visa Coupon Book for discounts and free tastings. The coupon book can be purchased for \$15 at any of the wineries or online.



A Finger Lakes vineyard in the fall

Two interesting and enjoyable stops we recommend are Ports of New York on Taber St. in Ithaca and Corks & More Wine Bar on W. Buffalo St. in Ithaca. At Ports of New York you will meet Frederic Bouche, who will share with you the fascinating history of his family's winery in France beginning in the early 1900's, as well as show you his equipment and process for producing his Meleau Specialty Wines.

Corks & More is a great place to experience, not the art of making wine, but rather a unique way of serving it. This wine bar/lounge features the new technology of the WineStation, a self-serve dispensing system that allows customers to use a pre-paid tasting card to dispense a 1 oz., a 2.5 oz., or a full 5 oz. serving of a wide variety of wines. If you like wine, you may feel like a kid in a candy store. A fully-stocked bar, including over 40 craft beers and a great list of scotches is also available, along with a tasting menu of small plate cuisine.

And, of course, the Grains

After hiking the gorges and enjoying the grapes of this Finger Lakes region, it's time now to enjoy the grains – at least the ones that the local breweries and brew pubs use in their craft beers. Ithaca Beer Company is open every day for tastings and conducts tours on Saturdays. Naturally, its fine selection of craft brews is available for retail sale.

Local brewpubs featuring their own craft brews include Bandwagon Brewpub on Cayuga St. and the Scalehouse Brewpub on Cinema Dr., both in Ithaca. Rogues' Harbor Brewing Company is located at the Rogues' Harbor Inn on East Shore Drive in Lansing, just five miles north of Ithaca. We can't account for the brewpubs' brews, but we can say that Ithaca Beer makes some very fine beers, especially the Cascazilla Red Ale and Flower Power IPA.

Ithaca is about discovery.

When you are done hiking the gorges, and sipping the wine, and enjoying the beer, what else will you discover in Ithaca? Plenty. What would you expect from a city where there are 758 graduate-degree-holders per square mile?

Take for instance Ithaca's Discovery Trail, a group of eight educational organizations whose goal is to promote awareness and understanding of the connections among art, history, literature, science, and the natural world. Trail sites include the Cayuga Nature Center, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Cornell Plantations, The History Center, Johnson Museum of Art, Museum of the Earth, Sciencenter, and the Tompkins County Public Library. With a wide arrange of activities, exhibits and hands-on fun, The Discovery Trail has something for everyone. We only had time to explore the Botanical Gardens and Arboretum of Cornell Plantations located on the university's campus.

Culture and the arts do not take a back seat to nature in Ithaca. The many theaters, music venues, galleries, and artist studios are thriving with creative expression. From downtown galleries and sculpture exhibits, to the museums and galleries of Cornell and Ithaca College, art enthusiasts will find a wealth of creative exhibits. Music and performing arts are also thriving in the community, with a wide variety of concert venues, nightclubs, and theaters offering a wide choice of local and internationally acclaimed artists, including a number of free concert series.



Ithaca Commons on a summer day

We took in a wonderful production of a new musical, "Waiting for Spring," at the Kitchen Theatre Company's intimate 99-seat, 3/4-round theater. If this production is typical of the Kitchen's goal of presenting "bold, intimate, engaging" theater, then this nationally-recognized, year-round professional theater company will continue the success it has experienced for the last 21 years.

Dining can be a great experience in Ithaca—especially when you consider the fact that Ithaca has more restaurants per capita than New York City. (In 2008 *The New York Times* called Ithaca a "gastronomic oasis.") Downtown has a wealth of choices, from upscale bistros to casual cafes and taverns. A dining experience you don't want to miss is Moosewood Restaurant, which is well-known for its 11 internationally acclaimed cookbooks. It features vegetarian cooking, with a daily fish entrée on the menu as well. *Bon Appetit* named this

restaurant “one of the 13 most influential restaurants of the 20th century.” We never knew that vegetarian cuisine could be so creative and inspired.

Another recommendation we have is for a treat – ice cream from Purity Ice Cream, which has been a popular spot for ice cream and other treats in Ithaca since 1936. (Did you know that Ithaca is the birthplace of the ice cream sundae?)



Sunset on Cayuga Lake

Lodging in Ithaca is also eclectic. There are plenty of chain hotels if that’s your preference. But Ithaca has a wealth of wonderful inns and B&B’s. We stayed at MacIntire’s Cottage B&B, and we felt like we were at a home away from home. The Cottage is located in a residential, walking neighborhood and is a mere 3 miles from the town of Ithaca and 2 miles from Cornell (the closest B&B to the college). Judith MacIntire has been welcoming visitors to her B&B since 1989 with her warm hospitality. For a complete list of B&B’s visit the websites of Bed & Breakfast of Greater Ithaca and Association of Historic Bed & Breakfast Inns of the Ithaca Area.

We enjoyed our experience in Ithaca, discovering for ourselves some of the many things available in the eclectic college town. Discover for yourself the vibe that is intimated in its slogan – “Ithaca is Gorges.”

August 10, 2012

HUFF
POST TRAVEL

The New York Finger Lakes: Mother Nature's Handprint (PHOTOS)

Posted: 07/20/2012 7:00 am

Millions of years back, glaciers covered northern New York State. Ten thousand years ago, they receded leaving behind crevices filled with water and forming 11 long and narrow Finger Lakes. Five of the lakes are large, feigning Mother Nature's handprint. Today this beautiful region -- dotted with historic cities, vast farmland, vineyards, dramatic gorges and waterways -- is a fun place to visit for all kinds of reasons.

Rochester, a progressive city and the Western Gateway to the Finger Lakes

Rochester's history is rich in innovation, culture and epochs of social progressiveness. A boomtown in 1825, due to the Erie Canal, it was incorporated in 1837. George Eastman, the ingenious founder of Kodak (1879), became a patriarch leaving endowments to the arts and education that benefit the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Eastman School of Music. In Rochester, Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony sought liberty. And now, with 18 colleges and universities flourishing within the metro area, a youthful, laissez-faire feel infuses the vibrant city of 210,000.

Things to do: The George Eastman House International Museum of Photography & Film displays the magic of photography. National Museum of Play, with its exhibits of games and toys, lets kids smile and play everyday. Weekends, 5:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., the shopping and people-watching at Rochester Public Market (started in 1905) attracts 40,000 people. In 1825, mules dragged boats and barges up the Erie Canal. These days anyone can ride a tour boat or rent a houseboat to navigate the 363-mile-long waterway with 57 precision locks.

Eat your heart out: The "in" crowd prefers 2.Vine in the hip downtown East Avenue section of Rochester where the crab cake with cucumber salad reigns. Say hello to the phalanx of biker dudes when you head into Dinosaur Bar-B-Que restaurant for mouth-watering ribs that taste even better with red beans and rice, cornbread and coleslaw. Wegmans, an oversized indoor marketplace/mall, features a potpourri of delicious, fresh-cooked foods (Asian, Mexican, Indian, etc.) that you buy by the pound. Wegmans makes Whole Foods look like a Piggly Wiggly.

Events: In June, the annual Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival showcases artists like Norah Jones and Esperanza Spalding at 10 different venues that are adjacent to tempting food concession stands like Abbott's Frozen Custard (the insanely rich chocolate almond ice cream is sinful).

Canandaigua: the lake, the region, the view

Canandaigua Lake is the westernmost of the larger Finger Lakes. The metro area of Canandaigua (population 20,565) sits at the top of the 15.5-mile-long, 1.5-mile-wide lake that is surrounded by a verdant, densely forested region that looks like Bavaria. If Hansel and Gretel were in a witness protection program, they'd hide out here. The city and town of Naples is on the southern banks.

Things to do: Grab a picnic box with a chicken salad sandwich, strawberry shortcake and fresh lemonade from the organic restaurant Roots Café in Naples and have lunch at the scenic overlook on County Road 12. If you're feeling lucky, take your chances at video poker or bet on thoroughbreds at Finger Lakes Casino & Racetrack. Ravenwood Golf Club welcomes golfers of all levels. Play a friendly game of scramble where everyone hits, and wherever the best ball lands is where the group hits from next. (It's good for everybody's ego.)

Eating: For unique, au courant dining, head to Upstairs Bistro at the New York Wine & Culinary Center where the menu changes with the whim of the chef and the availability of seasonal, local produce. The grilled pork chop entrée with cornbread casserole must be followed by the white chocolate brownie with ice cream.

A place to stay: The five-room, one-suite Morgan Samuels Inn, set on 46 pastoral acres, has classy, intimate, Victorian-styled interiors, five-to-eight course dinners and lavish breakfasts (order the herb scrambled eggs with fruit and berry toast). If you play with their lovable Weimaraner puppy, you'll want to stay an extra day.

The road to Watkins Glen is routed through heaven and around Seneca Lake

Drive east of Canandaigua, to Seneca Lake the deepest and second longest Finger Lake, and you'll hit Geneva. Head south on Route 14 and you'll cruise along the western banks to Watkins Glen. There are farmland and jaw-dropping lake views on the left of the road. On the right side vineyards flourish. Stop the car and take a picture of a landscape that is as visually stunning as that of the South of France or Sonoma County.

Watkins Glen: This quaint town is famed for its 3.4-mile Watkins Glen International raceway which hosts NASCAR, other auto races, concerts with headliners like Phish and the hugely popular Finger Lakes Wine Festival, which features 600 wines by 80 wineries. You can drive your own car around the track or take a thrill ride and get heart palpitations in a bullet-fast pace car.

Watkins Glen State Park is centered around a magnificent gorge with 19 waterfalls and hiking walkways. Red Newt Cellars Winery and Bistro serves the best area wines: sip on the 2010 Sawmill Creek Riesling or the 2008 Curry Creek Pinot Grigio.

Resting your head: Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel brings a classy aura of Portland, Maine to town with its gray and white New England-styled architecture, harbor-front location and attentive service.

Eating: The Seneca Harbor Station Restaurant operates in a building that was once an 1876 railroad station. Their rich and creamy clam chowder warms the body, but oh those baby back ribs -- the meat falls off the bones.

Cayuga Lake, the ultimate farm experience and Ithaca.

The college town of Ithaca sits at the basin of Cayuga Lake, the longest glacier New York Lake. Before you hit city center take a side trip to the Silver Queen Farm in rural, idyllic Trumansburg. Customers harvest their own blueberries, corn and asparagus here. The monthly, Saturday night Farm & Fork banquets in the huge cross-gable barn feature local baked goods (Wide Awake Bakery), milk products (Finger Lakes Farmstead Cheese), vegetables, fruit and meat that become menu items like strawberry and lettuce salad, spring lamb soup and raspberry rhubarb swirl fresh ice cream. It's an authentic, agrarian experience that you'll remember fondly.

Ithaca: Cornell University and Ithaca College reside in the ultimate college town, which has the air of Berkeley, California. Tour around the 745-acre Cornell Campus, which sits on a peak with Cayuga Lake views, gorges and botanical gardens. If you're looking for a tennis game, bring your racquets to Cornell's Reis Tennis Center and ask for Brian. The waters of Fall Creek pour over 150-foot high Ithaca Falls to form a trout stream popular with fly fishermen. Taughannock Falls in Taughannock Falls State Park is three stories taller than Niagara.

Eating well: The Asian Fusion cuisine at Mia is a nice reason to head over to the Commons, a two-block pedestrian mall lined with stores, cafes and restaurants. The barbeque pork buns with pickled daikon is a signature dish. Locals suggest Moosewood for its natural food, Saigon Kitchen for Vietnamese food, Mercato Bar & Grill for Italian and Madeline's for meat and poultry.

Looks like home: Lynnette Scofield, the friendly proprietress of William Henry Miller Inn gives her guests free breakfast, beverages and evening dessert. Set in a red brick building from 1880, the inn is a stone's throw away from Cornell.

You can see the bottom of Skaneateles, the most beautiful Finger Lake

It's worth driving by the town of Auburn, which crowns Owasco Lake, on your way to Skaneateles, the cleanest, clearest and most gorgeous of the big lakes. The town of Skaneateles feels like a transplanted New England village. Stores, inns and restaurants line Genesee Street, which runs along the lakefront. Like Martha's Vineyard or The Hamptons, this place is very tony.

Things to do: Lunch at the venerable Sherwood Inn and try the Baked Scrod Christopher. The Mid-Lakes Navigation Sightseeing Cruise gives tourists the best views of the lake where stately mansions with boathouses the size of regular homes surround the perimeter.

The most chic Finger Lakes inn: The lush, 34-room, Mirbeau Inn & Spa sits on 12 acres of forested grounds. Six, pale yellow French chateau-style buildings are cloistered around goldfish-filled ponds and heavenly gardens. At the spa, asks for the 100 minute D'vine Vinotherapy Pinot Noir Body Polish and Massage. For dinner at The Dining Room at Mirbeau, the duck confit spring rolls (with slow-roasted Hudson Valley duck) are a great way to start. The Thai curry lobster is perfect for dinner. Or ask for a tasting menu and let the chef impress you with dishes like strawberries with custard.

Upper New York State is packed with culture, history, urban vibes, sublime country experiences and geographical wonders. Start your journey in Rochester, end it in the Skaneateles/Syracuse vicinity and you will have traveled the width of Mother Nature's handprint, the Finger Lakes.

Visit travel writer Dwight Brown at www.DwightBrownInk.com



7 Semi-Secret North American Swimming Holes

Nothing says summer like the swimming hole, a hidden oasis that's usually reached by a short walk along an overgrown path and often sporting a rope swing and pure aquatic refreshment. Whether tucked away in the Ozarks or just off the road in the New Mexico desert, a swimming hole engenders your inner child like few other experiences. Here are 7 that will help you beat the heat this summer. *Text by Crai S. Bower | Photo editing by Mike Hipple*

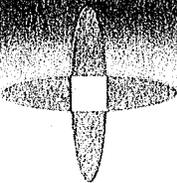
< > 5 of 7



Robert H. Treman State Park, Ithaca, N.Y.

The bumper stickers read "Ithaca is Gorges" for good reason, as shale channels provide the Northeast's best assortment of natural swimming pools. Buttermilk Falls State Park also provides a wide cascading swath of freshwater, and is just a skipping stone's distance from city center. Visitors to [Treman State Park](#) encounter a dozen falls en route to the deep pools beneath the lower falls of Enfield Creek. The 115-foot-tall Lucifer Falls is up the path away from the swimming area, where the adventurous slide beneath the falling water and the thrill seekers jump from the shale plateau six feet above the deepest pool.

Bing: [View more photos of Treman State Park](#)



Conversion Study 2011

Final Report

Prepared for:

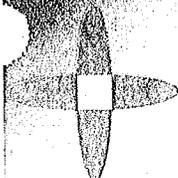
Ithaca/Tompkins County
Convention & Visitors Bureau

June 25, 2012

#11-152

171 East State Street, Ithaca NY 14850 • 607-330-5300 • www.WBandA.com





Key Findings

Methodology

- Telephone survey conducted among individuals who have had some contact with Ithaca promotional materials in the recent past.
- In total, 426 surveys: 326 "Print" respondents (including oversampling for Albany, Buffalo, and Rochester); 100 "Trade Show" respondents (four Canadian trade shows).
- Focused on "getaway" travelers (at least one hour, but less than 8 hours drive time to Ithaca).

Demographic Differences

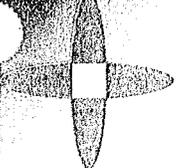
- Trade Shows are more likely to reach a younger audience (23% from Gen X/Gen Y demographic vs. 6% for the Print market); Print is more likely to reach Baby Boomers.
- Both groups are skewed female, but Trade Show participants much more than Print.
- Trade Show respondents are wealthier, on average. Among Print respondents, Buffalo reportedly wealthier than other oversampled markets.
- Neither group had a high concentration of individuals connected with Cornell or Ithaca College, so college/university-influenced travel did not influence the findings.

Trip Behavior

- The majority of respondents are taking trips, but Trade Show attendees are more likely to take longer trips (vacations or getaways, rather than day trips) compared to Print respondents.
- Having "things to do" (e.g., attractions, experiences, activities) is a primary motivator for those who take getaways. Amenities (e.g. good shopping, dining, hotel options) or logistics (e.g., getting to and around the place) are also very influential in getaway enjoyment.

Trip Planning

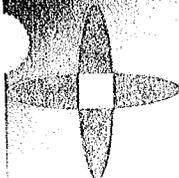
- The Canadian travelers found through the trade shows are more likely to take "spontaneous" getaways (i.e., most planning only days or weeks in advance), whereas Print travelers are far more likely to take months to plan a getaway.
- For Trade Show respondents, the internet (with Google at the top of the list) is most often mentioned as a resource for information when considering or planning leisure travel. Print respondents are more likely to get information through referrals from people, places (like Info Centers or AAA) or things (such as guidebooks or brochures).



Key Findings (continued)

Perceptions of Ithaca

- Overall, a sizable minority of Trade Show (30%) and Print (44%) respondents claim to be very or somewhat familiar with Ithaca.
 - In the targeted oversampled Print markets, level of familiarity increases dramatically for Albany (72%), Buffalo (62%), and Rochester (76%), but is significantly lower in Philadelphia (23%).
- Roughly one-third recall receiving a travel guide or brochure from Ithaca in the past year or so.
- Only about one out of ten have visited the visitithaca.com web site.
- Overall ratings of Ithaca are predominantly positive.
 - Indicative of successful recent efforts in Rochester, ratings of Ithaca are especially high in this oversampled Print market (rivaling overall ratings for their favorite getaway), and none of these respondents gave Ithaca a negative overall rating.
- On an unprompted basis, Ithaca is best known for its natural surroundings.
- And on a prompted basis, the characteristic “wonderful natural beauty” is most strongly associated with Ithaca relative to the other seven attributes tested.
 - By comparison, Ithaca is generally less likely to be associated with having good shopping, dining, or appealing travel packages/deals. (*Exception: Rochester Print respondents are more likely than the other oversampled markets to give positive ratings to Ithaca for shopping and dining.*)
- The largest “gaps” (differences in positive ratings) between Ithaca and one’s favorite getaway location are:
 - Trade Show respondents – easy to get to, good distance from your home for a getaway, great dining options, and excellent shopping.
 - Print respondents – great dining options, excellent shopping, and appealing travel packages or special deals.



Key Findings (continued)

Quadrant Analysis

This analysis looks at perceptions and uses correlation analysis to determine the individual qualities that are most commonly associated with positive perceptions overall. Using this form of "imputed" importance, rather than "stated importance" can usually help identify greater distinctions between characteristics. The primary areas of focus are:

"Maintain" = *performing well, higher imputed importance*

Trade Show respondents – wonderful natural beauty

Print respondents – wonderful natural beauty, sustainable community that cares about protecting the environment

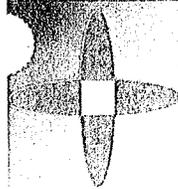
"Priority" = *poorer performance, higher imputed importance*

Trade Show respondents – great dining options

Print respondents – great dining options, affordable, excellent shopping

Conversion

- In total, about one out of ten travelers surveyed said they took a vacation (rare), getaway or day trip to Ithaca in the past year or so.
 - This is somewhat higher in Rochester, especially for day trips specifically.
- Roughly one-third overall claim they will definitely or probably visit Ithaca in the next year or so.
 - This is also higher in Rochester, as well as Buffalo.
 - Conversely, Albany travelers are far more likely to say they will not visit Ithaca in the next year or so.
- What will be most likely to entice people to visit Ithaca? Cost, things that are not controllable (e.g., having more vacation time, knowing someone in the area), having "things to do" (e.g., sites/attractions), and getting more information/familiarity.



Recommendations

Print advertising is mainly reaching an older demographic.

- Continue to use Trade Shows and Facebook to reach Gen X and Gen Y travelers.
 - Although we were unable to measure conversion rates among Facebook fans, the fact that Ithaca's "likes" have doubled since this project began is indicative of the strength of this marketing tool. Hopefully there will soon be an effective methods of reaching this audience to conduct research so that a more complete conversion rate can be determined.
- Trade Show attendees are also heavier travelers, and are more spontaneous in their planning – incorporate this into trade show marketing materials.

Highlight all that there is to do in Ithaca.

- In addition to a focus on Ithaca's perceptual strength (natural surroundings), educate travelers are about Ithaca's attractions (e.g., Discovery Trail) as well as its plentiful and unique dining and shopping options.
- Also try to emphasize the ease of getting to Ithaca.

Buffalo is likely the most viable untapped market.

- While Albany is more closely surrounded by markets that would compete with Ithaca for residents' travel dollars and time, Buffalo residents do not have nearly as many options available to them.
- Buffalo residents are primed for this – those who are familiar with Ithaca have generally positive perceptions, but more than one-third are not familiar with what Ithaca has to offer. And, they are reportedly slightly more wealthy relative to the other targeted markets studied.
- Efforts in Rochester have been very successful – replicate this in the Buffalo market.

Program Description: Tompkins Tourism Partner Award

Tompkins County Legislature and Strategic Tourism and Planning Board's recognition of local individuals who enhance the local economy by bringing conventions and large groups to Tompkins County

PURPOSE:

To recognize individuals, organizations, and associations who through their actions or activities have made an impact on the local economy by attracting conventioners and visitors to Tompkins County. Individuals and organizations that are not paid for the purpose of attracting these groups are eligible. Convention and Visitors Bureau staff and hotel properties sales staff are not eligible.

Attracting and hosting groups or conventions to Tompkins County has a positive impact on the entire economy impacting hotels, restaurants, retail sales, rental car agencies, airlines and the airport. Sales tax and room tax is positively affected by increasing the number of visitors to Tompkins County.

It is further meant to encourage, by creating awareness, the positive impact that tourism and conventions can have on the local economy. It is a "call to action" for all residents to invite the associations that they are members of to meet in Tompkins County -- examples would be national associations, state associations, hobby groups, social organizations, education associations, learned societies, fraternal organizations, and military groups.

WHO IS RECOGNIZED:

Local community members (and/or local associations, corporations or groups) who have an impact on our economy by inviting and hosting groups and conventions through their own efforts. Primary recipients would be individuals who are not "convention planners" or sales people.

Additionally, the Strategic Tourism Planning Board at its discretion may from time to time recommend recognizing a local company, group or educational institution that brings annual business to the County. (Examples include The CBORD Group Inc., local roads and highway superintendents)

QUALIFICATION FOR AN AWARD:

A minimum of 400 room nights booked – however, Strategic Tourism and Planning Board can entertain all nominations on merit. Weddings are excluded. The award is made only after the group has visited the county.

WHAT IS THE AWARD:

- It is a certificate and public recognition along with an engraved keystone paver to be installed in a designated section of the Waterfront Trail with the recipients name on it. The pavers are to be installed at the trailhead near the Tompkins County Chamber and Visitors Center during an annual unveiling ceremony.
- Awards at the Keystone level (\$500 paver)

HOW IDENTIFIED:

- Convention and Visitors Bureau Staff
- Staff of the Ithaca College and Cornell University Conference and Events Departments

- Nominations from hotels through the Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Nominations from Strategic Tourism and Planning Board and Legislature members

HOW SELECTED:

- The Recognition Committee of the STPB reviews nominations. They gather input from the Convention and Visitors Bureau if necessary.
- The chair of the Recognition Committee and the chair of the STPB ensure that the process of selection is fair and objective.
- Upon nomination approval, the Recognition Committee forwards their recommendation to the full STPB for approval. The approved nominations will then be forwarded to the County Legislature for review and final approval.

HOW OFTEN AWARDED:

Twice a year to keep the event and recognition special.

HOW RECOGNIZED:

Presentation at either (or both) a Strategic Tourism Planning Board meeting or at a meeting of the County Legislature.

BUDGET:

\$2,000 per year made up of four \$500 Keystone Awards. Awards were made to TurkeyShoot Lacrosse Tournament and Ithaca College NCUR Organizing Committee in early 2012, but pavers for these have not yet been installed. Also, other awards have been recommended by STPB over the past several years, but not formally approved. Due to these factors, \$3,000 is recommended for 2012 to grant six awards. Pavers will be purchased in advance each year with one check for the Cayuga Waterfront Trail Initiative, a project of the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

HOW PUBLICIZED:

(Local publicity spurs other community members to action -- local residents will hopefully be inspired to invite a group that they are associated with to visit Tompkins County.)

- Tompkins County Chamber newsletter
- Ithaca Journal Op-Ed
- Press release to all local media and University Presses

CALL TO ACTION:

- A letter from Strategic Tourism and Planning Board or CVB will be sent to a wide assortment of local influencers to make them aware of this award. It will be a call to action to remind them that they may be able to invite organizations with which they are affiliated to meet in Tompkins County.

NAME FOR RECOGNITION

- Tompkins Tourism Partner

Contact information:

- Tom Knipe, Senior Planner / Tourism Coordinator, tknipe@tompkins-co.org, 274-5560
- David Sparrow, Chair, STPB, sparrowwine@clarityconnect.com
- Rick Adie, Chair, STPB Recognition Committee, ra99@cornell.edu
- Mary Rachun, Group Sales I/TCCVB, mary@visitithaca.com

Tompkins Tourism Partner Award

Tompkins County Legislative Recognition

STPB / Convention & Visitors Bureau

Name of Individual/
Organization to be Recognized Jane Miller

Name of Group/Event Cayuga Lake Triathlon

Address PO Box 4134
Ithaca, NY 14852

Telephone Number 844-8899

E-Mail jmm8@Cornell.edu

Date Event Occurred Every Aug. since 2002, 2012 event was the 10th Aniv. of CLT
Business Brought to Ithaca Based on post event surveys that ask "did you stay overnight and did you stay in a hotel or B&B?" it is estimated that each year approx. 393 room nights were generated in 2012.
25% of survey respon. stay in hotel or B&B * 749 athletes in 2012 Tri. * 2.1 avg. # of overnights in Hotel/B&B (Chmura study) = 393 room nights. Total estimated impact of the 2012 CLT is \$394,965 based on an avg. travel party size of "3" and an average daily spend of \$335 / person. (Chmura)

Estimated # of Room Nights 393 in 2012

Hotels Impacted Unknown, organizers made the decision not to have a headquarter hotel.

Comments It is important to note that, because of the start time of the race (mandatory racers meeting takes place at 7:30 a.m.) athletes need to stay overnight on Saturday night. Also, a survey of registrations shows that 60% are from outside of Tompkins , Cortland, Cayuga, Seneca, Tioga, and Schuyler counties leading me to believe that the 25% of survey respondents indicating that they stay in hotel or b&b is actually low.
Also, Jane Miller and her board have successfully used the STPB's Marketing and Advertising Grant program to establish their race as one of the premier triathlons in the North America. Their signature advertising, supported by an STPB marketing grant, help them increase their visibility such that they were invited to be the host site of the USA Triathlon's national Sprint distance championship race in 2008. Only six years after holding their first race.

Nominated by: Fred Bonn

Affiliation Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Address 904 East Shore Drive, Ithaca NY 14850

Telephone Number 607-272-1313

E-Mail fred@visitithca.com

.....

Strategic Tourism Planning Board Tourism Award Nomination

Name of Individual to be Recognized Lynn Cramer

Name of Group/Event Highway Superintendents

Date Event Occurred Annually 6/1/08 - 6/14/08

Address Cornell University
422 Riley-Robert Hall
Ithaca NY 14853

Telephone Number 607-255-8033

E-Mail LHIL@CORNELL.EDU

Dates of Meeting Annually 6/1/08 - 6/14/08

Business Brought to Ithaca This group brings over
500 people spending across the state of
NY to Ithaca

Estimated Number of Room Nights ~ 300

Hotels Impacted La Tourelle, Holiday Inn
city-wide

Nominated by: Paul N. Klingler / Holiday Inn

Affiliation DOJ Holiday Inn Downtown Ithaca

Address 222 South Cayuga St
Ithaca NY 14850

Telephone Number 607-272-1800

E-Mail PKLINGER@HOLIDAYHOTELS.COM

STPB Action _____

Date _____

Comments _____

Tompkins County Legislative Recognition
STPB/ Convention & Visitor Bureau
Tompkins Tourism Partner Award

RECEIVED
AUG 5 2008
TOMPKINS COUNTY
ADMINISTRATION

Name of Individual/
Organization to be Recognized Ithaca Asian American Assn
Name of Group/Event Finger Lakes Dragon Boat Festival

Address PO Box 4016
Ithaca NY 14851

Telephone Number 254-8072 Amy Somchanonavong

E-Mail amy.kuo@dragonboat.org

Date Meeting Occurred July 11-13 2008

Business Brought to Ithaca overnight accom @ area hotels,
used restaurants, local vendors were @ festival.

Estimated Number of Room Nights 300

Hotels Impacted CLARION, Ramada, Hampton Inn
Comments _____

Nominated by: Deanna Lockwood

Affiliation Director of Sales

Address 2310 N Triphammer Rd
Ithaca NY 14850

Telephone Number 257-3100 x 408

E-Mail dlockwood@innmgmt.com

STPB Action _____

Date _____

Comments _____

Name	Email	Representation	First Start Date	Current Appointment Date	Current Term Start	Term Expires
Rita Rosenberg	barber.rita@gmail.com	Agriculture	2/7/2012	2/7/2012	1/1/2012	12/31/2014
Susie Monagan	susiemonagan@gmail.com	Arts-Culture	5/19/2009	2/7/2012	1/1/2012	12/31/2014
Rick Adie	ra99@cornell.edu	Lodging	4/20/2004	2/7/2012	1/1/2012	12/31/2014
Sue Stafford	StaffordS@tc3.edu	TC3	4/20/2011	2/7/2012	1/1/2012	12/31/2014
Sue Perlgut	scperl@verizon.net	Arts-Culture	1/18/2011	1/18/2011	1/1/2010	12/31/2012
Anne Kellerman	kellerman@prodigy.net	At-Large	1/18/2011	1/18/2011	1/1/2010	12/31/2012
Beverly Baker	bb@bakertravel.net	At-Large	1/16/2001	12/15/2009	1/1/2010	12/31/2012
Ken Jupiter	15steps@danica.com	At-Large	6/15/2004	12/15/2009	1/1/2010	12/31/2012
David Sparrow	sparrowwine@clarityconnect.com	At-Large, Chair	2/19/2002	12/15/2009	1/1/2010	12/31/2012
Anthony Hopson	ahopson@ithaca.edu	Ithaca College, Vice-Chair	5/18/2010	5/18/2010	1/1/2010	12/31/2012
Ethan Ash	ethan.s.ash@gmail.com	Arts-Culture	10/18/2011	10/18/2011	1/1/2011	12/31/2013
Tim Joseph	tim.joseph@parks.ny.gov	At-Large	1/18/2011	1/18/2011	1/1/2011	12/31/2013
VACANT		At-Large			1/1/2011	12/31/2013
Jon Reis	jon@jonreis.com	Arts-Culture	12/21/1999	1/18/2011	1/1/2011	12/31/2013
Stuart Stein	sws8@cornell.edu	At-Large	12/4/2001	1/18/2011	1/1/2011	12/31/2013
Scott Wiggins	cariba@lightlink.com	Lodging	12/21/1999	1/18/2011	1/1/2011	12/31/2013
Gary Stewart	gjs28@cornell.edu	Cornell University	8/5/2003	1/18/2011	1/1/2011	12/31/2013
Paul Tatar	Fishnprof@aol.com	Recreation	12/21/1999	1/18/2011	1/1/2011	12/31/2013
Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members						
Will Burbank	wburbank@tompkins-co.org	Legislature, Non-Voting				Annual
Brett Bossard	director@artspartner.org	CAP, Non-Voting				Ongoing
Fred Bonn	fred@VisitIthaca.com	CVB, Non-Voting				Ongoing
Gary Ferguson	gary@downtownithaca.com	DIA, Non-Voting				Ongoing
Jean McPheeters	jean@tompkinschamber.org	Chamber, Non-Voting				Ongoing
Martha Armstrong	marthaa@lightlink.com	TCAD, Non-Voting				Ongoing
VACANT		Government Transportation				Ongoing
Tom Knipe	tknipe@tompkins-co.org	Staff				Ongoing



**Community Celebrations Grant Program
APPLICATION GUIDELINES
Fall 2012**

Community Celebrations Grants are awarded twice a year by Tompkins County to support events in our community that convey our unique culture and history. These grants allow us to dig into our past, to educate the public about our cultural inheritances, to give residents a way of understanding and enjoying local culture, and to expand contemporary local culture in ways that are informative, educational, and just plain fun. These grants are available to any recognized community within the County, including municipalities and other government entities; traditional, cultural, and ethnic organizations; and groups that hope to build on historical, architectural, musical, culinary, agricultural, and/or cultural traditions by providing venues for local talent/performers and goods produced within the County.

The goal of these grants is to enhance the quality of life for residents. Carnival-type events or attractions are not typically funded. Community Celebrations Grants are funded by a room occupancy tax collected by hotels and B&Bs in Tompkins County. This is one of several grant programs of the Tompkins County Tourism Program, for which the Strategic Tourism Planning Board provides oversight and strategic direction.

A celebration is an event, program, or series of events endorsed by a municipality that is free and open to all, and is planned by community members as a benefit to the community. A celebration is also defined as an observance, commemoration, jubilation, inauguration, presentation, or any other "red letter day" or salute that has meaning for the community. A community is a recognized municipality, or a part thereof, within Tompkins County, a traditional, cultural, and/or ethnic organization; and groups that hope to build on historical, architectural, musical, culinary, agricultural, and/or cultural traditions by providing venues for local talent/performers and goods produced within the County.

Contact

Tom Knipe, Senior Planner/Tourism Coordinator, tknipe@tompkins-co.org, 607-274-5560
Applications forms available at: www.tompkins-co.org/tourism

General Guidelines

All events must be free and open to the public without discrimination.

The grant review committee will ask the question: **is this event a real celebration that builds community?** That is the question that applicants should also address.

The review committee encourages applicants to think of all the ways life here is made richer by the area's history, folk life, architecture, ethnicity, and historic events. Grant applications will be reviewed by a number of committees, and awards will be made by the Tompkins County Legislature.

Applicants are encouraged to source goods and services locally.

Funds Available

The total amount of funds available for all awards in the Fall 2012 round is \$4,875. Individual grants may be requested for up to \$2,000. In exceptional situations, an application be made to exceed this amount, but strong reasons must be given to support such a request. The minimum request is for \$500. Award payments will be paid directly to municipalities; successful grant applicants should contact their individual municipality for payment instructions. All unspent funds will be returned to the County.

Fundable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Local artists, performers, or providers of cultural programming
- Support for volunteers
- Certain professional services needed to produce a successful Celebration
- Educational materials
- Food is fundable only if it is related to the theme of the event, and is demonstrated to the audience. Example: if the event celebrates Italian culture, then the grant could be used for the purchase of Italian food and a cooking demonstration
- Reusable banners

Ineligible expenses

- Bounce houses, carnival type rides, gifts, fireworks, building repairs or alterations, prizes.
- Staff time

Details

- **Under New York State Law, not all entities are eligible to receive funding from County government.** For example, Tompkins County government may only award a grant to another municipality or certain not-for-profit agencies. Before completing the application, please consult with your accountant or attorney to confirm that your organization is eligible to receive money from a County government. For-profit organizations are not eligible to receive a grant.
- Events that exclusively promote religious traditions are ineligible.
- Award decisions are made twice annually on a competitive basis. A previous award for the same event does not guarantee future funding.
- Preference will be given to applications containing components of local culture, heritage, and/or history.
- The celebration must take place in Tompkins County.

- Applicants must demonstrate a financial match of at least 50%. The match can be met through cash support from other sources, event revenues, and/or in-kind contributions.
- Donated goods and professional services may be considered in-kind contributions.
 - Volunteer time may be included towards a calculation of in-kind contributions only where this time would otherwise need to be replaced by paid staff time or paid professional services. General event volunteers, such as registration volunteers or organizing committee members, may NOT be counted towards in-kind support for the purposes of demonstrating a match, but the time contributed by a volunteer event organizers, photographers, massage therapists, face painters, musicians, etc. may be counted. Where the specific value of the service is not estimated directly by the service provider, use an estimate of \$21.79 per hour¹.
 - The value of donated goods will be their estimated retail value.

Ineligibility for future funding

Organizations failing to acknowledge support from the Tompkins County Tourism Program will become ineligible for future funding.

Organizations failing to furnish a grant report within 30 days of the completion of the Celebration will become ineligible for future funding.

Schedules - When to apply:

Submit application in the **Spring grant round** if the event occurs May-December (of the year of application)

Submit application in the **Fall grant round** if the event occurs January-April (of the next year)

Review Committee

A review committee from the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) will evaluate requests for grants. It will be chaired by the County Historian, and will have at least three members of the STPB and one member of the PDEQ (Planning, Development and Environmental Quality) Committee of the Tompkins County Legislature. The committee is responsible for presenting a recommendation for the allocation of Community Celebration Grant funds to the STPB, which will then make a recommendation to the appropriate legislative committee.

¹ This is an independent estimate of the value of volunteer time in the United States in 2011. Source: Independent Sector.
http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time

Evaluation Criteria

The review committee will score applications based on an assessment of how well an application meets the following criteria:

Cultural and Historic Value – 25%

- The event is a real celebration that builds community
- Significant historical educational elements are incorporated
- Components of local heritage or culture are highlighted

Community Value – 25%

- Demonstrates broad and deep community support through partnerships, financial and in-kind contributions, and volunteers
- Supports local talent and performers, and sources locally grown food, local manufactured products and services from local businesses
- Tradition: demonstrates a history of importance to the community
- For new celebrations, demonstrates a compelling vision and innovative addition to local festival offerings
- Demonstrates coordination with other partners of the Tompkins County Tourism Program

Clarity of Application – 20%

- A detailed and interesting description of the celebration is provided
- A clear and complete budget that identifies all event costs, projected revenue, in-kind support and what part of the event the grant would be used for, is presented
- A means of measuring attendance is provided
- No information is missing, and the application is free of grammatical and numerical mistakes
- The application is submitted in the format requested

Ability to Deliver – 10%

- Demonstrates organizational capacity to produce a successful celebration
- Offers an event plan
- Demonstrates evidence of reflection, learning and adjustment from past events
- Demonstrates evidence of using technical assistance provided by the Tompkins County Festivals Program

Diversity – 10%

- Promotes social diversity and inclusion
- Promotes geographic diversity in the distribution of Community Celebrations grant funds

Sustainability – 10%

- Employs sustainable event management practices
- Actively promotes environmental sustainability

Tompkins County Festivals Program

Grant applicants are strongly encouraged to take advantage of resources provided by the Tompkins County Festivals Program. The following resources may be available for your Tompkins County-based celebration.

- Annual event management workshops – various topics. Led by the Downtown Ithaca Alliance and Tompkins County Tourism Program.
- Technical event assistance. Topics of potential individualized technical assistance include, but are not limited to: budgeting and fundraising, site planning and permitting, volunteer management, site management, succession planning, etc.
- Event equipment loan service.
- Vendor lists.

For more information, visit the Tompkins Festivals website at www.tompkinsfestivals.com (Enter Username: *tcfestivals*, and password: *festivals*)

For more information about any of these services contact Tompkins Festivals Program Coordinator Vicki Taylor-Brous at the Downtown Ithaca Alliance, vickit@downtownithaca.com, or Senior Planner/Tourism Coordinator Tom Knipe, tknipe@tompkins-co.org.

Important Notes

All grant recipients must acknowledge the Tompkins County Tourism Program in advertising, collateral and promotional materials with the following phrase:

This program was made possible by a grant from the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

Or, if more appropriate, you may recognize the Tourism Program with this phrase:

This program was made possible, in part, by a grant from the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

A logo is available for web-based purposes on the Tourism Program website: <http://www.tompkins-co.org/tourism/>

Grant recipients must submit a grant report within 30 days of the completion of the project. In the absence of a report, funding requests by the same organization will not be considered for the next two years.

A .pdf file of the completed application form should be emailed to Tom Knipe at the Tompkins County Planning Department - tknipe@tompkins-co.org - by 4pm on September 6th, 2012. The application may also be submitted by hand or by mail by the same time and date to the Tompkins County Planning Department at 121 East Court Street, Ithaca, New York 14850. Upon submission, applicants will receive an email confirmation of receipt.

Applicants must also deliver one copy of the application to the municipality where the event will take place. Funds for successful applications will be sent directly to the municipality, not to individuals or groups.

Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Mayor Svante Myrick
City of Ithaca
108 Green Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

RE: STPB Support for the Ithaca Commons Redesign Project

July 16, 2012

The Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) is pleased to offer this letter of support for the Ithaca Commons Redesign Project.

The STPB is an 18-member advisory board charged by the Tompkins County Legislature with providing oversight and strategic direction for the Tompkins County Tourism Program. The Tourism Program is funded by hotel room occupancy tax and awards more than \$600,000 annually in grants to local organizations to support tourism development. The STPB has also recently completed a draft of the County's strategic tourism plan, which when adopted later this year will help guide future room tax investments.

Visitors rank Downtown and the Ithaca Commons as important travel motivators (third after our institutions of higher education and the state parks and gorges), and as one of the top two activities while in Tompkins County (with Cornell University). Yet, visitor surveys and experience also tell us that the Commons is not living up to its potential as a visitor destination/experience.

Enhancement of downtown Ithaca is vital to the tourism sector in Tompkins County. Downtown Ithaca is the physical core of our community and a big part of Tompkins County's identity to the visitor. The Commons is an important part of what makes us unique, along with our institutions of higher education and natural and cultural amenities. It is what gives visitors a sense of who we are as a community and that is what people look for when they are on a trip.

Tourism is a critical component of our economic health and quality of life, and a growth industry for the County. In 2011, tourism generated \$166 million in local spending, over 2,400 direct jobs, local taxes of \$11.2 million, state taxes of \$9.7 million, and direct labor income of \$52 million¹. In addition, in 2011, the Tompkins County hotel occupancy tax generated \$1.92 million for tourism promotion and product development². Our identity

¹ Source: Tourism Economics

² Source: Tompkins County Department of Finance

and role as a regional tourism hub, and continued success in this sector is intimately tied to the quality of visitor experience in the Ithaca Commons.

The STPB has recognized the potential for the Ithaca Commons Redesign project to enhance visitor attraction and experience in the County's recently updated draft Strategic Tourism Plan. Specifically, the board has identified downtown Ithaca as one of 15 distinct "focus areas" for the plan, with a single associated Critical Action, to "provide advocacy, collaboration, and funding to help rebuild The Ithaca Commons with feature elements serving visitors."

Should the City of Ithaca receive State funding through the CFA process for this project, the STPB will look forward to carefully considering opportunities to provide additional financial support.

For more information about the Tompkins County Tourism Program, including descriptions of grant programs and a copy of the draft Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan for 2012-2020, visit www.tompkins-co.org/tourism.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Sparrow". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David Sparrow
Chair

Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Diana Riesman and Constance Bruce
Ithaca Motion Picture Project
907 Hanshaw Road
Box 211
Ithaca, New York 14850

RE: STPB Support for the Wharton Movie Studio Museum

July 16, 2012

The Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) is pleased to offer this letter of support for the Ithaca Motion Picture Project's (IMPP's) transformation of the former Wharton film studio in Stewart Park into the Wharton Movie Studio Museum.

The STPB is an 18-member advisory board charged by the Tompkins County Legislature with providing oversight and strategic direction for the county's Tourism Program. The Tompkins County Tourism Program is funded by hotel room occupancy tax and awards more than \$600,000 annually in grants to local organizations to support tourism development. The STPB has also recently completed a draft of the County's strategic tourism plan, which when adopted later this year will help guide future room tax investments.

Wharton Movie Studio Museum, as a new, vibrant cultural and educational destination for the region predicated on Ithaca's place in the history of early silent films and the bigger picture of moviemaking is positioned to become a significant cultural destination located on the shores of beautiful Cayuga Lake in the City of Ithaca's main park. This building is one of maybe a handful of silent film studios still standing in the U.S. It is an important artifact from an era when filmmaking was just emerging as a new art form. Ithaca's role in the early years of modern filmmaking is truly unique and significant.

It is this vision for a new cultural space that would not only be a regional draw in its own right, but could significantly enhance the overall draw to Stewart Park and the Cayuga Waterfront Trail, that is behind the STPB's past financial support for the project. The STPB has supported several local tourism grants for IMPP in the past two years, including a Tourism Capital Grant for a feasibility study for the museum, and a new Tourism Initiative Grant to develop high-quality display and interpretive materials that will eventually find a permanent home in the Wharton Movie Studio Museum. Should they be successful in receiving state funding through this CFA process, we expect that IMPP will apply for matching funds from the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

The STPB has also recognized the potential for this project to attract visitors to the area in the County's recently updated draft Strategic Tourism Plan. Specifically, the board has identified "implementation of the Stewart Park Rehabilitation Action Plan" as a Critical Action. The Wharton Movie Studio Museum is a centerpiece of that plan. IMPP's co-founder Diana Riesman is a board member of Friends of Stewart Park, a new organization committed to revitalizing Stewart Park and IMPP has been working in conjunction with the Friends of Stewart Park and also the Cayuga Waterfront Trail towards this end. IMPP has demonstrated an impressive ability to envision the potential for this project and to generate support for it in our community, and we look forward to carefully considering further opportunities to help develop it to its full potential for all of its potential economic development and quality of life benefits.

For more information about the Tompkins County Tourism Program, including descriptions of grant programs and a copy of the draft Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan for 2012-2020, visit www.tompkins-co.org/tourism.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Sparrow". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David Sparrow
Chair

Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Mr. David Skorton, President of Cornell University
Tom Tranter, President of Corning Enterprises
Co-chairs, Regional Economic Development Council of the Southern Tier
Binghamton Office State Office Building
44 Hawley Street - Suite 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Messrs. Skorton and Tranter:

I am writing on behalf of the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board to convey our support for the Cayuga Nature Center's WPA-era Lodge Building Renovation project, for which they are submitting a funding request through the New York State CFA on July 16, 2012. This project promotes economic development and enhances the quality of life in Tompkins County as well as supports the comprehensive vision of the Regional Economic Development Council of the Southern Tier to support regional economic development.

The proposed renovation of the historic Works Progress Administration-era lodge building at the Cayuga Nature Center is an important capital project that is expected to provide 20 jobs (1 permanent, 1 temporary and 18 construction-related), and further place the Cayuga Nature Center as a regional visitor draw. The County provided one-third of the necessary funding through a Tourism Capital Grant and the State's support would complete the project's need.

For more information about the Tompkins County Tourism Program, including descriptions of grant programs and a copy of the draft Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan for 2012-2020, visit www.tompkins-co.org/tourism.

Respectfully,



David Sparrow
Chair

Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Mr. David Skorton, President of Cornell University
Tom Tranter, President of Corning Enterprises
Co-chairs, Regional Economic Development Council of the Southern Tier
Binghamton Office State Office Building
44 Hawley Street - Suite 1508
Binghamton, NY 13901

Dear Messrs. Skorton and Tranter:

I am writing on behalf of the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board to convey our support for three proposed projects of the Paleontological Research Institution and its Museum of the Earth, for which they are submitting funding requests through the New York State CFA on July 16, 2012. These projects promote economic development and enhance the quality of life in Tompkins County as well as support the comprehensive vision of the Regional Economic Development Council of the Southern Tier to support regional economic development.

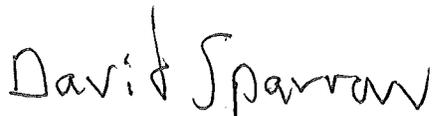
The proposed collaborative arts partnership with the State Theatre and the State of the Art Gallery to present multiple projects in celebration of the Museum of the Earth's 10th Anniversary in 2013 is an innovative example of effective collaboration. Bringing Laurie Anderson, a world-renowned performer, to Ithaca holds potential to have important impacts on tourism.

The proposed multi-year renovation of the Museum's permanent exhibits will enhance tourism in the years to come. We provided seed funding to start the glacier project and we look forward to a compelling addition to our region.

Finally, the proposed building assessment study is an important first-step to renovating this important contribution to the Region's commitment to public outreach and science education.

For more information about the Tompkins County Tourism Program, including descriptions of grant programs, visit www.tompkins-co.org/tourism.

Respectfully,



David Sparrow
Chair

Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Friends of Stewart Park
101 East State St #222
Ithaca, NY14850

RE: STPB Support for the Cascadilla Boathouse project of the Friends of Stewart Park

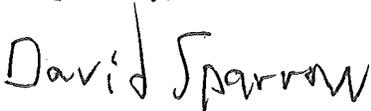
The Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) is pleased to express our support for the Friends of Stewart Park's project to transform the Cascadilla Boathouse in Stewart Park into a public facility in a beautiful historic building on the waterfront at the foot of Cayuga Lake that can be used again for public gatherings and events.

The STPB is an 18-member advisory board charged by the Tompkins County Legislature with providing oversight and strategic direction for the county's Tourism Program. The Tompkins County Tourism Program is funded by hotel room occupancy tax and awards more than \$600,000 annually in grants to local organizations to support tourism development. The STPB has also recently completed a draft of the County's strategic tourism plan, which when adopted later this year will help guide future room tax investments.

The proposed renovation of the historic Cascadilla Boathouse building in Stewart Park is an important capital project that is expected to enhance Stewart Park visitation over time. The County provided past funding to develop an architectural study of buildings in Stewart Park, and the STPB has also recognized the implementation of the Stewart Park Rehabilitation Action Plan as a Critical Action in the County's recently updated draft Strategic Tourism Plan. Along with the redevelopment of the old Wharton Brothers movie studio into a motion picture museum, improvements to the Cascadilla Boathouse are an important piece of this plan. We look forward to seeing ongoing efforts to implement the Stewart Park Rehabilitation Action Plan come to fruition, for all of its potential economic development and quality of life benefits.

For more information about the Tompkins County Tourism Program, including descriptions of grant programs and a copy of the draft Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Plan for 2012-2020, visit www.tompkins-co.org/tourism.

Respectfully,



David Sparrow
Chair