

Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board

Wednesday September 18, 2013; 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

CVB – 904 E. Shore Drive, Ithaca

AGENDA	Time in Minutes
1) July STPB Meeting Minutes	2
• ACTION – Approve Meeting Minutes	
2) Chair’s REPORT – Rick Adie	5
3) Privilege of the Floor	3
(limit of 3 minutes per person for members of the public to address the board)	
4) Annual TPA Designation	3
• ACTION – Approve resolution to be forwarded to EDC	
5) Nominating Committee	5
• ACTION - Election to appoint the 2013 Nominating Committee	
<u>Nominating Committee Description</u> - The Nominating Committee has at least three voting members. It is appointed annually by vote of the STPB membership and its sole responsibility is to present a slate of officers for the next year no later than the last regular meeting of each year. A member other than a prospective officer serves as chair of the Nominating Committee.	
6) CVB – Bruce Stoff and Kristy Mitchell	20
• REPORT and DISCUSSION - Proposed 2013 Marketing Plan changes	
7) CVB – Kristy Mitchell	20
• REPORT – Ithaca Farm to Table Culinary Tourism Initiative	
• Website preview: http://ithacafork.com	
8) Ticket Center – John Spence, Community Arts Partnership	30
• REPORT and DISCUSSION	
9) Planning and Evaluation Committee	10
• REPORT - Strategic Tourism Plan Implementation Status	
10) CVB Director Search Update - Jean McPheeters	5
11) Membership & Bylaws Committee – Sue Perlgut	15
• REPORT on responses to survey	
• Recruitment Update	
• Committee chair planning for 2013. Festivals and NTI/TPG Grant Review	
Announcements (if time available)	

Agenda Packet

1. July 2013 STPB meeting minutes
2. Draft Resolution – Annual TPA Designation
3. CVB 2014 Travel Guide Proposal
4. CVB Culinary Tourism Grant Summary
5. STPB New Member Recruitment Press Release
6. Tourism Partner Award Nomination Recruitment Press Release
7. Recent STPB Letters of Support for Grant Applications
 - a. TC3 Culinary Program
 - b. Stewart Park Large Pavilion
 - c. New York State Parks Taughannock Falls Overlook
 - d. Cortland Regional Sports Council

Next Meetings

Wednesday, October 18

Wednesday, November 20



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.

1 **Date:** July 17, 2013
 2 **Time:** 3:00-5:00pm
 3 **Location:** Ithaca College Athletic & Events Center
 4
 5

Attendees:

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

7

8 **Also in attendance:** Ronda Roaring, John Spence, Bruce Stoff, Kathy Wilsea (Tompkins County Planning
 9 Dept.), ICAEC Tour Guides.

10
 11 **Agenda**

- 12 Opener
 13 Approval of minutes for June, 2013 STPB meeting
 14 Chair's Report
 15 Privilege of the Floor
 16 Budget Committee Report and Vote on Recommended Budget
 17 CVB Monthly Report
 18 Membership & Bylaws Committee – Recommend new member and plan fall search schedule
 19 Strategic Tourism Implementation Updates
 20 Highway Superintendents Conference
 21 Tourism Grant Programs Schedule
 22 CVB Director Search - Discussion
 23

24 **Discussion**

25 **The meeting was called to order** at 3:10 PM. Anthony Hopson welcomed STPB to the Athletic & Events
 26 Center. Rick Adie thanked Anthony for making the arrangements for our visit today.
 27

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

30 **Chair's Report** – Rick welcomed Bruce Stoff, Interim Director of the CVB, and John Spence, incoming
 31 Executive Director of CAP. Rick and Tom Knipe attended a meeting hosted by the Kitchen Theatre
 32 regarding the Ticket Center, and will be meeting tomorrow with a larger group to lay out issues. This is a
 33 long-term discussion, and we have a big stake in TCI. He congratulated Kathy Wilsea on her approaching
 34 retirement from the County and thanked her for her work on behalf of STPB.
 35

36 **Privilege of the Floor** – Ronda Roaring would like to provide comments during discussions on the Budget
 37 and CVB Director search. Anthony Hopson welcomed an IC student who was observing today.
 38

39 **Budget Update** – Rick and Tom attended the July EDC meeting. Tom provided updates on room tax
40 income, which was down 1% in the first quarter and up 3% in the second quarter over the same quarters in
41 2012. Based on these results, the Budget Committee recommends that the 2013 projected increase be
42 reduced from 5% to 3%. They maintained an additional \$4,000 above 3% to the CVB to help address two
43 issues: attempts to increase Sunday through Thursday business through group sales, and response to
44 Jean McPheeters' comments re CVB Director salary. Tom Knipe distributed a revised proposed budget.
45 There were no member comments. Ronda Roaring said Celebrations should require stats on how events
46 contribute to heads in beds. She recognizes the Caroline ag event is also promoting B&Bs, but most
47 Celebrations are totally irrelevant to tourism and municipalities should be paying for them. Stu Stein
48 provided history, saying some County legislators wanted to get Celebrations out of the County budget, they
49 pointed out Celebrations are not tourism, and we all recognize that. Rick recalled prior discussions and said
50 this is a small way communities can gather. The Celebrations budget is currently around \$32,000. Tom
51 Knipe said these events do contribute indirectly to tourism by creating a sense of a vibrant community once
52 visitors are in the community. In addition, some evolve into larger events which are tourism draws
53 themselves. Rick reported that evaluation is ongoing.

54
55 As Chair of the Budget Committee, Rick presented the draft budget for vote. Seconded by Will. Susie
56 Monagan said she appreciates the committee's work and asked what will happen if more money becomes
57 available through larger than anticipated room tax returns. Rick said that was part of today's committee
58 discussion. They would like to use additional money for grants and Strategic Tourism Plan implementation.
59 In 2009 we had to cut 10% from the budget across the board, then ended up with large reserves after the
60 market did better than feared. Concerning proposed changes to the budget, Gary Ferguson said it is better
61 to be pro-active and make changes now rather than once we are already into the budget year. Today's
62 revised draft budget passed unanimously by voice vote.

63
64 **Membership/Bylaws Committee** – Appointment: Sue Perlgut reported the committee recommends
65 moving Mike Mellor from his associate seat to an At-Large voting seat. Seconded by Paul Tatar and
66 passed by unanimous voice vote. Fall Search Schedule: STPB will have four vacancies for voting
67 members at the end of the year. Due to term limits, we will be recruiting to fill at-large, lodging, arts &
68 culture and recreation seats.

69
70 **Strategic Tourism Implementation Updates** – Tom Knipe reported. Chamber of Commerce Wayfinding:
71 There was a meeting today with Lorene Gilbert (project manager at C of C), DIA staff, TCAT staff, and Tom.
72 They interviewed two possible consultants today, and are on track and on time according to the proposal.
73 CVB Farm-to-Table is also moving forward. Christy Mitchell is working on branding and meeting with
74 Cooperative Extension. DIA Commons Kiosks: Gary Ferguson will bring information when the Commons
75 upgrade is in Phase 2. Rick Adie announced TC3 is working toward having a Culinary Arts Center in the
76 former wine center. Although it has a different timeline from the Commons redesign, they are linked. Tom
77 has worked with the Creating Healthy Places Project (of Human Services Coalition) on a County Priority
78 Trails Strategy document. This supports the Critical Action from the Strategic Tourism Plan of connecting a
79 destination-quality network of multi-use trails and the Finger Lakes Trail. Ronda Roaring said she has
80 learned the link of Finger Lakes Trails to the Great Eastern Trail, which comes up from Alabama, means
81 10,000 miles of trails are now linked.

82
83 **Highway Superintendents Conference** – Although Scott Wiggins could not attend today's meeting, he
84 provided a summary of his concern about the probable loss of this annual conference. Rick Adie reviewed
85 Scott's concerns, which included the conference is scheduled through 2014, but after that the Dean of
86 Cornell's ag school feels CU cannot support it. They were a recipient of a Tourism Partner Award last year.
87 Scott requests STPB provide a letter to the dean in support of keeping the program. The program manager
88 is retiring, but thinks there is adequate staff to keep the program going. Jean McPheeters said if we want to
89 support the program, we should state why. There was consensus to have Rick send a letter based on
90 today's discussion.

91
92 **Tourism Grant Programs Schedule** – Tom Knipe establishing predictable cycles. For the fall grant round:
93 post NOFA (Notice of Funding Opportunity 3rd Friday in July/ hold workshop August or early September/
94 applications due 9/20. For spring: post NOFA mid-December/ workshop January/ applications due 2/21.

95 This builds in more time for staff review and committee review. He has discussed this with grant committee
96 chairs and workshop organizers. There were no comments today from members.

97
98 **CVB Report** – Bruce Stoff’s report is at the end of this document.

99
100 **CVB Director Search** – Jean McPheeters provided an update. She thanked members for participating in
101 the survey, and said innkeepers also had a survey. This is a two-part process of advertising the position
102 and then working toward a selection. The deadline is tonight for applications. She is seeing lots of talent,
103 some of which is local. The search committee will meet early in August. They are examining salary range.

104
105 Ronda Roaring had several comments regarding the brand development role of the CVB, importance of
106 broad perspective on data and research, ecotourism, and role of the CVB Director in providing
107 representation at the State level. Rick said, as a hotel operator, he works with group sales organizations in
108 Albany, and knows that Fred also did, so there were reasons other than lobbying for visits to Albany. Paul
109 Tatar pointed out our County is very different from others. Other aspects of municipal government may be
110 familiar to applicants, but not match our system. Susie Monagan asked if there will be any public
111 involvement in the selection process. Jean said she will check with the screening committee, but she
112 doesn’t feel this level position merits public involvement. Ultimately, hiring is Jean’s decision. Paul said
113 other counties look at Tompkins as a model, so keep doing what we’re doing. Jean concurred and said the
114 success of our tourism programs is a tribute to the forethought of Stu Stein and other legislators. Rick Adie
115 and Anthony Hopson will serve on the screening committee.

116
117 **Member Items** – Paul Tatar said he is reaching a term limit at the end of the year, but he would like to
118 represent the County on the Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance if that is appropriate.

119
120 The business portion of the meeting ended at 4:30 and tours of the facility were provided.

121
122 Respectfully Submitted,
123 Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
124 Tompkins County Planning Department

125
126 Approved by STPB on _____, 2013

127
128 **Next Meetings Scheduled**
129 Wednesday, September 18 – 3pm
130 Wednesday, October 16 – 3pm

131
132
133 **STPB CVB Update 7/12/2013**

134 **Underway at CVB**
135 Thank Tom for a very helpful meeting a couple weeks ago aligning CVB practices with Strategic Plan
136 guidelines.

137
138 **Sports Marketing Proposal with Cortland Sports Council**
139 Grant-based program tapping NYS Market NY Tourism Pool
140 Goal is to bring 8-12 major sports event to town
141 Michelle Phelps Director

142
143 **Finger Lakes Beer Trail Passport**
144 Grant Proposal tapping regional NYS dollars. Proposal due Aug.

145
146 **STPB Farm to Table Grant Update** – Currently in the content creation process as we have near-final logos
147 and have selected a web development vendor. Have worked with Cornell Cooperative Extension and
148 Downtown Ithaca Alliance to determine some of the strongest restaurants that source locally for initial
149 launch.

150

151 **Group Sales**
152 **Thomas Tours** from Pittsburgh, Mary & Sarah bringing 40 tour leaders to town Aug 26
153 For one day fam trip.
154
155 **Lead Generation** Destination Northeast Planners Meeting
156 A colleague from Albany CVB attended this meeting planner show held at Mohegan Sun, June 19-20. Some
157 37 pages of leads culled to yield 20 prime candidates. Sales calls to them began this week.
158
159 **Marketing, Kristy & Stephanie report that**
160 Beginning a long overdue content overhaul on **Ithaca Meetings.Com** -- Group sales side of website—to
161 make it more effective.
162 Ongoing newsletters, social media, website updates, SEO fine tuning.
163 Online metrics all looking good
164 PR
165 **Video with/Ford Fiesta Marketing**
166 Stephanie Vann worked her contacts to have Ithaca included in a Ford Motors Social Media Video
167 Production. “Fiesta Movement + J.W. Harvey from the Huffington Post” received 10,544 views and 100%
168 positive sentiment. The piece Included links to VisitIthaca.com, LaTourelle.com, & the Tony Simons
169 Firewalking workshop. Huff Post article coming soon. Links:

170 Hank Chen Video (Ford Fiesta Agent): [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4iex86VGcY&feature=c4-](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4iex86VGcY&feature=c4-overview&list=UUSRY_9huMWfYTWv8HuJ0BXQ)
171 [overview&list=UUSRY_9huMWfYTWv8HuJ0BXQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4iex86VGcY&feature=c4-overview&list=UUSRY_9huMWfYTWv8HuJ0BXQ)

172 Dan Brian Video (Ford Fiesta Agent): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMrK6b9793c>

173 **AAA Conn Member** Magazine Online Feature Upcoming in Sept/Oct
174

Designation of Tourism Promotion Agency for State

WHEREAS, the Tompkins County Planning Department in its administrative function for tourism matters is qualified to recommend the appropriate agency for official Tourism Promotion Agency (TPA) designation, and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Tourism Planning Board has reviewed the matter with appropriate agency representatives, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County has historically been a gateway to the Finger Lakes region of New York State and experiences significant economic benefit from tourism as a result, and

WHEREAS, to obtain certain New York State funding, counties must designate a TPA, and

WHEREAS, Tompkins County has a contract with the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce to for the period of January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2015 to provide destination marketing services for Tompkins County through the Ithaca Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau (ITCCVB), now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Economic Development Committee, That the Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitor's Bureau (ITCCVB) be granted the official TPA designation for Tompkins County for State Fiscal Year 2013-2014, and

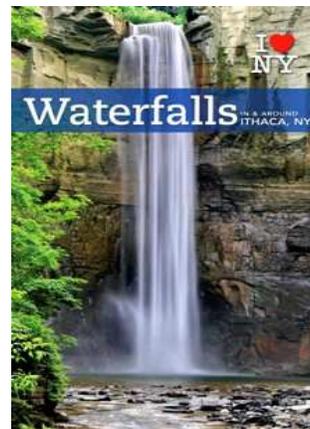
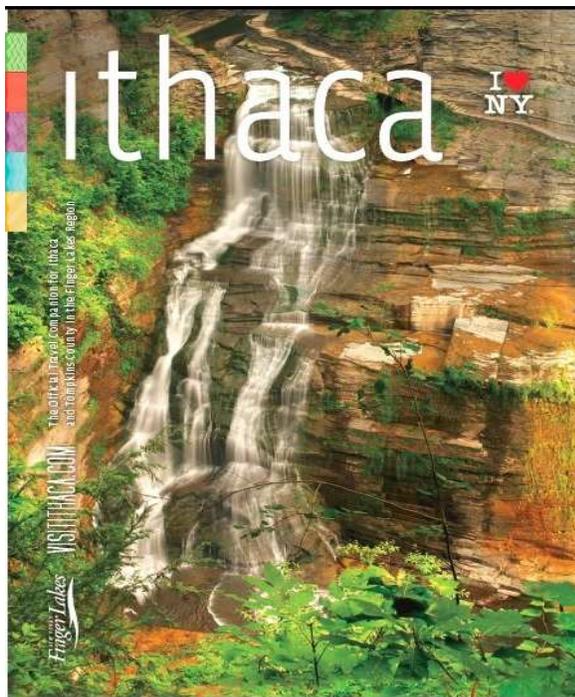
RESOLVED, further, That the Director of the ITCCVB report to the Economic Development Committee if change occurs in state tourism funding requirements.

SEQR ACTION: TYPE II-20

* * * * *

Proposed Ithaca/Tompkins Travel Guide Redesign Cost Comparisons & Narrative

2013 Travel Guide			Revised "Digest" Guide @ 48pp	
Cost Center	Amount	Notes	Amount	Notes
Printing	\$ 49,000.00	80k copies	\$ 14,000.00	Vanguard EST 2x waterfall guide
Map	\$ -	Included	\$ 7,000.00	standalone
Design	\$ 14,000.00		\$ 10,000.00	
Photos	\$ 7,000.00		\$ 5,000.00	
SR MGT	\$ 8,300.00		\$ 600.00	
Editor	\$ 2,080.00		\$ 2,080.00	
Asst Editor	\$ 2,000.00		\$ 480.00	
Staff Hours	\$ 5,800.00		\$ 1,040.00	
Postage	\$ 20,250.00	9,000 mailed x \$2.25 ea	\$ 12,500.00	10,000 @ \$1.25
Gross Cost	\$ 108,430.00		\$ 52,700.00	
Ad Revenue	\$ 32,000.00	6 pages	\$ 32,000.00	6 pages
Net cost	\$ 76,430.00		\$ 20,700.00	



Presenting a modified travel guide

The current CVB Travel Guide absorbs roughly 10% of entire CVB budget and reaches only 80K people. By contrast, Visitithaca.com costs less than \$50k per year and delivers 2.2 million page views. The current magazine-sized guide is a 64-page "directory" that must grow in size as the local tourism industry expands. This is unsustainable.

We propose a 48-page "digest-sized" publication that will include key tourism information: waterfalls, gorges, University vibe, downtown, dining, arts, theatre, nightlife, wine trail, Discovery Trail, major events, lodging and a detailed county map.

IMPORTANTLY, THE PROPOSED GUIDE WILL NOT INCLUDE DIRECTORY LISTINGS OF EVERY TOURISM BUSINESS IN THE COUNTY. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT VISITITHACA.COM AND EDITORIAL WILL PUSH READERS TO THE WEBSITE. THAT SAID, THE CHANGE WILL BE HIGHLY VISIBLE AND MAY SPARK COMPLAINTS FROM TOURISM BUSINESSES ACCUSTOMED TO FREE PRINT LISTINGS.

This new guide will save roughly \$50k per year. The money will be reinvested in digital marketing, website upgrades, mobile device marketing and importantly expanded marketing in group sales, conference sales and meeting sales. This is crucial as the lodging market expands in 2015.

Timing: Now. Production on the 2014 Guide must start in October. By making this redesign now, the Bureau will have its marketing budget realigned and properly prioritized in advance of the new lodging inventory. With new 20% more rooms opening in 2015, we can't afford to stumble in 2014.

Culinary Tourism Grant Update – 9/18/2013 – STPB Meeting

Current Progress:

- Website live @ www.IthacaFork.com
- Kick-off meeting with Restaurants & Farms held last Monday at Felicia's Atomic Lounge
- Initial local PR promotion – story on YNN (TV), coming up next week on WHCU
- Press release to hit targeted media today highlighting the launch of the campaign

Coming Up Next:

- Collateral production in progress including window clings, a rack card for mailer/rack/retail distribution, plus intro kits to be delivered to all participating restaurants and farms.
- Begin to populate social platforms – Facebook, Pinterest, Youtube
- Integrate a hotel component into the website to enable location-based dining decisions
- Build culinary-specific email newsletters to website opt-ins
- Media buying for test marketing an online media-campaign in targeted regions within a drive-distance to Ithaca to increase web traffic and overnights for culinary tourism
- Create mid-week packages that have culinary integration with local hoteliers
- Continue farmer-chef meetings to facilitate increased cooperation and local buying (CCETC)

Long-Term:

- Media planning / buying for a long-term sustainable campaign at the launch of the 2014 spring harvest season
- Tracking and growing the campaign to eventually contain advertising revenues based on website and newsletter banner ads

Contacts:

CVB, Kristy Mitchell / 607-272-1313 / Kristy@visitithaca.com

CCE, Monika Roth / 607-272-2292 / MR55@cornell.edu



Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING BOARD
121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850
Telephone (607) 274-5560

August 21, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Tom Knipe, Senior Planner / Tourism Coordinator
607-274-5560
tknipe@tom-pkins-co.org

Tourism Board Seeks Four Representatives

The Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) is recruiting four new members to begin service in January 2014. Tompkins County residents are invited to submit an application no later than October 1st, 2013. In addition to one At-Large seat, one representative for each the following sectors of the local tourism economy will be appointed: Arts and Culture, Lodging, and Recreation.

The STPB is a volunteer public board which advises the Tompkins County Legislature on effective use of over \$2 million in hotel room occupancy tax revenues. Its mission is to provide oversight and strategic direction for tourism initiatives that promote economic development and enhance the quality of life in Tompkins County.

The STPB contains balanced representation with interests in lodging, retail, recreation, arts and culture, institutions of higher education, agriculture and other relevant sectors of the local tourism industry. The current vacancies are being created by the departure of long-serving members who are leaving the board because of term limits. Meeting dates are the third Wednesday of each month from 3:00 to 5:00 pm.

For an application, visit the County's website at www.tompkins-co.org/legislature/advisory or call the Legislature office at 607-274-5434.



Tompkins County
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Edward C. Marx, AICP
Commissioner of Planning
and Community Sustainability

Telephone (607) 274-5560
Fax (607) 274-5578

August 21, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Tom Knipe, Senior Planner / Tourism Coordinator
607-274-5560, tknipe@tompkins-co.org
Mary Rachun, Ithaca Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau
607-272-1313, mary@visitithaca.com
Richard Adie, Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board
607-257-2500, ra99@cornell.edu

**TOMPKINS TOURISM PARTNER AWARD NOMINATIONS ACCEPTED
THROUGH OCTOBER 1ST**

(Ithaca, NY) Tourism is a powerful economic tool in upstate New York. All too often, the impact that conferences and meetings have on the local economy is overlooked. So are the individuals who invest their own time in coordinating those efforts. The Tompkins Tourism Partner Award remedies that. The award is presented annually by the Tompkins County Legislature to individuals and organizations who are not professional meeting or event planners but who devote time and effort to bring groups to Tompkins County that result in more than 400 room nights at local lodging establishments.

Nominations are being accepted now through October 1st for 2013 awards. Forms are available at the Ithaca Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Tompkins County Planning Department or online at: www.tompkins-co.org/tourism. Nominations will be reviewed by the Strategic Tourism Planning Board and award recommendations will be forwarded to the Legislature.

Previous Tompkins Tourism Partner Award recipients include the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Ithaca College National Collegiate Undergraduate Research Conference, TurkeyShoot Lacrosse Tournament, Ithaca Asian American Association for the Finger Lakes International Dragonboat Festival, Jane Miller and the Ithaca Triathlon Club for the Cayuga Lake Triathlon, and the Cornell Local Roads Program for the Annual Highway Superintendents School. In addition to being honored by the Tompkins County Legislature, each award is commemorated with an engraved paving stone at a trailhead of the Cayuga Waterfront Trail.

Meetings, conferences and events generate direct benefits for taxpayers. Tax revenues collected from these activities fund new and existing programs and reduce the overall tax burden on county residents. A 2009 study of Tompkins County visitors shows that an event drawing 300 overnight visitors for two nights generates \$201,000 in local economic impact and \$8,040 in local sales tax. A separate New York State report compiled by Tourism Economics estimates that in 2012 tourism had an economic impact of \$174 million, generated over \$13 million in local taxes and employed approximately 3,400 people in Tompkins County.

–END –

ABOUT THE TOMPKINS TOURISM PARTNER AWARD PROGRAM

- The purpose of the award program is to honor people and organizations that devote time beyond their regular duties to bring a conference or meeting to Tompkins County, because of the positive impact their efforts have on the local economy.
- Awards will be presented by the Tompkins County Legislature.
- Anyone who lives in Tompkins County and is not directly employed in the tourism/hospitality industry is eligible to be nominated for the award.
- The conference or meeting must result in 400 or more room-nights being booked in Tompkins County.
- Nominees do not have to live in Tompkins County, but the conference or meeting must result in the room-nights being booked within the County.
- A room-night is defined as one room being booked for one night. Examples: 1 room booked for 1 night = 1 room-night. 2 rooms booked for 2 nights = 4 room-nights. 100 rooms booked for 2 nights = 200 room-nights.
- Weddings, family reunions and graduations are not eligible.
- Recipients will be honored with an engraved stone paver, laid at a trailhead of the Cayuga Waterfront Trail. The inscription will recognize them by name as a Tompkins Tourism Partner.
- Nomination forms are available through the Ithaca Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Tompkins County Planning Department, and online: www.tompkins-co.org/tourism
- A committee of the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) will review nominations with a recommendation made to the full STPB. The STPB will then make a recommendation to the County Legislature, which will have final approval.
- The award will be made after the meeting or conference group has visited the County.



Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD
121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

August 12, 2013

Machell Phelps
Director, Cortland Regional Sports Council
37 Church St.
Cortland, NY

Dear Ms. Phelps,

I am writing on behalf of the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board to express our support for your grant application to the State of New York's Market New York Program to form a regional sports marketing partnership with Tompkins and Cayuga Counties. This project demonstrates strong alignment with the Southern Tier's Regional Economic Development Council goals and is a perfect fit with our County tourism strategy.

One of 15 major goals in our recently adopted 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan is to "increase sports tourism" and we strongly support the Ithaca Tompkins County Convention and Visitor Bureau's use of their budget to provide a local match for this project. We expect this project to implement two of the critical actions which are identified under Sports Tourism in the Strategic Tourism Plan:

- "Create a comprehensive feasibility study and implementation strategy for attracting new sporting events and tournaments, including recruitment best practices, cost-benefit of different types of tournaments, financial requirements, inventory of sites and inventory of ideal weekends"
- "Create a Sports Council...to develop a coordinated program to create and grow sports tourism".

The Cortland Regional Sports Council brings relationships in the event and sporting industries, and the organizational infrastructure to attract more athletic events and tournaments to our region. Tompkins County does not have a Sports Council of our own, but we do have a number of high-quality venues and facilities that can play host to an expansion of sports tourism in the region; not the least of these is the new Ithaca College Athletic and Events Center, a \$65.5 million state of the art facility with 130,000 square foot field house, 82,000 square foot stadium and 47,000 square foot aquatics pavilion. The potential for partnership between Tompkins and Cortland County on sports tourism is just too good to pass up, and we fully expect a highly successful regional sports marketing project and a deepening of our relationship over time.

Best regards,



Sue Perlgut
Vice-Chair, Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board



Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD
121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

August 6, 2013

Re: 2013 Consolidated Funding Application, Stewart Park Large Pavilion Renovation Project

Dear Grant Administrators;

I am writing on behalf of the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board to express our enthusiastic support for the Stewart Park **Large Pavilion Renovation Project** grant being submitted to the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council by the City of Ithaca. For many residents and visitors, the Large Pavilion is the public face of Stewart Park, creating park's the first impression for those attending the many special events hosted at the Pavilion.

The proposed improvements will bring the Large Pavilion back to its former stature and greatly enhance Stewart Park. Pavilion restoration is a priority project in the Stewart Park Rehabilitation Action Plan, a plan supported by the City Parks Commission and the Board of Public Works and adopted by Ithaca's Common Council in 2009. Improving Stewart Park is also identified as a *Critical Action* in the Tompkins County 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan. In fact, we recently awarded the Friends of Stewart Park – partners with the City of Ithaca on improving this regional tourism amenity – a \$70,500 Tourism Capital Grant for a portion of the funding needed for the Large Pavilion improvements described in this grant application.

The Large Pavilion Renovation Project will include numerous improvements to make the building more attractive, efficient and accessible. Among many valuable improvements, the addition to accommodate paddle craft storage will complement the future Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail by improving day camp operations and possibly accommodating kayak and canoe rentals. The Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan is being developed now with support from the NYS Department of State and the draft Plan identifies Stewart Park as a priority site in Tompkins County for paddling access improvements. Implementation of the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan is also identified as a *Critical Action* in our 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan.

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

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,



Sue Perlgut
Vice-Chair, Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board



Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
BOARD

121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

August 6, 2013

Fred Bonn
Regional Director, Finger Lakes
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
2221 Taughannock Park Road
Trumansburg, NY 14886

Dear Mr. Bonn,

I am writing on behalf of the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board to express our support for EFC's Green Innovation Grant / Regional CFA Application for funding a Storm Water Control and Mitigation project at the Taughannock Falls State Park Overlook . This project not only supports regional economic development priorities; it also fits with the Tompkins County 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan, particularly our policy to "inspire environmentally sustainable practices by partners in the local tourism industry", and our need to promote our community as a green and sustainable community.

Green travel and the ability to link a community's identity to sustainable initiatives has the ability to make a destination especially memorable to both domestic and international travelers, and we know from our 2009 *Profile of Visitors to Tompkins County* that, in motivating travel to Ithaca "gorges and state parks" ranked second only to higher education. Given the number of visitors to the Overlook at Taughannock, this is an ideal location to provide interpretative information about the need to protect the Cayuga Lake watershed and to have the Storm Water Control and Mitigation project act as a teaching tool.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Sue Perlgut
Vice-Chair, Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board



Tompkins County
STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING
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121 East Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

Carl E. Haynes, Ph.D., President
Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3)
170 North Street, PO Box 139
Dryden, NY 13053

August 6, 2013

Re: 2013 Consolidated Funding Application, TC3 Farm to Bistro Proposal

Dear President Haynes:

I am writing on behalf of the Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board to express our enthusiastic support for TC3's proposed Farm to Bistro program and the request for regional economic development funding. This project not only supports regional economic development priorities, it also fits squarely into the Tompkins County 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan, particularly our goals to:

- Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as regional hubs of culinary and agritourism
- Increase educational tourism,
- Develop Ithaca and Tompkins County as the preeminent sustainability tourism destination in New York State, and
- Enhance collaboration and partnership on tourism related initiatives between tourism partners and our institutions of higher education.

Food and drink rank high in importance to Tompkins County visitors. According to the 2009 Profile of Visitors to Tompkins County, in motivating travel to Ithaca "dining and restaurants" ranked #4 behind higher education, gorges and state parks, and downtown Ithaca and the Commons. Visitor spending on food and beverage in Tompkins County in 2011 accounted for 26% of total visitor spending, or over \$43 million. Your proposal will add to our reputation as culinary destination, not only in development of the restaurant, but also by creating space and opportunities for community and conference programming related to wine and culinary arts. Your new academic and training programs will increase education options for local residents and help develop and maintain the qualified professional talent necessary to support restaurants and other hospitality establishments across the community.

Your decision to locate the culinary portion of the project on South Cayuga Street in downtown Ithaca further supports efforts to revitalize and successfully retain our strong, vital retail core district and build the area as a tourism hub. The project will complement others on that street including expansion of the Holiday Inn conference center, beautification initiatives and other retail and residential projects.

The value of the TC3 Farm to Bistro program will be further leveraged by the Ithaca Farm to Table Culinary Tourism Initiative, a soon-to-launch project of the Ithaca Tompkins County

Convention and Visitors Bureau. This initiative aims to strengthen the messaging surrounding our region's thriving farm to table efforts and utilize this messaging to promote Tompkins County as a tourism destination. It is intended to develop and showcase the wealth of culinary resources cultivated and harvested in the region and the health, sustainability, and economic benefits of these items as they make their way to diners' plates. The integrated marketing campaign will combine strong social media messaging, event planning, print media, and community partnership to highlight Ithaca, NY as a culinary destination for farm to table dining.

We are also excited by your plans to provide a regional showcase for wine, beer and other local agricultural products. These economic sectors are among the fastest growing in the state.

TC3 has a long history of successful program development; the breadth and vision of this project is an example of the college's efforts to best serve your students and the community. The project will serve Ithaca, Tompkins County and our region well and I look forward to successful funding decisions on your behalf.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue C. Perlgut". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sue Perlgut
Vice-Chair, Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board