



Greene County Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 - 9:30 a.m.

Greene County Office Building, Planning Conference Room

Attendance:

Committee Members Attending –Patty Handel County Legislature, Economic Development and Tourism Committee; Russ Coloton, Hunter Mountain; Chuck Tomajko, Fairlawn Inn B&B; Suzanne Oldakowski, Bavarian Manor Country Inn and Restaurant

Legislators in Attendance – Eugene Hatton, Joe Kozloski

Others in attendance: Staff – Warren Hart, Heather Bagshaw, Nancy Petramale, Teri Weiss, Karl Heck

Warren spoke in general about projects that his office has been working on: ILNY CFA Kaaterskill Clove Experience Grant; Mountain Cloves Scenic Byway Committee; ILNY CFA CATS Campaign; BuyInGreene, InVest in Greene Business Attraction Campaign; Great Northern Catskills Campaigns; New Vacation Travel Map; New Film Landing Page. Warren also wanted to have everyone give some thought to TAC Priority Projects for 2015, and possibly 2015 CFA grant funding. One of the meetings in the fall will be dedicated to TAC Priorities and Budget.

Heather spoke about the “Kaaterskill Clove Experience”. Warren and Heather both attended a meeting regarding the Clove Experience campaign with attendees from the Thomas Cole House, Mountain Top Historical Society, Arboretum Society, Catskill Mtn. Foundation, Hunter Foundation and NY & NJ Trail Conference, DEC Law Enforcement. Heather explained in depth about the campaign with its focus being a cultural and historical trail experience based upon the history of the famous writers, painters, novelists, naturalists that made the Clove famous. This will be a self-guided tour experience from Catskill to Prattsville (Thomas Cole to Pratt Rock and Museum, with spurs to Olana and Burroughs Cabin as they enhance the trail experience). There are three tourism target audiences to capture throughout the trail stops; family, leisure and adventure, with digital advertising targeting each audience. The tourism website will host a page for the Kaaterskill Clove Experience with each of the stops or sites along the trail having its own listing page.

Chuck Tomajko asked a question regarding purchasing of advertising space on the web page of the Kaaterskill Clove Experience. “On there you could have tours that coincide with the trail, itineraries, and packages.” He also spoke of having a library for resources. Heather responded that we’re building a resource page that will also have authoritative content, photos, images and stories on it. We’ll also have an entire marketing campaign, including itineraries and packages, focused on the Trail. Warren

addressed Chuck's question with regards to advertising on the GreatNorthernCatskills.com webpage and advised the group that this is not part of our business model, however, individual tourism businesses have an opportunity to add a package on the sight.

Russ Colton had a question about trail safety, garbage and other safety issues that need to be addressed. Warren added that lead entities addressing most of the major safety concerns and actions are the Town of Hunter, the NY/NJ Trail Conference and the Scenic Byway Committee. Tourism will be addressing safety issues through appropriate safety information on the County website and the Kaaterskill Clove Experience landing page, as well as the hiking information and personal contact with visitors at the Visitor Center. Warren also mentioned that Hunter submitted a CFA grant for a proposed shuttle to address pedestrian access, usage and safety concerns at the Molly Smith parking lot on Route 23A, and have been working closely with Lopez and Tkaczyk as well.

Warren then spoke about the five CFA grant applications that were submitted by our department on behalf of Greene County. He explained the process of fulfilling a CFA Grant, from writing it, to the steps that the State takes for scoring and ranking of the applications, to the Regional Council's regional priorities. A summary of the CFA funding requests was handed out, summarizing the five completed applications totaling \$3,995,500 in funding.

Warren then lead the discussion regarding 2015 projects. There are no major structural projects anticipated for 2015, with the new responsive website just being completed, with the exception of a possible reservation system. This has been discussed at prior meetings with the direction to conduct additional research and engage the tourism businesses with their interest. Chuck Tomajko mentioned using "Survey Monkey" to see if there is an interest within our tourism partners for a reservation system. Warren has a few possible 2015 grant related ideas as identified in the *County's Trail-Based Tourism Plan*, being 1) Route 23, five-state lookout parking lot, owned by the State, to improve the site with a viewing platform, information kiosk, and parking improvements, 2) Rip Van Winkle Bridge Sky Walk parking and pedestrian access to Thomas Cole House and the Catskill Walking Trail, 3) Historic Catskill Point ferry slip reconstruction and dock improvements (owned by adjoining landowner).

There was discussion amongst everyone regarding the positive increase in the wedding business that our tourism partners have had over the past couple of years.

The next meeting will be in September unless something takes place that would require a meeting. Heather will send an email to TAC members asking that they think about projects that could become TAC priority for 2015.