

UC TAC Minutes 4-14-09

Attending

- Karl Beard
- Tim Allred
- Cathy Terrizzi
- Melissa Everett
- Richard Edling
- Steve Ladin
- Roy Hochberg
- Lisa Mondello
- Steven Rice
- Kathy Nolan
- Robert Parete
- Wally Cook

Previous Minutes:

Minutes from the March meeting were adopted by a unanimous vote, following a motion by Robert Parete and second by Kathy Nolan. In the absence of a Secretary, Kathy Nolan volunteered to take notes for the minutes of the April meeting. A motion to record future meetings by audiotape was made by Robert Parete and seconded by Steve Rice; the motion passed unanimously.

Presentations:

Economic Benefits of Trails – Karl Beard, Director of the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance Program for NY, encouraged the Committee to build and grow our trail benefits. Karl quoted Mary Carter, who said, “Good trails are good business...; of course, you Easterners haven’t figured that out yet.” Karl reported on research documenting increases in local spending of at least \$3-11/day and total benefits to host communities of \$1.2-1.9M/year. A good trail (i.e., one at least 5 miles in length) can bring \$200-600K/year in new money to a host community and increase property values by 6-20% (the higher value from economist Dave Lindal of Morton Trails, who found “trail premiums” on houses within three miles of off-road trails). Karl gave illustrations of economic revitalization from NYS, citing the Lake Champlain Bikeway, the Erie Canal Trail, Inn-to-Inn bike touring, the Art Trail to North and South Lakes, and other events and strategies. He encouraged trail groups to be creative and innovative in marshalling resources. Karl closed by distributing a summary of resources on “Community & Economic Benefits of Trails.”

Hudson River Valley Resorts (“Williams Lake Project”) – Tim Allred described himself as an outdoorsman, with a background in forestry. He described his involvement with the proposed resort and residential community focused on outdoor recreation and wellness, which he said is no longer headed by Canopy Development. Tim explained that a small group of socially minded investors hopes to honor the legacy of the site (as it had evolved under Anita Peck’s ownership) as a publicly accessible asset for Rosendale and Ulster County. He described the site as environmentally sensitive, with miles of trails (including a pre-existing trail network), scenic views, historic features, biodiversity and opportunities for wellness and outdoor recreation, as well as education. Conservation easements currently exist 400-800 acres of the site. Plans include a hotel, which will pursue LEED Gold certification, with onsite water regeneration and other conservation features. When questioned about public access to the existing rail trail, Tim replied that it bisects the “only level ground” in the proposed development, but that alternates with connectivity were being considered. He proposes a hotel, residences, and scheduled events, such as mountain bike races, triathlons, and community walks, with perhaps a day pass model. The scope for the SEQRA review of the proposal was released at the end of March and the investors are developing a DEIS.

Complete Streets Resolution

After a motion by Kathy Nolan and a second by Steve Rice, the Committee voted unanimously to send the proposed Complete Streets Resolution to the Public Works Committee for their approval and recommendation for adoption by the Legislature.

Streetscape Update

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Melissa Everett reported on the plans and successes of the Kingston Green Trail Alliance, which is working with RUPCO to put bike racks on the Green Trail (which follows the Kingston's Saint Patrick's Day Parade Route down Broadway), to publish a bike map for Kingston, and to encourage greater bicycle use throughout Kingston.

Trail Reports:

Discussion about trail activities ensued. Highlights included:

- The Grand Opening for the Walkill to Walden Rail Trail is scheduled for May 2nd
- Kathy Nolan reported that a trails advisory group has been formed to assess the Comeau Trail in Woodstock
- Land owned by the prison, containing a trail section, was let to lease at the end of March – the role of the County in preserving trail use was discussed briefly
- Negotiations are continuing with John Rahl regarding his ownership of a section of rail trail

Communications:

Steve Rice reported on his conversations with Vin Martullo about the web site. The Committee requested, by consensus, that the entry page for the Trails Advisory Committee be located in the Planning section of the Ulster County web site. The Committee asked Steve Rice to put together a Press Release for the launch of the TAC site. Steve Ladin volunteered to work on monthly PR for the Committee.

Roundtable:

Highlights of member roundtable remarks were as follows:

- *Chronogram* plans to publish an issue focusing on bicycles and cycling in May.
- The Hudson Valley Ramble will take place on Saturdays during the summer.

Adjournment was moved by Robert Parete and seconded by Steve Rice at approximately 8:30PM. The next meeting is May 12th at 6:30PM.