**Historic Hudson-Hoosic Rivers Partnership Meeting August 25, 2014**

Tom Wood Supervisor/Town of Saratoga

Dave Perkins Washington County Association of Snowmobile Clubs

Bert Mahoney Mayor – Village of Waterford

John Sherman Mayor of Schuylerville

John A. Hayes Prospect Hill Cemetery Association

Alane Chinian NYS Parks

Teri Ptacek Agriculture Stewardship Association

Maria Trabka Saratoga P.L.A.N. (proxy for Julie Stokes)

Tracey Clothier The LA Group

Frank Rooney NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets

Jean Carlson Supervisor/Town of Schaghticoke

Robert Hernandez Flatley-Read, LLC

David Bullard The Marshall House

Javier Monjas The Marshall House

Lawrence Stevens Hoosic River Watershed

Sara Idleman Supervisor/Town of Greenwich

Kay Tomasi Senate Appointee

Chris DeBolt Washington County Planning

Marilyn Dubois Assemblyman Englebright’s Office

Jeffrey Cleary Senator Marchione’s Office

Timothy Holmes Friends of Saratoga Battlefield

Joe Finan Saratoga NHP

Tom Richardson Supervisor/City of Mechanicville

Elizabeth Nostrand Office of Assemblyman Englebright

**Introduction**

Tom Richardson called the meeting to order at 10:10am with greetings and introductions

**Acceptance of the minutes from the June 30, 2014 meeting**

* Sara Idleman proposed passage of minutes
* Kay Tomasi seconded the motion

**Visitor Center**

Tom Richardson received a message from Kathy Moser. Mark Gerstman had contacted her to say he would help move things forward. On Friday Kathy Moser said, “Congratulations, we are all set!” Fran Sheehan will be our point person.

Tom Wood said, “We are flabbergasted, pleased and delighted that activity will commence in the near future to get the property purchased and the building built.” He mentioned that he spoke to Danielle Dwyer about funds the Town is sitting on. He sent them completed reports for the appraisal and soil analysis and asked a couple of other questions regarding additional uses of remaining funds, such as work done by the LA Group, whether those funds could be used for finalizing the RFP and advertising. Tom concluded by saying it was great news and indicates that we are making progress.

Joe Finan observed the significance of the fact that it now appears we will be able to use state term contracts, noting that if we use term contracts, they have already been competed. We need to clear out what services we have with them and pay off Flatley-Read, noting that with term contracts we will not need Flatley-Read. He went on to say that Michelle has the RFP in a format to move quickly. She included all the boilerplate State language, though he wasn’t sure we will need that with the term contracts.

Tom Wood mentioned a conference call he had with Michelle DeGarmo and Janet Kennedy. Janet had a couple of tweeks that we can move on to the State for the state format.

Marilyn DuBois said at the meeting with DEC and Kathy Moser she thought they said we couldn’t use state contracts for design and construction, only purchasing. This sounds like a 180.

Joe Finan responded that it appears we now will be able to.

**Press Conference**

Tom Richardson mentioned this Wednesday morning at Hudson Crossing the press will be there and we will be talking about residual PCBs. Hopefully everyone will come out in support. Senator Marchione will be there to support us.

Joe Finan reported three samples have been taken out of the Old Champlain Canal resulting in very trace low levels of PCBs based on those samples at that time. The Attorney General’s office shared this information. The other thing that came out is they are probably going to cap around the kayak launch to stabilize it because there are detectible levels of PCBs.

**By Laws**

Kay Tomasi observed that the by laws are outdated and don’t include new Partnership. She would be happy to work on it, though she is going to California.

Alane Chinian said she would help.

**Mechanicville Boathouse**

Tom Richardson reported the City of Mechanicville had a grand opening of their boathouse on the Hudson River. There was great press on channel 13. There is a large dock in Mechanicville and they offer free water, power and pump-out. The boathouse enables the offering of free showers and bathrooms. Thanks to Alane and her team for the grant of $237,000. We are very pleased. There are a lot of boaters in the summer. It has been well received. Mechanicville is one of very few communities that offer those services for free.

**Susan B. Anthony House Update**

Alane Chinian provided an update on the Susan B. Anthony House, which New York State acquired a number of years ago. Susan B. Anthony lived in Battenville. We want to find a way under the umbrella of the Partnership. Our efforts are going into the physical building where she lived. It has been renovated so many times there is nothing original to her day. In the beginning of the Partnership we got a $10,000 grant to stabilize the house and hopefully find an adaptive re-use. No viable proposal has come forth over the years. There is terrible drainage on the property and the building is suffering. Do we put an incredible amount of money into it or re-think how to honor Susan B. Anthony? Want to put a committee together to address this. Volunteers for the committee include: Tim Holmes; Sara Idleman; Alane Chinian and Elizabeth Nostrand.

Marilyn DuBois asked if there was any idea how much it would cost to restore the building.

Alane Chinian answered the house has suffered extensive mold damage.

Sara Idleman asked if there is any original woodwork. Also, Susan B. Anthony and Mary Anthony have a long history in the area. Someone next to the house said it should be preserved no matter what. But it has been changed so many times there is nothing original left. She taught in many areas of Washington County.

**Soil Test Update**

Tom Wood wanted the Partnership membership to know what the soil tests yielded. He reported that the site could suffer a 6.0 earthquake and withstand that with no movement. There may be settling of an inch or less. They recommend driving down to bedrock rather than removing soil.

**Elections**

David Doonan, John Sherman and Tom Wood all indicated they would be willing to serve another year as voting members.

Tom Wood nominated: Tom Richardson as Chair; Sara Idleman as VP; Jean Carlson as Secretay; and Bill Peck as Treasurer. Bert Mahoney seconded the nominations. The vote was unanimous.

**Feast of the Fields**

Maria Trabka reported Saratoga P.L.A.N.’s major fundraiser, “Feast of the Fields” is on September 11th. It is held on the veranda overlooking the easement. Saratoga P.L.A.N. has a number of conservation projects and have identified as Conservation Heros: Matt Vitch of the County Board of Supervisors who started a Trail Committee through the Board of Supervisors, and Greenman-Pedersen, Inc., an engineering firm who specialize in trails. They donated $20,000 of services to building the Seige Trail. (South side of Fish Creek west of Schuyler House). Greenman-Pedersen donated 100’s of hours additionally towards the project. The event starts at 5:00. It is usually sold out and tickets are $80.

**Saratoga National Historical Park Waysides Exhibit Replacement Plan**

Tracey Clothier reported having had a public meeting and receiving some terrific comments about this initiative. As a community driven effort, they definitely want to be part of the Partnership. They just got some themes done and artists lined up. The ready date will hopefully be 2016. Saratoga and Cape Cod were chosen from our area.

Joe Finan referenced hidden stories at the Battlefield and some secondary themes. He mentioned having been approached again by the Civil War Trust, and the need for information from Rensselaer. He shared plan with them. Joe didn’t know what they are fishing for but he is trying to get boundaries for all parks in the region.

Tracey Clothier referred back to the Partnership and noted the Battlefield is the jewel along the corridor. She suggested it is time for an implementation committee to put into effect a stewardship plan – put together a different group from the visitor’s center on what makes sense between now and then.

Tom Richardson said at the next meeting we will put together a committee to look at that.

Joe Finan expressed a need to speak to Fran about pulling together a development committee.

The suggestion was made for an email to go out about Tracey’s idea and get members thinking about it.

**Partnership expansion bill**

Tracey Clothier asked if there was an update on the bill to expand the Partnership.

Marilyn DuBois answered there has been no movement of the two bills in the Environmental Conservation Committee but it is probably a conversation worth having again because there will be some staff changes.

**Other Business**

If anyone has thoughts or interest in updating the Partnership’s bylaws, they should contact Kay Tomasi at: **jtomasi1@nycap.rr.com**

NEXT PARTNERSHIP MEETING TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 29, 2014 AT 10:00am AT THE TOWN OF SARATOGA TOWN HALL IN THE SCHUYLER ROOM

John Sherman made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Tom Wood.

Meeting ended at 10:50 am