

Historic Hudson-Hoosic Rivers Partnership

Annual Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2018

Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring Street, Schuylerville, NY

Board Members Attending:

Tom Richardson, City of Mechanicville

Tom Wood, Town of Saratoga

Maria Trabka, Saratoga PLAN

Kay Tomasi, Senate Appointee

Julie Stokes, Governor Appointee

Teri Ptacek, ASA, Governor Appointee

Joe Durkin, Rensselaer Land Trust

Sara Idleman, Town of Greenwich

Also Attending:

Bill Reynolds Senate Appointee

Dave Perkins, CCTWG

Pete Bardunias, The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County

Judy Wood-Zeno, Village of Stillwater

Frank Rooney, NYS Dept of Ag and Markets

Mike Sullivan, NYS Canal Corporation

Cindy Wian, Hudson Crossing Park

Lauren Stevens, HooRWA

David Bullard, The Marshall House

Dennis Morreri, Village of Corinth

Keith Swensen, Friends of IBA

Andrew Alberti, Flatley Read

Tracey Clothier, LA Group

Dave Roberts, Partnership

Joe Finan, HHRP

Chairman Richardson called the meeting to order at 10:04 am with a quorum present. Introductions were made.

Secretary's Minutes

- Julie Stokes presented two corrections for the October 29 meeting:
 - Page 3 – Saratoga Sword Surrender – 1st bullet should read *There is approximately \$500,000 in the bank or pledged. Site work is planned for the spring.*
 - Page 3 – Announcements – 2nd bullet should read *Plans have been completed for Champlain Canalway/EST from the footbridge in Schuylerville. Reds Road will also include a path around gate at HCP.*
- **Teri Ptacek made a motion, seconded by Julie Stokes, to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion carried.**

Program - Gateway Visitors Center history and status:

- Joe Finan reported about the current status of the Gateway Visitors Center construction - siding installation will continue but the utility line construction is closed for the season.
- Joe reviewed the early history of the Partnership:
The partnership evolved out of a collaborative effort between the State of New York, Saratoga National Historical Park, and the local community leaders. Saratoga National Historical Park commenced their General Management Planning Process in the early 2000s after years of research, meetings with state and local leaders, public workshops and reviews by the staff of the Director of the National Park Service in 2004. The plan was designed to provide a guide to the future development and stewardship of the resources associated with the Battles of Saratoga the “Turning Point of the American Revolution”. One significant recommendation emerged from the plan, citing the need to formulate Protection Plan for Park by engaging local officials, not-for-profit organizations and the public. Park outreach quickly garnered the support of the Local NY Assemblyman Roy McDonald and his Assembly colleague Assemblyman Steve Englebright.

A “Battlefield Protection Plan” was prepared in collaboration, with local land conservations entities; Saratoga Plan, The Agricultural Stewardship Association, New York Open Space Institute, and the American Farmland Trust along with town, county and NY State officials.

This effort led to the formulation through NYS Legislation of “The Historic Saratoga-Washington on the Hudson Reserve & Partnership” in 2006. A subsequent legislative initiative in 2012 establishes the “Historic Hudson Hoosic Rivers Partnership & Reserve”.

Partnership Mission 2012

The Partnership’s mission is to preserve, enhance and develop the historic, agricultural, scenic, natural and recreational resources and the significant waterways within the Partnership region. Through the tradition of municipal home rule, the Partnership will foster collaborative projects with pertinent non-profit and governmental entities with an emphasis on both agricultural and open space protection, economic and tourism development, and the protection and interpretation of our natural and cultural heritage.

Early Partnership Activities

From 2006-10 the “Partnership” received a number of “NYS Member Item Grants” the Partnership Board establishes priorities for allocating funding for a number of projects. Take note that these funds leveraged funds and in-kind services with the membership.

New York State Budget Funds

Chapter 55, section 1, of the laws of 2006--\$67,700

Chapter 55, section 1, of the laws of 2007--\$350,000

The first priority was to protect the site known as the Saratoga Surrender Site which was for sale and vulnerable in 2006. The NY Open Space Institute Land Trust collaborated with the National Park Service, and NYS Legislators to acquire the site along with an easement restricting development on the adjacent agricultural lands abutting the Hudson River. Next was to develop a Stewardship Plan which inventoried member communities’ resources and local not for profit organizations, provided a list of community project needs and sources of potential grants and technical assistance. A local member’s grant program was formulated for the projects identified

in the Stewardship Plan. The need for a “Gateway Visitor Center” in Schuylerville was recognized as a priority project.

In the 2011 Annual Report prepared in January of 2012 (attached) reflected the grants received and those allocated to member communities and included funds leveraged;

-the funds allocated to members by the “Partnership” was \$192,000,

-the partnership also retained \$700,000 for two priority projects the Saratoga Surrender Site and the Gateway Visitor Center

-the total grants received by the Partnership was \$4,319,000

- total funds leveraged was \$ \$393,000

- All funds as of December of 2011 \$4,712,000

2016 the legislature approved HHHRP application for grants to carry out its mission.

Dave Roberts reported:

- Adirondack White Cedar shingles will be sealed on all sides, with 3 sides having color stain, by volunteer and contracted help. Dave received a round of applause for all his work. There have been meetings in the GVC. Dave thanked Joe for his tenacity in dealing with the state and federal governments.

Other comments:

- Private funding amounting to \$25,000 has been pledged for the installation of utilities.
- Possible rental of the ground floor could assist with operating expenses. Suggestions are welcomed.
- Facility may need sprinklers which is determined by the building code for public use.
- Janet Kennedy is exploring the extension of interior interpretation extension.
- The goal is to have GVC open next year. However, it will not be fully accessible.
- Julie Stokes thanked Joe for his synopsis of HHHRP history and suggested that it be placed online. Joe received a round of applause. Julie volunteered to participate in the decision-making process for maintenance of GVC.
- Tracey Clothier suggested that we need a plan to meet the parking needs of GVC and include handicap parking.
- Drew Alberti stated that \$250,000 would fund construction needed to enable the opening of the first floor. A clear definition of HHHRP classification needs to be established. If we are a not-for-profit, financial reports need to be available and tax returns filed. Joe clearly stated that we should not use the classification of 501 (c) (3) when referring to HHHRP not-for-profit status. Non-profit status, declared in house, is not recognized by the state. It was suggested that HHHRP may become more of a regional planning council as it moves into an operational GVC.
- Tom Richardson reported that Senator Marchione has promised a \$400,000 legislative grant to be used for the completion of GVC. It has not been identified as a DASNY grant or a SAM grant. Preliminary application was made before Election Day.
- The Carrie Woerner legislative grant (\$250,000) will be used to pay the remainder of the Saratoga County loan.

Financial Report – Tom Wood

- The balance in the account managed by the Town of Saratoga is \$50,158.57.
- Tom was thanked for his assistance with managing the HHHRP account.

Drew Alberti presented the 2019 budget.

Partnership Membership

- **Julie Stokes made the motion, seconded by Sara Idleman, to approve 2019 membership fees - \$200 for municipalities and \$50 for non-profit organizations. An explanatory letter will be sent to all members. Motion passed unanimously.**
- Suggestion made to include an image of the reserve in the membership letter.

Nominating Committee Report – Tom Wood

- **Tom presented the following nominations for the 2021 Class of Board Directors (3-year term): Ed Knowski, Bill Peck, and Cindy Wian. William Reynolds was nominated to fill a 1-year vacancy for the 2019 Class of Board Directors. David Bullard made the motion, seconded by Teri Ptacek, to approve the slate as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

Saratoga Sword Surrender Site Report – Joe Finan

- There are 3 phases of the project
 - Site work which currently has adequate funding.
 - Addition of decorative features.
 - Final landscaping.

David Bullard suggested that meetings should focus on various projects - not just the GVC and Sword Surrender site.

Tracey Clothier has volunteered to do a power point presentation about the Champlain Canalway/EST at the January meeting. Teri Ptacek volunteered to have a program about ASA at the February meeting. Dennis Morreri set a good example for presentations when the meeting was held at Corinth. All members are encouraged to invite the partnership for a meeting and share their experiences.

The next meeting will be held at the Saratoga Town Hall on January 7. Operational and project discussions will take place at 9:30 am. The regular Partnership meeting will be held at 10 am. All are invited to attend the 9:30 session. Tom Richardson thanked Tom Wood for the refreshments.

Announcement: FEMA floodwater resolving workshops will be held in Brunswick and Malta.

Sara Idleman made the motion, seconded by Julie Stokes, to apply for a Hudson River Valley Greenway grant to update the stewardship plan. Motion carried.

Julie Stokes made the motion, seconded by Sara Idleman, to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Tomasi