

**Sitka Long-Range Tourism Plan Collaborative Process**  
**Conveners and Steering Committee meeting**  
**March 6, 2006, 5:30 p.m.**

**In attendance:**

Vern Culp, Dave Malone, Fred Reeder, Jeff Budd, Mark Gorman, Jill Hansen, Tonia Rioux, Sandy Lorrigan, Julia Smith, Stef Steffen, Eric Jordan, Gordon Blue, Linda Behnken, John Litten, Cleo Brylinsky, Kayla Boettcher

(Matthew Turner is out of town – Cleo facilitates the meeting)

**Agenda:**

- Show Conveners the current list of Stakeholders and explain how it has been altered
- Split up the names of potential Stakeholders to invite/recruit
- Discuss and ask input on the potential Stakeholder meeting schedule
- Gather ideas for information that the Stakeholders might need to review

**The first Stakeholder meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14, 6:30-8:30 at Centennial Hall.**

**Stakeholder List:**

Last Wednesday about 10 people gathered to review the grid, fill in the blanks for Perspectives and Experiences, and get an idea about which categories were light/heavy.

As you're looking at the matrix, the numbers across the top (below the categories) indicate how many "hits" in each column.

The names have been grouped into 3 groups:

- Self-identified – these folks have volunteered to be Stakeholders and already know about the first meeting.
- Those who were recommended by Conveners or the Steering Committee – they may or may not know their names are on the list; the group on Wednesday did their best to fill in the P&E for these folks
- People whose names were thrown out somewhat haphazardly – some are not even people, just names of businesses. When we did the exercise last Wed and found categories that were a little thin (i.e. had 3 or fewer people in it), we used people from this list to fill in those gaps.

This is still too many to be a manageable Stakeholder group, but not all of these will be able to be Stakeholders. Furthermore, at the first SH meeting, when they're all together in one room, they may realize that they are part of a cluster of people that share viewpoints, and there may be more winnowing in that way. We didn't want to be the ones making that decision. Similarly, when we bumped people up from the 3<sup>rd</sup> list of names to fill gaps in the categories, we moved ALL the people that were associated with the gap we were trying to fill, instead of selecting just enough to fill the gap. For example, if restaurants didn't have 3 or more, and there were 5 suggested restaurants on the 3<sup>rd</sup> list, we moved all 5 up instead of choosing just one or two.

*Q: In the self-identified list, it was my perception that it is slanted toward “light tourism” vs. “heavy tourism.” If I walked into a SH meeting and saw what I considered to be one sector of the community, I’d be anxious that there isn’t balance there*

*A: Very important to remember that we’re working hard to make sure every sector is represented, and that this is a consensus process, not a voting process. Therefore, even if there are more people from one viewpoint present in the room, the one person from an opposing viewpoint has complete veto power. It’s not about coalitions – the number of people for any single viewpoint will not sway the outcome if we do this right.*

Cleo notes that the top two categories (“self-identified” and “recommended”) are more likely to be people who are commonly involved in these types of things. The third category may be more unusual voices, the high interest/low influence segment – getting them involved may be more about recruiting them than inviting them. We need to educate and reassure them about the process, and tell them the process will be better if they are involved.

*Q: Someone I recommended and really wanted to have involved isn’t on the list.*

*A: Tell that person to come to the SH meeting – it’s still not closed process.*

When we went through the list on Wednesday, the group decided to set a couple of thresholds. One was that we kept all the Self-identified people on the list, and then all the Recommended people that had 9 or more P&E categories associated with their name. (This doesn’t mean they don’t associate with 9 or more categories, just that that information hadn’t been filled out for them.) Some individuals were removed from the list because committee members were confident that they would be out of town too much or not interested in participating. Then the group looked at the categories, and for P&E that had 3 or fewer people associated with it, people from the 3<sup>rd</sup> list (the “brainstormed” list) were included to fill out those gaps. The person you recommended probably just didn’t have all the information filled out, but they should still come if they’re committed to the process.

*Q: A Convener expresses concerns about making sure the public knows this is not an exclusive list.*

*A: We have tried as much as possible to communicate this – on the website there is a long narrative about this process and in bold it states that this is not an exclusive list, but rather an attempt to make sure all the P&E are represented. Kayla encourages everyone in the group to consistently convey this message to the public.*

At this point, the group takes a few moments to review the list. Then Cleo reconvenes the group with the task of inviting/recruiting the people on the list (those who are not Self-identified). In the case of suggested Stakeholders that are not individuals, but rather business names, there is some discussion about how to approach them. Also, some people who worked on this list last Wednesday asked for clarification – they thought we would recruit people from the 3<sup>rd</sup> list only after the first SH meeting, when it was more apparent which gaps needed to be filled. Cleo responded that this recruiting work needs to be done at some point, and it makes more sense to try to get as many people as possible to the first meeting so they can start at the same time. Kayla adds that at the first meeting, there will be exercises to illuminate some of the redundancy in the room, and perhaps this will help winnow the group size.

### **Invite/Recruit Potential Stakeholders**

A few names/businesses were eliminated from the list during this process:

- Aero Services – people feel Fed Ex is a more appropriate contact
- Nick Galanin – in New Zealand until summer
- Robert Hoffman – is the same person as Robert Davis
- Trooper academy – law enforcement can be better represented by the SPD

The rest of the names are divvied up as follows:

Brady, Isabella	<b>Tonia</b>
Budd, Amelia	<b>Jeff</b>
Filler, Stan	<b>Julia</b>
Gassman, John	<b>John L</b>
Gassman, Lisa	<b>Tonia</b>
Hauck, Ron	<b>Fred</b>
Hope, Gerry	<b>Tonia</b>
Iwamoto, Ed	<b>Jeff</b>
Lubin, Davey	<b>Sandy</b>
Majeski, Ray	<b>Fred</b>
Meisner, Karen	<b>Sandy</b>
O'Connell, Victoria	<b>Cleo/Linda</b>
Ozment, Jack	<b>Gordon</b>
Perkins, Keith	<b>Dave</b>
Ryan, Tim	<b>Linda</b>
Shaffer, Cathy	<b>Julia</b>
Stockel, Dan	<b>Fred</b>
Vosburg/Bauder, Vicki	<b>Jill</b>
Wasson, Mike	<b>John</b>
White, Dirk & Trish	<b>Gordon/Jill</b>
Barger, Candi	<b>Gordon</b>
Bayview	<b>Sandy</b>
Bennett, George	<b>Cleo</b>
Bingham, Jay	<b>Stef</b>
Bruhl, Gus	<b>Jeff</b>
Calhoun, John	<b>Fred</b>
Canizzaro, Tristan	<b>Cleo</b>
Clarke, Tom	<b>Julia</b>
Davis, Nancy	<b>Tonia</b>
Davis, Robert	<b>Vern</b>
Dunlap, Michaela	<b>Jeff</b>
Eubanks, Rene (from FNBA)	<b>Jeff</b>
Faulkner, Elizabeth	<b>Jill</b>
Ferguson, Keith	<b>Cleo</b>
Finn, Liz	<b>Stef</b>
Fiske, Annie	<b>Jeff</b>
Florirose	<b>Jeff</b>
Food Services of America	<b>Dave</b>
Greba, Sandy	<b>Sandy</b>
Green, Ed	<b>Dave</b>
Harang, Trevor	<b>Fred</b>

Harris, Scott	Mark
Herforth, Colin	Vern
Hodges, Lisa	Cleo
Jacoby, Bob	Linda
Joseph, Tommy	Vern
Kane, Dan	Sandy
Kempton, Colin	Mark
Lane, Mark	Stef
Little Tokyo	Cleo
Louie (pharmacist White's)	Dave
Ludvig's	Tonia
Maguire, Mike (Laguire)	Stef
Martin, Marty	Fred
McCarty, Kay	John
Moore, Hank	Vern
Pizza Express	Vern
Primacio, Estelita	Cleo
Reiff, Mike	Mark
Richards, Kevin	Cleo
Robidou, DJ	Vern
Rothcar, Teri	Tonia
Rusk, Judson	Jeff
Sam, Bob	Tonia
Sean - SJ	Jeff
Straley, Finn	Mark
Sullivan, Iko	Sandy
VanWinkles	Stef
Weiland, Pete	Linda
Whittington, Cindy	Julia
Winger, Joe	Stef
Wunrow, Seth	Jeff

The group wonders if Tina McNamee plans to be involved. Kayla says she's tried to get a response from Tina about her involvement, but hasn't heard from her. Sandy will contact her, and also ask about her mom's involvement (Iko Sullivan).

Cleo advises the group to use the handouts on the table (they provide the mission statement, basic tenet of collaborative process, the website address, and a list of expectations/values that the Stakeholders should bring to the process) to help potential SH understand the process better. Kayla adds that she is working on an FAQ, which she will email to everyone tonight so they can use that as well.

### **Potential meeting schedule**

In writing, potential Stakeholders have been informed that they should expect at least 2 intensive meetings per month. Cleo points out that there are really only 7 weeks until May,

which is a benchmark in the process as well as the beginning of the tourist season, when the SH group will ease off the meeting times for the summer. Cleo also acknowledges that when the assembly passed this, they expressed concerns that it would drag on and on. We also expect that meetings should last at least 3 hours in order to accomplish the goals for that meeting. Weeknights are expected to be busy, and it is difficult for people to attend long meetings at the end of a workday. Cleo asks the group how they would feel about meeting every Saturday for 3 hours, or every other Saturday for 6. There is a strong negative response to this. People clearly feel that taking Saturdays is more difficult than committing to a regular weeknight, that we'd have a better, more consistent turnout if we meet every week on a weekday. Someone suggests bringing in pizza or sandwiches for the group.

There is also a suggestion to mix it up – maybe every week on a weeknight, and one Saturday per month.

The group agrees we need some input from the Conveners – as they're being invited, tell them to bring their schedules with them. But they also feel the Steering Committee should put forth a proposal, not just ask everyone what works best for them. Someone suggests taking a poll about which weekday evening would work best. But we also need to consider room availability – finding a consistent place that would be available every week.

It is acknowledged that we can expect some absenteeism, but it is the SH's responsibility to catch up on what they missed. Cleo notes that all documents and information about this process will be available not only on the website, but as hard copies in public places, such as the library.

### **Suggestions for information needs**

- Models of tourism plans (such as Talkeetna, Ketchikan, Petersburg), although maybe not too early in the process
- # of Emergency calls during the season
- # of tourists, etc.
- overview of Sitka's economy, McDowell's economic report; what is the situation, where is it heading – Dave Wolff can give a good presentation too.
- From the city – last five years of occupancy tax – bed tax overall for the city per month
- Visitors Bureau will have much of this information; Dave Wolff for the city also
- Alaska trends on tourism
- Reports about the negative impacts of tourism on a community

### **Discussion:**

- Let the SH start with some of the reports, if they need more information, maybe they will survey the services as needed.
- Have local experts available to answer the questions accurately.
- SH may choose to do focus groups to collect/digest the information and report to the overall group instead of everyone working through every detail.
- Important to know where we've been and where we're headed – big challenge to put it in digestible bits for the SH (is it budgeted for the facilitators to do this?) – need to present info so people will understand things quickly
- Ask Chris Beck for his input on the type of information that will be needed

- During the solid waste process, it was helpful to have a general overview of what the current situation is; in this case, describe the overall scope of tourism as it is today. Perhaps someone from CVB could do this? Also, before any of this, ask the SH what their concerns are about tourism in Sitka. We did this in the solid waste process – they wrote down their concerns individually, then they broke up into small groups to discuss, reported back to the large group, the concerns were grouped into topics...this helped to focus what types of information we needed to gather. It also allows people to vent what they need to say at the beginning.
- In addition to concerns, good idea to ask the group, what things they like about the topic – such as what are the things you celebrate about visitors to our community? Also give opportunities to swap stories about the topic (for example – favorite tourist story) – this helps build common understanding.
- Ask the CVB, city, SEDA for relevant reports that could be helpful to us
- This needs to be a holistic approach – the mission statement isn't just about tourism, but about Sitka's quality of life, characteristics that make Sitka attractive, etc. It would be helpful to have a presentation on our economy as a whole, not just the positive/negative impacts of tourism on the community. (Sandy notes that the CVB has a plan from Hawaii that includes a section on positive/challenges of tourism.)

Meeting ended at 7:00.