

**New York State Olympic Trail Scenic Byway
Corridor Management Plan (CMP)**

Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Organizational Meeting

Location: Ramada Inn

Time: 7:00-9:00 P.M.

Date: November 7, 2001

Minutes

Attendees: **Bob Ashodian, Mike Sligar, Gary DeYoung, Rick Novy, Nancy Robbins, David Altieri, Bruce Armstrong, Christine Hoffman, Doris Gorham, Kevin Smith, Mark Pacilio, Wayne McIlroy, Lori Borland, Bob Fetterly, Terry Martino, David Zembiec, and Kathy Amyot**

Dave Zembiec, New York State Tug Hill Commission (THC), opened the meeting at 7:05 P.M. by welcoming attendees and presenting a **brief overview** and background of the development of New York State Scenic Byways Program. Dave stated the Seaway Trails Scenic Byway received the first designation in New York State (NYS) and became the model for the development of additional Scenic Byways in NYS. Attendees introduced themselves and the location along the Route 3 corridor they represent.

Terry Martino, Executive Director of the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) provided an **opening statement** regarding ANCA's role in the North Country and Scenic Byways Program. Terry highlighted ANCA's role in administering federal funding through the Department of Environmental Conservation for the planting of trees in local communities destroyed during the "Ice Storm." In addition, the NYS Department of Transportation has contracted with ANCA to develop the Adirondack and Olympic Trail Scenic Byway "Corridor Management Plan" (CMP), emphasizing the potential for economic development to local communities along both corridors.

Kathy Amyot, Project Coordinator, presented a promotional video on Scenic Byways and summarized by stating, "**Scenic byways are roadway corridors developed to meet the needs of local communities while providing the traveler with positive and diverse experiences.** Scenic Byways have at least one **major unifying theme/intrinsic quality** based on the corridor's Scenic, Historical, Natural, Recreational, Cultural, and/or Archeological resources." New York State currently has 12 designated byways administered by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT).

A **preliminary list of reasons to travel the Olympic Trail corridor** were identified by attendees in a brainstorming exercise and include: restaurants and bookstore in Sackets Harbor; cycling and snowmobiling in Cranberry Lake; Henderson Overlook; fishing, boating/rafting and scenic beauty along the Black River; Access to Fort Drum; Natural Bridge Caverns; Canadian Route to Maine; and the multiple opportunities to enjoy the foliage, open space and active

farmlands, hunting, and culture and history throughout the corridor. In summing up the exercise, Kathy emphasized the Scenic, Recreational, and Natural theme/intrinsic qualities that support the NYS designated Olympic Trail Scenic Byway, identified in the preliminary list.

To gain a **contextual framework** of the process involved in developing a CMP, attendees viewed a segment of the “Lake Champlain Byway” video, a suggested model for replication in the development of the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway Project. The elements of developing a CMP were highlighted by Kathy in a Power Point presentation and emphasize the grassroots approach to balance the needs of communities along the corridor and its resources with the interests and experience of visitors.

While members of the LAC identified several **issues**, a discussion to reroute the segment of the designated Olympic Trail along Route 3A from Deferiet to Fargo was emphasized. Attendees agreed Route 3 along the scenic Black River into Carthage offered more services to travelers and was in keeping with the intrinsic qualities of the scenic byway. Several members expressed concerns regarding future use of Route 3A as a scenic byway as it borders Fort Drum and may require limiting access due to increased security measures.

Another key issue the group discussed was centered on the “Olympic” theme. Committee members asked if the Olympic theme make sense to the traveler experiencing the corridor and how does a traveler who does not identify with the Olympic theme identify with the corridor?

Additional issues identified by attendees:

- The corridor is not a road (travelers will access and exit at differing points);
- Money (financial resources) for development;
- How to promote the corridor;
- Need for an active outreach to gain broad community support;
- Negative implications to local communities in developing a rooftop highway;
- Current Olympic Trail Scenic Byways name (refers to one event in one location);
- Strengthen local identity to corridor development;
- Need to define the corridor;
- Regulatory restrictions surrounding zoning, signage, and view sheds;
- Watertown’s role as the city and service center; giving attention to local needs and issues within the broader plan.

Attendees also identified a **list of opportunities** reflecting economic development, resource management, community services, and visitor and roadway management.

- Need to define the corridor;
- State and regional marketing;
- Expand the current business season;
- Invent the “product,” i.e. interpretive products (themes);
- Encourage cycling;
- Establish a unifying theme and a stronger identity;

- “Sell” the small-town experience;
- Quality Of Life;
- Share/Learn from one another.

A **preliminary vision** was identified by attendees by listing elements for advancement and is reflected in the following vision statement. To add an edge to what the product developers are marketing, i.e. greater appreciation and stewardship of the resource, enhance the quality of life, the corridor becomes a desirable route travelers choose, create new and expanded business and economic opportunities, boost local and regional pride/spirit.

The group discussed whether the next meeting should be held in a central location or if “focus group” meetings or forums should be held at differing locations along the route to broaden community support. The decision was to meet next in a centralized location and hold local forums as the project progresses along differing segments of the trail as an effective way to reach out locally. At this time, members of the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) agreed to meet the first Wednesday of each month until June of 2002 from 6:30-8:30 P.M. at the Ramada Inn, Arsenal Street, Watertown, NY.

The next LAC meeting will be held **6:30 P.M. on December 5, 2001 at the RAMADA INN on Arsenal Street, Watertown, NY.**

The meeting concluded at 9:00 P.M.