



Minutes
Gateways Network Working Group Meeting
Offices of Maryland Historic Trust
January 14, 2004

Participating: Lisa Gutierrez, Elizabeth Hughes, Marian Hrubovcak, John Davy, Derral Jones, Robert Carter, Robert Picket, Dan Martin, Tom Ford, Jonathan Doherty, Skip Meehan, Cheryl Branagan, Michael Land, Catherine Mueller

The meeting began at 10:15 a.m.

The minutes from the December 17, 2003 teleconference were approved.

Overview of Existing Major Initiatives

A brief overview and discussion followed each of the topics included in the agenda packet. See the packet for details. Among the points noted were:

- *2005 Gateways Conference:* The next Gateways conference is planned for March 2005. A planning committee will be formed from interested parties (Working Group, Gateway sites and NPS) and begin work in March 2004.
- *Workshops:* An orientation to the Gateways Network for new sites is planned for early spring. 2-3 grant writing workshops will also be held this spring.
- *Interpretive Planning Assistance* is continuing using the services of John Veverka and Associates. The pilot for this assistance was a two-day workshop at Occoquan National Wildlife Refuge, VA. Skip Meehan felt it was quite successful since several new ideas and the groundwork for an interpretive plan was laid out. The success was due to all the participation from both the site managers and friends group. Several other Gateways are being scheduled for the end of February and early March. At least two Gateways have contracted independently with Ververka for creating interpretive plans (Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum and Flag Ponds/Kings Landing.)

CBGN Committees

Jonathan Doherty provided an overview of existing CBGN committees. See the agenda packet for the committee listings. Please send your suggestions to Jonathan if you are interested in participating in a committee, or can suggest someone who would be, as soon as possible.

Next Steps on Support Organization

Bob Carter outlined the next steps in the ongoing process for developing a support organization for the Gateways Network. He noted that at the November conference, participants agreed with

the proposal from the Working Group to move forward, with the cautions and concepts outlined in the 10 Principles. The next steps involve:

- *Establishing an ad hoc committee to guide the process:* Members should represent a diversity of geography, size of institution, economic and program focus, and interest, but also have demonstrated active commitment in CBGN. Membership will be explored further and finalized in the coming few weeks, with the group's intended size being 7-8 members. The committee will be supported by APPL in its work.
- *Identifying an organization:* The committee will undertake the following steps, outlined in the conference Town Hall materials, and complete its work if possible by the end of June 2004: (a) Develop and use a letter of inquiry process to determine if there is a fostering organization; (b) If yes, develop an agreement with that entity, and if not, select a founding board in concert with the WG and Gateways. In addition, the committee will advise on the revenue contract described below.
- *Revenue Assessment Contract:* NPS will engage a contractor to research and develop revenue opportunities associated with the Gateways Network.

Bob noted the committee would return to the Working Group at several steps in the process, now envisioned to occur over the next 6 months. He indicated he would like to continue on with the committee, and that John Valliant, President of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum had also agreed to serve.

Network Promotion

Promotion/Communication/Marketing Strategy

Jonathan Doherty noted that Reingold Inc. has completed a communication audit; he encouraged members to review the document and the issues presented in advance of the next meeting. He also noted that Reingold is carrying out focus groups on the positioning statements developed late last year. Elizabeth Hughes expressed some concerns about branding for sites and how that can or should be done when the property is actually supported by multiple sources. Lisa Gutierrez concurred with these concerns. Jonathan noted the importance of these concerns and that they have been expressed to Reingold. Elizabeth also noted uncertainty about whether developing materials to target potential new members was a priority at this time. Jonathan said the committee expects to meet with Reingold next week and that a draft strategy is scheduled for review at the February 10 meeting.

Gateway Network Exhibits

Skip Meehan noted the standard exhibits for Gateways sites have been fully designed and will be available for online ordering in the next couple of days. The primary use for the exhibits is as a device to introduce the CBGN and distribute the map and guide. The initial order (one per site) of these standard exhibits will be underwritten by the Network. Additional exhibits will be available at cost.

Product Development

Gateways Network Production Committee

Bev McMillan's memo states she is working with the product development committee on creating a strategy for the guiding and selecting Network-wide products including the additional 4 thematic guides. Working Group members discussed the proposed subjects for the next guides. Members were reasonably comfortable with the general subject of Chesapeake Bay bird life, but

felt that ultimately a more specific focus may be required, such as the Bay as a migratory route, waterfowl, shorebirds or raptors. There were also some comments about the wealth of existing bird products and the need for any Gateways Network product to be in a vacant niche. The group felt that having good links to related themes would enhance the Gateways and thematic guides, as well. Tom Ford noted the tie-ins to wildlife at Conowingo Dam as an example. Members also felt that Classic Bay Watercraft and Colonial Life were reasonable starting points for the third and fourth products. Elizabeth Hughes noted it would be optimal to invite Gateway sites to participate in the development process.

John Smith Voyages of Exploration

Bob Carter discussed the joint project documenting John Smith's voyages around the Chesapeake, due for completion by October 2004, with the information to be published in book form. An extensive bibliography and available art and illustrations will also be included. The book will explore the Bay's natural and cultural history of the era, including the Susquehanna and uplands areas of Pennsylvania. A review meeting with an open forum is tentatively scheduled for March 23, 2004 at George Washington Birthplace NM in VA Northern Neck. Public is and invited and encouraged to review and comment on the current research. Ultimately, a copy of all the information will be given to each of the Gateways Network sites to be useful in creating place-based interpretation in coordination with the 2007 John Smith celebration.

2004 Grant Deadlines

Working Group members set the deadline for accepting new Gateways site nominations to qualify for the 2004 Grant Round as **February 20, 2004**. These nominations will be reviewed at the March 10 meeting.

The deadline for grant applications for the 2004 Grants is May 14, 2004. These applications will be reviewed at the Tuesday, June 8 meeting.

Lisa Gutierrez asked about the possibility of block grants to the states, noting the deterioration of state budgets. John Davy expressed interest in the possibility of funding someone to coordinate Gateway activities in Virginia. Jonathan Doherty suggested the Working Group consider topics such as this in the context of its regular priority setting, where the group has outlined key strategies essential to moving the Network forward.

Initial 2004 Priorities Discussion

Jonathan Doherty noted the limited time available for this initial discussion and that there would be more time available later. He noted the group's regular practice is to identify initial priorities early in the fiscal year and then reassess them in summer after closure of the grant process.

Working Group members reviewed the status of 2003 Priorities using an updated listing. Jonathan noted that there were several major initiatives identified for this year that will only begin to become clear in the next few months, including implementation of the promotion strategy, development of an education strategy, and the support organization process. The group also looked over a brainstorming list of possibilities for FY 2004 generated by NPS staff prior to the holidays. A general discussion ensued with members noting several items as possible ideas:

- Expanding state capacity to facilitate CBGN
- Carrying out a potential new member audit/gap analysis (see minutes of 12/17/03 for more details)
- Possible challenges to developing an education strategy, including: concern over how the NCLB Act may push out opportunities for Gateways in the classroom due to the time spent on reading and math; how to get a good connection with the state departments of education (the suggestion was made to look at the “teaching for historic places” initiative of the National Register, NCPTT work with Louisiana on heritage training, and VA state parks educational materials.)
- Conference planning
- Community visioning – assistance in working with cities and communities about hub and other forms of designation
- Developing a better restoration component
- Considering a higher funding level for a specific category of projects and requiring more up-front planning and greater caveats.

More discussion and finalization was tabled until a subsequent meeting. These priorities are attached.

Education Strategy

An education component to the Gateways Network was discussed but was tabled for a future meeting. A committee will be formed to discuss the possibilities.

Derral Jones’ Retirement

Working Group members thanked Derral Jones for his work and commitment in helping get the Gateways Network started. Derral is retiring from Virginia DCR later this month.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at the Fish Shack on February 10 and is expected to focus on the Promotion/Marketing Strategy.

2004 Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, February 10

Wednesday, March 10

Tuesday, April 13

Wednesday, May 5

Tuesday, June 8

Wednesday, July 7

Wednesday, September 8

Tuesday, October 12

Tuesday, November 9

Wednesday, December 1