



Minutes
Gateways Network Working Group Meeting
Chesapeake Bay Program Office
Joe Macknis Conference Room
October 8, 2003

Present: Lisa Gutierrez, Pat Stuntz, Melanie Teems, Marci Ross, Robert Pickett, Marian Hrubovcak, Robert Carter, John Davy, Lynn Bostain, Rodney Harrell, Jonathan Doherty, Skip Meehan, Mike Land, Catherine Mueller

Guests: Beverly McMillan, Matt Gaffney, Janet Reingold, Joseph Ney, Vicki Jones

The meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

Working Group members reviewed and approved the minutes of the July 9, 2003 meeting.

Review of the Pending Nominations:

Baltimore & Annapolis Trail Park (Land Route): Members discussed the trails roles as an historic and present transportation corridor, its part in the East Coast Greenway, and the volume of users along the trail. Members felt the links to existing Gateways in Annapolis, as well as developing links toward Baltimore and other resources were sufficient to meet the designation criteria. Moreover, members felt that a historic rail corridor linking Baltimore and Annapolis is fundamentally tied to the Chesapeake Bay story. Members felt interpretive signage would further encourage visitors to access local Gateway Sites. The Working Group accepted the nomination.

Eastern Shore of VA Barrier Island Center (Gateway Site): The Working Group felt the focus of this institution was not sufficiently connected to the Chesapeake Bay for designation as a Gateway at the current time. To the extent the center's focus changes and incorporates a strong focus on both the Bay-side and Atlantic side of the lower Eastern Shore, members would be willing to reconsider the nomination.

Parkers Creek Watershed Nature Preserve (Gateway Site): Members felt this site offers the Gateways Network a great opportunity for visitors to enjoy an undisturbed natural setting and a place for conservation and restoration projects. Members agreed the site needs development with its education and interpretive program to make the site more user friendly. The Working Group accepted this nomination.

Patapsco Valley State Park (Gateway Site): Working Group members agreed this park represents a substantial natural and recreational resource along many miles of a Bay tributary. Its

location near Baltimore presents a significant opportunity for interacting with large numbers of visitors. The Working Group accepted the nomination of this site.

Great Bridge Lock Park (Gateway Site): After much discussion regarding the characteristics of this site and its ties to the Intercoastal Waterway, the Working Group accepted this resubmitted nomination. Members felt the resubmitted plans demonstrate a serious commitment to interpreting the park. However, members recognize there is work that will need to occur for this site to provide visitors with an effective Gateways experience. Members felt the designation should be couched as being contingent upon a near term commitment for creating and installing interpretive signage.

Jonathan Doherty mentioned a call has been received regarding the possibility of nominating a historic church in Wye Mills as a Gateways Site. He noted raises a new type of resource the Working Group is going to have to evaluate in the future.

Conference Update

Conference planning is progressing well with the confirmations of participants for the plenary sessions and a good portion of the breakout sessions. Registration is still low. Members were asked to help generate registrations.

Update on Network-wide Initiatives

Jonathan Doherty outlined the status of current and upcoming network-wide priorities and initiatives, including:

Product Development

Product Development Strategy: Bev McMillan will coordinate creation of a strategy for selecting and guiding all future Network-wide products.

Upcoming Products:

1. Lighthouse Poster – November 03
2. Development of up to 5 additional thematic guides funded for this year (except printing).
3. Documentation of J. Smith routes and 17th century Bay in book form. MHT & DHR contract.

Graphic Standards Update: GN Graphic Standards to be updated to incorporate recent product experiences.

Website Development

Web Expansion: Features (tied to thematic products and other topics) and additional functions (accommodations) to be added regularly throughout the year.

Network Promotion

Promotion/Marketing & Messaging Strategy: Reingold Inc. to work with NPS, WG, MOTD, VTC to develop strategy this fall. Should include implementation agenda.

Standard Exhibits: Models to debut at conference for selection by Gateways. Fabrication to follow with installation in winter/spring.

Network Support

Support Organization Decision: Final decision on proceeding to next phase of developing support organization due at conference. If agreed, proceed to phase III.

Network-Building

Conference: Coming up next month

Workshops: Two additional sessions funded; topics TBD.

Technical Assistance

Interpretive Planning: Contract with John Veverka expanded to provide direct assistance to Gateways on interpretive planning

Graphic Design Assistance: Contracts established with designers to assist on priority Gateway projects where necessary.

NEPA: Initial contract established to complete all NEPA documentation for 2003 grants. Will need to be expanded for 2004.

Web Advising: NPS web staff will conduct sessions at conference and subsequent workshops, as well as responding to one-on-one advice requests.

Network Promotion, Marketing & Messaging Strategy

Reingold Inc. has been contracted to work with NPS, WG, MOTD, VTC to develop a strategy over the next 4 months. Introductions were made of the Reingold team. Initial discussions began with the group answering and discussing a series of strategic questions.

Next Meetings:

November 5-7 (Conference)

December 17 –A mid November review will determine whether a December meeting is needed.

January 14