



PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
December 10, 2015

The Public Awareness and Communications Committee convened at 3:35 PM.

Committee Members Present:

Sherman Craig, Daniel Wilt, Bradley Austin (DED), Dierdre Scozzafava (DOS) William Thomas, Chair was not present. Chairwoman Ulrich sat in as Chair.

Other Members or Designees Present:

Lani Ulrich (Agency Chairwoman), Karen Feldman, Richard Booth, Arthur Lussi and Robert Stegemann (DEC)

Local Government Review Board Present:

Frederick Monroe – Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino, James Townsend, Keith McKeever and Mary Palmer

Approval of November Draft Minutes

By motion of Mr. Craig, seconded by Ms. Scozzafava, the Board unanimously approved the November minutes.

Public Relations Director Keith McKeever introduced Shane Rogers, Professor of the Adirondack Semester of Clarkson University.

Professor Rogers stated that the Adirondack Semester is a program that establishes a living and learning community. He added that the students come up to Saranac Lake to learn about Adirondack science, to learn about policy, how people live here, and to work on a project throughout the semester in which they do something positive for the Adirondack community.

Professor Rogers said they were fortunate to be connected to the Adirondack Community-based Trails and Lodging System in Saranac Lake, and that this semester the students have been working on a project on the integrated trails and hut system centered around the Saranac Lake area. The project included how the trails might be placed, where would they go, how could they be connected and where the hut locations might be in general.

Public Awareness and Communications Committee
Draft Minutes
December 10, 2015

Professor Rogers introduced Dustin Jochum, Kayla Jurchak, Sonja Gagen, Conor Drossel, the students that worked on the project.

The students did a Power Point presentation of a conceptual design of a hut-to-hut system which allows hikers, snowshoers, cross country skiers and paddlers to go on a trail system, and then at the end of the day be able to spend the night in a hut rather than camping in a lean-to or tent.

They noted that in order to create the Saranac Lake circuit, their objectives were to map out proposed trails, design ecolodges, work to understand the regulations of trail and hut development, evaluate bridge options for necessary river crossings and explore the potential economic and environmental impacts to the region.

The students noted that in creating a hut-to-hut system they also recognize that there are some challenges to trail development such as finding the optimum public and private land ownership combination, conflicts with trail users, especially between non-motorized and motorized users, and trail sustainability.

The students presented conceptual designs of ecolodges which sleep 24 to 36 people in bunk rooms or private rooms, and utilize solar technology, low emission heating, showers and composting toilets. The students said the huts are proposed to be ADA compliant.

Karen Feldman asked how far apart the huts were and besides solar energy if there are any other sources that could be used. Mr. Drossel said that the average distance between the huts was between 8 and 10 miles. He added that they looked into biomass, pellet stoves, thermal, and radiant floors to heat the huts. He said that there could also be natural gas to use in emergencies.

Arthur Lussi noted the large size of the huts and said that small progress is easier than starting big. He also suggested trying to create more space for a communal area instead of having such a large kitchen.

Sherman Craig asked if there was a cost estimate based on the current conceptual drawings. Mr. Jochum said that based on the main huts and using the most up-to-date green technology the cost of each hut is about \$1 million.

Richard Booth asked what the user would pay on a day-to-day basis. Ms. Gagen said for self-service about \$35.00 to \$40.00 a night, and for full service around \$100.00 a night.

Ms. Ulrich asked if the huts would have a small map room or reading area. Ms. Jurchak noted that the huts are designed with a loft so it would be a cozy nook away from the general area. She added that when they were looking at plans for the huts, they did consider how to educate people on the area and the environmental issues. Ms. Jurchak said pamphlets can be incorporated into the hut system.

Public Awareness and Communications Committee
Draft Minutes
December 10, 2015

Ms. Ulrich thanked the students and congratulated them for a project well done.

Old Business – None

New Business - None

Adjournment: The committee adjourned at 4:30 pm.