



Memorandum:

To: Bayshore Heritage Byway Corridor Management Committee [CMC Mtg. #7 handout]
From: Jim Klein
Date: 7/16/12
Subject: Managing the Bayshore Heritage Byway

As part of our meeting on Thursday, July 19, we need to initiate discussions about options for developing a permanent management entity for the Bayshore Heritage Byway. The following memorandum identifies a consolidated list of byway management activities (condensed from the implementation table) followed by a list of current and potential partners and three options for organizing the partners into a permanent entity to take overall responsibility for managing the byway.

Given the recent changes enacted as part of MAP-21, the federal transportation reauthorization bill, including the elimination of scenic byway program funds and the reduction in transportation enhancement funding programs (now “transportation alternatives”), it will most likely be necessary for the management responsibilities to be shared more broadly than they currently have been for the development of the CMP.

Please review this material prior to the meeting so that we can have a frank discussion about how to establish a clear path for the future management of the byway.

BYWAY MANAGEMENT NEEDS

The following needs (from Chapter 4 of the CPM) are organized into five structured committees:

Byway Administration (Executive Committee w/ representatives from each of the four subcommittees)

1. Serve as the leading voice for the implementation of the corridor management plan
2. Coordinate the actions of individual partners and participating government and agency partners
3. Submit grant applications to federal, state and non-governmental funding agents
4. Accept, administer and disburse federal and state funds
5. Raise funds in the private sector in a manner that does not compete with existing partners fund raising activities (individuals, businesses, foundations) –
6. Speak out on behalf of the byway as part of development and environmental reviews
7. Take the lead in seeking designation as a National Heritage Area and/or other recognition programs
8. Reach out to individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders for continued involvement in the implementation of the plan
9. Conduct an annual meeting of byway partners and stakeholders
10. Develop subarea plans for each destination cluster and identify leaders in those clusters
11. Coordinate the activities of four committees with agendas as follows

Byway Stewardship Committee

1. Work with municipalities to adopt CMP as part of master plans, especially Open Space and/or Comprehensive Plans, for the purposes of applying for Green Acres funding
2. Work with conservation and preservation organizations to incorporate the Bayshore Heritage Byway as part of their ongoing priorities
3. Develop and produce educational programs for landowners on stewardship practices beneficial to the byway, including model guidelines/best practices for conservation, preservation, and sustainable development

4. Assist byway-related historic sites in seeking funding for and developing preservation plans, establishing local historic districts, and nominating historic sites and districts to the New Jersey or National Registers of Historic Places

Transportation and Enhancement Committee

1. Work with state, county and municipal governments (transportation departments) to support and implement the signage plan for the byway (route marking) and developing detailed wayfinding plans for the byway
2. Work with county and municipal governments and non-governmental organizations to gain 100% coverage of the byway route through "Adopt-a-Highway Programs" and facilitate community tree planting and landscape improvements
3. Work with county and municipal governments and non-governmental organizations to submit coordinated grants for byway facilities projects (including potential grants through the MAP-21 "Transportation Alternatives categories)
4. Provide "circuit rider" technical support for community-based land use, preservation, and design guidance tools and techniques focusing on entrance corridors and the context of historic sites and districts
5. Work with local and state government to advocate for context sensitive solutions and approaches to transportation projects, and to encourage the use of common roadway design details (emphasizing maintaining views from bridges out to the waters and wetlands)
6. Monitor and comment upon the six-year transportation improvement plans, local development proposals, utility projects and programs, solar installations and other potential changes that may alter the Byway visitor experience

Heritage Tourism Committee

1. Work with state, county and municipal tourism organizations to establish a Bayshore Heritage Byway web page and mobile application that includes information about visiting the Bayshore region, visitor ready sites and itineraries, a common Bayshore region event calendar that includes bird and wildlife watching events as well as cultural heritage programming
2. Provide a point of contact for tourism and visitor information for the three county Bayshore region (telephone, email, and social media)
3. Work with travel and tourism partners to maintain brand and image when communicating about the Bayshore region, including web-based and mobile applications.
4. Facilitate and lead more detailed heritage tourism and beach access planning at the geographic cluster level
5. Produce, market and maintain itineraries, special events and promotions, and travel packages including passport programs
6. Monitor and maintain up to date market research about visitors to the Bayshore region, their visitation and spending habits

Education and Interpretation Committee

1. Develop plans for an outdoor museum that incorporates and updates Coastal Heritage Trail interpretive materials and implement in phases by geographic cluster (Strategies 4.1 through 4.3)
2. Develop printed and mobile- web-based guides to the outdoor museum (and the Bayshore region's natural history and cultural heritage
3. Produce, maintain and coordinate educational activities and programs (curriculum, teacher training, programming at all levels and for all seasons) using the outdoor museum as the organizing structure for events and programming
4. Seek funding for, program and produce traveling events and exhibits for the region celebrating Bayshore region natural history and cultural heritage

Existing and Potential Partners

Existing Members: South Jersey Bayshore Coalition (from web site)

American Littoral Society
Association of NJ Environmental Commissions
Bayshore Discovery Project
Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries, Inc.
Cohansey Area River Preservation
Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ
Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Environment New Jersey
Natural Lands Trust
NJ Audubon Society
NJ Conservation Foundation
NJ Environmental Federation
NJ Sierra Club
Partnership for the Delaware Estuary
Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Plan Smart NJ (formerly Regional Planning Partnership)
Preservation Salem County
Salem County Watershed Task Force
South Jersey Land and Water Trust

Existing Supporting Organizations: South Jersey Bayshore Coalition (from web site)

National Park Service
The Nature Conservancy

Agency Involvement and Support

NJ Department of Transportation
NJ Department of Environmental Protection

- Historic Preservation
- Fish and Wildlife
- Parks and Forestry
- Green Acres
- Coastal and Land Use Planning

New Jersey Department of Agriculture
New Jersey Department of State

- Travel and Tourism
- Cultural Trust
- Historical Commission
- State Council on the Arts
- State Museum
- Division of Programs
- Business Action Center (NJ's 5 year Strategic Plan developed by this group)

Garden State Preservation Trust
New Jersey Economic Development Authority (Small Business Services)
New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust (Open Space Acquisition)
New Jersey Global Warming
New Jersey Historic Trust (preservation and heritage tourism programs)
Delaware River and Bay Authority
Delaware River Basin Commission
US Fish and Wildlife Service

Additional Supporters and Potential Partners

Friends of Supawna Meadows

Mid Atlantic Center for the Arts and Humanities, Cape May

Chamber of Commerce (Cape May, Cumberland, Salem)

Heritage and nature-based tourism businesses

Non-profit organizations, sites and attractions (e.g. Historic Cold Spring Village, Bayshore Discovery Project, etc.)

Township and County Historic Preservation Societies

PSEG (both its land managers and community foundation)

Management Issues

- Length of travel route makes face-to-face meetings difficult
- Length of travel route makes it difficult for public to comprehend
- Number of local government jurisdictions (counties and municipalities)
- Number of state agencies involved
- Number of partners: unifying actions and funding initiatives will be difficult
- Achieving fair representation among so many partners yet a workable size organizational structure is tricky
- "Shared power," "control" and "accountability" issues among levels of government, and among government and non-governmental partners
- Scenic byway program at federal level is not funded for next 27 months (program authorization remains) and transportation enhancement funding has been consolidated and opened to more competition
- How to move forward with the idea gaining designation as a National Heritage Area or other recognitions programs
- Determining type of organization to best manage the byway
- Making sure that the vision of the byway fits the organization managing the byway
- Who will serve as the fiscal agent for the byway
- What kind of leverage can the byway establish to implement programs on its behalf

General ConsiderationsPhasing:

Consideration will need to be given to phasing in appropriate levels of management.

Funding:

Funding for a specific position to serve as a "byway manager" is very difficult to obtain at this time and all organizations are suffering from funding shortages; therefore the administrative costs will have to be borne through small foundation grants and by incorporating "project management" costs directly into all grant applications

Geography:

There is a wide range of geographic coverage to existing regional organizations and other than the South Jersey Bayshore Coalition there does not appear to be another organization that covers exactly the three counties – examples include:

- The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem counties in Southern New Jersey.
- New Jersey's Southern Shore DMO covers Cape May and Cumberland Counties
- South Jersey DMO includes Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem Counties
- Cape Atlantic Conservation District ("for more than 65 years the District has been dedicated to the conservation of natural resources in Atlantic and Cape May Counties")
- Cumberland-Salem Conservation District was merged back together again in 2005

Management Options

Option One – South Jersey Bayshore Coalition (coordinated by ANJEC)

The current approach, the South Jersey Bayshore Coalition could continue to serve as the lead organization in support of the Byway. ANJEC has supported the SJBC with staff time and other support. SJBC and its partners could form committees and begin the process of implementing the plan, seeking grant funding and support for high priority projects. SJBC/ANJEC would most likely need to include a portion of each project budget to manage that project when funded, including support for staff time to administer grants.

SJBC would host and organize two startup meetings: the first meeting would be to organize the committees and develop committee priorities and assignment of responsibilities. The second meeting would be to report back to the group as a whole and to coordinate grant applications and set priorities among all the committees. Each year after that, a winter meeting would be to plan the upcoming year's agenda, priorities, and coordinate calendars; and then a late summer/early fall meeting to follow up and coordinate the work of the committees.

An executive committee could be formed with the chair of each of the committees whose responsibilities would include the Administration of the Byway Management Programs. The executive committee would need to meet more frequently – perhaps monthly to stay focused on managing the byway. The executive committee should include at least one person from each destination cluster area to ensure geographic representation.

Advantages

- a) no new legislation or procedures required
- b) has been working well and everyone knows "the rules" (not many)
- c) signals strong reliance on counties (and municipalities) for implementation of community based programs and projects
- d) CMC can remain fluid while interest and participation are gauged and developed

Disadvantages

- a) continues to rely upon good will of ANJEC for staffing and support – would need to find a way to finance the administration of the byway projects and programs
- b) role of public employees at county tourism and planning offices, as well as state and federal agencies (NDEP, NJDOT, USFWS) would need to be defined clearly through alternative memorandum of agreements to work together on specific issues (the signing program, partially funded through FHWA, could be a good first opportunity to test this out).
- c) where funded projects do not exist, the ability of public agency employees to participate is severely constrained by limits on time spent on open-ended programs without specific funding allocations
- d) lack of a specific not-for profit management entity may be a disadvantage when applying for National Heritage Area designation

EXAMPLE: Alliance for the Cumberlands

The Alliance for the Cumberlands is a partnership of public and private organizations unified in their commitment to protect the Cumberland Mountains and Plateau Region of Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, West Virginia and Virginia. Their membership represents a broad cross section of environmental organizations, heritage tourism interests, business organizations, and local, state and regional governmental bodies.

Current projects include the EDGE-TREKKER web based trip planning site and involvement, involvement in three scenic byways in the region, supporting the creation of a documentary film on the Cumberland Plateau. The following describes their mission, values, and goals (<http://cumberlands.org/>)

Our vision for the future of the Cumberlands

A network of interdependent communities whose concerted actions reflect their commitment to protect and conserve the unique and inherent natural, historic and cultural resources of this region, because they understand and acknowledge that those resources are the foundation upon which they will build and maintain a diverse, prosperous, and sustainable economy.

Our Values and Principles:

The Alliance for the Cumberlands...

- Values the natural, historic and cultural environments, quality of life, and the economic vitality of the Cumberlands.
- Welcomes and seeks out all individuals and organizations willing to work toward our mission, vision, and goals.
- Seeks to engage all demographics and relevant, cooperative interests, find common ground for appropriate actions, and work toward solutions utilizing diverse partnerships and non-confrontational approaches.
- Engages in projects that are broadly endorsed by our membership and driven by the participation of our member organizations.
- Strives to maximize our effectiveness and leverage resources through strategic partnerships and projects.
- Implements projects designed to accomplish tangible conservation of the natural, historic and cultural resources of the region through voluntary approaches, such as economic incentives and encouraging new and expanding markets such as experiential tourism.

The Role of the Alliance for the Cumberlands is to:

- inform and encourage the communities of the Cumberlands to understand and effectively address the challenges they face in protecting and conserving their natural, historic and cultural resources while simultaneously pursuing their economic goals.
- serve as a communication bridge among the members of the Alliance and between the members and other community constituents by fostering non-traditional partnerships and networking opportunities.
- provide leadership and encourage the use of relevant information and resources to local and state decision makers at effective times, to ensure tangible outcomes for natural resource conservation, historic and cultural resource preservation, and sustainable economic development in the Cumberlands.
- be a clearinghouse of information and resources for the members of the Alliance for the Cumberlands about relevant issues facing the Cumberland Plateau region.

Strategic Goals of the Alliance:

- 1) Promote and participate in regional projects that support eco-heritage tourism.
- 2) Encourage support and lead local communities in their efforts to successfully address changes in the region to their natural, cultural, historic, and economic resources.
- 3) Promote awareness of the Alliance and our efforts to protect and enhance the natural, cultural, historic, and economic resources of the Cumberland Plateau.
- 4) Utilize the diverse strengths of Alliance members and our strategic partners to achieve the goals of the Alliance for the Cumberlands.
- 5) Build membership by conducting outreach to interested and/or strategic partners; couple this with the comprehensive marketing/public relations plan (see goal #3)

Alternative 2: Non-profit Organization as Management Entity

Formation of a management entity specifically for the Bayshore Heritage Byway (incorporating as a 501 (c) (3) organization for tax purposes) is a tried and true process of organizing. The board is self nominating; and can vary in size from, say 9, to 45 or so. Larger boards are often organized so that there is an executive committee that makes decisions between meetings. (By laws address the host of such issues as groups to be represented by board members, officers, committees, meetings, etc.)

A non-profit organizational board might include "ex-officio" members that represent the state agency and support groups and participate in committee work in support of their management interests along the byway (e.g. USFWS, NJDEP and NJDOT all have extensive management responsibilities for land and roads). A good breakdown might include:

- 3 represent historic preservation and interpretation interests
- 3 represent land stewardship interests
- 4 represent business and tourism interests
- 4 represent public agencies, if appropriate.

Obviously, because one individual might fulfill several of these qualifications, a varying number can serve "at large" to round the number up; this will allow flexibility in nominations and the ability to seek individuals with other qualifications needed at the time of any given nomination.

Bylaws language should state that members on the board must "adequately" represent municipalities and be distributed "fairly evenly" between the three counties (using the destination clusters, for example).

Advantages

- a) nonprofits, while operating in the public eye, are more flexible in operation
- b) tax-deductible contributions are a distinct value to the donor and recipient
- c) non-profits can typically receive grant funding from most categories, although some may need to be qualified to accept federal pass throughs from New Jersey agencies

Disadvantages

- a) Where does the funding come from? Will the organization be dependent on public largesse for most of the budget (sales of products and services might be feasible as part of business plan for this organization)
- b) many current individuals participating in the planning for the byway are already involved with multiple non-profits and organizations (many hats, little time)
- c) a non-profit needs a champion, a natural leader that takes charge and serves as an executive director for extended periods of time. When that champion retires or moves on, there is a distinct vacuum that often takes many years to fill
- d) Developing a charter and bylaws may require outside expertise
- e) NJDOT has requested that a fiscal agent be capable of meeting federal requirements for administering grants. In most cases this means at least a municipal government agency.

Example: Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership

Mission Statement (from www.hallowedground.org)

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising national and local awareness of the unparalleled history in the region, which generally follows the Old Carolina Road (Rt. 15/231) from Gettysburg, through Maryland, to Monticello in Albemarle County, VA. From its communities, farms, businesses and heritage sites, we'll celebrate and preserve this vital fabric of America which stands today in the historic, scenic and natural beauty of this region. The Journey Through

Hallowed Ground® is dedicated to encouraging both Americans and world visitors to appreciate, respect, and experience this cultural landscape that makes it uniquely American.

How do we achieve this mission? (from www.hallowedground.org)

- Building a strong network of local, regional and national partners to develop a common vision for the conservation and enhancement of the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, and natural characteristics of the region.
- Developing an education outreach program to reach every student and teacher within the region as well as across the nation.
- Creating a heritage tourism program that will provide economic development opportunities, through regional branding and cooperative marketing, in communities throughout the corridor.
- Working in partnership with local, state and national leaders and residents to create and support a National Scenic Byway, and a National Heritage Area, to sustain and strengthen our economy, heritage and quality of life in this region.
- Creating open cooperation with property owners, heritage sites, citizens, businesses, real estate leaders and public officials to help communities grow and prosper while preserving America's historic, natural and scenic heritage.
- Promote the creation and maintenance of transportation systems that employ context sensitive design and protect efficient safe and enjoyable travel through the corridor.

About the JTHG -

JTHG has a staff of ten (2012) that includes a president and vice president, and directors of education, marketing, the national scenic byway, and strategic partnerships. Cate Wyatt is a dynamic leader and has been very good at bringing in very strong board members and advisors. They have an annual meeting, along with standing committees that meet once or twice a year. Staff carries out the rest of the work. They bring agencies such as NPS and Virginia Department of Historic Resources into the leadership boards and advisory councils.

The JTHG was initially started with private money, but was supplemented by funds earmarked by Congress (now much more difficult to do, if not impossible) to prepare a corridor management plan for the byway. Cate Wyatt raises about 1500/day to keep the organization going and self sustaining. It is an entrepreneurial model.

Alternative 3: Hybrid Approach

Under this alternative the South Jersey Bayshore Coalition would continue to serve as the lead entity for managing the byway and operate in a similar manner as Alternative 1. However, under this option, a private, regional grant-making foundation would be created for the sole purpose of accepting and distributing private financing for specific programs and projects to benefit the Bayshore Region. The regional foundation would be a membership organization comprised of related individuals or organizations that share a common goal: to strengthen philanthropy in the Bayshore region. Regional association members could include private or independent foundations, community foundations and corporate foundations and giving programs.

The mission of the regional foundation would be consistent with vision and goals of the corridor management plan and/or the mission and goals of the South Jersey Bayshore Coalition. The foundation would be created with a separate and independent board of directions and bylaws, and once funds have been established, it would set up a grant-making program for Bayshore region communities.

A variant on this approach could be the establishment of a business membership association to work in tandem with the overall management entity (or perhaps as the management entity) including all of the representatives from various heritage tourism businesses with an interest in the marketing and promotion of the byway as a means of increasing economic activity. This association could take on some of the management aspects of the byway (such as web page, product development, and some of the enhancement functions especially beautification and litter pickup)

Advantages

- a) this approach may attract some civic-minded benefactors that have been interested in giving back to their community in the Bayshore region but do not have the knowledge or ability to manage a community foundation
- b) tax-deductible contributions are a distinct value to the donor and recipient
- c) the charitable arm could also serve to receive other donations of land and property or interests in land and property, museum quality objects and artifacts, and could serve to aggregate smaller donations into more effective funding streams

Disadvantages

- a) is there enough private money in this part of New Jersey to establish a sustainable giving program?
- b) would require participation on the board of financial professionals capable of overseeing the management of various funds
- c) may create a burden to the foundation when offered property or artifacts that cannot be turned in to liquid assets
- c) an independent board would need to be created with members that are widely trusted in the community in order to attract participants

Example: Community Foundation of South Jersey

<http://communityfoundationsj.org/PublicPages/Welcome.aspx>

Note that Cape May, Cumberland and Salem Counties are part of the coverage area for the Community Foundation of South Jersey and it may be possible to structure specific community funds to preserve, enhance and promote Bayshore Heritage. Using an existing regional foundation may reduce startup costs and result in greater efficiencies in management costs.