

MINUTES OF MEETING

TO: Suzanne Copping, Project Manager,
National Park Service

FROM: Shannon Kettering/ Faye Goolrick Ecos Environmental Design, Inc./ Goolrick
Interpretive Group (Consultant Team)

DATE COMPLETED: January 18, 2010

PROJECT: Star-Spangled Banner National
Historic Trail Interpretive Plan **PROJECT #:** 0929

SUBJECT: Interpretive Plan Stakeholder
Workshop
November 16, 2009
Washington, DC metropolitan area;
American Institute of Architects

Meeting Agenda and Outcomes: The following are agenda items with corresponding feedback from attendees. ALL TEXT IN *BLUE ITALICS* WAS PRESENTED AT THE WORKSHOP BY THE CONSULTANT TEAM TO DEFINE DISCUSSION TOPICS AND GENERATE DIALOGUE AMONG THE ATTENDEES.

Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Interpretive Plan Stakeholder Workshop #1

Welcome, Introductions, and Purpose

It was expressed to attendees that the purpose of the Interpretive Plan is to initiate a long-range vision for the interpretive programming of this trail, and to identify a number of actions necessary for implementing that interpretive vision. The purpose of this stakeholder workshop is to initiate the interpretive plan by gathering information from stakeholders regarding the stories, places (or resources) and potential visitor experiences. The meeting was interactive with the consultant team asking a series of questions to the attendees and then recording feedback on flip charts. To facilitate in the understanding of the trail's significance and past initiatives, project overview boards hung around the room providing answers to the following questions:

- A. *What is the purpose and significance of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail?*
- B. *Where is the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail?*
- C. *Who is involved in the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and what other initiatives are occurring?*
- D. *Why an interpretive plan, and how will it be used?*
- E. *How is this workshop incorporated into the Interpretive Planning process?*

Attendees were provided handouts: 1) The Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Information Sheet; 2) A copy of two of the project overview boards (A and D/E); 3) the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail NPS Unigrd Brochure; and 4) the Star-Spangled Banner Trail War of 1812 Chesapeake Campaign Driving Map. The attendees were asked to introduce themselves and answer the following question:

1. What challenges and opportunities do you foresee associated with interpreting the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail in the DC Metropolitan area?

Challenges

- Partner involvement in informing visitors of the stories
- Inventory of historic places
- Identification of these places as a part of the trail
- "How to tell the story" at each resource in a meaningful way, in an effective way
- Existing "inaccuracies" in current interpretive signs and replacing them with correct information
- How to inform the visitor of all the stories? On the Byway?

- Logistics and wayfinding between resources
- How to develop stories that are relevant for all audiences – general and specific
- The understanding of the War of 1812 is limited for many
- Coordination of the stories, messages at the resources
- How do you make a trail out of all of these stories and resources? Linear or circuitous?
- Will this trail be sustainable? (Especially after 2014?) Will the interest continue or wane? How to keep it interesting/ relevant?
- Public access with recreation
- Every story needs to be compelling/ intriguing
- Public transportation, i.e. large buses
- Communicating the trail's significance and stories to different audience sets, especially locals and "uninformed visitors", visiting friends/ families
 - How to involve the non-traditional sites/ resources?
 - How to communicate
- Did any event happen at these resources "in 1814"?

Opportunities

- "Dolley Madison" story and relevant resources – could be more relevant for a female/ young female audience
- "Francis Scott Key" story and relevant resources, especially the flag → may appeal to a wide audience
- "People-based" stories, i.e. Armstrong, Barney, the people behind the events; the human aspect of success and failures
- "Domestic life in Washington" – those citizens that stayed in their residence
- Architecture/ historic remnants
- Story of slaves
- Using new media to tell the story
- "The economy of war" story
- "Piggy backing" literature and signage at the key resources
- Student field trips
- "The life of ..." discusses the economic climate, the food, the dress, the trade and commerce; "the social story"
- "Information – sharing" between resources
- Tell the same story through a different perspective at all of these different sites
- Alternative transportation to these sites, i.e. signature tours, trams, shuttles
- The relevance of war then and today – i.e. "the meaning of war"
- To get the larger message, while also selecting from a list of itineraries
- Library of Congress – the "souvenir of a general" and the Treaty of Ghent; Thomas Jefferson

Additional Group Comments:

- Jim Jones of St. Paul's Episcopal Rock Creek Church knows many human-interest stories about this era, especially regarding the historic Rock Creek Cemetery
- Challenge of drawing together all the independent resources available to visitors on this trail

Group Discussion: A Visitor Perspective

The Consultant team asked the workshop attendees the following questions:

2. While visiting the DC Metropolitan area, what should a visitor learn about the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail? What significant stories, messages, or perspectives should be presented?

- How to find out the history of the War of 1812
- How the war impacted Washington
- For the trail to bring visitors to the Congressional Cemetery
- Bring visitors to Navy resources, especially the Navy Museum
- Dolley Madison story and Dumbarton House role
- Dolley Madison at Octagon Museum and Treaty of Ghent
- Dolley Madison – portrait and national documents

- Overlapping of stories between Washington DC/ Maryland/ Virginia
- Burning of Washington DC
- Dolley Madison and Women’s role and Treaty of Ghent (international/ national perspective)
- Loss of the capitol galvanized many and why is this a story relevant today (especially for school children)
- To get a sense of what Washington was like in 1812; its tie to the marsh; what it was like as a young city (1812/1814)
- How to find these resources, this trail while visiting DC? How to tell the story at other resources?
- The Treaty of Ghent
- Connecting all of the stories: education of the importance of this war (to all visitors)
- The importance of Francis Scott Key’s role in the community as a whole
- The only time our capital city was taken over by a foreign entity; it was a young city and its effects on the country
- The battle at Fort McHenry; the “turning point” of this battle/ of the war
- The importance of the Declaration and Constitution
- Is a “feel good/ positive story” for all sides/ all involved; British, Americans, Canadians
- “Rising from the Ashes” – the after effect of the city’s destruction; decision to keep the capitol in Washington DC; “the maintaining of democracy”
- The “politics” of the War of 1812; is relevant for educational objectives
- The rise of Nationalism – clearly relevant when visiting the District
- What was happening on the Home front? (including transportation)
- Military Strategy in Washington DC
- British perspective the Chesapeake Campaign and War of 1812

Additional Group Comments:

- Many names/streets in DC today were named after War of 1812 – Barney Circle, etc. – but people no longer know the references.
- We need to communicate to the locals because they drive much of the tourism – 25% of visitors are friends of a family, and they visit tourist sites together.

3. Where are the places (and types of places) that best teach these stories in the DC Metropolitan area?

Tudor Place	✓
Octagon	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
U.S. Capitol	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Library of Congress	✓✓✓✓
Congressional Cemetery	✓✓✓✓✓
Navy Yard	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
National Archives	✓✓✓✓
White House	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓
Belmont Sewell House	✓
Fort McHenry	✓
Bladensburg	✓✓
Capitol Hill (the historic district)	✓✓✓
Pennsylvania Avenue District	✓
Fort Washington	✓
Smithsonian (National Museum of American History)	✓✓✓✓
Anacostia Waterfront	✓✓
Georgetown Sites	✓
Dumbarton House	✓✓

✓= indicates # of responses by attendees

Additional Group Comments:

- Anacostia Waterfront – importance of Navy; National Maritime Heritage Museum, coastal defenses; a place to tell the “water-based story” and its tie to the Navy yard; associated stories; large opportunity to

capture visitors' attention on this redevelopment initiative/ environmental remediation; Fort Lincoln Cemetery and D. Fields

- Bladensburg Water Park has a current interpretation program (fine example of interpretation on water)
- Star-Spangled Banner/ Smithsonian is a logical gateway/ initial/ yet many entry points maybe necessary
- Gateway at Visitors Center (i.e. Smithsonian, Capitol, etc)
- Current visitor centers have issues currently (i.e. congestion, etc) so need to think strategically about those for Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

4. How many different types of visitors should we expect? How can these different types of visitors best learn about the stories of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail? What types of activities, programs, media, etc., can enhance visitors' experiences at these places and reinforce visitors' understanding of the many stories of these places?

- Organized Groups (clubs, interest groups, community organizations)
 - Biking/ kayaking
 - Scouts
 - Science organizations
 - Lecture series
 - "Clean ups"
 - Annual – themed events
 - Organize and participate
- Educational Groups (Youth and Universities)
 - Living history programs
 - Podcast download
 - Curriculum, virtual tours, etc.
 - Lecture series
- Virtual Visitors (Internet)
 - Podcast download
 - E-curriculum
 - Lectures
 - Traveling exhibits
- Trail Neighbors/ Local Residents
 - Lecture series
 - Special events
- Special Audiences (seniors, special needs)
 - Bus tours
- General Visitor/ Tourist
 - Guided tours
 - Living history programs
 - GPS/ self-guided tours
 - Permanent exhibit and associated materials and traveling exhibits
- Veterans Group/ Military
 - Self-guided tours
- International visitors
 - GPS/ self-guided tours
- Historians (non-academic)
 - Living history programs
 - Lecture series
 - "Hands on" programs
- Convention Attendees and Significant Other/ Family
 - Permanent exhibit
- Political/ elected official
 - Special events
 - \$\$\$ (need funding)
- Business related tourist
 - Permanent exhibit/ "A visual destination" or central "hub"

Additional Group Comments:

- Providing itineraries for each visitor group; suggested times (1-day, 3-day, 3-hours), associated nearby resources, etc.
- Partners are critical for implementation and visitor experience
- Need to reach out to hotel concierges, because they often direct tourists to good sites
- Be innovative – invite people to tea with Dolley Madison

Wrap Up and Next Steps:

The Consultant team asked the workshop attendees one final question, while reiterating the planning schedule (identified on the Project Overview Board *E*) and asked all attendees to stay informed in this process by visiting www.nps.gov/stsp.

5. It takes many partners to interpret the resources along the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail effectively. Who else should be involved in developing and implementing the interpretive plan? (Responses provided to consultant team via post-it/ sticky notes upon attendees departure)

- Travel writers of America
- SYTA – Student Youth Travel Association
- Capitol (Anacostia) River Front BID
- Captain John Smith National Historic Trail
- Center for Military History (Fort McNair at SW Waterfront)
- History Buffs
- Military District of Washington
- Destination DC/ Cultural Tourism DC/ Historical Society and their members
- Navy Yard/ NPS Battlefield Group
- Corporate Sponsors
- Museums – special events
- Patriotic Societies (Society of War of 1812 Chapters nationwide)
- Historic Homes (1812 Era)
- Bus tour companies (i.e. special tours)
- Architect/ engineering firms (relevant for historic buildings, etc.)
- Capitol Historical Society
- U.S. Capitol Visitors Center
- Union Station

These minutes constitute the author's understanding of the items discussed and conclusions reached. If there are any errors or omissions, please notify this author in writing within four (4) working days of receipt.

END OF MINUTES