

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 19, 2009
Alexandria, Virginia; Office of Historic
Alexandria, Lloyd House

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 #4

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 Unigrid 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 Alexandria, Virginia area?

Challenges

- How to separate the bicentennial with the sesquicentennial
- To communicate to the nation the difference between the events is the significant of the war's bicentennial
- To be successful in telling the "Declaration" story; to include this story
- Money/ Funding
- To explain the surrender at Alexandria and the navy story/ perspective

- Explain the difference between colonial and War of 1812 perspective
- How to make the war relevant and engaging
- Many Americans don't have a true understanding and isn't an uplifting story for the nation or Alexandria

Opportunities

- Story of African Americans
- Volunteers are willing to help in these efforts/ expand partnership efforts with this initiative
- To tell the 'Saving of the Declaration' story
- To include the "Declaration" route in the story-telling
- To bring/ facilitate interest in Alexandria
- To discuss stories alternative to/ apart from just the battles
- To be clear about the effects of the war on Alexandria; how it shaped the current city today (and then)
- To tell the Potomac story (including Mr. O'Neal)
- To tell the similarities throughout war here in Alexandria
- The role of African Americans in shaping who America is then and now (is a national story)
- To tell the story of Alexandria, and the role Alexandria played in the War
- To tell the story of how the war shaped our nation; strengthened our nation
- To combine Star-Spangled Banner Trail with Potomac National Heritage Trail
- To connect these many resources and to collaborate on tourism benefits regionally
- To tell the northern Virginia stories at the same level as both DC and Maryland

Additional Group Comments:

- How best to ensure visitors don't see this as a 'negative story' for Alexandria?

Group Discussion: A Visitor Perspective

The Consultant team asked the workshop attendees the following questions:

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

- The evolution of Alexandria and its importance
- Had no real government for days throughout this war – and its effects
- The youth of this nation and our unpreparedness (both administrative and military)
- Saving of the national documents (adding the human story)
 - "the clerk" in the war department
 - "one person can make a difference"
 - the "sacred documents"
- The surge of patriotism after the war
- The birth of the nation
- Understanding that we did not have a standing army or navy (unlike today)
- Getting our facts right (i.e. Telling the "right story" about who sewed the flag , etc)
- Connection Alexandria has to Fort McHenry
- The "national icons"
- Stories of common citizens and their life throughout the war (domestic life); lack of newspapers during this time; was word of mouth
- Importance of Fort Washington and its relationship to Alexandria
- The role of the merchants (sinking their own ships); the fighting they participated in and relating their loss to today's economic times and perspective and how this negatively impacted the main commerce of this city (i.e. it was a port town)
- The story of independence of this nation – is actually our second battle
- Why was Britain here?
- The role/ evolution of Alexandria and their position and importance to the nation's survival
- The "saving of our government system" throughout such a tumultuous time
- The role of "citizen soldiers" and the effect on the family life back home (i.e. would be a "short battle"); their perspective
- The saving of Alexandria with a "neckerchief"

- “Merchant story then and now”
- The Battle of the White House and the position of Alexandria in this battle
- The role of free and enslaved African Americans
- Putting this war in context with wars today/ this century
 - British then and now; how we decided to go to war
 - “Ties that bind us also make us vulnerable” (i.e. ports, infrastructure, etc.)
- Britain’s perspective to be “in charge” of the seas
- To tell the broader context of the story
- To encompass the stories/ personalities of those involved in this war that are from this region (yet may have fought elsewhere)
- The story of 3 naval sailors/ soldiers in Alexandria and their military strategy
- This war had a negative impact on the economic viability of Alexandria; it took the commerce and had no recourse

Additional Group Comments:

- Great opportunity to use historical materials to think about modern decision-making regarding warfare

3. Where are the places (and types of places) that best teach these stories in the Alexandria, Virginia area?

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|---|--------------|
| Fort Washington | ✓✓✓✓ |
| Old Town Alexandria/ Waterfront | ✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓ |
| Shufer’s Hill | ✓✓ |
| Fort Belvoir (White House) | ✓✓ |
| Colonial Farm (Maryland) – National Colonial History Farm | ✓ |
| Sully Plantation | ✓✓ |
| Chain Bridge | ✓✓ |
| Salona-McLean | ✓✓ |
| Leesburg – Madison crossing area (ferries) | ✓ |
| Mr. Simms House (Mayor) | ✓ |
| Carlyle House | ✓✓✓ |
| City Hotel Tavern/ Gadsby Tavern | ✓✓✓ |
| Ludwell Lees House | ✓ |
| Lyecum | ✓✓ |
| Black History Museum | ✓ |
| Homes of the Merchants | ✓ |
| Colvin Run Mill | ✓ |
| Mason’s Island | ✓ |
| Library – British log | ✓ |
| Office of Archaeology (maps of merchant locations) | ✓ |
| Market Square | ✓ |
| Riverbend Park, Virginia | ✓ |
| Mt. Vernon | ✓ |
| S-L Apothecary | ✓ |
| National Museum of American History | ✓ |

✓ = indicates # of responses by attendees

Additional Group Comments:

- Recommend contacting/ informing the Society of 1812, Association of Study of African American Life and History; inclusion in the War of 1812 Journal and Symposium

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, including Family Reunions, Recreational Boaters/ Sailors)
 - Buoy transmitters (NOAA)
 - Signage about War of 1812
 - Hands on volunteer opportunities
 - Bike tour (may add to Civil War tour) and map
- Educational Groups (youth/ university, including High school leadership tours -government)
 - Youth boat/ vessel tour and I.D.
 - Performance on the War of 1812
 - Geocaching
 - Integrating the story into curriculum/ text books
- Virtual visitors (internet)
 - Virtual tour – downloadable; scavenger hunts
 - Downloadable performance
 - Add bike tour information (so can be guided or self accessible)
- Trail Neighbors/ Local Residents
 - Merchant “themed sale” in Old Town
 - Special event/ lecture/ re-enactment
 - Geocaching
 - A play/ theatre/ performing arts (video)
 - Traveling display in storefronts (depicting the entire War of 1812 story/ overview and/ or customized stories)
 - Scavenger/ cell phone “hunt” – themed
- Special Audiences (seniors, special needs, including Elderly, economically disadvantaged, Deaf community)
 - Podcast/ self-guided
- General Visitor/ Tourist/ ‘Accidental Tourist’
 - Riverboat/ barge tour – “the British perspective”
 - Narrated tour on the trolley
 - Hotel specific tours on a particular subject
 - “Portable cart” exhibits (on sidewalk)
 - Merchandise specific/ point of sale items
 - Geocaching
 - War of 1812 print materials
 - Traveling exhibit at the sites
 - “reproduction ship” themed event
 - Wayside at Chain Bridge (anglers, hikers, etc.) on NPS land
- International Visitor
 - Walking tour
 - Self-guided tour – language appropriate
 - Bus tour
- Collectors/ Genealogy Research
 - Information to be distributed about War of 1812 (Alexandria Library)
 - “Friends Group...”
 - Workshops on the process of genealogy on War of 1812
 - “Themed collectors” program
- Military Veterans
 - Navy “staff ride”
- Media/ Travel Writer
 - Documentaries/ specials on TV
 - “The Music of the War of 1812” – DVD, iPod/ concert/ orchestra programming
- Themed tours (i.e. Food groups, History groups, VIP groups, Architecture/ Artists groups)
 - ‘1812 Menu’ to be offered by restaurants
 - Boat tour
 - Water taxi – video
 - Living history (i.e. at the Apothecary)

- War of 1812 Consortium/ Journal and Symposium

Additional Group Comments:

- Recommend interpretive signage at the Chain Bridge on the Declaration of Independence story (include electronic media as well)

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)

- Navy Museum (Annapolis)
- Gary Scott, NPS, Washington DC
- Decatur House
- Octagon House
- DAR Museum
- Brookeville, Maryland (Home Madison Stayed)
- Arts Commission of (localities)
- American Association of Museums
- Virginia Association of Museums
- Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association
- Alexandria Library (local history collection) – Barnett Branch
- Chamber of Commerce at Alexandria
- County School System (for curriculum)
- 1812 Consortium
- National Capitol Region NPS
- Potomac River Boat Company
- Alexandria Seaport Foundation
- Local College and High Schools
- Fort Belvoir/ Military/ Virginia National Guard
- US Navy, Christine Hughes
- Fairfax County Historical Commission
- NPS Departments: GW Parkway, MV Parkway and Sites
- Arlington County
- NPS Sites: C&O Canal, GW Parkway, Fort Washington, Battlefield Protection Program, Potomac Heritage Trails
- Judy McCorville – Alexandria Public Schools curriculum specialist
- Folger Consortium – Folger Shakespeare Theatre in DC

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