

DRAFT Meeting Summary – Meeting #6
High Peaks Strategic Planning Advisory Group (HPAG)

Main Conference Room,
Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
DEC Region 5 Warrensburg
10:00, Monday February 18, 2020

Attendees:

1. James McKenna, Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism
2. Shaun Gilliland, Chair, Essex County Board of Supervisors
3. Sandi Allen, Retired DEC Counsel
4. Joe Pete Wilson, Supervisor, Town of Keene
5. Rocci Acquire, Adirondack Council
6. Pete Nelson, Adirondack Wilderness Advocates
7. Seth Jones, Adirondack Mountain Club
8. Theresa Cheetham-Palen, Rock and River Guide Company
9. Rick Weber, APA Deputy Director
10. Kris Alberga, DEC Region 5 Natural Resource Supervisor
11. Rob Davies, DEC Director of Division of Lands and Forests
12. Bob Stegemann, DEC Region 5 Director
13. Karyn Richards, DEC Special Assistant to the Commissioner (staff)
14. David Winchell, DEC Public Participation Specialist (staff)
15. Mary Roy, DEC Strategic Planning/Performance Management Office Director (facilitator)

Participated Remotely

16. Dr. Jill Weiss, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
17. Laura DiBetta, DEC, Director of Outdoor Recreation
18. Peter Frank, DEC
19. Kris Cheney-Seymour, ORDA, Nordic Program Manager

Absent:

1. Charlie Wise, The Mountaineer
2. Chris Morris, OPHRP Statewide Trails Program Planner
3. Pat Barnes, DOT Region 1 Director

Goals for Managing Public Use in the High Peaks Region

- *Ensure public safety within communities, along roadways, at trailheads, and in interior areas*
- *Protect natural resources and recreation infrastructure*
- *Provide a quality recreation experience*
- *Supporting local economic vitality*
- *Make decisions based on science using the best available data*

Charge for the HPAG

Undertake a collaborative process to provide a strategic framework to address public use in the High Peaks Region of the Adirondack Park which will:

- *Include short, medium and long-term recommendations (strategies, actions and tactics) to achieve the goals of the initiative*

- *Incorporate, expand, and/or modify recommendations made to date*
- *Identify additional data necessary to inform the HPAG recommendations*
- *Identify priorities for the implementation of recommendations*

- I. Opening Remarks – Members were asked to share information they developed directly with the group rather than emailing to DEC staff for distribution
- II. Today and Future Agendas
 - a. HPAG Meeting Action Plan Overview was shared and discussed
 - i. Provides a process road map to complete full report of recommendations to DEC Commissioner by end of June
 - ii. Next three meetings will focus on completing the interim recommendations to the DEC Commissioner
- III. Vision Statement
 - a. A draft vision statement developed by two of the group members was discussed
 - b. Town of Keene vision statement was shared
 - c. HPAG concurred that the vision will include core tenets and ideals
 - d. Three members will work on redrafting the vision statement based on the discussions
- IV. HPAG Report to the Commissioner
 - a. Group discussed the format and content of the report
 - b. A potential report components list was shared, and the Group requested a report format example
 - c. Group expressed need to provide context for their recommendations
 - d. Two members will draft a preface for the report based on the discussion
- V. Interim Recommendations Discussed
 - a. Planning
 - i. A Group member briefed the Group on potential planning efforts beyond the lifetime of HPAG
 - ii. Concurrence was reached by the group members to make a VUM recommendation
 - iii. A group member will draft a recommendation for future planning for discussion at March 3, 2020 meeting
 - b. Shuttles
 - i. After a short discussion, group members endorsed the use of shuttles to transport hikers
 - ii. Group concurred that a shuttle information system will be recommended and to recommend implementing a shuttle pilot, which will be evaluated for the future shuttle system
 - iii. A recommendation was drafted, a group member will draft additional recommendation content and another group member will draft content regarding e-shuttles
 - c. Parking

- i. Discussion on the need of enforcing parking prohibitions, addressing additional parking needs, and the relationship of parking to the shuttle
 - ii. A recommendation was drafted, and a group member will draft additional content for the recommendation
 - d. Trails Management
 - i. Discussion on the necessary actions, resources, and training needed to develop a sustainable trail system
 - ii. A recommendation was drafted
 - e. Alternative Funding
 - i. Discussion of various methods for funding the actions necessary to implement the recommendations of HPAG
 - ii. Discussion will continue at future HPAG meetings
 - f. Human Waste Management
 - i. Discussion on better means of managing human waste at trailheads and in the interior
 - ii. Will be discussed further in future meetings.
 - g. Leave No Trace (LNT) and Communication
 - i. Discussion of the recently released report from Leave No Trace which provided numerous recommendations to improve the knowledge and practices of hikers and other users
 - ii. A table of selected recommendations and proposed implantation efforts developed by two of the members was shared and discussed
 - iii. Group recognized that efforts proposed by many of the recommendations had already begun
 - iv. A recommendation was drafted in support of LNT and it was agreed that the table (in ii) would be an attachment to HPAG's immediate recommendations report
 - h. Work Groups
 - i. Discussed forming work groups with HPAG members and topic experts from outside HPAG to develop the details needed to implement the recommendations

VI. Shared Documents

- a. DEC
 - i. Meeting Agenda
 - ii. Updated Draft Recommendations Matrix
 - iii. HPAG Meeting Action Plan Overview
 - iv. Proposed Components of the HPAG Recommendations Report
- b. Member
 - i. Draft Vision Statement
 - ii. Proposal Regarding Future Planning Efforts
 - iii. Proposed Recommendations from the Leave No Trace Report
 - iv. Town of Keene Strategic Planning Committee Vision Statement

VII. Assignments for Next Meeting: HPAG was asked to draft and share the following with full HPAG by March 25, to allow time for review and comment prior to the March 3 meeting:

- a. Revised Draft Vision Statement (S. Allen, R. Aguirre, J.P. Wilson)

- b. Draft Report Preface (S. Allen, R. Aguirre, J.P. Wilson)
- c. Draft Recommendations:
 - i. Future Planning (J. Weiss, R. Aguirre)
 - ii. Shuttles (S. Gilliland)
 - iii. Parking (T. Cheatham-Palen, M. Roy assisting)
 - iv. E-shuttles (P. Nelson)
 - v. LNT – Communications (S. Jones, R. Aguirre)

VIII. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- a. Review draft recommendations HPAG members prepared for 3/3/20 meeting and at the 2/18/20 meeting
- b. Develop Remaining Immediate Action Recommendations
- c. Review revised draft Vision statement
- d. Discuss how HPAG engages with the public
- e. Discuss Ideas for Limiting Visitor Use