

SIMSBURY TOURISM COMMITTEE
"Heritage, Charm, Adventure"
Simsbury Historical Society- Ellsworth Center
Tuesday, Feb. 19 2019 7:00 pm Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Dominique Avery, Joe Buda, Pat Carbone, Paulette Clark, Sheree Landerman, Charmaine Seavy and Visitors Center rep Lori Lubetkin

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.
2. Minutes from January meeting were reviewed, moved by Paulette, seconded by Charmaine and approved unanimously.
3. We postponed discussion on 1st Selectman Wellman's request that we identify one key Tourism Committee focus area & proposal for a permanent location for the Visitors Center until after updates. We briefly discussed the Betty Hudson Park project and its name. Joe favors calling it 350th Park while Dominique feels it should be called after Betty Hudson for her enthusiastic support of the Flower Bridge. Since it was at her front door, without her immediate support it would never have happened.
4. Old Business and Working Team Updates:
 - **A. Events: Carriage Rides;** Lori report that the Town Manager has asked to be updated on the progress to see whether she can be helpful. **Trail of Thanks:** Parks and Rec has approved Tariffville and Town Forest Park sites but they still need to go before the Wetland Commission. Simsbury Farms site is okay. Joe continues to work on signage with Tom Roy (Public Wks) & Tom Tyburksi (Parks & Rec) using National Parks Service design (aluminum frames etc) for all local signage including Bike Paths; **MLK project** moves ahead with the trees marked for removal in front of Simsbury Free Library
 - **B. Outreach:** Lori reported that the Simsbury Visitors Center received 1 visitor & 3 calls in January. One caller was interested in the Pinchot Sycamore tree. Two were looking for local maps. Pat Carbone will make arrangements for locations for next 3 meeting to be posted at town hall.
 - **C. Recognition:** We discussed giving out a yearly award to recognize outstanding work to develop Tourism in Simsbury to be given out at a BOS meeting perhaps in June. We settled two names for this year. We will contact BOS to arrange a date, and write up award presentations.
 - **D. Governmental:** a)Eric and Joe have been trading calls on the future of the Kiosk in front of Eno. Seems to be some problem. b)Simsbury was once

again named as a Silver Bike Friendly Community. c) Triathlon is back on Sunday May 15 and has added a Duathlon. Dominique is doing an SCTV program on it. d) D also reminded members that they can keep up with town projects & events by signing up for First Selectman & Town Manager's bi-monthly reports on the town website.

- **Projects:** No update on Tourism Hub for Aer Lingus in Jan's absence except we passed around publicity Simsbury's tourism sites got as the result of Aer Lingus/Bradley outreach; As for campsite project, Dominique will reach out to someone who has expressed a willingness to spearhead the effort.

5. **New Business:** a. **One key Tourism Focus Area:** There was 100% agreement that **our main focus this year** needs to be on **printed tourism material** including reprints of our existing brochures **1) reprint of Simsbury brochure with the original Pam Kirk art, 2) a reprint of the Hopmeadow Walk Brochure. 3) We also recommend the funding for the creation of a NEW one page Simsbury Hand Drawn Map.** We're almost out of printed materials and have nothing to share with local hotels, restaurants, tourism sites, library or Big E etc. According to Charmaine's research, as a non-profit, a franchise could be purchased for an up-front cost for one-sided map for a non-profit rate of \$4 or \$5,000 which would cover the design of the map; Ads would be sold to cover the cost of printing. These maps are the kind available in all tourist towns and would include all parts of town not just downtown. We also recommend that the Chamber develop a Kent Passport like brochure in time for the 350th Anniversary.

b. Proposal for a Visitors Center. Now that the Chamber signed a lease for Bill Selig's Studio in the Cannon Building after our last meeting, **all members of the committee agreed it was the perfect place to continue to host the Visitors Center with the Chamber.** The only proviso is that the Selig site will only be open M-F because of handicapped access thru the building on the weekends, Joe suggested that **during the warmer weather during high tourist times, the Visitors Center share a space at the new Betty Hudson Park by re-configuring the current plan for a shed next to the planned pavilion to store and display town brochures,** and perhaps even as a space for volunteer staff on weekends. Sheree stressed that having a Visitors Center, even part time, puts us way ahead of most 70 communities she's visited through the M. Podskoch CT 169 Passport program.

8. Adjournment was at 8:32. Next meeting is Wednesday. March 18 at 7:00pm at the Simsbury Historical Society's Ellsworth Center.

Submitted by Dominique Avery