

PLANNING CHARRETTE SUMMARY – Revised REVIEW DRAFT

Warren Heritage Communities Program

Government/Economic Development/Industry Session 2/1/12

Attendees: 13

Presentation: Overview of mapping, localized themes and concepts

Comments

- Consider incorporating the religious heritage/houses of worship as potential resources:
 - Stained Glass Tours possible
 - Pipe Organ Tours/Concerts possible
 - Russian-Orthodox Church in Sheffield (established by/for tannery workers)
 - Reuse of one former house of worship on east side of town (presently on the market)
- USFS has forest history available on-line
- Carl Sorensen poster collection – Circus 1890-1990
- Struthers Library Theatre – major resource
 - Potential packaging for overnights
 - 18th oldest in country – 129 years
 - Costume Tour
- Crary Gallery – another major resource
 - Collections
 - Continuous Programs
- Native American heritage
 - Burial of Plates
 - Cornplanter's Grave – Kinzua area
- Russell area resources – fossil bed and relocated block house
- CCC Camps
- Tanning Industry was historically important
 - Attracted Eastern European immigrants
 - Austin Hill/Bull Hill and Sheffield
 - Sheffield Container Corp on site of former tannery
- Musical heritage – music college and conservatory
- Kinzua area reflects natural resource base/respect
- Industrial heritage includes one-time furniture manufacturing
 - Phoenix perhaps most notable
 - Piano manufacturing also
- Some “best-kept secrets”
 - Lack of location identification to outside world assumes
 - Not enough is made of self-help accomplishments
 - No industrial tourism among notable existing businesses
 - St. Louis Arch made in Warren (replica at WCCBI, 1401 Lexington)
 - Long volunteer/community service heritage – also Community Foundation of Warren County

- Agricultural heritage in northern Warren County – Future of Ag Task Force
 - Warren made products being marketed
 - Fall Farm Tour
 - Farmers Market
 - WCCD owns former WSH farm – used as conservation demonstration area
- Geocaching is important tourism attraction – GeoWoodstock 2011
- Warren State Hospital
 - Agriculturally self-sufficient
 - Early Alzheimer’s research
 - Early air circulation/geo-thermal
 - Classic old buildings and tunnels
- Oakland Cemetery – right on Rt. 6 Bypass
- “Walkable Warren” – hopes to develop bike racks and interpretive panels along river and downtown (County Planning/Transit Authority)
 - *Post-Charrette Discussion* – Longer term rail trail concept involving Bike/Bus/Walking; eastern end of Warren-Youngsville Trail (also noted in Youngsville WorkPlan)
 - Warren segment - Connecting recreation sites, transit center, downtown and Betts Park along River; bike lanes needed if streets are used
 - Options are under study for connection to Ludlow Street (i.e. trail between Pennsylvania Avenue and River, along Business Rt. 6, 4th Avenue and side streets)

Historic/Heritage and Architecture/Art Session 2/1/12

Attendees: 16

Reviewed mapping, localized themes and concepts, as well as some prior input from earlier session

Comments

- More mention of “classic” outdoor tourism – very important
 - Hunting
 - Fishing, including fly fishing
- Unique heritage still intact
 - Banking heritage – alive in Northwest Savings Bank
 - United Refining – 2nd Oldest Refinery in operation
 - Historic District – walking tour in past
 - Very early (1900’s) and active historical society
 - Civil War heritage – “Servant in the Wind” focused on Warren County families; staged at Library Theatre in 2011
 - Warren State Hospital – research and innovation
 - Green Group – GG Greene
 - Church – organ & stained glass
 - A number of golf and tennis opportunities
- Native American
 - Mary Jemison rumored to have been taken through Warren by Seneca
 - Cornplanter

- Famous People
 - Charles Stone (Lt. Gov.)
 - Charles Whetmore
 - Roy Stone
 - William Greaves
- Central Themes – River Confluence and Architectural Heritage
 - River as “unifying force”
 - Arts and cultural heritage – a gift from the “barons” of early industry – bringing culture to the wilderness
 - Wilderness Mecca
- Tourism needs to span the generations
 - Attractions for all ages, especially children
 - Revisit amphitheatre concept at Rimrock
- Some “best kept secrets”
 - Locals supplied manpower for War of 1812
 - Underground Railroad heritage – “forgotten again”
 - Crary Gallery
 - Kinzua area – more activity and development in 1970’s than now
 - 1st Fracked Well – on Rt. 6 (joint effort between Pennzoil & Quaker State)
 - More use for “Big Blue” – water slide (half-facetious)
 - Breeze Point Park – beautiful river view/access perceived as not “public” (*Post-Charrette Discussion*: Noted as being private – not just a perception)
 - Camp Olmstead – On Kinzua
 - Sponsored by the Chief Cornplanter Council, the oldest existing, continuously registered Scout Council
 - Part of Cornplanter land grant
- Emerging tourism resources
 - Pennsylvania Kinzua Pathways – major plans in Kinzua area linking town and natural resource base (*Post-Charrette Discussion*: PKP seen as focusing on Kinzua area rather than linking Kinzua to town)
 - Greater emphasis on arts in general
 - Boonies International Film Festival – also 2 independent films shot in area recently
 - Warren Facebook Page – “You know you grew up in Warren if ...”
- “Music Town” Heritage
 - Music education important – sends music students out into the world
 - 3-week summer music school
 - Early music schools – college/conservatory
- “Long-Gone” industries/heritage
 - “Piso” (“Snake Oil”) – early use of medical marijuana (i.e. cannabis)
 - Brewery
 - Cheese
 - Furniture & Piano
 - Interurban/Streetcar
- Other festivals/events
 - July 4th – very big

- County Fair (8/7/12 – 8/11/12) - Artesian Fest Site too (Post-charrette - found Pleasures and Treasures Folk Art Faire 7/14/12 and Wild Wind Folk Art and Craft Festival 9/8/12 & 9/9/12)
- Johnny Appleseed Festival (Sheffield 10/5/12-10/7/12)
- Canoe races
- Kinzua Arts and Music Heritage Festival (Russell 8/24/12-8/26/12)
- WWII Bridge at Remagen Reenactment Tidioute (8/3/12-8/5/12)
- Summer in the Park (Friday/Saturday)
- Warren County Great Race (2nd Saturday in September)
- Grass Roots Racing (3rd Sunday in September)
- Wild Woods Seneca Native American Festival (Labor Day Weekend)
- Kinzua Country Tango Annual Adventure Race (1st Saturday in August)
- Kinzua Country Classic Bike Race – 2nd weekend in August
- High 5 Cinco de Mayo races – 1st Saturday in May
- Gran Fondo of the Alleghenies 2012 Bike Race (2nd Saturday in October)
- Sixx Gun Choppers – Home Town Heroes Fund
 - "Thank A Vet" Dam Run (Warren-Dam – July)
 - Snowmobile Poker Run (February)
- Ideas for Additional Festivals
 - Storytelling
 - Native American Festival
 - Sustainability Conference/Festival
 - Folk Music – plenty of area talent

Tourism, ANF, Sports & Recreation Session 2/1/12

Attendees: 13

Presentation: Key Concepts noted earlier and input from earlier sessions

Comments:

- River is a key resource and marketing opportunity
 - Pristine, clean and pure with many species
 - Wilderness islands in Allegheny
 - Trophy trout fishing in River and Creek
 - Relaying and publicizing the meaning of “Wild and Scenic River”
 - River and Creek are and should be marketed as paddling destinations
 - Warren is and should be marketed as a River Town
 - Co-existence with refinery – noted as a “good citizen”
- Nature/Outdoors resources – draws many visitors
 - Eagle Watch – 1st weekend of February in ANF/Kinzua
 - Plans and activities of PA Kinzua Pathways noted
 - Jakes Rocks
 - Climbing opportunities at ANF
 - Horseback riding
 - Bird Viewing, including:
 - Local participation in the Annual Christmas Bird Count
 - Public bird banding (Allegheny Outdoor Club)

- Akeley Swamp – numerous species and hiking trail
- Hunting is quite strong
 - Coyote Hunt
 - Kinzua Quality Deer Cooperative
- Chapman Dam/State Park
 - Long sledding hill
 - Winterfest – 3rd weekend in January (draws 6,000 in mild winter to 12,000 in regular winter)
- Busy events calendar – need to better coordinate and publicize

Other ideas and needs

- Coordinated wayfinding signage
- Welcome Basket for new residents
- “Warren County App” for smart phones
- Hospitality training has been tried – questions on the manner of providing it (i.e. DVD’s vs. business day sessions)
- Perception that stringent and advertised DUI enforcement may scare hunters and other recreational tourists from venturing into town
- Closer coordination between Warren County Visitors Bureau/WCCBI websites on calendar of events/links with event partners
- ATV/Snowmobile trails in ANF – inconsistent information
 - Roads are often gated
 - No connection with services in town
- Better trail connections to town
- Wildwoods Animal Park offers zoo and education
 - May-October
 - Groups and schools
- Warren is a unique blend of outdoor recreation and arts/culture
- Judge Robert H. Jackson connection
 - Nuremburg involvement
 - Brown Vs. Board of Education involvement

Public Session #1 2/1/12

Attendees: 2

Presentation: Key Concepts noted earlier and input from earlier sessions

Comments:

- Library should be noted as being a resource
 - Large historical and genealogical collection
 - 600-900 people visit the Library daily
 - Complementary relationship with Historical Society
- There is a rich Native American heritage
- Warren Area – attractions plus “space”
- Numerous Artists in the region
- Needs

- A “signature” element/attraction downtown
- Multi-cultural restaurants
- Reconsideration of a resort at Kinzua Dam

Student/Youth/Civic Session 2/2/12

Attendees: 9

Presentation: Key Concepts noted earlier and input from earlier sessions

Comments:

- Focus on events that keep people overnight
 - National Canoe Race
 - Geocaching
 - Tango Adventure Race – 450+ participants plus support
 - ½ Marathon, Bike, Swim, Orienteer, Canoe
 - Music
 - Kinzua Country Classic Bike Race
 - Gus Macker 3-on-3 basketball – May 19-20, 2012
 - Johnny Appleseed Festival
- Sponsor/co-promote complementary events for other family members of participants in above activities
- Allegheny Center for the Arts – addressing image/viability perceptions
 - Operating in Watt Building (*Post-Charrette Discussion: perception issue may be complicated by being housed on 2nd floor of an operating business*)
 - Offers lessons for Guitar, Tai Chi, Art for children and adults; hopes to offer writing classes
- Marketing challenge – reaching people within a few hour drive (i.e. Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Cleveland)
 - Updated information on web, social media and billboards
 - Missing connection with young adults – reinforces need to be on social media – i.e. Facebook page in Timeline format
 - Connect with the bus tour operators
- Needs
 - More hike/bike trails
 - Reintroduce speedboats at the Dam
 - Cluster events – Dam and Town
 - Renovations to Skate Park
 - Ethnic festivals reflecting local ethnicity
 - Cabins (non-primitive) or lodge in ANF – now one needs tents/RV’s
- Refocusing on downtown – some festivals “outgrew” downtown
 - Need for boat access in downtown – pull-out dock noted
 - Public walkway at Breeze Point Landing
 - Festivals in Downtown
 - YMCA considering a fall Pumpkin Festival
 - YMCA sponsors New Years Eve festival
 - Shuttle may be re-tried to better connect outlying events and downtown (NOTE: Local transit operates Monday-Friday and part of Saturday)

- Communication/Coordination of events – needs a common forum
 - Common link appears to be WCVB/WCCBI
 - Need for at least monthly scheduling/coordination meetings noted

Business Session 2/2/12

Attendees: 7

Presentation: Key Concepts noted earlier and input from earlier sessions

Comments

- Some discussion on perceived positive/negative impacts of bypass, with comparisons with other communities
- Getting word out via a radio system with signage alerting motorists to tune in to a certain frequency to hear about Warren area attraction, events, etc.
- Perception that Visitors Center may be underutilized
- City has an industrial base but no real centralized display of items perhaps can be incorporated into Visitors Center and/or a satellite in downtown
 - Disney-related items manufactured by Whirley is an example
 - Warren souvenir sales are needed
- Reintroduce a welcome package formerly offered by newspaper
- Needs
 - Wayfinding signage (*Post-Charrette Discussion: Should address the whole issue of making people aware of events*)
 - River access – location near Allegheny Outfitters suggested
 - Better connect hotels on outskirts with events
 - Complementary events during signature events
 - Post-6:00 PM activities
 - Events in Spring
 - Better connection with Fall Foliage (NOTE: Two October events being planned as noted is several sessions)
 - Better promotion of fishing – 5 species of game fish in River
 - Better promotion of hunting
 - Active sports – zipline and sledding/tubing hill (Hatch Run Rd. mentioned)
 - Interpretive panels/signs on Conewango
 - Better information sharing with US Forest Service/ANF

(Post-Charrette Discussion: Concept of Downtown events – either as primary or complementary events complicated by balancing needs/benefits of retail businesses [who may benefit from added foot traffic] and service businesses [who do not need the added traffic and whose business may be negatively affected by the added foot traffic/congestion]; overall it is a question of “scale” for any future downtown events)

Public Session #2 2/2/12

Attendees: 6

Brief recap of charrette process and its role was carried out. Discussion then focused on recommendations noted above, especially as they may have changed or become refocused during the charrette.

Warren – Balanced Resources

Nature:

- Kinzua Resources
- ANF
- Allegheny and Conewango Water Trail
- Chapman State Park
- Recreation, Scenic and Wilderness areas
- Signature events – Tango, Canoe races, etc.
- Nature-related businesses – zoo, outfitters, campgrounds, etc.
- Collectors/Antiquers
- Weekenders/Get-Away

Cultural:

- Performing and Visual Arts
- Music and Theatre Heritage
- Historic Society/Museums
- Crary Gallery
- Library
- Historic District
- International Film Festival

Industrial and Cultural Heritage:

- Oil
- Timber/Furniture/Tanning
- Existing Industries
- Native American
- Agricultural

“Best Kept Secrets”

- Promotion, Coordination and Scheduling is perhaps greatest need (*Post-Charrette Discussion seems to reinforce this as a major need*)
- Warren State Hospital stories
- Links between town/Kinzua events
- Linking Arts, Culture and Nature
- Native American Heritage

Gaps

- Boat access near downtown
- Festivals in Downtown
 - Linkage (i.e. businesses involved, publicity)
 - Complementary activities during other events
- Wayfinding signage – especially given distances between attractions/events
- Extending the season – requires recruiting new volunteers
 - Spring
 - Autumn
 - Winter (sledding/tubing/snowmobiles)
 - Web-Based and accessible information
- Trails and Trail Connections – land and water
- Industrial tours and/or Products
- Church Tours – stained glass/pipe organ

Getting the Word Out

- Coordinated and user-friendly marketing/promotion
- Single or coordinated website(s)
- Warren County App
- Radio capacity for regional traveler
- Social networking
- Better metropolitan penetration (i.e. Buffalo, Cleveland and Pittsburgh)

Questions/Comments

- *Community WorkPlan* concept explained in response to question
- Rt 6 Alliance promotions reviewed
 - WCVB events get to Rt. 6 website in response to question
 - Facebook links to website
 - Brochure listing procedures reviewed
- Need to keep events on website current
- Various perceived issues with organization/coordination were discussed
 - Little feedback on event draw
 - Perceived recognition/lack of recognition of events by WCCBI discussed
- Desire to see a Chili Cook-off event continue
- Hope for closer coordination between accommodations in town and at Kinzua
- Hope for greater use of Memorial Field for other events
 - Fees may limit other uses

Total Attendees: 66