

**Pinelands Heritage Partnership**  
**Heritage Forum November 14, 2009**  
**Results from round table discussions**

One part of the November 14, 2009 Pinelands Heritage Partnership's Heritage Forum was a series of round table discussions to develop an educational and policy agenda for the upcoming year for the Pinelands Heritage Partnership. Attendees were offered six topics for discussion, and were free to participate in any group discussion of interest. Below are the results of the discussions including any action steps to move the issue forward in the coming year.

***1. State legislative issues and incentives (Table facilitator: Ron Emrich, Executive Director of Preservation New Jersey)***

Participants: Tom Keck and Ron Emrich

Major issues: Stable funding is needed for various departments and programs within state government that deal with resource based stewardship: Agriculture, Parks and Forests, Historic Sites, Travel and Tourism, Wildlife Management, Land Acquisition and Maintenance of parks and sites.

**Action step:** Persuade Governor-elect Christie to convene a Task force to examine global reorganization of the governmental agencies that include these programs into one department, to consolidate resource based functions together and remove them from regulatory based agencies. Agencies/programs that make sense include Parks and Forests, Fish and Wildlife, Agriculture, New Jersey Historic Trust, Green Acres, Travel and Tourism. This should be done ASAP as transition is starting NOW. Suggest consortium of groups make suggestion including Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Preservation New Jersey, and Keep it Green Coalition.

**Action step:** Build public support for parks and historic sites from urban legislators; need to create more allies in urban areas. Need grass roots focus on the Pinelands? Get urban testimonials about usage of state parks and historic sites, short video clips showing urban people using state parks?

**Action step:** Create an ORFO Council to promote cooperation and coordination among Officially Recognized Friends of Groups for state owned historic sites, to promote strength in numbers and sharing of information. Suggest ORFOs need one issue to organize around (similar to regulated professionals home association as a model). Suggest the NYC Historic Districts Council as a model. There was little interest expressed by attendees in this item at the meeting.

***2. Encouraging municipalities to pass strong preservation ordinances (Table facilitator: Stephanie Cherry-Farmer, Programs Director for Preservation New Jersey)***

Participants: Representatives from Medford, Hammonton, Mullica, Hamilton Township, Tewksbury and Mays Landing.

Current challenges: Many commission members are interested in this issue. Some towns complained about Municipal officials with too much influence or parochial issues are a major concern. There is a need for education and more communication with local elected officials and the public in our communities as there are still arguments and discussions about landmark issues in many communities. Up to date surveys are needed to help determine what a municipality has to protect. There are enforcement issues especially with conflicts between various codes. Many towns do not have written design guidelines. Some are interested in form based codes. Many complained about a lack of awareness of historic resources from all periods. Suggestions to help solve common challenges: Working with officials, and encourage discussion of historic districts in communities. Working with Main Street or other organizations in town to help with common issues. Solution: work with your local real estate agents to get info out about historic buildings/districts in town so new property owners know the rules. Need more written documentation, and historic resources guidelines, survey. Overarching need: Increased communication, list serve and more information on Best Practices.

**Action steps:** Share emails from all participants. Tell participants how to participate in the State Historical Commission list serve. Encourage participants to take advantage of CAMP (Commission Assistance and Mentoring Program) held each year somewhere in the state to network and learn more about the workings of historical commissions and the legislative issues around them.

***3. Coordination and cooperation between sites and historic societies across county lines (Table facilitator: Flavia Alaya, Chair, and Bridgeton Historic District Commission)***

Participants: unidentified

Problems: Funding for Batsto, Politics, and missing coordination opportunities among the DMOs. Need a coalition for Pinelands, South Jersey and Southern Shore CVB/DMO.

Strategies: Build a broader vision; involve school kids and scout programs; think outside the box, Share resources, and one day tickets across the entire region, or heritage area. There are many themes to explore: African American, WWII, Birding, Kayaking, Depression era CCC camps etc. Byways need to bring together many groups. South Jersey has too many different subgroups. Suggest South Jersey Cultural Alliance as a possible model, which focuses on 8 counties of South Jersey rather than just Pinelands. Maybe SJCA is a possible convener of group.

Things to do: Getting people to do the work. Use the PPA web site, get students involved, and using technical and knowledgeable professionals.

Public education: HPRA could/will help, increasing civic pride, and a sense of place.

**No action steps provided**

***4. Heritage tourism in the Pinelands (Table facilitator: Elizabeth Moritz, Councilwoman, Tuckerton Boro)***

Participants: unidentified

Byway management plan provides a good start of much heritage tourism in the area. All are encouraged to review Pine Barrens Scenic Byway Management Plan  
<http://www.pinebarrensbyway.org/>

Federal Transportation funding is a source of revenue for the byway. There was considerable enthusiasm for projects like a resource map and plan.

Suggested activities: Create new podcasts about Historic Smithville and the Pinelands in general, by region, ideally to be able to visit five sites in a day. Themes and sites to be linked for a tour. Support for developing Atsion for tourism with interpretation; Hard hat tours, small groups guided tours; Consistent signage throughout the Pinelands (brand the region);

Coordination with the Scenic Byway: Suggest low impact bike tours; cross market to environmental, historic and business groups; Hierarchy of organizations, to reduce the duplication of effort, we do not need to reinvent the wheel. Reverse marketing with casinos, to encourage gamblers to visit elsewhere, so that the visit ends at a casino or casino restaurants. Tourism based on skill or ability level, such as outdoor adventurer vs. the casual tourist. Create your own "byway"; Bathroom issues—there are not enough of them; Lack of park police results in too much vandalism and misuse. Connect Wharton cell phone tours and podcasts with the byway.

**No action steps provided**

***5. Encouraging private sector philanthropy for historic preservation (Table facilitator: Carleton Montgomery)***

Participants: Janet Worrell and Carleton Montgomery

Current issues: Three sources of funding—a. Foundations (small and large), b. individuals and c. corporations (not discussed here). A. Foundations come in two sizes: large and small family foundations. Large foundations deal with policy matters, seek broad impact and organizational sustainability. The collaborations between and among multiple groups are interesting to them; some can be asked to create mini grant programs. Most are very excited about public/private partnerships to expand impact and their money. Small foundations—fund specific interests of

the family members, and must be cultivated over time, smaller gifts, but more entrepreneurs in their giving. B. Individuals—provide sustained yearly giving, but membership requires infrastructure (staff) and you need to spend money to make money. Project funding must be specific such as Eagle Theater renovations. Extraordinary gifts and bequests are serendipity (you can plan and plant the seed, but you never know when they come).

How to do it: Get the word out. Need to have a message that is tailored to the constituents. There is a need to recruit leaders or headliners, but volunteers can generate gifts. Need research and cultivation of donors over time, sometimes it takes years.

### **No specific action plans proposed**

#### ***6. Review of county-wide historic sites surveys, filling in gaps (Table facilitator: Donna Ann Harris, Heritage Consulting Inc.***

Participants: Rich O'Hara, Paul Schopp, Mark Dimitroff, Arthur Gabris, Joe Lauffer, other Mullica reps, Donna Harris

Major issue: Too little is known about Pinelands historic resources. Many sites are not known or recognized in surreys. Surveys are too old and not complete, so Pinelands Commission cannot do its job. Main concern is making the Pinelands Commission follow its own rules (Comprehensive Management Plan) and survey all the historic resources in the area. This has not been done, and seems not to be an interest or priority for the Pinelands Commission. Pinelands Commission's approach has changed so that it is not enforcing its own standards, deferring authority of local government.

**Action step:** May need revision of current Pinelands legislation to force them to comply with their CMP to survey historic resources. This item needs to be an agenda item for PPA, PNJ and several large local preservation organizations, who will press state senators and assemblymen/women to support. Alternatively if legislation is not feasible, then allow the SHPO to help create surreys and update current ones in the Pinelands.

**Action step:** Use NJPineBarrens.com to post and collect information from local historians. All should be encouraged to post local photos, histories and stories about historic properties in the area as a means to catalogue and gain access to disparate materials. Pilot with Mullica Township. Arthur Gabris

**Action step:** Find funding to update and complete county wide survey. Identify/survey other counties to determine how they found money to update their county wide historic resource surveys. Suggest looking at county wide open space funding and seeking a small portion to update surreys. We need legislative funding to pay for surveys. Connect to the economic benefits of this data getting done. Some towns already have good existing surveys that need to

be shared and collected by the county. Suggest looking at Bergen County, which funded new updated survey using open space funding. Joe Laufer

**Action step:** Ask NJ HPO to provide more training for towns that want to update their surveys so people understand the current standards for survey cards.

### **Wrap up**

All attendees to be notified of next meeting. Discussion group members encouraged to meet or communicate with others as part of a broader effort to encourage cooperation and coordination. Talk to your friends and colleagues about these issues. Pinelands Preservation Alliance will continue to serve as convener of this effort and will host another Heritage Forum in six months to hear from groups on progress on these education and policy agenda items.