

Chapter 5 • Consultation and Coordination

The management planning process, in general, serves as a mechanism to guide understanding, encourage involvement, and build consensus among community members, existing and potential partners, and the general public. The management planning and public involvement process with respect to the development and analysis of alternatives for Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area took place over a twelve (12) month period, beginning with project initiation in April 2009 through the selection of a preliminary preferred alternative in late March 2010. The further exploration of the preliminary preferred alternative through the development of a draft implementation plan took place over a nine (9) month period beginning in April 2010 through the completion of the draft plan in February 2011. The full environmental assessment with the draft plan as an attachment was then submitted for public review and comment.

The eight major phases of the management planning process to date have included:

- Project Initiation;
- Existing Conditions and Resource Assessment;
- Partner Survey;
- Vision, Goals, and Strategies Development;
- Development and Analysis of Alternatives;
- Selection of a Preliminary Preferred Alternative;
- Development of the full Environmental Assessment and Draft Implementation Plan; and
- Public Review of the Management Plan and Environmental Assessment.

This first section of this chapter describes the nature of public involvement associated with each of the eight phases of the planning process. Although more detailed descriptions of certain aspects of this process appear elsewhere in the management plan, this section is intended to provide a brief yet thorough overview of the entire process. The second section of this chapter describes the nature of consultation that occurred among key agencies involved in the management planning process.

5.1 Planning Process and Public Involvement

Throughout the planning process, the consultant team managed a program of outreach and engagement with the Crossroads Association, key partners and stakeholders, and the general public designed to provide a forum for these groups to collectively determine the heritage area's mission, goals, and future. Key aspects of this program of engagement included meetings and workshops with the Crossroads Management Plan Steering Committee (Steering Committee), a body composed of members of the Crossroads Association Board of Directors with a special focus on the heritage area management plan; three rounds of public workshops at key points in the planning process; and public events and outreach designed to promote public awareness about the Crossroads Heritage Area. The public involvement process was organized around three sets of public workshops.

- The first series of public workshops was held in June 2009 to introduce the management planning process, engage partners, and gather initial input about historic preservation, heritage tourism, and open space preservation.
- The second series of public workshops was held in November 2009 to present findings of the existing conditions and resource assessment phase, discuss goals and strategies for the heritage areas, and offer preliminary concepts for heritage area alternatives.
- The third series of public workshops was held in February 2010 to present the five alternatives or scenarios for the heritage area future and to elicit feedback and comment on those five alternatives.

Several hundred individuals participated in these three rounds of public workshops. While the general public was invited to these meetings through notification on Crossroads website, press releases, newsletters distributed to numerous email list-serves, and personal invitation, workshop attendees included primarily Crossroads partners. Primary engagement of the general public occurred through major events and publications sponsored by Crossroads throughout the planning process. Examples of these events and publications include the Revolutionary War Beacons Event, Trenton Patriots' Week, and the publication and distribution of the *Crossroads Guide* to the heritage area.

- The second annual Revolutionary War Beacons Event was held on November 25, 2009, to commemorate the 226th anniversary of the British evacuation of the United States from New York City. The event, designed to highlight the significance of the American Revolution, included the lighting of thirteen Xenon Skytracker searchlights between Princeton, New Jersey, and Beacon, New York.
- Trenton Patriots' Week, held December 22-December 31, 2009, is one of the largest festivals celebrating the American Revolution in the country. The week-long event held in downtown Trenton included speakers, historic site tours, programs for teachers, and special events for children.
- *Crossroads of the American Revolution: A Guide to New Jersey's American Revolutionary War Sites*, was published by Crossroads Association and State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection in 2008. This guide used by residents and tourists alike, promotes public awareness of the extent and significance of American Revolution history in New Jersey. The guide can also be found online through the Crossroads website.

Public involvement for the planning process, in all its forms, is described in a document entitled "Public Participation Plan for Management Planning: Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area", developed by the consultant team in May 2009. This document served as a general guide for the management planning process for the heritage area from the beginning of the process, but was also intended to be a "living document" and was adapted as the process proceeded. The principal goal of this document and for public participation overall was to encourage outreach, acquire thorough information, and lay a foundation for public outreach beyond the management planning process. This chapter provides an overview of the key elements of the planning process and associated public involvement.

5.1.1 Project Initiation

The Crossroads management planning process and scoping began in April 2009 with the consultant team participating in a two-day guided tour of the heritage area. This tour, led by members of the Steering Committee, provided the consultant team with an overall sense of the

quality and complexity of the heritage area. The tour occurred on April 20-21, 2009, and marked the beginning of a three-month phase of existing conditions research and assessment.

As part of project initiation, the consultant team and Crossroads Association staff met with National Park Service (NPS) representatives at the NPS Offices in Philadelphia on May 29, 2009. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the planning team and discuss the planning, environmental assessment, NPS coordination, and public participation processes.

The consultant team met with the Steering Committee on June 8, 2009 in New Brunswick to discuss the meeting with the National Park Service and public participation.

5.1.2 Existing Conditions and Resource Assessment

The existing conditions and resource assessment phase of the project took place during May, June, and July 2009. The purpose of this phase of the planning process was to better understand the character and potential of the heritage area. Areas of focus for this phase of study included historic, cultural, and natural resources; existing organizations and programs; stewardship issues; heritage tourism potential; and community development issues. Sources of information for this phase included background materials, inventories of resources, consultation with stakeholders, and field review and reconnaissance.

The consultant team met with the Steering Committee on July 23, 2009, in New Brunswick to discuss the progress of the existing conditions and resource assessment phase. Topics discussed at the meeting that relate to resource assessment included interpretive sites, education and related programs, heritage tourism, stewardship, and recreation. This meeting also included planning for undertaking an online survey of potential partners and stakeholders.

The **first round of public workshops** was held in June 2009 to introduce the management planning process, engage partners, and gather initial input about historic preservation, heritage tourism, and open space protection. These workshops were advertised on the Crossroads website, by press release and email listserv, and by word of mouth. One workshop took place on June 17, 2009 in Trenton, and two workshops took place on June 18, 2009 in Burlington and Morristown. The primary question posed to partners at the workshop was: “How can the heritage area management plan help you achieve your goals?” Altogether, about 95 people attended this series of workshops.

5.1.3 Partner Survey

The consultant team discussed undertaking a survey of potential partners within the heritage area as a way of both soliciting information and encouraging interest and participation. The team prepared an outline for the survey, which was discussed at the July 23rd Steering Committee meeting. As a result of the discussion, Crossroads Board member Patrick Murray, a professional pollster, volunteered to conduct the survey through The Polling Institute at Monmouth University, which he directs. The online survey was conducted in August, 2009 and its results are included in Appendix XXX of this document.

The survey was comprehensive in scope and professional in quality. The Crossroads Association solicited participation through a series of email announcements to its contact database. A total of 103 invitees responded including 65 visitor sites and 38 other types of organizations.

The survey obtained information from the potential partners relative to their 1) interest in working with the heritage area, 2) organizational challenges and needs with which the heritage area could assist, and 3) visitor site operations. 55% of respondents felt that increasing resident's awareness of New Jersey's Revolutionary War heritage is critical, while 93% said it was important. Promoting New Jersey resident's pride and identity was selected as the key marketing need. Strong support was also noted for the need to include heritage in the state's school curriculum and for reaching out to out-of-state visitors. 66% cited promoting preservation of historic buildings as the most critical resource preservation need. Key challenges cited included fundraising, marketing, and assistance with strategic planning.

5.1.4 Vision, Goals, and Strategies Development

During July, August, and September 2009, the consultant team worked to refine the vision for the heritage area put forth in the 2002 Feasibility Study and the 2006 Crossroads legislation. After refining this vision, the consultant team worked to develop goals and strategies to achieve the vision.

The consultant team facilitated a Preliminary Goals and Strategies Workshop with the Steering Committee at a day-long meeting on September 14, 2009, in Trenton. This workshop included a discussion of each goal and potential associated strategies and an evaluation of four major topics for each goal: 1) whether the strategies fully represent the broad range of interests and responsibilities of the heritage area; 2) specific actions that might be taken to implement strategies; 3) additions, deletions, and modifications that should be made; and 4) how strategies might be prioritized, mixed, and combined to create two to three distinct alternatives. This workshop discussion regarding prioritization of strategies and structures by which they might be implemented provided the basis for the development of preliminary alternatives for the heritage area.

The goals were further developed in a Steering Committee workshop held in New Brunswick on October 27, 2009. This workshop included a discussion of perceived issues and opportunities associated with each goal, as well as committee approval of the draft goals and strategies to be presented to the public workshops in November. A series of preliminary alternatives for the heritage area were also discussed.

The **second round of public workshops** was held in November 2009 with a primary focus of discussing goals and strategies developed by the consultant team and refined as a result of the Steering Committee workshops in September and October. One workshop took place in Haddonfield on November 18, 2009, and two workshops took place on November 19, 2009 in Morristown and Trenton. About 75 individuals attended this series of workshops.

Each of the three public workshops consisted of a PowerPoint presentation by the consultant team, explaining the management planning process, the stakeholder survey, existing conditions maps, and the goals and strategies. Following the presentation, questions and comments were encouraged from the participants.

The consult team also led participants in an exercise designed to obtain input on how their interests relate to specific goals and strategies. For the exercise, large posters were hung on the wall, each having one goal and associated strategies printed on it. First, participants were asked to "vote" by placing six dots on the posters indicating which goals were most important to their interests. Participants were free to assign more than one dot to a chosen goal. Then, participants

were also asked to provide comments on small Post-it notes, unlimited, and to assign them to the goals where their comments fit best. Facilitated discussion of the voting and comments ensued. The comments were especially substantive and sophisticated and offered much insight for the planning team into stakeholders' ideas about the heritage area.

5.1.5 Development and Analysis of Alternatives

Between September 2009 and February 2010, the management planning team developed a series of alternatives, or future scenarios, for the heritage area. The alternatives were developed with varying strategies related to heritage development, organization, interpretation, and stewardship. Each alternative was analyzed in terms of its possible impacts and benefits and potential for success. The alternatives were reviewed and refined both internally through Steering Committee and Board workshops and externally through partner review and public workshops.

Potential alternatives were first presented to the Steering Committee during the Steering Committee workshop in New Brunswick on October 27, 2009. At this meeting, the consultant team presented four alternatives to the Steering Committee: Alternative A, *Current Conditions Continue*: Current conditions continue with evolutionary, locally initiated change; Alternative B, *Revolutionary Legacies*: Emphasis on exploring the legacies of the American Revolution and their relevance in New Jersey today; Alternative C, *Heritage Tourism*: Emphasis on using New Jersey's Revolutionary Era story to attract national and regional heritage tourism, promoting economic development and community revitalization; and Alternative D, *Crossroads Presentation*: Emphasis on telling the story of New Jersey's role as the Crossroads of the American Revolution to residents.

After initial Steering Committee review, the four preliminary alternatives were presented for general input at the public workshops held in November 2009. As a result of discussion at these public meetings, the consult team added a fifth alternative focusing primarily on preservation and stewardship. The five alternatives are discussed in detail in this plan in Chapter 2, *Alternatives*. The five alternatives were then further developed and refined and reviewed again at a Steering Committee workshop held in New Brunswick on December 18, 2009.

The **third round of public workshops** was held during February 2010, to present the five alternatives to the public and to elicit input. Prior to the February public workshops, the alternatives were provided to the partners and public via a series of email newsletters sent out by Crossroads Association and were published on the Crossroads website. The Crossroads Association also advertised a webinar to be held on the alternatives. The webinar was held on February 3, 2010. Two public workshops were then held on February 4, 2010 in Hackensack and Somerville, one was held on February 5, 2010 in Mount Holly, and a workshop scheduled for February 6, 2010 in Trenton was postponed until February 27th due to snow.

At the workshops and during the webinar, the alternatives were introduced to the participants using a PowerPoint presentation. Following the presentation and general discussion, participants voted on the alternatives first through a show of hands (each participant was allowed two votes) and then through comment worksheets ranking the alternatives on a scale of 1 to 10. Discussion at the workshops was detailed and enthusiastic. Approximately 135 individuals participated in this series of workshops and about 37 people participated in the webinar. A five-week comment period followed this round of workshops during which input by email, fax, and phone was encouraged.

5.1.6 Selection of a Preliminary Preferred Alternative

Following the February public workshops and comment period, the consultant team conducted a detailed analysis of the discussions, voting, ranking, comments received from partners and the public. At a workshop of the Crossroads Board of Directors held on March 13, 2010 in Bridgewater, a preliminary preferred alternative was selected. The selection process was based in large part on the rigorous partner and public participation process and considered in light of an acknowledgement that all of the alternatives presented to the public have a place in the Crossroads management plan.

Upon discussion, the Board of Directors agreed. At the board workshop on a preferred alternative, consensus was reached that the Crossroads management plan recommendations should focus upon Alternative E (*Regions and Roads* – telling the story to residents). Telling the story to residents was felt to be the way to initiate the Crossroads mission and most effectively begin to raise public awareness of New Jersey's role and significance during the American Revolution as outlined in the heritage area's enabling legislation. As discussed in Alternative E, other Crossroads goals will be achieved over time through means consistent with the focus upon New Jersey residents.

5.1.7 Development of the Draft Implementation Plan

Following the selection of a preliminary preferred alternative by the Crossroads of the American Revolution Board of Directors, the consultant team prepared a draft Management Plan and Environmental Assessment that describes the planning process, presents the range of reasonable alternatives considered, and analyzes and discloses the potential impacts and environmental consequences of those alternatives.

Working with the Association board, steering committee, and partners, the consulting team prepared a Draft Implementation Plan for the preliminary preferred alternative to explore the alternative in additional detail with respect to the proposed approach, guidelines, actions and recommendations. Key elements of the Draft Implementation Plan, particularly those related to interpretation and management, were reviewed and discussed by the Association board and by the steering committee during the fall and winter of 2010. Presentations of the plan were made at two public workshops held on November 10th and December 16th 2010. The text of the Draft Implementation Plan was completed in January 2011 and is included as a attachment to the Environmental Assessment.

5.1.8 Public Review of the Management Plan and Environmental Assessment

This Draft Management Plan and Environmental Assessment has been released for a 30-day public review and comment period. The Draft Management Plan and Environmental Assessment has been made publicly available on the National Park Service's Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website www.parkplanning.nps.gov as well as on the Crossroads website www.revolutionarynj.org. Public comments can be submitted electronically through the NPS PEPC website. Availability of the Draft Management Plan and Environmental Assessment has been publicized through Crossroads emails, Crossroads email newsletters, press releases, and personal communication. In addition, an online webinar will be advertised and conducted presenting the plan and explaining use of the PEPC site.

During the public review period, the Association board plans to meet with a number of key partners to outline the proposed plan and receive comments and input, including a workshop with interpreters and site managers from the Revolutionary Era historic sites within the heritage area. All comments received during the review and comment period will be carefully considered, and appropriate changes may be made toward selection of a final preferred alternative and its proposed implementation as the heritage area moves forward toward completing the heritage area's management planning process.

5.2 Agency Consultation

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (16 USC 470 et seq.) and National Park Service policy require federal agencies to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and interested persons before undertaking an action on historic properties. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended (16 USC 1531 et seq.) requires all federal agencies to consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded or carried out by a federal agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitat.

Consultations were undertaken with the New Jersey SHPO through the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office throughout the course of the project. The Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer sat on both the Crossroads Association board and the management plan steering committee and was active in all phases of the project development and review. Historic Preservation Office staff was consulted during the existing conditions phase of the project for background information, data, GIS mapping, and discussion of issues. Historic preservation issues were also discussed with the Executive Director of Preservation New Jersey during the course of the project. The New Jersey State Historic Preservation Plan was used in the development of preservation strategies and recommendations in the plan. Upon completion of the draft plan, the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council, and Preservation New Jersey were contacted by letter and by telephone for review and comment.

Consultations were undertaken with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Environmental Protection Agency during the feasibility study phase of the project and responses were requested with respect to future participation, special resources, and potential for collaboration. The US Fish and Wildlife Service responded with a list of threatened and endangered species that were included in consideration and evaluation of both the feasibility study and management plan. The environmental assessment for the management plan found that there was, at worst, negligible impact upon vegetation and wildlife for all of the alternatives considered and no specific impact upon threatened or endangered species. Upon completion of the draft plan, the agency was contacted by letter and telephone for review, input, and comment.

During the planning process for the heritage area's feasibility study, consultation was undertaken with a number federally recognized Native American Tribes through letters. Two responses were received, including one letter and one personal phone call. Concern was raised about the potential for disturbance of Native American burial sites and a desire was expressed for participation in any future representation of the Delaware people. With respect to potential burials, the management plan includes recommended policies and actions for the protection of potential archeological sites, including burial sites. The management plan does not include recommended actions for any specific sites. Any site specific actions undertaken in future implementation of the plan will require full compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and review procedures, including those related to archeological and Native American burial sites.

Upon completion of the draft plan, the Crossroads Association contacted the federally recognized tribes by letter for review, input and comment. The two entities that responded to the feasibility study consultations were also contacted by telephone. The Crossroads Association wishes to develop a relationship with interested Native American Tribes for participation in heritage area interpretation. To this end, the Association will facilitate collaboration between the interested tribes and the heritage area's interpretive partners in the implementation of the plan.

A wide variety of other national, state, and local agencies and organizations participated in development of the Crossroads management plan. State agencies were particularly helpful in providing information and guidance during the development of the plan. Broad participation was received from historic sites and organizations at all levels as represented in Chapter 3 of the plan related to historic resources.

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