**Destination Groton Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, August 10, 2022**

**Zoom Meeting 9:30 am**

**Present:** **Greg Sheldon, Jeff Gordon, Mairi Elliott, Joni Parker-Roach, Julie Platt**

**Deb Buckley-Web Designer**

**Meeting opened at 9:30am**

Deb Buckley runs meeting for first hour.

She asks the committee to focus on their mission statement. Main sentiment that comes up is that our Mission is to tell the quintessential New England story.

JPlatt states that the pictures on the website will tell the story.

Judy Anderson suggests that we remember to include the region in our mission statement.

GSheldon states that our immediate target audience is Groton residents and stakeholders and then beyond the world is our audience.

JParker-Roach reiterates the statement that the Groton Visitors’ Center is local and DGC is more broad.

Deb asks about demographic targets and if it is Groton Hill Music visitors and the rest of the world?

JPlatt states it should not be solely targeted on GHM visitors. JParker-Roach adds that some of the audience will be GHM but the idea is to capture all New England travelers and that GHM is the catalyst. She adds that the target audience should include cultural enthusiasts, eco tourists, nature enthusiasts, and wedding planning. She reminds the committee that Gibbett Hill was ranked #1 for wedding venues in New England.

GSheldon states that we need to do research into how many weddings are held in town each year, so that we can make claims like “we are number 1 in weddings”. He asks Jeff Gordon to contact GBA members for their data on that.

Deb asks the committee what our unique value or sales proposition is. Ideas are discussed and it is agreed that we can narrow this down over time.

She then asks what we are hoping to accomplish with the website - to provide opportunity through information?

JParker-Roach states she would like a compelling website that can be very visual and one that entices people to come visit.

GSheldon states he would like to position Groton as a Gateway to the Soul. The committee considers that phrase for a tagline and thinks that perhaps it could be used on the website to head a category, i.e., photo.

Sheldon then goes on to say our goals should be to position Groton to capture revenue, inform the visitors to the site, and to attract visitors to Groton and the region.

He would like the website to be able to track visitors to compare to any revenue increase in town. Deb mentions that the site will have visitor analytics built into it. GSheldon asks how we capture the increase in visitors to town.

JGordon states we can partner with businesses for a survey of their clients to find out how they heard about the place. It is discussed that these can be to focused groups of businesses.

GSheldon suggests we first capture analytic info and then develop a survey for businesses.

Deb asks who will be the responsible party for updating and maintaining the website. Committee thinks all of us should have access to it, but thought that in hiring Deb that was her job.

Deb then asks to clarify our current infrastructure. JGordon states we have Destinationgrotonma.com and “probably” have DestinationGroton.com.

GSheldon wonders if it is better for grant purposes to be a .org?

MElliott asks Deb Buckley if there is a difference with .org vs. .com in web search results.

Deb will look into that.

JParker-Roach mentions that she has connections with people who specialize in Search Engine Optimization and she will reach out to them for recommendations.

Deb asks again who is responsible for the website logins. Jeff Gordon responds that it is currently him, but he hopes to hand it off to an economic development specialist that we eventually hire.

JPlatt suggests that users can be added in the future. DBuckley thinks a second person should be added now to have access. JGordon suggests that JParker-Roach be added, and Joni suggests that her husband Pat Parker-Roach would be a better choice. JGordon asks JPlatt if she had done work on the Platt Builders website and she says yes. JGordon assigns JPlatt to be second person on website access.

DBuckley asks the committee what the website “needs to be”.

Responses: Beautiful, easy to use, simple beauty, functional, informational.

Deb brings conversation back to SEO and suggests we come up with priority words to use.

Suggestions: Vacation, New England travel, day trip, Arts & Culture, history.

Movie set use is suggested, as we have had several movies shot in town and that is on the rise.

DBuckley will research what in this genre of ideas has the highest hits online.

Committee drills down on website features. Priorities are photography, video, calendar, and links to attractions.

The committee then discusses what the main tabs on the home page should be.

Suggestions: Events/Town/Region/Things to Do/Hospitality to cover items including Weddings, Art &Culture, businesses, Nature & Recreation, Hospitality.

JPlatt brings up that the Events Calendar is being utilized well. The Library is adding their larger events to it. She adds that having the calendar upfront on the website will be important.

GSheldon suggests links in calendar to video content.

MElliott then suggests adding the Farmer’s Market to the video list.

DBuckley asks committee what their idea is of colors for the website.

JPlatt suggests that if the GBA and Visitor’s Center have similar colors, and maybe we should try to use the same or similar for continuity.

JParker-Roach would like to stay away from browns. She will put together a palette for committee’s consideration. JPlatt states that Joni’s painting of view from Gibbett Hill has the perfect palette. It is decided that Joni Parker-Roach and Deb will work on this together outside of the meeting.

Deb asks who the copywriter will be.

JParker-Roach states that Barbara Scofidio has volunteered and is happy to help as much as she can.

JGordon states that we should have something on our site for blog posts and our ability to use verbiage from them.

DBuckley states we need to decide on a tone for the copy - Welcoming, Story Telling, and having one voice.

GSheldon suggest Joni be point person and coordinate with Barbara.

Regarding photos, JGordon states there is no central repository for photos on GBA site, but they have access to many photographers.

11AM - Zoom Meeting time limit reached - Meeting adjourned.