

# Canoe Camp School of Craft: Feasibility & Funding

October 2008 Meeting



# Initial Canoe Camp Complex

- 2 Wood Studios
- Multi-purpose use facility (A/V, exhibits, classroom, meeting space)
- Retail store
- Office/sales
- Kitchen/dining area (catering outsourced)
- 14 housing units (10 for students; 4 for employees, artists in residence)
- Basket garden, Herb garden
- Storage Facility

# Canoe Camp: USP

Hook: Tie Outdoors to Craft  
through wood-based craft and training:

- Canoes, paddles; create “Wilds” Style design
- Recreation equipment (skateboards, snowboards)
- Fishing, hunting accessories: decoys, calls
- Outdoor furniture: patio, garden, picnic tables, fences, foot bridges
- Phase II: furniture and house construction

# Benchmarks for Sustainability

- 10 month “program” must generate revenue for year-round operation
- Integrate payback strategy for amortized facilities into fee-for-services
- Grow strategically: don’t build or enhance without financial assets
- Provide critical mass and diversity of quality programs, services to achieve financial solvency
- Use appropriate spaces for appropriate uses, at appropriate times
- Partnerships leveraged for shared marketing, programming and sponsorships

# Canoe Camp: Critical Components

- Offer services to local artisans
- Provide benefits to local residents
- Schedule day, evening & weekend programs, entertainment, classes (for residents, visitors)
- Extend Main Street to Canoe Camp, build attractively landscaped corridor
- Connect to Mansfield (town, University) with green commuter shuttle & bike path
- Be an example of quality, authentic products and services - help “raise the bar” regionally

# Canoe Camp: Phase I

- Focus on Development:
  - Fundraising
  - Planning (EAI/Archaeological Study)
  - Construction
  - Sales/Marketing Communications
- Organizationally tied to NTCA: acts as fiscal agent for subsidiary
  - Hire FT Exec Director, PT Admin Asst, Contract PR

# Canoe Camp: Phase II

- Operates as 501c3 organization
  - NTCA has permanent seat on board
- Staffing additions:
  - FT Retail Manager
  - FT Program director/event coordinator
  - FT Maintenance
  - FT Housekeeping
  - Resident faculty
  - 2-3 kitchen staff (residents)

# Canoe Camp: Phase III

- Using Wood & Fiber Facilities to Full Capacity
  - Dye garden added
- Programming now available Mar-Dec
- Marketing to repeat customers
- Construction continues:
  - add metal facility
  - additional units
  - faculty housing
  - retirement housing
- Community garden

# Funding Sources: Discovery

- Investigated Planning, Site, Construction and Administration Funding from public, private entities
- Specific emphasis on government, foundations

# Funding Sources: Government

- State Government:
  - PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
  - PA Department of Community & Economic Development
- Federal Government:
  - USDA
  - ARC

# Funding Sources: Foundations

- Private Foundations:
  - Earnest L. Sweet & Mildred Roberts Sweet Foundation
  - Most limited for start-up organizations, operations
  - Best for programs, events, scholarships, educational activities

# Funding the Venture Today

- Change in funding climate:
  - Less credit available for start-up, new ventures
  - Concern over economy may reduce applicants for courses (earned income)
  - Market decline may decrease private funding available (as contributions, for capital campaign)

# An Alternative Recommendation

- Start with private development first that can generate income earlier from various sources and provide a community outreach opportunity:
  - Community center for lecture, meetings (with parking lot)
  - Restaurant
  - Accommodations, housing
  - Retail space to sell locally-made craft, supplies
- Focus on “USP” (connection to nature) in construction to provide foundation for growth

# An Alternative ...

- Consider low-investment craft programs first – basket weaving, quilting, textiles, heritage garden, lectures – to build clientele, test market. Then add wood studios, additional facilities.
- Use as satellite education center for Mansfield University, NTCA, PA Wilds
- Use complex to leverage funding and initiate beautification, strengthen/lengthen downtown corridor, launch other infrastructure improvements (bike paths, trolley)

# Revised Canoe Camp Complex

- Phase I: Multi-use facilities as foundation for Complex
  - Build new restaurant, meeting facility with parking (to offer community venue to host functions, special events) - either new green construction or convert existing structures to maintain aesthetics
  - Space for craft displays, exhibitions, lectures, instruction;
  - Retail store to sell locally-made craft, supplies
- Phase II: Add dedicated craft components: fiber, basket making
  - Community garden
  - Beautification
- Phase III: Add Wood studios, storage facility
- Phase IV: Staffed facility with expanded curriculum
- Phase V: Add metal facility, additional units

# Revised Canoe Camp Complex

- Alternative funding sources:
  - Tax incentives, credits
  - Venture capital
  - Other sources of revenue
- Identify new markets:
  - Regional meetings
  - Elder Hostel / group tours
- Define terms of public-private partnership:
  - Vendor for or collaboration with NTCA, Mansfield University for programs, services

# Next Steps

- Modify business plan to reflect change in development phases/components.
- Identify expanded community/customer uses and earned income potential for facilities.
- Adjust scale of project, staffing, and five-year budget.

# Next Steps: Schedule

- By October 30: Revised business plan
- By November 30: Short-term strategy
- By December 15:
  - 18-month calendar
  - Key stakeholder roles/responsibilities