VACATIONSCAPE: A CASE STUDY--
GOVERNMENT, UNIVERSITY, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

A Panel Presentation at the
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By
Clare A. Gunn, Uel Blank and Ray Gummerson*

Introduction

Today we have brought together, ten years after the project was first considered, three of the principals involved in an excellent example of "interface"--the theme of this conference.

The project, hereafter called "Guidelines" was a study-action effort sponsored by the Upper Peninsula Committee on Area Progress and performed by Michigan State University. It was designed to stimulate and guide the development of tourism in Michigan's Upper Peninsula in an ecologically sound manner. The basic recommendations are incorporated in a summary report entitled, "Guidelines for Tourism-Recreation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula". The report contains six parts: demand, existing supply, regional characteristics, interpretation for growth, concept development and implementation.

Dr. Blank's role was that of project director and economic analyst. Ray Gummerson's role was that of representing county extension activity and later as leader of local implementation. Dr. Gunn's role was as landscape architect and tourism specialist. Clarence Roy and other members of Johnson, Johnson & Roy, Inc. developed design concepts and designed the final report.

The Guidelines Project
Dr. Uel Blank

Although the focus of my talk is the Guidelines Project, it could be retitled, "Activating the Matrix of Decision-making", because interaction between decision-makers, designers, and extension educators was key to the success of this project. While landscape architects, as designers, are justified in the belief that the world needs landscape architects, it is equally true that landscape architects need the world--especially if they intend to have their concepts translated into tangible action programs.
The Guidelines Project developed out of local citizen concern over economic stagnation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Social and economic studies conducted about 1960 concluded that even though other parts of the economy were dwindling, "tourism will grow". The area's economic plight had generated many studies; these investigations gave rise to a popular myth that the Upper Peninsula had been "studied to death". Several of us who were informed about Upper Peninsula people and resources and also current trends in tourism doubted these assumptions. It appeared that, it spite of abundant resources and glowing reports, tourism was not growing—primarily because of lack of connection between study and action.

The full spectrum of interface between concepts and fulfillment must include three major ingredients: research, education, action. In the first place, there must be comprehensive and accurate knowledge. Secondly, this knowledge must be made to interact with the decision-making system. Finally, implementation must be made by action-oriented individuals. An important complementing concept is that knowledge is generated at all points in the system and should flow in all directions. I take issue with the "delivery system" concept now popular with many planners. This assumes that planners and designers know perfectly what has to be done and that education consists only of "delivering" it to the plastic clay of the general public. All knowledge does not reside either in professionals nor universities; ingenuity permeates the system.

In working reality, there is not a simple linear research-education-action continuum. Rather there is a multidimensional matrix, with study-action as one facet, the range of local-state-federal as another, public-private decision makers as yet another facet, plus many others. Failure to realize these dimensions creates much project frustration and failure.

Organizationally we consisted of a team made up formally of University components and professional designers, and informally of governmental agencies at local, state and federal levels, plus private landowners, investors, businesses and citizens. Each team component performed essential, unique roles.

A first priority was to research the facts about Upper Peninsula tourism. We found that it had not kept pace with other regions especially regarding tourism technology. It was however, within one day's drive of 40 million people and therefore close to an abundant market. Its sparsely-populated, forested, water-rich character gave it a basic wilderness image, which was served by
communities distributed around the periphery.

We came to the conclusion that the logical areas for investment in new facilities and attractions was in the vicinity of these already-existing communities, leaving the central area in its primitive state. Most tourists, our studies showed, wanted to be with other people most of the time. We delineated nine development zones surrounding a central conservation core. These zones were based upon team research and synthesis of resource, economic and tourism understandings.

We then set about to build upon the rapport already established by Michigan State University Extension. Over 60 percent of the total project effort went into interaction between the formal project team and the informal team units. The published report was considered primarily as a tool for interaction. We produced an information sheet listing preliminary study data and set up a series of local meetings for discussion. We met with representatives of chambers of commerce, local government, local investors, local tourist operators, main street merchants and state and federal agencies. The key was involvement.

During this phase we watched for local sparks of interest that could be supported and that were complementary to the overall concepts. For example, Sault Ste. Marie had lost its last major employer and we recommended that the city build tourism expansion upon the local historic theme. However, it was not our specific recommendation but that of a local priest to develop a major sightseeing and historic interpretive tower—and as you know, this has been built. The ingenuity of the system was allowed to come through. We did not think of going to the churches but they came to us.

Our interface with professional designers had two major aspects: First, the firm of Johnson, Johnson and Roy were an invaluable part of the formal team. Secondly the project generated demand at many points for other professional design inputs. The project thus demonstrates the potential synergism between such university projects and professional designers.

In conclusion, it is my opinion that the success of the Guidelines effort in the Upper Peninsula has been due to the unique composition of the team, the range of interaction across the full spectrum of decision-makers, and the extent of education and interaction that took place.
Interface and Implementation
Ray Gummerson

The interpretation and implementation of the Guidelines Project fell heavily to those of us in Upper Peninsula Extension Service, not only because this is our general role but because greener pastures lured both Dr. Blank and Dr. Gunn from the state just as the report was issued. My remarks consist primarily of a "brag sheet" because so many of the concepts originally set forth by the team have produced results.

Our major input, even at the start, was that of understanding the people, the resources and the power structure of the region. But, contrary to past activities, we soon learned that we could not restrict our efforts to local interests. Contacts outside the University into national and state government and investment were essential. Our past one-to-one contact was supplemented by corporate and agency clients. At that particular time, through administrative policy by Dr. Blank, all county agents of the Upper Peninsula were able to (and expected to) make a major input to the Guidelines effort.

It should be emphasized that our role did not wait until a final implementation stage. We were involved from the start, even in data gathering. At this time and throughout the study we assisted in creating the awareness of need for study and action. After the report was completed our role expanded.

First, we held a peninsula-wide meeting of all key leadership at which our University President, Dr. John Hannah, gave the keynote address. Following this, every county held an individual presentation of local opportunities for development. An Upper Peninsula-wide financial seminar brought bankers and other lending institutions together to discuss how specific projects could be funded.

Two major "flying tours" were held—one with editors of Mid-west newspapers and one with investors. Local people hosted the groups and the recommendations of Guidelines were discussed directly at the sites. We demonstrated that this was not to be the typical study on the shelf gathering dust.
But, there were problems. Extension staff members were not equally interested in adding this project to their usual roles. There was evidence of boundary maintenance on the part of agencies and private interests. There was criticism of the project from small businessmen as inviting competition from large investors. There was some opposition from proponents of non-development. Some continued to have an attitude of Guidelines being just another study with no action. Finally, there was difficulty in finding follow-up talent. Professionals with interest and competence to carry out the needed work were not to be found.

However, in spite of these difficulties, there has been implementation. Some examples may prove interesting. A Gateway Complex at the head of the Mackinac Bridge will soon become a reality. Design sketches are on display at this conference and ground will be broken this fall. A Black Gown pageant presentation centered on the life on Father Marquette is now operating. A Tower of History, over 200 feet high, is now operating at Sault Ste. Marie. An Iron Ore Freighter is now in drydock and available for interpretive tours. These are examples within area "A" Voyageurland.

In subregion "B", Tahquamenon Country, a 1600-acre lake has been formed; canoe livery and guides are now available; and the Big Sea Development of the U.S. Forest Service is open.

In subregion "C", Pictured Rocks Country, the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore is now a reality. New marinas, boat tours and renewed fishing are now available.

Within subregion "D", Baragaland, you can now see a large memorial statue to Bishop Baraga, a new major convention center complex at Marquette and the start of restoration of the Carp River Forge.

In each of the other regions, practical application of Guidelines has taken place. The Quincy Hoist has been restored, demonstrating a start toward a major copper country tourist complex. A new ski-flying facility is in operation. The Sylvania complex by the U.S. Forest Service is open to the public. A Mystery Ship and Memorial Marina are progressing at Menominee.
The Guidelines Project has stimulated much interest and action. Individual project developers have picked up the recommendations and incorporated them into their plans. By providing both concepts and local leadership we have established greater sensitivity to both the conservation of our resources and the development of projects compatible with the resource assets of the region. Greater involvement by professionals, such as yourselves, is now needed. The opportunities are there if aggressive and competent offices wish to pursue them.

The challenge of this effort has been threefold: to highlight sub-regional advantages and yet promote a viable concept of a total regional approach; to avoid duplication of effort or overlap in development that could prove costly; and to maintain interest in total regional development in light of short term financial possibilities that seem to provide the opportunity for quick gains that are not necessarily conducive to helping more long range regional goals.

_**Vacationscape/A Challenge**_

Clare A. Gunn

To me, the Guidelines Project went far beyond the stimulation of environmental concern over tourism and recreation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It helped us understand some of the spatial functionalism of tourism; it demonstrated important ways that landscape architecture interfaces with tourism-recreation and it stimulated me to look more deeply into this interface and to recognize the enormous challenge that tourism offers our profession. The term, "Vacationscape", was conceived to encompass these observations. As many of you know, design principles for tourism regions have been incorporated in a book by that title.

Today, I would like to discuss five ways in which I believe we interface directly with tourism-recreation and to challenge the profession into greater and more responsible action.

1. Tourism-recreation depends heavily upon landscape esthetics—a basic tenet of all landscape architectural training and practice is esthetics. I know of no more powerful force for tourism than beauty and yet how much of the touristic landscape is ugly! It is the beauty of water, mountains, forests and even historic buildings that appeals to many visitors.
Yet, where are those exponents of beauty when highway decisions are made, when lands around parks and reservoirs are developed, when hotel rooms encase beautiful beaches in concrete?

2. Tourism-recreation depends upon natural and cultural resource interpretation—a fundamental of landscape architecture is the interpretation of natural and cultural characteristics of land and features upon it. As people become more urbanized and as new generations are further removed from their heritage, they depend more and more upon interpretation of the world about them.

Basic to the training of all landscape architects is an understanding of rock, soil, water, trees, shrubs and the gentlest of breezes. And, some landscape architects, such as Don Parker of Williamsburg, are developing sensitivity to restoration of our cultural heritage. Yet, how can we better interface with historical societies and nature groups? How can we tie in better with park services? How can we provide inputs in order to make tourism and recreation the kind of rich experience for millions that it could be?

3. Tourism-recreation is an outgrowth of human behavior—landscape design is the act of creating environmental settings for people's use. Tourist activities are as dependent upon human behavior as they are upon resources.

People value highly the beautiful, the challenging, the educational, the spectacular and many other values they attribute to attractions. Understanding people's interest in tourism is essential to touristic design. Most of us have heard J.O. Simonds ex-pound upon the need for all landscape design to function for human use.

In spite of this, the traveler and vacationist finds so many landscape failures in terms of supporting or being in harmony with functional human behavior. Many park and recreation areas are designed with rubber-stamp concepts. Where are humanized landscape comparable to those created by Olmsted? How can we do a better job of interface with those who understand human behavior in the landscape?

4. The several components of tourism-recreation must be able to meet their needs for success—landscape architectural design is the fulfillment of client need as well as that of human behavior.
Whether or not we like the system, all land development in this country depends upon rewards to owners—public or private. Implicit in this reward-getting is an element important to us designers—the quality of the environments we design. Unless our created environments can satisfy the needs and desires of users and owners, neither public agencies or private enterprise will consider them successful designs.

It is at this point that much of our regional analysis breaks down. Most systems leave out rewards to owners. While a landscape architect cannot know all factors necessary to business and governmental agency success, he must be able to understand the basic needs of all developers.

5. Tourism-recreation depend upon the innovative and the creative—landscape architecture is the art of creating environmental settings for human use and enjoyment. Every year we as tourists seek new ways of doing old things and creative solutions to new experiences.

Therefore, designers of the landscape for tourism are performing a role of prediction. Each design problem requires the insight and creativity that landscape designers are supposed to possess.

In conclusion, I hope that you will visit the areas we have mentioned as growing from the Guidelines effort. I hope that you now agree with me that we need hundreds of new landscape architects actively seeking solutions to land development for tourism. And, I hope that you do not agree with my illustrious critic who wrote recently in our L.A. Quarterly. No one can prove that tourism is an evil to be stamped out. And, I think that it is the height of egotism to think that we can. Rather, it has become a vital form of human and economic activity and our role is that of doing what we are trained to do—create viable and high quality landscape environments so it can thrive. Guidelines is a case study that demonstrates that this can be done.

NOTE:

At the time the Guidelines study was initiated, Dr. Clare A. Gunn was tourism specialist, School of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management, Michigan State University (now
professor of tourism-recreation development, Texas A&M University); Dr. Uel Blank was Upper Peninsula Director of Extension and Associate Director, Institute for Community Development, Michigan State University (now extension economist, Institute of Agriculture, University of Minnesota, St. Paul); and Ray Gummerson was Director of Cooperative Extension Service, Luce County, Michigan (now district extension leader, resource development, Upper Peninsula, Michigan State University).

REFERENCES
