

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Partnership Office, 408 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 216, Boston, MA
Wednesday, June 2, 2010, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Maureen Cavanaugh, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed all. The minutes of the March 3, 2010, annual meeting were approved.

Improvements on Georges Island

Susan Kane, DCR, described recent improvements made on Georges Island. A maintenance facility was constructed with solar panels that will provide most of the electric power to the island. The administration building was refurbished and will include space for exhibits and retail, a conference room, ranger housing and a caretaker's apartment. Adjacent to the administration building is space designated for a food concession and children's play area. Susan described the plans for exhibits and wayside signs. The exhibits will focus on the history of harbor defense and Fort Warren from the Civil War to World War II. Exhibits include an eight minute introductory film and an interactive harbor defense map.

Elizabeth Solomon noted that Deer Island as an internment camp during King Philips War was not included in the exhibits about the colonial period. Susan Kane responded that she will work with designers to see if it can be added to the interactive map.

Community Outreach

Rebecca Smerling, BHIA, distributed copies of the events brochure and described many of the events going on over the summer; details can be found online at bostonharborislands.org. She invited council members to help spread the word about them. Council members requested the calendar in a "pdf" format. Rebecca also encouraged members to visit and post comments and photos to the park's Facebook page ([Facebook.com/bostonharborislands](https://www.facebook.com/bostonharborislands)) and to sign up for the Boston Harbor Island Alliance newsletter at islandalliance.org.

Volunteers-In-Parks

Mary Raczko, NPS, reminded council members that they are all VIP's (volunteers-in-parks), as they volunteer their time serving on the council. She encouraged all to sign an NPS VIP agreement form so the park can count their volunteer hours. The park receives NPS financial support based on the number of volunteers and the number of volunteer hours, so it is very helpful for the park to count them. Mary said many individual members also volunteer in a variety of ways, taking photos, keeping the web site updated, and planning special events to name just a few. She invited members to contact her or Jennifer Bender Ferre about ways they might like to contribute.

Project/Program Updates

Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion: Agreements have been signed and construction has begun.

Little Brewster Dock: The installation is complete; a celebration is planned for June 17. Contact Bruce Jacobson to sign up.

Climate Friendly Parks: Boston Harbor Islands is applying to become a NPS “Climate Friendly Park” with the goal of being the first “net-0” carbon emissions park. Bruce said Marc Albert, NPS is working with Deni Sarno Bucca, DCR, Bill Dowd, TIOBEC, Meredith Eustis, Park Intern, and Bill Green, Park Volunteer to develop baseline data and an action plan.

Bruce mentioned Thompson Island recently won a green business award from the Mayor of Boston for their recent improvements in recycling, composting and water transportation efficiencies as well as their related strong educational components. Susan Kane said DCR now has a single-stream recycling dumpster at Hingham and that island staff routinely recycle. Georges Island and Spectacle both use renewable technologies. Jasper White, the food vendor, is also making a commitment to environmentally friendly products and practices. Council members asked if the park could save, or even make money, with a broad recycling plan. Bruce responded that currently there is a carry-on/carry-off policy. He did add that the park has yet to implement a park-wide waste management plan. He said early studies did not include “single stream” recycling methods and that it was worth revisiting.

Native American Festival: Bruce Jacobson, NPS, announced a student was hired as a NPS park ranger to help plan a Native American Festival.

Web site upgrade: Bruce Jacobson, NPS, invited council members to review and comment on the recently upgraded bostonharborislands.org website.

Membership

Mary Raczko, NPS, gave an update on member status. She reminded all that several council seats are vacant and many current members’ appointments have expired. Although members serve until replaced, those that wish to continue should submit a resume or biography showing a relationship with the organization they are representing along with a home address, home phone number, and date of birth. Mary also suggested nominees also submit a support letter from their organization addressed to Bruce Jacobson. She will follow up with email reminders.

Ask the Superintendent

Bruce Jacobson gave the council the following updates:

The council’s pilot outreach project is moving slowly forward. Bruce, Charlie Norris, Karen O’Donnell and Louise Millet will soon meet to plan for an outreach effort to The Boston Harbor Association. It is hoped that this effort will produce an example that other council members can use to reach out to their own organizations.

The marketing committee developed a draft communication guide. The guide is meant to help Partnership agencies communicate about the park in a consistent manner. He said the draft is available on CD and invited the council to review and comment.

Bruce responded to questions as below:

- DCR has no current plans to place a composting toilet on middle head of Peddocks Island
- The planning study for Fort Andrews on Peddocks Island is available to the public. A memorandum of understanding is about to be signed with Massachusetts Historic Commission, so planning efforts can move forward to rehabilitate, stabilize, and demolish designated areas. Council members expressed frustration that many members did not seem to be aware of the plan until the public comment period had expired. They felt the council is not being utilized effectively as a vehicle to obtain the widest public comment. Some members were also disappointed at the island being closed to the public. Kelly Fellner responded that there are several safety issues to address, and in fact there was a serious accident recently. She said current public access to the island includes guided tours, stewardship opportunities and educational field trips.

Public Comment

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is holding its annual Blues Festival on the Spectacle Dock and just off Peddocks Island.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

