

**Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Independence Wharf, 470 Atlantic Avenue, Community Room, Boston, MA
Wednesday, December 1, 2010, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

Maureen Cavanaugh, Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all. The minutes from the September 15, meeting was approved.

Pet Policy Scoping

Marc Albert, NPS, said the current pet policy for the park is unclear and managers were taking a new look. The Advisory Council held a scoping session about the issue at their September meeting and a draft policy was developed and reviewed by the Operations Committee shortly thereafter. Marc distributed the current draft policy and several Advisory Council members commented. A wide-range of opinions was shared. There were concerns expressed about enforcement, waste disposal, safety, and environment for visitors that were afraid of dogs, particularly on the ferries. Some members expressed a desire to advocate for off-leash areas to make the park more welcoming to dogs; otherwise, dog owners may not be motivated to visit or they would not feel welcome. Some members felt the council has already spent a disproportionate time on the issue for a constituency about which little is known. Council members did agree that it was important the policy be clear and understandable to both staff and visitors, and that the ferry policies about dogs also be clear. Marc said the draft will be presented to the Partnership at the next meeting, and that once implemented, will be reviewed and updated annually.

Light Houses in the Park

Bruce Jacobson, Superintendent, said two park lighthouses were exsessed by United States Coast Guard (USCG), Long Island Head Light and Graves Light. Bruce announced NPS has requested that Long Island Head Light be transferred to NPS. He explained that USCG will still maintain the light, but NPS will manage the tower and immediate surroundings. He reported the park has not received, and does not expect, any funding for remediation or maintenance. He said NPS will also have the option to acquire Graves Light, but there are many additional challenges. The structure and location make it virtually inaccessible by the public and there would also be no budget to maintain or deal with compliance issues. Suzanne Gall Marsh, Volunteers and Friends of Boston Harbor Islands (FBHI), asked about public access to Long Island once NPS acquires. Bruce responded that keeping occasional access for the public was one of the reasons NPS justified the transfer.

Preparation for the Annual Meeting

A nominating committee was formed to recommend Chair, Vice-Chair, and Alternate Partner. Mary Raczko, NPS, gave an update on member status; there were still nominated members that had not turned in their paperwork, and several vacancies to fill. Mary asked for recommendations for a speaker and location for the annual meeting. John Anderson offered to check on the Aquarium space and Mary will contact Phillip Marsh about doing a presentation on Boston Harbor Islands during the Civil War.

Community Outreach Update

In Charlie Norris' absence, Bruce Jacobson gave an update on the Council's outreach efforts. He reminded all the current focus of the Council is to gather and communicate to the Partnership the perspectives of the public on issues of park management. He, Charlie Norris, Karen O'Donnell, and Louise Millet developed a presentation to open the conversation with The Boston Harbor Association (TBHA), as a pilot effort. Bruce showed the presentation, which was

designed to prompt thought about how the goals of TBHA and the park were similar. It was the hope that this presentation could serve as a template for any Advisory Council member that may wish to reach out to their organization's board. Another effort to design a presentation to design a presentation for a community group is also planned, as the approach will be very different. The group discussed. Joel Reck, Boston Harbor Island Alliance (BHIA), expressed concern about inviting more complexity into the Partnership. Pat Morss clarified that they are looking to see where synergy lies, where organizations might work together. Karen O'Donnell said it would be helpful if organizations like TBHA would have the correct info about the park so they can help share the message with a broader audience. Jennifer Bender Ferre said it was her experience that funding requests were much stronger when groups worked together.

Ask the Superintendent

Bruce Jacobson said City of Boston, DCR, BHIA, and NPS are involved in a joint effort to apply for additional mooring sites.

Bruce announced an RFP will soon be issued for a Spectacle Island Marina Operator. Constitution Marina performed the service for the last several years. Suzanne Gall Marsh, FBHI, requested that a copy of the RFP be sent to her and made available to council members.

Bruce reported that the *Friendship*, an NPS-owned tall ship replica, came for a visit during the regatta. He said it was a very successful weekend visit. The ship hosted 4 classrooms at the Courthouse Pier, a reception for the captains sailing in the regatta, and was open to the public at both Courthouse Pier and Georges Island. He said it would be a welcome addition to future programming if funding could be found to support the visit.

Bruce gave an update on the Peddocks Island improvements project. He said BHIA's Board expects that the demolition and stabilization of identified buildings will begin soon. When all costs are finalized, decisions will be made about what other improvements can be completed. Camping is expected to be available this summer. Suzanne Gall Marsh, FBHI, suggested that cottages slated for demolition on Middle Head should be added to the project to help consolidate costs.

Mary Anne Hendricks noted there were no photos of Native Americans in the exhibit panels planned for the Pavilion. Bruce said there were not any good photos available, and asked the Native American working group to find some to add.

Public Comment

Steve Marcus, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, said the Friends were involved in an effort to save Minot's Light. He said that although he recognized there were costs associated with acquisition, he encouraged Partners to work together to save lighthouses. He encouraged all to learn more about Minot's Light, even though it was outside park boundaries.

Rob announced an upcoming talk about the Battle of Chelsea Creek.

