

***Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
Park Advisory Commission Meeting***

March 15, 2007

Warren Country Government Center
Front Royal, Virginia

Agenda

- I) General Introduction
- II) Introduction of Bob Grogg, NPS volunteer
- III) Review and Approval of Minutes from January 18, 2007 (5 minutes)
- IV) De-brief on park landowners Forum, January 22, 2007 (10 minutes)
- V) GMP status update (5 minutes)
- VI) Change to Alternative B—addition of B1 and B2 (20 minutes)
- VII) Zone discussion follow-up (30 minutes)
- VIII) Alternatives newsletter—out to public in March; Advisory Commission to discuss in May (10 minutes)
- IX) Final Scoping Report (30 minutes)
- X) Old Business
- XI) New Business
- XII) Next Meeting—May 17, 2007, Strasburg Town Hall

Meeting Notes

Commission members in attendance: Diann Jacox, Designated Federal Official (DFO); Fred Andreae; Mary Bowser, chair; Patrick Farris; Randy Jones; Howard Kittell; Elizabeth McClung; Gary Rinkerman; Jim Smalls; and Dan Stickley.

Commission members absent: Gene Dicks, Roy Downey, Kris Tierney.

Others in attendance; Bob Grogg, NPS: Robert King, *Winchester Star*; Sarah Mauck, Strasburg; Chris Stubbs, NPS.

Chair Mary Bowser conducted the meeting.

The notes from the January 18, 2007, meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

Commission members spoke about the response at the park landowners' forum, January 25, 2007. The people attending the meeting were eager to talk and often sidetracked discussion to development outside the park. Nevertheless the commissioners found the landowners engaged in the process and interested in getting information. The private

discussions that followed during the social hour were especially important: people were able to talk to the commissioners directly, get answers, and relay their concerns. Everyone stressed the important of these one-on-one conversations.

Chris Stubbs of the National Park Service reported on the status of the general management plan. In January the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP staff presented the GMP alternative to the NPS Northeast Region's acting Director and to the NPS Washington Office. Approval to proceed, with modifications, was granted. The park staff will be meeting with relevant Virginia state officials in the coming week.

In response to comments received from the NPS Washington Planning Office, the park presented the commissioners with two options for Alternative B—Option B1 containing no visitor center and Option B2 containing a visitor center. They explained that the acting director for planning, who was subsequently appointed Deputy Director of the National Park Service, recommended that at least one of the action alternatives within the plan illustrate how the park would operate without a visitor center. He recommended that the alternative be a good faith effort to think through in detail how the national park would operate without a visitor center. In the subsequent discussion among the commissioners, it was agreed that Option B1 would be a more forthright and direct approach and provide the framework for the good faith effort recommended by the NPS acting planning director. The commissioners voted to recommend that the National Park Service drop option B2, and that option B1 become Alternative B.

Chris Stubbs reviewed the Draft Zone Prescriptions (March 6, 2007) for the commissioners, explaining how these decisions on land use would aid future park management. A suggestion was made that additional maps be created showing conservation easements within the park. They reasoned that such a map would be useful in showing property owners other protected land, thereby encouraging the owners to provide the same protection. Some people expressed the need for county lines on the maps, believing that such a device would help local populations invest themselves with a sense of being a part of the park.

Chris Stubbs reported that the Alternatives Newsletter has been printed and will shortly be delivered to park headquarters. It will be mailed out to about 450 people. He urged the commissioners to work with their boards to get comments on the alternatives so that at the May meeting concrete decisions can be made. The May discussion will be crucial to meeting the September 2007 release date.

Chris Stubbs presented the GMP scoping report (December 14, 2006) that is a compilation of everything that the NPS and the Commission have heard from public meetings and discussions with local authorities through late 2006.

Diann Jacox reported that she is waiting to hear on the DOI confirmation of the appointments of Sarah Mauck and Tom Price to be commission members.

Jim Smalls reported a U.S. Forest Service planning meeting will take place the third week in April in Woodstock. Inquiries may be directed to the Lee Ranger District, 540-984-4101.

Chair Mary Bowser adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m. Elizabeth McClung requested that everyone stay for a group picture for her newsletter.

Handouts provided at the March 15, 2007 meeting

1. Meeting agenda
2. Minutes from the January 18, 2007, meeting
3. GMP status update
4. Alternative B modifications
5. Draft Zone Prescriptions
6. GMP final scoping report