

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Nineteenth Meeting Minutes
February 10, 1999 10:30am – 12:30pm
Hale & Dorr, 60 State St., Boston, MA 26th Floor**

PRESENT: Phil Lemnios, Edith Andrews, Advisory Council; Captain Chuck Beck, US Coast Guard (USCG); Linda Haar, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Kathy Abbott, Island Alliance (IA); Cathy Douglas Stone, City of Boston; Peter Webber, Department of Environmental Management (DEM); Terry Savage, National Park Service (NPS); Brian Broderick, Metropolitan District Commission (MDC); Betsy Shure Gross, representing the Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA); Richard Howe, The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); George Armstrong, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC); James Doolin, Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT)

Chairman Webber called the nineteenth meeting of the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership to order and declared a quorum.

Review of minutes from the January 13, 1999 meeting

There was a motion to accept the minutes. **The motion was approved.**

Spectacle Island

Jill Ochs Zick, Boston Parks Department, presented a proposal from Boston Edison to bring in green energy and green technologies to make Spectacle Island sustainable. She requested a letter of support for the project from the Partnership & the other agencies involved with Spectacle Island. Cathy Douglas Stone said that there has not been a great deal of talk about conservation, but that it had always been an important issue and projects should be at the highest level. The City of Boston is exploring a program called Sustainable Boston; they are always looking for ways to spend money wisely. She hopes that the Partnership supports the grant. Peter Webber concurred, realizing that the full proposal has not been seen by the Partnership, but believes that it is well deserving of support in principle. Terry Savage said that this opportunity to have the Park Service involved with a model of energy independence couldn't come at a better time. He supported the idea, thought it was wonderful for the city and the entire country. Edith Andrews and Kathy Abbott voiced support. Linda Haar added that it is very significant that the private sector came to us.

There was a motion made for George Price to draft a letter on behalf of the Partnership and for all to write individual letters. **The motion was passed.**

Planning Committee – Presentation of the Alternatives

Linda Haar said that the planning committees had 17 meetings and had a broad representation that brought them to this point. The diverse group considered almost all angles on all issues and the alternatives come with a lot of thought. They have received good public feedback. There seemed to be some confusion about the alternatives, but mostly strong support for the project. Besides this presentation, there will be an opportunity for a meeting with all the Partners individually. There is also an Advisory Council meeting scheduled for February 23.

Bruce Jacobson, NPS, gave an overview of the process up to this point. He reminded everyone that

these are concepts for consideration, it was not the full plan, and input from the Partners is needed. The goal is to have a full set of alternatives ready to go to the public. The purpose of the management plan is to present a policy for resource management. It is required by law and contains the policy that looks 10-12 years in the future. The alternatives have evolved since they were published in the newsletter; they have changed in response to public and planners input. One major purpose of the management plan is to define the mission of the park. The planning committee is making progress on what the mission statement will be. There will also be a vision statement within the plan.

The management plan timetable is as follows:

March 10—Partners vote on a preferred alternative

May 22 – July 22—Public comment period

September – November—Review by Governor

Jan 31, 2000—Record of decision

Feb – April, 2000—Review by the Secretary of the Interior

Barbara Mackey, NPS, presented the alternatives. The two sources used to arrive at the alternatives were public comment and looking closely at the cultural and natural resources. She briefly described the key features of Alternative A & B:

Alternative A – enjoying nature and history

- People concentrated on six islands
- ferries going to hub islands
- Public program relates to park policy
- Island setting is an attraction

Alternative B

- more piers than in A
- Additional hubs
- Various activities drawn for recreation – a people place
- More amenities/lodging
- Emphasis on recreation

Barbara described the six management areas and went over potential gateways. She discussed costs and possible sources of revenue, visitor statistics and carrying capacity.

Linda asked if there are any initial thoughts on reaction or direction. Captain Beck said that one major difference between A & B is that the green area disappears maybe more than necessary in plan B, like World's End being blue in B. Richard Howe said he had the same initial reaction, but once he read the definitions carefully, it seemed that the blue is actually more appropriate for World's End. The green and blue areas have a lot of similarities and he thought there may be a public perception problem and should be defined differently. Linda agreed that there could be a public perception problem if the details are not looked at closely. The blue color also represents a preservation-based plan and just has a different level of activity. Cathy Douglas Stone said that the goal of A is very appealing, but some goals of B are not inconsistent to A. Edith Andrews said that definitions are not always read very carefully and the color green is a prominent factor when looked at by a preservationist minded person. The blue color could be perceived as negative. Phil Lemnios said that blue is not necessarily contrary to green, but when A is looked at it does not seem very

different then where we are today; B seems like it would take a long time to get there.

James Doolin said that there needs to be a distinction between A & B, both have to be looked at as end states. It seemed that A didn't have as much activity, so less money would be spent on restoration. Peter Webber said that it should not be looked at as one leading to the other, but thought that parts of A and parts of B could be combined. Linda said that the preferred alternative could be Alternative C or A' or B'. This alternative would define the general character, a vision for current decisions and funding. Kathy Abbott said that she would like to see a new blended alternative containing elements of A and B. She mentioned that Chelsea and the North Shore are important places to consider as gateways.

Bernice Mader, Advisory Council, said that it might be useful to use a formula to compare plans, using four ingredients: Preservation; Restoration; Education; and Recreation. First, determine how much of which ingredient is in each alternative, then determine costs and sustainability, and maybe readjust ingredients from there. Suzanne Gall Marsh, Advisory Council, was very concerned with Alternative B's key feature of having recreation based activities that were not related to historical or natural resources. She thought that this was a serious policy issue for the Partnership to consider. She did not think that it would be easy to combine A & B to make C, and that Alternatives D & E might be needed. She said that different ways to generate revenue should be looked at, the park should get revenue from ferries and private boats. Why focus on Spectacle Island when there are piers on Peddocks and Deer Islands now? It seemed that Spectacle should be a project in the future.

Phil wanted to see cost estimates. He asked what would happen if the chosen alternative is not financially sustainable. Terry Savage said that details will come out over the next few months and during the process you have to evaluate all alternatives not just the preferred one. Brian Broderick said that the plan needs to have flexibility in it and he looks at it as more of a philosophy. Peter Webber agreed that the financial feasibility is important, but the goals should not be lowered because of present day or perceived future realities. George Price said reality checks are built into the process.

Vivian Li, Advisory Council, said that she was impressed with efforts of planning committee and the Trustees of The Boston Harbor Association applauded their efforts. The Trustees felt that there needs to be more draws to the islands to increase visitation, with something new every year to show the progress. The management plans should consider the individual needs of each island as they each have different carrying capacities. There is also a need for improved access, there has to be affordable and convenient transportation.

Closing Comments

There was a request to change the Partnership meeting dates, as there is a conflict with the MWRA board meetings. George said that the March 10 meeting will stay the same and he will be in contact with Partners about a new time.

Richard Howe announced an orientation trip to World's End on May 14.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:41