

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Twenty-eighth Meeting Minutes
Hale & Dorr, 60 State Street, Boston, MA, 26th Floor
December 16, 1999, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

PRESENT: Rob Moir, Edith Andrews, Advisory Council; Captain Chuck Beck, US Coast Guard (USCG); Maynard Goldman, Island Alliance (IA); Linda Haar, Boston Redevelopment Authority; Cathy Douglas Stone, City of Boston; Bob Durand, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); Terry Savage, National Park Service (NPS); Peter Webber, Department of Environmental Management (DEM); Brian Broderick, Metropolitan District Commission (MDC); Richard Howe, The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); Alden Gifford, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC); Jim Doolin, Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT)

Cathy Douglas Stone, Vice-Chair, called the twenty-eighth meeting of the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership to order and declared a quorum.

Review of minutes from the November 18, 1999, meeting

Cathy Douglas Stone made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 18 meeting. The motion was seconded. **The motion was carried.**

Island Lights

Kathy Abbott, Island Alliance, introduced a proposed event called Island Lights. The idea for the event has been evolving for sometime with the help of Jack Roberts and Bob O'Brien. A creative team has been hired to develop this proposal. She introduced Michael Schaffer, Executive Producer of the project. He gave an overview of the full evening of events. The program will start on the boat ride out to George's Island. It will continue on the island with Civil War history characters, a picnic dinner, an exhibit/multimedia presentation, a historical pageant, and a sound and light spectacle. The evening will end with a finale of lights seen from the boat returning to Boston. Michael introduced Yves Devraine, Scenographer. Yves said that Fort Warren was a wonderful site and he was proposing suggestions to enhance the image of the fort for the visitor. He proposed some changes including placing photographs on the front wall and towers on the site. He said that the changes were not meant to be a transformation of the site, but would lead to a new impression for the visitor. He also recognized that this is a very sensitive site and there would be no permanent changes. Stuart Solomon, Solomon & Bauer Architects, spoke about some specific changes that would need to be done to the fort for safety, accessibility and technical reasons. He said that he is working with MDC and the Massachusetts Historical Commission toward the least invasive construction options. The floor was opened up for questions and comments.

Linda Haar said that she had the sense that the event would be fun and festive but have an underlying sinister component of the war theme that would make it interesting. She did express concerns regarding the structures that were proposed. She also said that it was extremely important to create a quality, meaningful program.

Edith Andrews was concerned that the Civil War emphasis left the Native Americans out of the historical presentation. She requested that the Native American history be recognized in the

program. Linda Haar spoke in support of Edith's comment. Sam Sapiel, Advisory Council, also felt the Native American perspective was again being ignored. He was also concerned with some of the images seen in the presentation, specifically some puppets that were "false faces" from the Native American perspective. Kathy Abbott said that the team is actually looking into two shows, this one and one that would show a more complete island history.

Bob Durand asked about the budget of the project and was told that the cost of the entire project is in the range of 2.5 to 3 million dollars and would be privately funded. Bob also expressed concerns about the permanence of the proposed structures and was reassured that everything done would be reversible. Brian Broderick expressed that he was disturbed that this was the first time the MDC had seen this particular presentation on Island Lights. He said that several capital improvements would be needed to support such an event and gave specific examples. He also stressed the fact that this is a National Historical Landmark and should be revered as such. Some of the proposed changes may be fine for an evening event, but might not be appropriate for visitors that had different expectations during the day. He was very concerned about the proposed structures.

Richard Howe asked about the logistics of the evening. It was estimated that the event would last approximately from 6:00 PM to 11:00 PM, and would cost \$30 a ticket, with discounts available for seniors, school groups and children. The expected attendance was 500 to 1000 visitors a night.

Jim Doolin applauded the efforts of the team and thought this really demonstrated the Partnership in action. He said he appreciated the concerns of others and added the concern about how the lights at the end of the show would effect air traffic. Michael Schaffer said that the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) has been contacted, and he got the impression that the issues could be worked out. Suzanne Gall Marsh, Advisory Council, said that she could see potential in this project for generating funds for preservation and other financial needs of the islands.

Finance & Legislation Committee

Cathy Douglas Stone gave a presentation on the draft funding assumptions. She said that Island Lights could be used as an example of applying the funding assumptions. Funds generated would first go toward making the show self sustaining. Any funds generated over and above that would go first to George's Island to help with any program related costs, and any excess funds above that would go into a pool of funds for the park. She opened the floor for questions and comments.

Terry Savage said that the proposal seemed to be on a parallel track with a fee demonstration program the NPS recently started under authorization from congress. The program, which gave parks the ability to retain fees, has been a great success.

Bob Durand asked about the timeline for the state legislation. Peter Lewenberg said that the Legislative Sub-committee is in the process of modifying the state legislation and the draft will be submitted for review when complete. The Finance committee is hoping to submit the legislation in February or March.

Brad Swing, City of Boston, said that the funding assumptions would be useful when having discussions with municipalities. Suzanne Gall Marsh, Advisory Council, said that fee retention was a key issue for islands.

Richard Howe made a motion to accept the funding assumptions. The motion was seconded.
The motion was carried.

Cathy said that the Finance Sub-committee continues to work on the report of accounting of costs associated with Boston Harbor Islands from November '96 to November '98. She said that 100% of the participants have submitted. There are some technical policy questions that still need to be resolved. She thanked Lauren Downing, NPS, and the rest of the sub-committee for their work.

Planning Committee

Linda Haar said that the planning team has received preliminary comments from the NPS policy review by Washington staff regarding the draft general management plan. The team is in the process of responding to them.

Diane Haynes gave an update on Spectacle Island. Linda said that she hoped the Partnership could pull together a few professionals to look at the design of the visitor center, as it is an important first image for the park. Terry Savage and Jim Doolin offered their help. Linda welcomed comments from all. She stressed the need for all comments to come soon because the design of the visitor center is nearing completion.

Advisory Council

Jack Wiggin said that the Advisory Council met on December 9. The focus of the meeting was the status of the draft general management plan. The nominating process of Advisory Council members was initiated for the upcoming elections in March. Peter Lewenberg was recognized as the official representative from the state and he will give regular reports to the council.

The council wants to make sure that there is no question of adequacy of public outreach regarding the plan. They voted that the website should contain the entire draft GMP. They will hire a staff person to support the council for the public meetings. Jack gave thanks to Ruth Goldman, Merck Family Fund, for attending the meeting and for her help assisting the council in their quest for long term support. The council has scheduled a study session on January 6, to plan for the public meetings. He said that the council would like to add a survey piece to be used at the public meetings.

There is a full council meeting scheduled for February 10. The focus will be Spectacle Island and Central Artery representatives will attend. It will be a comprehensive look at the issues and he encouraged members of the Partnership to attend.

Public comment

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, invited all to attend the New Year's Day boat trip leaving from the EDIC pier at 12:00 PM. This has historically been an extremely successful trip in all types of weather.

New business

George Price announced the Project Office Holiday Open House from 3:00 - 6:00 PM that day. He invited all to stop by.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.