

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
Hale & Dorr, 60 State Street, 26th Floor, Boston,
January 21, 2003, 3:00 PM – 4:10 PM**

PRESENT: Joe Ferrino and Edith Andrews, Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Captain Dan May, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG); Maynard Goldman, Island Alliance; Linda Haar, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Secretary Ellen Roy Herzfelder, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), representing the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); George Price, National Park Service (NPS); Peter Webber, Department of Environmental Management (DEM); Alex Hall for Samantha Overton Bussell, Metropolitan District Commission (MDC); Jim Doolin, Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT); Lisa Vernagaard, The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR)

Maynard Goldman, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order and declared a quorum. He introduced Ellen Roy Herzfelder, Secretary of Environmental Affairs. Ellen stated that she is pleased to be a part of the partnership and park. She said that she grew up in Massachusetts and has very fond memories of the beaches here and remembers spending time on Thompson Island in particular. She stated that she looked forward to learning more about the park.

Approval of minutes from December 17, 2002

There was a motion made to accept the minutes of December 17, 2002.

The motion was approved.

Operations Committee

George Price described the visitation and statistics program and said that the need for a comprehensive visitor statistics collection program has been a priority since the establishment of the national park area. The Island Alliance was able to secure the talents of Ricardo Monteiro, an intern with the Environmental Careers Organization, who built upon work done by agency staff members and research from other national parks that have similar island resources. The statistics summary was distributed at the December Partnership meeting and represented a much larger, more detailed report that outlines the proposed system. The proposal was further discussed at the January Operations Committee meeting after comments were received from Partnership agencies. George said that he was pleased to announce that the Operations Committee is putting forth a recommendation that the Partnership adopt the system as the official visitor counting method for the park. The Partners discussed the proposal.

A motion was made for the Partnership to adopt the Visitor Statistics Collection and Reporting System as presented by Operations Committee. The Operations Committee will have the ability to make minor adjustments as necessary and will report to the full Partnership any major adjustments that may become necessary. The Committee will provide an annual park visitation report to the Partnership based upon this reporting system.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Peddocks Island Update

Doug Welch, Island Alliance, reported on the current status of three Peddocks Island projects.

Island Alliance received \$5.3M from a portion of the harbor gas pipeline project public benefit funds, which will be dedicated to infrastructure and improvements on Peddocks Island. He said that these funds “jump-started” efforts toward the development of an eco-family camp on the island, but reflects only a small portion of the funds needed. Island Alliance will hire a project manager within the next couple of months to manage the project as well as investigate additional funding opportunities. Doug mentioned that NPS has submitted a funding request to support the project.

Doug reported that the roof repair project is moving forward. The project is a joint effort of Island Alliance, MDC and NPS. Seven buildings have been prioritized to receive roof repairs; a vendor has been selected and repair work has begun.

A final report of the asbestos assessment is expected from the vendor by the end of the month. The NPS secured funds for the study and there may be some remaining funds that can be used to begin abatement and remediation efforts. Once the final report is received, it is expected that the NPS will initiate another funding request to complete the remediation process.

Water Transportation

Peter Lewenberg reported on the status of the water transportation contract for 2003. He reminded all that the current contract between the state and Boston Harbor Cruises (BHC) expires March 2003. The Partnership is now responsible for the water transportation contract, with Island Alliance acting as its agent.

The water transportation subcommittee held a pre-bid meeting with vendors who suggested that more time be given for the boat companies and for the water transportation subcommittee to prepare for the next three-year contract. Based on the comments received, the subcommittee decided to offer BHC a contract modeled after the current state ferry contract with a term of one year. This year, the contract process has been a challenge because there is no longer any funding available for the water shuttle system as there had been in past years. They are still in negotiations about the specifics of the contract with BHC. The subcommittee still hopes to find affordable ways for the visitor to get access to islands other than Georges. The subcommittee is approaching other vendors that may have interest different routes. They are also exploring opportunities to piggyback on existing commuter runs through the harbor. Jim Doolin requested that the Partnership receive reports as the process continues, as it is a very important issue.

Water Resources Scoping Report and Intertidal Assessment

Bruce Jacobson, National Park Service, reminded all that the Water Resources Scoping Report was adopted at the last Partnership meeting. This report, one of the first products of the inventory and monitoring initiative, provides a summary of the enormous amount of information currently available on water resource issues and is a tool for managers to use to identify and understand water-related issues relevant to the management of the national park area. The report also includes an intertidal assessment (distributed with the December Partnership meeting packet) as well as recommendations for the national park area on water-related issues.

Bruce reported on two projects that will continue the natural resource assessment in 2003. A survey of mammals, reptiles and amphibians will be conducted. Also, Rich Bell, New England Aquarium, will continue survey work of the islands intertidal zone, including Snake Island.

Planning Committee

Linda Haar reported that the committee met on January 14, 2003. The committee reviewed the draft role and function statement and adopted the final statement (distributed with the December Partnership meeting packet). The committee also established a work plan for 2003. This work plan includes making recommendations to the Partnership regarding: a history research plan for the park; a carrying capacity implementation and monitoring guideline for the park; a portion of a park resource management plan that deals with vegetation management; and continuing work on developing a park strategic plan.

The next meeting will kick off the committee's work on a resource management plan.

New Business

A nominating committee was formed for the Partnership. Members are: Joe Ferrino, Linda Haar, Peter Lewenberg, Dan May, George Price, and Peter Webber.

Lisa Vernagaard announced that work has begun on the restoration of the Damde Meadows salt marsh on the World's End property. This effort, when complete, will restore a significant acreage of salt marsh which will provide more critical habitat for several rare plants, reptiles and amphibians. Also, at certain times, World's End will once again be an island.

George Price announced the Island Encounters cruise planned for Saturday, January 25. This outer harbor discovery cruise is part of a series of winter cruises held in collaboration with the MDC, NPS, DEM, BHC and FBHI. The February 22 cruise will include a tour of Georges Island, and the March 29 tour is a guided tour of Peddocks Island.

Advisory Council

Joe Ferrino reported that the council has begun the planning process for a community outreach plan. The council is working with consultants from the Interactive Institute for Social Change. The next workshop will be held February 5 from 4:00 to 7:00 PM at the New England Aquarium Conference Center. All are encouraged to attend and offer their ideas on how to get the public to visit and become involved in the park.

Public Comments

Steve Marcus, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, invited all to the Friends Annual Meeting on Feb 2. He expressed concern about the new water transportation contract and stressed the importance of continuing the policy of providing free transportation for volunteers.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.