

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
Hale & Dorr, 60 State Street, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor  
July 20, 2004, 3:00 PM – 4:50 PM**

**Attendees:** Bill Hale—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Linda Haar—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Cathy Douglas Stone—City of Boston, Department of Environmental Services; Kathy Abbott and Samantha Overton Bussell—Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Tom Powers—Island Alliance (IA); Tom Lindberg for Fred Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); George Price—National Park Service (NPS); George Armstrong—Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC).

Cathy Douglas Stone, Vice-chair, called the meeting to order.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 15, 2004. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

### **Harbor Pavilion**

Sarah Peskin, National Park Service (NPS), gave an update on the harbor pavilion Long Wharf gateway project. She said that they continue to work with the greenway planning interests to try out various ideas while maintaining program goals. She reminded all of the goals and showed the most recent “concept sketch” of the proposed pavilion. Sarah said that the NPS, Island Alliance, Central Artery Tunnel Project, park planners, Artery Business Committee, abutters and others are continuing to move forward in the planning for a pavilion and the idea seems to be well received by decision makers. She said that they were asked to consider alternate locations for the pavilion, all of which are still on Parcel 14, our preferred location. Only two of these three proposed sites were at Long Wharf, an important factor because the park legislation defines Long Wharf as part of the park. Both of these sites were in areas of heavy foot traffic and had promise. Sarah will keep the Partnership updated as the project evolves.

### **Georges Island**

Karl Pastore, DCR, said that there are DCR engineers working to restore water service to Georges Island. The island has been without running water for a couple of years; they hope to have an interim solution within a couple of weeks until a more permanent fix is possible.

Karl reported on the clean-up of the fuel oil release. Although it was a very expensive process, the fuel oil was contained effectively and the majority was recovered. The soil contamination was not as extensive as originally thought, and the clean-up went smoothly. The DCR has taken a proactive response by inspecting other systems on the island to prevent similar equipment failures and is looking at alternatives to power to the island.

Karl announced that a reproduction of a Rodman Cannon was installed on Georges over the weekend. Island Alliance purchased the cannon with grant money received

from the NPS Civil War Roundtable. This grant was originally intended to go toward the production of a movie on Georges Island, but matching funds were never received and the movie project could not be completed. The rest of the grant money was used for the development of a Civil War curriculum for middle and high school students.

### **Peddocks Island**

Doug Welch, Island Alliance, reported that they have received the first draft of the engineering feasibility study for phase I of the Peddocks Project. Results indicate that there are issues with the capacity of the existing septic field and that they found no fresh water sources on the island. A micro tunnel to Hull seems to be the best option for water and sewage, consistent with preliminary reports. An electricity line could be run at the same time. Estimates to install these basic utilities came in around \$3.8M, leaving the rest for visitor center improvements. They are reviewing the details with a committee that includes members of the Island Alliance economic development committee and members of the Partnership (Samantha Overton Bussell, Jim Doolin and Linda Haar). They also plan to have a study group with the Advisory Council as part of the September 1 meeting. Steve Marcus, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, asked if the design plans for the utilities included other parts of the island besides the fort area. Tom Powers stated that the current plans are for East Head only.

### **Spectacle Island**

Doug Welch reported that Spectacle Island did not open. The Central Artery is still working on an engineering problem regarding the leachate circulation system. They continue testing different ways to get the system working again, but it has not yet worked to the satisfaction of the owners (City of Boston and DCR). The leachate system is tied into the gray water system of the visitor system so it can not be separated out for a partial island opening. It is not likely to be resolved in time for the island to open this season.

Steve Marcus stated that he has heard another side of this story, that the island could be opened safely this year if certain areas were blocked off and the bathrooms weren't opened. Karl Pastore responded by saying that the operational costs to this scenario were extremely high and would include a pump out of the leachate into a holding tank and disposal on a daily basis. Samantha Overton Bussell added that accepting the property at this point would mean owning this problem, that there would be little leverage left to get it fixed properly. Commissioner Abbott said that she and Commissioner Pollack are eager to accept the island and open it, but cannot do it in its current condition. She said that a working group meets regularly to discuss the technical issues. The Central Artery Tunnel Project does not currently have cost estimates for an interim solution, nor do they have an idea of how long the interim solution may be needed before a permanent fix is found. The Partners discussed inviting members of the Central Artery to present their viewpoint at a meeting. It was agreed that the technical details should continue to be worked on by engineers and that a report will be given in September once the technical team has more information.

Nancy Griik, City of Boston Office of Environmental Services, said that Mayor Menino sent a letter of support for the Spectacle Island legislation and that they remain hopeful that it will pass.

### **Park Updates**

Karl Pastore reported that the Department of Environmental Management and the Metropolitan District commission have consolidated. As of July 1, the Boston Harbor Islands became part of the Urban Parks Division of the DCR. Karl said that they are excited with the new benefits that the consolidation will bring.

Doug Welch said that the Island Alliance is co-chairing an event with the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Conventions (CERC) during the Democratic National Convention (DNC). The boat cruise through the park will have a focus on renewable energy.

### **Marketing**

Jen Whitman, Island Alliance, reported that marketing efforts are up and running. There are newspaper and radio advertisements, and the park has had exposure on channels 5 and 7 during the evening news. They hope to get additional press coverage during the DNC. There is a field trip scheduled to the Quincy gateway to look for ways to make it more visible to the public.

### **Operations**

George Price said that communications have been improving and island staff have really been working as a team this season.

George said that the Director of the NPS, Fran Mainella visited the islands during a whirlwind tour of 12 National Park sites in the Northeast.

George reported that water transportation continues to be a challenge. There have been issues with communication, scheduling, capacity and equipment failures throughout the season. The park is working very closely with the new vendor, Harbor Express, and there is continual improvement. This is the first year of a new 5-year contract, so there is a learning curve for all parties. All parties remain very enthusiastic with the new relationship and are committed to improving the system for visitors.

### **Advisory Council**

Pat Morss announced details for a photography contest sponsored by the Advisory Council. He asked if there were opportunities for the council to participate in the DNC event. He announced the next meeting which will be held on September 1.

There were no other public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.