

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP
60 State Street, 26th floor, Boston, MA
January 18, 2005, 3:00 PM – 4:50 PM
*As Corrected***

Attendees: Joe Ferrino and Marianne Farrington—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Linda Haar—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Cathy Douglas Stone—City of Boston, Department of Environmental Services; Karl Pastore for Kathy Abbott—Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Tom Powers—Island Alliance (IA); Jim Doolin—Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT); Marianne Connolly for Fred Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); George Price and Terry Savage—National Park Service (NPS); Cmd. John O'Connor—United States Coast Guard (USCG).

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

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 16, 2004.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Georges Island

Karl Pastore reported on the progress of some improvements on Georges Island. He said that DCR has removed an underground fuel storage tank, replaced an above ground storage tank and are almost finished with the installation of a new fuel line. They hope to award a contract soon for the repair of the water line from Hull. They continue to investigate the renovation needs of the former hospital. Planning continues for the walkways and railings project.

Karl also said that the drawings for the septic system are complete; a trip is scheduled to the island to site fencing and determine event locations since the field area by the dock will be closed at the start of the season.

Peddocks Island

Tom Powers said that the utility feasibility study is complete. The recommendation is to install a utilities micro tunnel from Hull with water, sewer and communications lines as well as to restore the guardhouse and transform it into a visitor center. The Island Alliance Board is concerned because it does not appear that this would allow for many other improvements with the available funds. They are exploring other options that would provide maximum visitor benefit.

Island Alliance is waiting for a report with results from the borings that were drilled along the proposed site of the tunnel; this should give more detail of what the actual costs will be.

Tom also said that during a site visit with the project team, it was determined that the buildings in the fort were deteriorating faster than was previously thought. Many more of the buildings may not be salvageable as was hoped. Some buildings were in such poor condition that they could pose a potential danger this season.

The Partners discussed the issues of the utilities and the buildings, cited examples of other parks in similar situations and how to attract private money into the project.

Spectacle Island

Karl Pastore reported that DCR allocated \$200k for Spectacle Island. He said that the exhibit design team is moving forward. Dredging around the marina will be done late summer or early fall. The installation of the photovoltaic system is almost complete. The Central Artery is working to hire an island caretaker. The leachate system still has serious problems that are not yet resolved. They are exploring other options to handle the waste water. Testing for asbestos continues. At this point, it looks like the swimming beach will be open, but the south beach might be fenced off, depending on results of testing and the DEP determination.

Water Transportation

George Price said that deficit for the water shuttle for the 2004 season is \$36k. This number assumes that the park will collect receivables due from the charter program. George said that NPS was able to give \$5k, leaving a \$31k balance. Last year Island Alliance was left with a bill of \$23k and is not in a position to cover the shortfall again this year. Financial support is needed from the Partnership.

Mangers continue to work on improving the system for next year as well as exploring ways to make the system sustainable and even to make a profit. The inter-island shuttle currently operates at an operating cost of \$30 per person; there is a need to look at ways to lower that cost. Harbor Express is looking at ways to obtain additional boats to ease capacity issues that were apparent last year.

The Partners offered ideas such as contacting the Mayor of Boston, loans, and setting up license plate sales or to collect donations from tax forms.

Tom Powers said Secretary Herzfelder has offered a \$50k challenge grant for next year, which have been matched, so there are some funds to support water transportation in the upcoming season.

Partnership Meetings and Management

George Price reported that there was an informal gathering of the Partnership in December. The group met to “brainstorm” ways to make the Partnership meetings more engaging and meaningful. The Partners discussed the group’s recommendations, and agreed to alternate regular business meetings with “workshops” dedicated to park-wide topics on the alternate months. The workshop format will be utilized to engage the Partners in problem-solving for the park. It was suggested that the first workshop should be on visitation and marketing. Other ideas for topics for workshop sessions included water transportation and state legislation.

Events

Larissa Fawkner reported that she is working on the first draft of the 2005 event brochure. The brochure will have a new look, but still contain general information about on-going activities in the park.

She hopes to expand the Family Fun Days to Sundays as well as Saturdays. She is looking for vendors, please contact her with any resources that you may have. Jim Scully offered Thompson Island as a venue for the park's opening event again this year.

Larissa is also exploring many advertising opportunities, and has a meeting with the MBTA scheduled. Marianne Connolly offered the orientation sign text and graphics for use in the advertisements.

Public Comment

Gary McCann, Muhheconneuk Intertribal Committee on Deer Island (MICDI), passed out a resolution to repeal a colonial law called the Indian Imprisonment Act. This law prevented Indians from entering the city. He announced that the Boston City Council has approved the repeal of the law, and that it now awaits the Governor's signature.

Steve Marcus, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, announced their annual meeting on February 13. The New Year's Day cruise to Thompson Island was very successful; they sold 142 tickets and had to turn people away because the boat was filled.

Susanne Gall Marsh, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, reminded managers about the cabins on Peddocks Island owned by the state that are in various states of disrepair. She said that some need to be demolished for safety, but at least 12 are worth saving.

Advisory Council

The annual meeting of the Boston Harbor islands Advisory Council will be held on March 2 at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.