

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Plaza, 9th floor, Boston, MA
May 17, 2005, 3:00 PM – 4:15 PM**

Attendees: Joe Ferrino and Linda Smith-Mooney—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Linda Haar—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Karl Pastore for Stephen Pritchard—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Jim Doolin—Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport); Terry Savage and Bruce Jacobson—National Park Service (NPS); Jim Scully—Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC); Cmdr. John O'Connor—United States Coast Guard (USCG).

Terry Savage called the meeting to order. There was a motion to approve the minutes of the April 19 meeting. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Park Opening

Karl Pastore reported that Georges Island opened on May 14. Operations went smoothly; visitor attendance was low, most likely due to poor weather. Karl said that a new clivas unit was installed on Lovells, and the existing one was pumped out and repaired. Floats are in place at Lovells and Grape to accommodate school groups and special trips. Bumpkin, Grape, Lovells and Peddocks are scheduled to open on June 25, when the water shuttle service will begin. Peddocks is currently closed for environmental testing, but it is hoped it will open on schedule. Karl said that DCR is moving forward on the contracting process for the repair of the waterline from Hull to Georges Island. The septic system upgrade for Georges Island has been delayed, at least until July, possibly until fall.

Island Micro-Wilderness Proposal

Bruce Jacobson reminded all of the island micro-wilderness concept that was introduced to the Partnership last fall. It was a proposal for the park to embark on an all-taxa biodiversity inventory of insects and invertebrates—an unprecedented exploration of the “little things” that inhabit the Boston Harbor Islands. At that time, the Partnership was supportive of the idea. Generous funding of more than \$320,000 has been made available by the Stone Foundation, Green Fund and National Park Service to begin the first phase of the project.

Bruce gave a summary of the project. He said that unlike most inventories which focus on larger, more familiar species (like mammals, fish, birds, amphibians or reptiles), this project will focus on “the little things.” The Boston Harbor Islands is definitely a small-animal park, the majority of animals in it are found in the micro-wilderness. In fact, up to 99% of animal species on earth are invertebrates. It is expected that new species to the park and even new species to science will be discovered in the process. The park will work with Dr. E.O. Wilson and Dr. Brian Farrell, of Harvard’s Museum of Comparative Zoology, in this ambitious undertaking. Dr. Julia Rykken will fill a new Boston Harbor Islands Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Museum’s Department of Entomology with responsibilities to plan and carryout the day-to-day activities of the invertebrate inventory. She will start in mid-July. The findings of this study will build upon inventory

work that was started in 2002, and will add to the park's scientific knowledge base. This scientific information that will help park managers better understand and monitor park resources.

An exciting aspect of this project is the community outreach component. Students, citizen scientists and amateur naturalists will participate "hands-on" in the discoveries. Findings will be shared through an internet database managed by Harvard, website visuals, posters and other exhibits. The Museum of Comparative Zoology also will house a permanent collection of the invertebrates of the Boston Harbor Islands. Bruce said that he will oversee the project, Mary Raczko will facilitate programs to involve the general public, and Kelly Fellner will manage the curriculum-based programs.

The Partners discussed some of the details of the project, collection methods and how it might affect restoration efforts as well as the estimated timeframe for the project. Tom Powers made a motion to endorse the micro-wilderness proposal. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Advisory Council

Pat Morss, Chair, reported that he traveled to Washington, DC, with members of the Partnership (Cathy Douglas Stone, Steve Pritchard, Bruce Jacobson and Tom Powers) to brief congressional staff. He said that they were well received and the trip was successful, and included a visit with Fran Mainella, Director of the National Park Service. She in particular was very receptive and interested in the public/private partnership.

Pat announced that the next meeting of the Advisory Council will be held on June 1, from 4-6pm at the New England Aquarium Teacher's Conference Center.

New Business

Bruce said that the public announcement of the invertebrate inventory will be held on June 6 at Fan Pier at 10:00am. Speakers include: Secretary Ellen Herzfelder; Dr. E.O. Wilson and Dr. Brian Farrell; Mike Soukop, NPS; Jim Hunt, City of Boston; Ken Pruitt of Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions; and, Virginia Ordway-Macrina, Headmaster of Odyssey High School. It will include a trip to Lovells for a "mini bio-blitz". All are invited.

Tom reported that Commissioner Pollack and Acting Commissioner Prichard have not yet announced the opening date for Spectacle Island, though they continue to work towards a soft opening on June 25, and a grand opening in late July. They have tentative plans to have ferry service to the island four days a week. Karl Pastore said that they have reached an agreement with MWRA to accept the shipments of leachate that will be pumped out on a daily basis, if it meets pre-treatment requirements. Karl said that benches have been installed, though redesign was necessary.

Sarah Peskin, NPS, announced that the winners of the Harbor Park Pavilion design competition will be announced at the Seaport Hotel on Thursday, May 19.

Public Comment

Mary Raczko, NPS announced three upcoming biodiversity events: a bird walk; a nature walk; and, a sailing trip with scientists from Mass Marine Fisheries that are conducting an eel grass restoration program in Boston Harbor.

Tom Powers invited all to the annual Drumlin Cruise on June 21.

Judy McDevitt said that the Peddocks Island cottagers had a meeting with DCR to address many issues. She said that the meeting went well. Karl Pastore said that as part of the reorganization process of DCR, they are working on the permit system with the cottagers.

The next Partnership meeting will be held on June 21, at Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP, 60 State Street from 3:00-4:30 PM. The July meeting will be held on the 19th, there is no meeting scheduled for August. Bruce said that the meetings have been a little shorter, partly reflected on the staffing changes of the Partnership Office. Once the new NPS superintendent is in place, the agendas should become more robust. Partners present expressed that, until that time, it is still valuable to get together as a group.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 PM.