

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP  
60 State Street, 26<sup>th</sup> floor, Boston, MA  
September 19, 2006, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Attendees:** Greg Ketchen and Charles Norris—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Cathy Stone—City of Boston, Office of Environmental and Energy Services; Tom Powers—Island Alliance; Betsy Shure Gross and Susan Kane—Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Jim Doolin—Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT); Bob Golledge—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); Bruce Jacobson—National Park Service (NPS); Peg Wheeler—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); Commander Fred Myer—United States Coast Guard (USCG).l;

Cathy Stone, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order. The Minutes of the July 18 meeting were approved.

#### **Election of Officers**

Jim Doolin presented the slate of officers proposed by the nominating committee, sought nominations from the floor (there were none), and then the Partnership voted unanimous approval of Betsy Shure Gross as chair and Cathy Douglas Stone as vice chair. Ms. Shure Gross took the gavel and conducted the remainder of the meeting.

#### **Pedlocks Island Utilities**

Tom Powers introduced Danielle McLaughlin, Jones Lang LaSalle Project Manager, who made a visual presentation of the process of installing the utility conduit to Pedlocks Island. The conduit contains pipes for water, sewer, power, communications, and two spare conduits for future use. The process entailed directional drilling from Windmill Point in Hull to Pedlocks, a length of about 2000 feet through bedrock approximately 200 feet in depth. This project resulted from the cooperative work of the Secretary of Environmental Affairs, Duke Energy, Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the private sector. Planning and permitting took three years, and building took about three months, with completion this month. Mr. Powers noted that having infrastructure on Pedlocks was prerequisite to future enhancement of the island. Now it will be possible to seek private sector interest in developing park-compatible and visitor-attractive uses on the island.

#### **Spectacle Island Review**

Reports were given by Susan Kane, Kelly Fellner, NPS, and Diane Haynes, Island Alliance, on the opening and first season for Spectacle Island.

Preparations: From January to July, there were 121 boat trips carrying staff and equipment, to Spectacle Island, including three landing craft with large items. The transition from engineering responsibility to operations responsibility went very smoothly. The island caretaker and lifeguards were hired, baseline water testing was done two weeks ahead of opening; four rangers (1 NPS, 3 DCR) were assigned and lived in yurt behind the visitor center.

Visitors and programs: There were formal tours focused on history, natural history, birding; also family programs, junior rangers, teacher institute and workshops. Some large groups came from City of Boston, The Boston Harbor Association, and the Mayor's Youth Triathlon.. The Visitor

center had space not only for exhibits, but for programs. Approximately 11,000 people visited Spectacle, approximately 68% of whom arrived by ferry. The marina was active and functioned well for private boaters, though fewer than expected stayed overnight. Retail sales were slower than expected. Next season the food service will be expanded.

Operations: Vehicles included electric pickup trucks, a Cushman, and a people mover. They operated with varying success through the season. Staff work was great, well integrated among the partners.

### **Water Transportation**

Report of Water Transportation Subcommittee by Tom Powers. This year there have been two hi-speed ferries in service for the first time; they cut the visitor's transportation time dramatically. Visitation was up 25% through August, on top of a 30% increase last year. Unfortunately, the inter island shuttle service was inadequate. He reiterated Partnership goals of equal service to Georges and Spectacle and improved inter-island shuttle service. His written proposal for boat service was handed out and is attached.

Discussion included:

- possibility of a stop for visitors at Deer Island; discussion included visitor access to rest rooms, and praise for excellent trail system; MWRA will consider and develop a request.
- charges for charter boat operators that bring people to the islands; discussion concerned permitting vs. charge per head, the desire to keep fares low to attract people who wouldn't normally go to the islands and thus achieve a more diverse demographic.
- Congressman Delahunt's interest and support for water transportation which has resulted in additional federal funds for infrastructure and the strong need to match that with operating funds.
- the inter-island shuttle is not self sustaining and requires subsidy which has been tried in various ways and needs a solution.

The conclusion was that the Transportation Sub-committee of the Operations Committee should immediately address these issues, well before next season.

### **Advisory Council Report**

Charles Norris reported on the addition of Maureen Cavanaugh from Epsilon Associates to the board, that the council has not decided whether to do an evaluation of the islands this year, and that the council is considering having its annual meeting in March on Spectacle Island.

### **Other Items**

- Island Alliance is sponsoring 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Boston Harbor Islands Regatta in cooperation with DCR to take place September 30, with a cookout for \$20 at the race conclusion on Georges Island. Partners and the general public are invited to participate in and watch the race.
- Corrine Young of Congressman Delahunt's office was introduced and brought greetings and congratulations from the congressman for the good work opening Spectacle Island. She also stressed Mr. Delahunt's strong commitment to water transportation.
- The Partnership voted unanimously to send a letter of congratulations to Mary Bomar, NPS regional director for the Northeast who has been nominated by the President to become NPS director.

- Bruce Jacobson reported that National Geographic issued a report on ‘national parks in peril’ as it did in 1966, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the National Park Service. Also, the NPS and DCR conducted two public field trips to Outer Brewster in a small landing craft and another 200 observed the island from a Discovery Cruise aboard a Harbor Express boat. People on the trips were surprised to find a number of private boaters there, contrary to the island’s portrayal by advocates of an LNG facility as being of no interest or use to the public.

**Public Comment**

Vivian Li, The Boston Harbor Associates, expressed gratitude for how well the Spectacle opening was handled and praised the extraordinary collaboration. Secondly, she urged that non-profit organizations not be subjected to the charter landing fee. Thirdly, Ms. Li suggested that the Partnership designate a committee to talk with the governor’s transition committee after the November election to be sure the new governor becomes familiar with the park and the partnership.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.