

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, 2nd Floor, Room B, Boston, MA
June 19, 2007, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

Attendees: Maureen Cavanaugh and Charlie Norris—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Antonia Pollak and Cathy Douglas Stone—City of Boston, Office of Environmental and Energy Services; Tom Powers—Island Alliance (IA); Betsy Shure Gross, Susan Kane and Karl Pastore—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Marianne Connolly for Fred Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); Bruce Jacobson—National Park Service (NPS); Arthur Pearson—Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC); Jim Doolin—Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT); LT John Korsch for CMD Fred Myer—United States Coast Guard (USCG).

Betsy Shure Gross, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed all. As the group reviewed the minutes from the May 15 meeting, it was noted that Betsy Shure Gross, Chair, was present and called the meeting to order not Cathy Stone. Cathy took the gavel mid-meeting. There was a motion to approve the minutes from the March 20 meeting with the above correction. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Betsy Shure Gross announced that Cathy Stone will be stepping down from the Partnership. She thanked her for her dedication and commitment, noting that Cathy had attended 75 meetings of the Partnership. Bruce Jacobson added that this represented 10 years of service, and that she served as chair of the finance committee, and was involved in countless projects over the years. Antonia Pollak thanked her on behalf of Mayor Menino for her perseverance obtaining project funding and especially for her work opening Spectacle Island to the public. The Partnership presented flowers and a plaque commemorating her work to Cathy.

Report of 2007 Washington, D.C. Visit

Tom Powers, Island Alliance, said that he and Cathy Stone took a trip to Washington, DC to visit the congressional delegation. He said that they met with staff from both senators' offices and all representatives whose districts include the islands, as well as Representative Olver, whose district does not extend to the islands, but who is on the appropriations committee. He said that all the staffers are new except those from Kennedy's office so it was an informational briefing. The park's water transportation issues and potential solutions were key points of discussion.

Centennial Initiative

Bruce Jacobson reported on the status of the President's Centennial Initiative. This initiative is an ambitious challenge to raise \$3B for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016. He said that it involves a \$1B increase in base funding for parks, \$1B in private donations, and \$1B in federal match of those donations. Listening Sessions were hosted to gather public comment and over 6,000 comments were received. There are several issues that have surfaced, such as what entities will receive donations, and that Congress will need to pass authorizing legislation for the initiative to be funded, but plans are moving forward. Parks were asked to submit up to five projects; Boston Harbor Islands submitted five.

Partnership 2007 Funding Priorities

The Partners discussed the draft copy 2007 funding priorities they received at the March 20, 2007 meeting of the Partnership. These priorities were developed jointly by the planning and finance committees of the Partnership. The top 20 projects were identified by using a ranking process applied to approximately 100 projects: 50 from the park's 2006 priority list, 50 submitted by DCR and 1 by the US Coast Guard. "Projects" were defined as discreet activities with a beginning and an end ("programs" are on-going activities). Projects could be programmatic or related to park facilities. There was a motion made to accept the 2007 funding priorities as presented by the finance and planning committees (attached). **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Partnership Committee Reports

The committee chairs were asked to give a summary of recent activities and future plans for endorsement by the Partnership.

Planning Committee

This past year the planning committee reviewed several major developments going on in the park, such as: art installations; Thompson Island salt marsh restoration; Harbor Park Pavilion; utility installations, and the Long Island Harbor View Camp, to ensure that projects were consistent with the park's general management plan. They also reviewed a scenic analysis that was prepared for the park. The planning committee produced the park's 10-year brochure, a summary of accomplishments since the federal park's designation in 1996.

Future plans for the committee include developing: a zoning map for wind power development; an emergency preparedness plan in conjunction with the operations committee; and a natural resource stewardship plan.

Subcommittee on Renewable Energy and Sustainable Design (SRES D)

Bill Green, volunteer lead, thanked the Partnership for their commitment to better the environment by endorsing sustainable practices. He said the subcommittee continues the education process regarding wind power; their outreach efforts will include participating in the "Easy Being Green" weekend event on Spectacle Island.

Future plans for the subcommittee include determining the carbon footprint of the park and encouraging the park to move towards becoming carbon neutral. The Partners suggested that the subcommittee prepare recommendations for 2 to 3 specific projects that included costs. The Partnership asked for a status report at the September meeting.

Karl Pastore recognized Bill for his dedication and he said that DCR will continue working to realize the initiatives. The Partners agreed that the clean energy initiatives are a timely issue, and are of interest both to the Mayor and to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

Events & Marketing Committee

Tom Powers reported that last year the marketing committee sought to achieve a huge leap in public awareness for the park. Island Alliance sought and received grant funding to assess the current marketing situation and initiate a branding campaign. He said that a review committee has been set up with members from NPS, Island Alliance, Island Alliance Board, and the Marketing committee to review proposals from consulting firms. They have narrowed the field down to two, and they hope to choose the finalist next week.

The marketing committee produced the annual park marketing brochure and modified it to include a larger map and the ferry schedule. Tom also announced Carol Thistle is the new Marketing Director for the Island Alliance.

Future plans include work on the branding initiative, and to continue working to improve visibility about park events and happenings.

Education Committee

Kelly Fellner, NPS, reported that the education committee functions as a networking opportunity for harbor educators. She said that the focus of the committee last year had been in three areas: program information, curriculum development; and program staff development. She announced that Arthur Pearson is now the chair of the committee, and that Sukey Padawer has stepped down as lead. The education committee is working with the marketing committee and NPS Harpers Ferry Design Center to develop an updated information brochure and map based on the NPS "Unigrid System" format. The committee also reviewed a concept for a "Predator or Prey" card game developed by Jessica Rykken, Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology, and youth from the Boston Environmental Ambassadors to National Parks (BEAN) program.

Kelly said that future plans for the committee include: review of the long range interpretive plan for the park as described in the park's general management plan; updating the goals and objectives that the committee developed 5 years ago; and to increase youth programming.

Arthur said that steps are already underway to increase youth programming this year. Thompson Island has developed a salt marsh restoration curriculum and they are partnering with the NPS on education programs related to the all-taxa biodiversity inventory (ATBI) and on programs for Camp Harbor View. Thompson Island and NPS are also collaborating on a major initiative to create a research and learning center on Thompson Island. A feasibility study is now underway by TDC, a nonprofit consulting and research group.

Operations Committee

Jim Scully was not present, so Susan Kane gave the report for the operations committee. She said that meetings continue to serve as a vital communication tool between partners. Topics are very broad and revolve around all aspects of park operations. This past year, there has been a focus on water transportation and improvements in communications between island and mainland staff and boats. Susan said that concessions were also a big topic; there is now a memorandum of agreement between DCR and Island Alliance that allows them to work more seamlessly. Strides were made with the use of new technologies for permitting and reservation systems. Group volunteer projects expanded in natural resource stewardship opportunities.

Future plans include continuing to use the committee for sharing information and resources and tackling the day to day issues that arise.

Finance Committee

Bruce Jacobson reported that the finance committee was not very active over the last year, outside of the work done to determine funding priorities, but that the technical subcommittee was v putting together the partnership financials for 2007.

The Partnership endorsed the activities of all committees.

Advisory Council

Claudia Smith-Reid, Co-chair, reported that the council met on June 6. She said council members discussed preparing an annual “park report card”. This report would identify issues that are important to the general public and recommend them as priorities for the Partnership. Opening Gallops Island, restoring the chapel on Peddocks, and attending to the neglected state-owned cottages were already identified as issues needing attention. They plan to work on the effort over the fall and winter and plan to report to the Partnership at the January meeting.

Claudia said that it was the sense of the council that members were not energized and need to feel more engaged. Members were encouraged to participate in partnership committees.

Claudia requested on behalf of the Advisory Council that the Island Alliance branding contractor seek input from the Advisory Council, perhaps by holding a workshop.

Claudia said that they also discussed “housekeeping issues” like membership and ferry passes. Mary Raczko, NPS, said that ferry passes and identification badges will be sent to Partners and Advisory Council next week.

Public Comment

There was an announcement that a town pier was built in Winthrop this summer.

Steve Kirk said that the *Lettie G. Howard* is in Boston. Youth sponsored by Thompson Island and NPS took a sail. He reminded all that Boston Water Bus is available to help with school trips and other water transportation needs. He said that they have just received their first delivery of biodiesel to use in their vessels.

Pat Morss, Advisory Council, said that he is working with Carrie Zeiss to plan a park visit for a national conference of architects in May 2008.

Steve Marcus, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, reminded all of the contributions that volunteers make on a daily basis, and he asked for the Partners continued support of their efforts.

Karen O'Donnell, Advisory Council, announced the planting of a traditional Native American three sister's garden (corn, beans, and squash) on Long Island. A ceremony was held for the planting and volunteers will tend to the garden. She said it was an example of making a connection and she looked forward to the harvest. Karen also suggested that composting and recycling should be done on the islands, and gave suggestions. She also stated that a composting toilet was needed on Peddocks on middle head.

LT John Korsch thanked Island Alliance for the funding to fix the temporary dock at Little Brewster. Kelly Fellner, NPS, announced that tours to Boston Light begin on Thursday.

Bruce Jacobson announced that the NPS was a recipient of a Unilever/National Park Foundation donation of recycled plastic lumber. Last week, DCR received \$22k worth of recycled lumber from the grant that will be used to build walkways and tent platforms. Volunteers are scheduled to help with the construction.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 PM.