

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
WilmerHale, 60 State Street, 26th Floor, Boston, MA
November 20, 2007, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

Attendees: Maureen Cavanaugh—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Jim Hunt—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Tom Powers—Island Alliance (IA); Antonia Pollak—City of Boston; Susan Kane and Karl Pastore—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Bruce Jacobson and Terry Savage—National Park Service (NPS); Jim Scully—Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center; Peg Wheeler—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); CDR Fred Myer—United States Coast Guard (USCG).

Jim Hunt, Vice-chair, called the meeting to order and Partners were introduced. He said Betsy Shure Gross sends her regards and hopes to be back soon; he will relay the Partners' best wishes. The minutes from the September 18 meeting were reviewed. There was a motion to accept the minutes as written. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Planning Committee Report

The Planning Committee presented a report to the Partnership regarding a proposal to reduce the park's carbon footprint and mitigate environmental costs of programming and operating the Boston Harbor Islands. Marc Fournier gave a summary of the proposal (attached). He presented a chart of the carbon footprint of the park as prepared by the subcommittee on Renewable Energy and Sustainable Design with the help of Engineers Without Borders. It is important to note Harbor Express is the park's primary vendor for water transportation, and as such make frequent trips to the islands. It was expected their emissions would be higher over the year than other boat companies that make less frequent trips.

Marc said overall impacts were not excessive, but encouraged park managers to become environmental leaders, and take further steps to reduce impacts. He gave an overview of the recommendations from the report and highlighted opportunities to use bio-diesel fuels, improve waste management systems, replace the diesel generator on Georges Island, and hire a full-time staff person for sustainability. The Partners discussed the report and the recommendations.

Jim Hunt said the City of Boston secures 12% of its electric power from wind and is expanding the use of biodiesel in city vehicles. He recommended combining Mayor Menino's Executive Order regarding climate action with the Commonwealth's Executive Order 484 when creating guidelines for the park.

A suggestion was made to structure the park guidelines as a consensus document. Peg Wheeler stated TTOR is engaged in a similar project to reduce impacts, and could not commit to the specifics in the recommendations regarding biofuel use. She said there is some evidence that biodiesel fuels could have a greater negative environmental impact than standard fuel if you factor in production. TTOR is considering alternative ways to lower emissions.

The Partners discussed an idea for visitors to pay an offset, a contribution to support responsible environmental action. There was agreement that offsetting carbon emissions is a rather complex and abstract concept, but also a good educational opportunity. Toni Pollack said the city has been involved in an online program where offset contributions go to support the planting of a tree. She said the responses have been interesting—that the more personal the

outcome, the better the response. Partners were very interested in this existing project; Jim Hunt offered to set up a meeting to discuss the evolving program and ways to include the islands. Terry Savage added that educating the public about making personal choices to reduce carbon emissions is as important as contributing money to offset emissions.

Susan Kane reported DCR is discussing what can be done about the generators on Georges Island. They hope to renovate the administration building as a visitor center, and hope to use this opportunity to improve the electric system.

Mike McGurl, Harbor Express, said their catamarans are efficient and burn 30-50% less fuel than traditional vessels. Harbor Express also handles sewage and trash in an environmentally responsible manner and uses a high grade of fuel, further reducing carbon emissions.

Operations Committee

Tom Powers said Island Alliance is working on consolidating visitor numbers for the season. He said it is a priority to get a consistent counting system for visitation. Early numbers indicate a 15% increase in ferry ridership and a significant increase in visitation to Spectacle Island. He announced that through Secretary Bowles the Commonwealth has committed \$150k in matching funds for the inter-island shuttle service.

Susan gave an update on the status of the LCM8 repair. She said that they are on track to have it operational next season. They are still interested in creating a way to share the resource.

Advisory Council

Maureen Cavanaugh said the council will next meet on December 5.

New Business

Partners gave thanks to the City of Boston for hosting a trip to Long Island to see the facilities of Camp Harborview.

Jim Scully announced the park was recognized by the NPS and was a co-winner of a universal access award for the floating docks at Grape, Bumpkin and Lovells Islands. Toni Pollak said the City of Boston Parks Division, Central Artery, and DCR received an award for environmental programs and reclamation of Spectacle Island. CDR Fred Myer reported that Boston Light received an award from the Foundation for Coast Guard History.

CDR Myers said the USCG is looking at response protocols and asked if the park was prepared for emergency situations. Jim Scully said each island owner has their own plans, and the Operations Committee was working park-wide emergency response plan. A final draft is available that focuses on communication between partners. Park representatives will participate in the USCG unified command system during harbor emergencies. Mike McGurl said Harbor Express boats would be an asset to the response plan and could move personnel or supplies.

Public Comment

Steve Marcus, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, invited all to a Seafarers Expedition that will take place on New Years Day. He said a recent Friends trip to Long Island was cancelled, and will be rescheduled for April. He reminded the Partnership that the Friends have good base of experienced people who would be interested in working on tree plantings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.