

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, 2nd Floor, Boston, MA
March 18, 2008, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

Attendees: Maureen Cavanaugh, Bill Hale and Greg Ketchen—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Jim Hunt—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Tom Powers—Island Alliance; Susan Kane and Karl Pastore—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Jim Doolin—Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT); Bruce Jacobson and Terry Savage—National Park Service (NPS); Peg Wheeler—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); Arthur Pearson—Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center.

Jim Hunt, Vice-chair, called the meeting to order and Partners were introduced. There was a motion to accept the minutes from the January 15, 2008 meeting. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Harbor Park Pavilion

Tom Powers gave an update on the Harbor Park Pavilion. He said the original concept was for a 4-season building with a visitor contact station, café, restrooms and bookstore. This design concept would have cost upwards of \$7M, while the budget was for \$3M. In addition, a feasibility study was done that indicated it would not be financially sustainable operation. A 3-season building concept was drafted, but significant questions were raised by BRA during informal discussions about the concept. Another 3-season design is in the concept stage and consists of a one-story structure that will serve as a visitor information station. The Harbor Park Pavilion still has the potential to be the first building constructed on the Greenway.

Marketing Strategy

Carol Thistle, Island Alliance Marketing Director, reported that the contract with Corey McPherson Nash (CMN) for the park branding strategy is complete. CMN delivered a branding strategy that included a design for advertising flyers, brochures, posters, and banners. Their work will be the basis of a media plan targeting tourists, Boston inner-city residents, local residents to the I-495 beltway, and recreational boaters. Carol said that advertising will be placed in a variety of publications, large and small, including El Mundo and local Chinese papers. Outlets such as local cable stations and web sites will also be utilized. Jim Hunt offered help from the City of Boston in efforts to reach out to Boston's inner-city.

Carol mentioned that the park got space in the Massachusetts Getaway guide as well as a spot on a Massachusetts Office of Tourism commercial. The park will also have a booth at the upcoming Down to Earth (D2E) event at the Hynes Convention Center.

Native American Youth Institute

Kelly Fellner, NPS, reminded all that a Native American Youth Institute was funded by NPS and held on Thompson Island last summer. Eight youth from Mashpee Wampanoag, Nipmuc Nation, and Massachusetts heritage came together for a week of workshops. These sessions were led by speakers from local Native communities. One of the speakers, Chief Earl Mills, Mashpee Wampanoag, enjoyed his time so much he stayed an extra day, and is planning an extended stay next time. The youth also learned video production techniques and documented their experiences. Kelly showed a short video clip from the week that showcased a few highlights of the week. She gave special thanks to Kristen Wyman, Island Alliance, and Dan Knapp, World Turtle Productions, for their contributions to the success of the program.

Kelly said Thompson Island was an excellent location because of its history as a meeting place for different communities. Kristen added it was an empowering experience for the youth to create their own stories, since historically their stories have been defined for them. She described it as a healing process for both Native and non-Native participants.

Kelly explained that we hope to make this a recurring event and are actively searching for funding to complete the editing process from last summer (over 20 hours of film still need editing), and to host a workshop again in the coming year. Chuck Smythe, NPS, said youth grant funding was requested through NPS, and that he was hopeful that funding will be received to continue and expand the program. Kristen mentioned the Natick Nipmuc Council has also submitted a grant request to support the program. Jim Hunt offered the City of Boston's support also.

Native American Consultation Planning

Bruce Jacobson said that the Partnership has a commitment to consult with Native Americans; the park's general management plan requires the Partnership to develop a consultation plan. Bruce defined consultation as a conversation, an on-going communication. He said that according to the general management plan, NPS will represent the Partnership in this process. Bruce explained that this communication may have different forms; it may involve a government-to-government process between the United States and federally-recognized tribes, but will not be limited to that definition. NPS is committed to consult with all traditionally-associated Native peoples, whether they are tribes, bands, organizations that represent Native interests, or individuals.

Jim Hunt asked what the first step will be. Bruce responded that a letter will be sent to gauge interest of all tribes and groups that have participated in the past. If the tribe or group wishes to stay involved, it will initiate further conversation—specifically, identifying what types of issues they are interested in and how they wish to participate.

Gary McCann, Muhheconneuk Intertribal Committee on Deer Island, introduced himself and gave a brief description of issues he had with the park's creation and consultation process. He recommended an inclusive process for a large number of tribal governments in the United States and Canada. He indicated that the Partnership's current emphasis on consultation planning seemed to be a positive step.

Wind Project Proposal

Bruce Jacobson said the Town of Hull proposed to install four wind turbines off their coast. Though this is outside the boundaries of the park, it may have visual impacts on it. Bruce said he requested for NPS to receive notifications of any federal permitting during the planning process. The Partners discussed. Jim Doolin added that Massport looked at the project and determined that turbines at the proposed location would not interfere with airport operations. Susan Kane said the proposed turbines would be much larger than the ones currently on Hull. Susan reported the Commissioner of DCR drafted a letter stating concern about the project and has also requested a visualization study from Georges, Peddocks, Bumpkin and Grape be completed.

Advisory Council

Greg Ketchen reported that the council held its annual meeting on March 5. The council got a preview of an upcoming guidebook *Discovering the Boston Harbor Islands* by Christopher Klein. Greg said the council also worked on sorting out a list of park priorities to submit to the Partnership, which he passed out in summary form. He said the council is working on ways to formally report wants to present in a way that is productive, could be an evaluation of the Partnership efforts in a "report card" format.

Greg also mentioned that the council requested more information on the proposal for a research and learning center. Bruce said that this will be a topic at a future advisory council meeting and reminded all that last fall, the NPS responded to a call for centennial projects, a research and learning center on Thompson Island was one of them. He reported that two other park projects have made the first cut of eligible 2008 projects: a \$50k all-taxa biodiversity inventory and a \$4M project to restore buildings on Peddocks Island. He cautioned all that this is just a first step; funding for 2008 centennial projects is limited and the park is competing with all parks in the national system.

New Business

Tom Powers gave an update on water transportation. He said prices will be \$14 for adults, \$10 for Seniors and \$8 for Children. The interisland shuttle will cost \$3 if visitors leave from Boston and go to camping islands. A discounted family 4-pack is still available. Improvements are planned for the year. Two new 73-passenger water shuttles will be in service. Tom said park managers are working on securing Hingham as a gateway, this will provide easier access for the southern islands. There will be a new ticketing system, they are working towards having timed tickets to improve service at peak times. The new system should also provide better statistics about usage. A large quantity of free tickets are still available for non-profit groups in July and August, requests are processed through DCR. The park is looking at other ways to offer discounts or subsidized tickets.

Public Comment

Steve Marcus, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands (FBHI), suggested installing temporary directional signs at Hingham if it will be used as a gateway. He said the entire area is a construction zone and is confusing to navigate.

Steve also announced the Friends annual meeting on April 6, and a trip to Long Island for volunteers on April 19.

Suzanne Gall Marsh, FBHI, asked for a status of camp Harbor View on Long Island, particularly about construction of a swimming pool and pier. Jim Hunt replied the beach swimming area did not work out as well as they had hoped. The currents washed away the sand, it and was too treacherous for students that were not accomplished swimmers. He said they are planning to install a swimming pool. Jim said that a pier is also under development for camp use. The city continues to monitor the Long Island Bridge for structural integrity. Suzanne suggested that use of the facility be expanded for use outside the short season of the camp and that the city and Camp Harbor View participate in the Partnership's planning and education committees.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.