

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
WilmerHale, 60 State Street, 26th Floor, Boston, MA
July 21, 2009, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

Attendees: Maureen Cavanaugh and Bill Hale—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Tom Powers—Boston Harbor Island Alliance; Jim Hunt—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Susan Kane and Karl Pastore—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Marianne Connolly for Fred Laskey; Massachusetts Water Resources Authority; Bruce Jacobson and Terry Savage—National Park Service (NPS); Peg Wheeler—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR).

Jim Hunt, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order. Jim announced that Terry Savage is retiring from the Park Service after 40 years of public service. He recognized Terry Savage's contributions to the Partnership. Jim said that Terry served on the board since its inception, has actively participated in Partnership initiatives, and will be missed.

The minutes of the May 19, 2009 meeting were approved.

New Park Website

Bruce Jacobson, Superintendent, presented a glimpse of the new Partnership website currently under development. Weber Media Partners won the bid for the redesign of bostonharborislands.org. The site will be a trip planner for park users, and will be designed as a content management site, so partner agencies will have the ability to add or change content directly. The nps.gov site will continue to be the reference site for the park.

Facility Development Updates

Harbor Park Pavilion

Bruce Jacobson reported that designs for the Harbor Park Pavilion were presented to the National Park Service Development Advisory Board and received a good review. The pavilion will be sited at Long Wharf on the Rose F. Kennedy Greenway, near the park's ferry dock, Faneuil Hall, and the Blue Line Aquarium stop. Designed as an open-air facility with an interpretive landscape, the pavilion will offer visitor information, and ticket and reservation services. The design includes interactive exhibits and solar panels to power the outdoor lighting at night and the winter months.

Funding is identified for the construction, but there are still many legal and technical hurdles to overcome. It is a complex undertaking with many stakeholders. The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority will enter into a long-term lease with the National Park Service for the property. The construction and operation will be carried out by Boston Harbor Island Alliance in cooperation with the National Park Service. The design is complete.

Georges Island

Susan Kane, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, reported on four Georges Island projects:

- Construction of a new maintenance building is scheduled for completion in mid-September.
- A generator upgrade is also underway. A consequence of this upgrade is that a by-product from the old generator has built up in the soil. The current thought is to sift through the fill, which is actually a historic trash pile, and save what is significant and move the waste to Gallops for remediation. Susan announced a new development;

she said costs to clean up Gallops Island may be less than originally thought (only \$3-4M as opposed to upwards of \$25M).

- Bids for the renovation of the mine storage building into a visitor center are due by the first week of August.
- Preliminary designs for exhibits for Georges are under review. It is hoped that designs will include indoor and outdoor interactive exhibits, new waysides to tell more of the stories and a film. Susan said to look forward to a formal presentation of the projects this fall.

Strategic Plan

Bruce Jacobson distributed copies of the draft strategic plan for the park. The plan describes strategies for the partnership to consider adopting from now until 2016. The date 2016 was chosen because it marks the 20th anniversary of the National Park, the centennial of the National Park Service, and the tercentenary of Boston Light. The plan describes the work to be done within 5 strategic themes: Education & Interpretation; Stewardship; Environmental Leadership; Recreational Experience; and Professional Excellence. The Partners invited public comment during a 45-day period that will end on September 4, 2009.

The Partners discussed and mentioned the desire to clarify financial and legislative strategies to meet these goals. Bruce reminded all that the Partnership is a federal entity and cannot lobby. He also said that because government agencies are funded on a project and annual basis, they couldn't commit funds that far into the future.

Advisory Council

Maureen Cavanaugh, Chair, reported the Advisory Council held a messaging workshop in June. She said it was a lively discussion with the goal of figuring out how the council can serve their function as "voice of the people." The next meeting of the council will be held on September 16 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

New Business

Tom Powers, President, Boston Harbor Island Alliance, said that overall ferry ridership has been down from last year at this time; generally attributed to the rainy June. The last two weekends have seen an upsurge with the return of the good weather. Georges Island had over 5,000 visitors last weekend alone.

Tara reported Island Ambassadors are working hard learning about the islands, participating in many activities, events, and citizen science programs like the habitat restoration and phenology projects.

Public Comment

Vivien Li, The Boston Harbor Association, reported they sponsored a recent trip to Georges for 80 youth. She said the youth had a wonderful time and gave kudos to the ranger staff. She did express concern about the location and condition of the restroom facilities.

Steve Marcus, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, reported the Friends are involved in many projects in this, their 30th Anniversary year. Projects include a Library Legacy project, where they donated three books about Boston Harbor Islands to many area libraries and schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.