

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
WilmerHale, 60 State Street, 26<sup>th</sup> floor, Boston, MA  
February 16, 2010, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Attendees:** Tom Powers—Boston Harbor Island Alliance (BHIA); Rich McGuinness—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Susan Kane—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Marianne Connolly for Fred Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); Bruce Jacobson—National Park Service (NPS); Jim Scully—Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC); Peg Wheeler—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR).

Bruce Jacobson, Acting Chair, welcomed all and called the meeting to order. The minutes from the November 17, 2009, meeting of the Partnership were approved.

The Nominating Committee presented their recommendations for officers: David Cash for Chair, and James Hunt for Vice-Chair. Members present approved the slate, but the election will be postponed because a quorum was not present.

### **Park Website**

Bruce Jacobson reminded all that a team of partners (Boston Harbor Island Alliance, DCR, NPS and City of Boston) were involved in upgrading the park website. Last year, the team chose the vendor, Weber Media Partners, and reviewed the site as it developed. Bruce said the upgrade was a long process, but the site is finally scheduled to go live in early March. He invited all to review the site at a test URL before it goes live. Comments can be directed to him.

### **Capital Funding Projects**

Bruce Jacobson reported the Funding Priorities ad-hoc committee met on January 12 to review capital projects for submission to a NPS funding call. The merits of 30 projects were considered within the context of each of the five themes of the Boston Harbor Islands 2016 Strategic Plan. Two projects rose above the others: Georges Island pier replacement and a cost-effective and energy-efficient water transportation system. Eighteen other projects also rated as top priorities. Projects were submitted to NPS in time to be considered. Susan Kane mentioned edits to projects can be made; changes will be seen in the next round. NPS is reviewing projects now.

### **Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion**

Bruce Jacobson and Tom Powers gave an update on the design of the Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion. It will be located on the Greenway's Parcel 14 at Long Wharf, near the end of the Marriott hotel. He said the purpose of the Pavilion is to connect downtown Boston with the Harbor Islands, to help ensure a seamless experience for visitors. He explained there will be interactive exhibits and interpretive panels about things to experience on 8 islands. The Pavilion will be an open air structure, covered by a canopy. It will contain two kiosks, one for information (staffed by rangers and volunteers) and one for ticketing and retail. A large map of the park will be in the paving. The building will be powered by solar panels on the roof. Tom said managers are exploring the possibility of connecting with the Boston Grid.

Nancy Brennan, Executive Director of the Greenway Conservancy, was introduced. She explained the Conservancy operates and maintains the entire Greenway. Nancy said she was delighted to partner with NPS and Boston Harbor Island Alliance to offer a full experience to Harbor Islands' visitors while also serving the visitors to the Greenway, North End, and other harbor attractions. She said these reciprocal benefits are what good partnering is all about.

Marianne Connolly said she understood the reasoning behind the chosen focus on 8 islands, but hopes other islands can also be included in the exhibit. She asked if there were any plans for a "phase two" of the project where Deer Island and other islands can be represented. She suggested that this could be done with a smaller series of exhibit panels. Bruce said that the

current panels are made to be interchangeable, but additional panels are not part of the existing project budget. Susan Kane agreed that the flexibility to add different islands is desirable.

### **Advisory Council**

The Advisory Council will hold its annual meeting on March 3. Marc Albert, NPS, and Heather Deschanes, New England Aquarium, are invited to speak about citizen science projects.

### **New Business**

Susan Kane reported that improvements to Georges Island continue relatively on schedule despite some setbacks; the visitor center is expected to open by the first week of July. She said DCR brought out a video production team for a site visit. The team will create a movie for the new center that will focus on harbor defense, but also include a park introduction.

Bruce Jacobson said Boston Harbor Island Alliance, DCR and NPS continue to search for funding to replace the pier on Georges Island. The pier project in total is expected to cost approximately \$23M, but will be designed so that work can be done in phases. NPS obtained \$850k for design work that is nearing completion. Susan Kane mentioned that DCR may have capital funds available this year to purchase new floats. It would be important that such a purchase fit with the new design.

### **Public Comment**

Steve Marcus, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, said they have a table at the upcoming boat show; he invited others to participate.

Bruce announced Kelly Fellner, NPS, is currently on a 60-day detail as acting Chief of Interpretation and Education at Boston National Historical Park. He also mentioned the new Superintendent, Cassius Cash started this week.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.