



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cedar Creek & Belle Grove  
National Historical Park

P.O. Box 700  
7718 ½ Main Street  
Middletown, VA 22645

(540) 868-9176 phone  
(540) 869-4527 fax

---

# Cedar Creek & Belle Grove NHP

## Park Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda

December 16, 2010  
Strasburg Town Hall  
Strasburg, Virginia

1. General Introductions
2. Review of Minutes from September 16, 2010 and June 17, 2010
3. Updates and Status Reports  
General Management Plan  
New Positions  
Office Move
4. Presentation and discussion: Shannon Kettering, ASLA, AICP: *Interim Interpretive Plan for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP*
5. Old Business
6. Business

*Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park  
Federal Advisory Commission Meeting*

September 16, 2010

Warren County Government Center  
Front Royal, Virginia

- I) General Introductions
- II) Review of Minutes from June 17, 2010
- III) Updates and Status Reports
  - General Management Plan
  - Status of Commission nominations
  - New Positions
  - Interpretive Program
- IV) Presentation and discussion: Shannon Kettering, ASLA, AICP: *Interim Interpretive Plan for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP*
- V) Old Business
- VI) New Business

Meeting Notes

Commission members in attendance: Diann Jacox, Designated Federal Official (DFO); John Adamson, Belle Grove; Fred Andreae, National Trust; Mary Bowser, private landowner; Patrick Farris, Warren County, chair; Stanley M. Hirschberg, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation; Eric Lawrence, Frederick County; Sarah Mauck, Strasburg; Elizabeth McClung, Belle Grove; Nick Picerno, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation; and Pam Sheets, Shenandoah County

Commission members absent: Carl Bernhards, Middletown; Rob Nieweg, National Trust; Jim Smalls, U.S. Forest Service

Others in attendance: Joanne Blaco, NPS Northeast Regional Office; Eric Campbell, NPS; Fay Goolrich, ECOS Environmental Design; Bob Grogg, NPS volunteer; Terry Heder, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation; Shannon Kettering, ECOS Environmental Design; Rick Redmond, Strasburg; Peggy Scherbaum, NPS, Harpers

Ferry Center; Russ Smith, NPS, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP; and Elizabeth Stern, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.

Chair Patrick Farris opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Names and affiliations were provided by everyone in the room. Without a quorum present, the meeting notes could not be approved and were held over until the December meeting for action. Diann Jacox announced that the GMP is at the printer and will be available later in the fall. She also announced that six new commissions members have been appointed, three have been reappointed, and three more nominations remain to be made.

For the Administrative Support Assistant position Jacox reported that there were 209 applications; she is ready to offer the position to one of the applicants. For the Facilities Operations Specialist position, there were 89 applications and she will begin interviews next week.

Eric Campbell reported on this past summer's interpretive programs. Approximately 103 programs were offered; visitors showed up at 76. Learning what worked and what did not work in the operation of the programs has been an ongoing activity. For instance, the staff learned that Sunday morning programs were a failure. Most people did not know that the park exists. Several commission members expressed their appreciation and approval of the programs. "We have put markers on the ground and will grow from here," was a sentiment that everyone agreed with.

The bulk of the meeting was taken up with a presentation and discussion led by Shannon Kettering and Faye Goolrick of ECOS Environmental Design, contractors hired by Harpers Ferry Center to prepare an interim Interpretive plan for the park. They described the process and told how making connections between the park—the resource—and the public would engage visitors and ultimately build a sense of stewardship for all who come to know the park. The GMP is a very sound foundation on which to build this effort.

The discussion began by exploring the opportunities and the challenges that introducing interpretive programs provides. They are:

- Trails
- Orientation
- Mix of public and private land and endeavors
- Digital information; using technology
- Branding and integration of individual sites into a whole
- Protection of water and trails, and promoting wildlife education
- Fractured landscape and roles for each partners
- Are partner and NPS identities important to visitors?
- Finding the right mix of identities for park and partners
- Partners: one place or six places?
- Changes outside the park boundaries—quarry, I-81 expansion, development
- Finding the newest and most relevant history and making it part of the program

- Archeology
- Lack of park infrastructure—road system
- Connect the story of Cedar Creek to those at other nearby sites in the northern Shenandoah Valley
- Take advantage of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War
- Attract visitors year round
- Visitor Center
- Partners need to be coached on financial opportunities with the NPS (This item was moved to the parking lot.)

Next the commission members looked at the themes developed and agreed upon in the GMP, fleshing them out and providing supporting ideas.

- A fertile land
- Transportation
- American Indians and early European settlers
- Colonial era
- Antebellum society
- Military
- Political
- Post-Civil War
- Geography—this is one of the key elements, both the north-south orientation of the valley along with the limestone geology and its influence on agriculture, building style, etc.
- Colonial land grants and the encouragement of settlement
- True “specialness” of the Shenandoah Valley is key to NPS programs

The discussion moved on to think about (1) the actual physical places for interpretation and (2) what the most outstanding things park visitors can do.

- Families can interact together
- Walk in the footsteps—the battle happened on this very land
- Re-enactments
- Another place in time
- Understand the size of a battlefield
- To see oneself in the story
- To see or handle artifacts—employ the senses
- To understand the human dimension
- Make people feel “rewarded”

What are the challenges and opportunities to the implementation of the plan, once completed.

- Land preservation in the face of ongoing development
- Land ownership
- Making the various landowners and partners into one park
- Recognizing all local and grassroots efforts, not just those of the NPS
- Nonprofits are self-supporting and dependent on raising funds. How do partners survive under these conditions?
- As the NPS confronts a new century, should this model—a partnership park—be promoted to the public?
- All activities should be planned together. No single partner wants to read about another partner's programs in the newspaper for the first time.
- Overcome the branding problems
- Interpretation has to be available at all times of the day and wherever visitors want it.

### Old Business

None

### New Business

The finals of the national sheep dog trails will take place this coming weekend at Belle Grove.

October 2, 2010, marks the tenth anniversary of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.

The next meeting will be held in the Strasburg town Hall at 8:30 a.m., December 16, 2010.

Chair Patrick Farris adjourned the meeting at 11: 35 a.m.