

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

July 19, 2007

Middletown Town Hall
Middletown, Virginia

Agenda

- I) General Introduction
- II) Review and Approval of meeting notes from May 18, 2007
- III) GMP Status Update
- IV) Presentation on Battlefield Archeology, *Kristen McMasters, American Battlefield Protection Program*
- V) Presentation on Sensitive Natural Resources, *Chris Stubbs, NPS*
- VI) Facilitated Discussion on GMP Zones, *Chris Stubbs, NPS*
- VII) Old Business
- VIII) New Business
- IX) Next Annual Cycle of Meetings: decision on frequency, time, and location
- X) Election of Commission Chair to be held at next meeting
- XI) Next Meeting—September 20, 2007, Warren County Government Center

Meeting Notes

Commission members in attendance: Diann Jacox, Designated Federal Official (DFO); Fred Andreae; Mary Bowser, chair; Gene Dicks; Howard Kittell; Elizabeth McClung; Gary Rinkerman; Jim Smalls; Dan Stickley; and Kris Tierney.

Commission members absent: Roy Downey, Patrick Farris, Randy Jones.

Others in attendance: Suzanne Chilson, Executive Director, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation; Butch Fravel, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation; Bob Grogg, NPS volunteer; Wendy Hamilton, Preserve Frederick; Drew Houff, *Winchester Star*; Kristen McMasters, NPS; Sarah Mauck, Strasburg; Linwood Outlaw III, *Northern Virginia Daily*; Steve Shipe; Chris Stubbs, NPS.

Chair Mary Bowser conducted the meeting.

The notes from the May 18, 2007, meeting were reviewed and approved.

Chris Stubbs reported he was been working with the core planning team and with consultants to produce the General Management Plan draft. Since the last Advisory Commission meeting he and Diann Jacox have met with the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation board on June 7, 2007, and had two meetings with the Key Partners on June 13 and July 9, 2007.

Diann Jacox introduced Kristen McMasters of the American Battlefield Protection Program, an external arm of the National Park Service. Ms. McMasters spoke for approximately 30 minutes and detailed how the Program helps federal, state, and local government identify, inventory, and protect battlefields within the United States. She spoke at length about battlefield archeology and protection.

Chris Stubbs began a report on sensitive natural resources with a quick overview of the park and the GMP process. He detailed the number of meetings that the NPS has had with local governments, the Advisory Commission, and the Key Partners. He also presented the amount of federal funds that the Key Partners have received over the years from the National Park Service for land acquisition: Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation--\$398,000; National Trust for Historic Preservation--\$250,000; and Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation--\$1,000,000.

The presentation on sensitive resources moved seamlessly into the discussion of the Management Zones. Chris Stubbs reminded everyone that the zones are a park planning tool; they provide direction and vision for how lands owned or purchased by the NPS or the Key Partners should be managed. The six zones were developed in January 2007 and have been refined with input from the Commission and the Key Partners since that time. Stubbs passed out two letters from state officials detailing what their inventory of lands within the park boundary have shown. Shenandoah University has found stretches of Central Appalachian shale barrens on the lands owned by Shenandoah County and is working with both the County and the National Park Service to protect these areas.

Most of the discussion centered on the Bayliss Tract owned by the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation. This piece of land contains 0.7 mile of Civil War earthworks, interpretive signage, and fairly rare forest types as studied by both Shenandoah University and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation expressed concern that the sensitive resource zone may somehow hinder future use of the land for conducting battle reenactments and other similar activities.

The question was asked if a term other than “zone” could be used. This term can sometimes be misunderstood, attracting negative feelings with some property rights advocates. The term “zone”, however, is a concept that the National Park Service uses throughout the system. It is important to ensure that users understand the description and definition of the term and the zone prescriptions.

Commission members briefly talked about the Large Events Zone. By having such a zone is the park opening itself to a situation where any event could be hosted whether or not it is in keeping with the park purposes and interpretive themes? Again, the discussion returned to the need for detailed zone prescriptions to help guide appropriate events, management, and activities.

New Business

Belle Grove will be celebrating its Fortieth Anniversary as a National Trust site August 13, 2007.

A new cycle of meetings begins September 1, 2007, the third year of the Advisory Commission's existence. Commission members voted to meet four times over the next annual meeting cycle rather than every other month. This next year's meetings will be:

September 20—Front Royal

December 13—Strasburg

March 20—Middletown

June 19—Front Royal

Mary Bowser is not eligible to continue as Commission chair. Nominations for a new chair should be sent to Chris Stubbs via email or telephone by August 15.

The next meeting will be September 20, 2007 in the Warren County Government Center.

Chair Mary Bowser adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Handouts provided at the July 19, 2007, meeting

1. Meeting agenda
2. Minutes from the May 18, 2007, meeting
3. GMP status update
4. Letter from Amy Martin, Nongame and Environmental Programs, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
5. Letter from René Hypes, Project Review Coordinator, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation