

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

June 19, 2008

Warren County Government Center
Front Royal, Virginia

Agenda

- I) General Introduction
- II) Review and Approval of Minutes of March 20, 2008, meeting
- III) Discussion of next annual meeting cycle—Where? When? How often?
- IV) Invited speaker, Dr. Woodward Bousquet, Shenandoah university—*Ecological Investigations in Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park*
- V) Park Web Site, www.nps.gov/cebe
- VI) Discussion of Internal Draft GMP
 - A) Report from subcommittee
 - B) Major discussion topics raised by subcommittee
 - Park friends group
 - Visitor center criteria
 - Large events zone
 - Strengthen NPS role as coordinator among Key Partners
 - Other topics
- VII) Old Business
- VIII) New Business
- IX) Next Meeting

Meeting Notes

Commission members in attendance: Diann Jacox, DFO; Fred Andreae; Mary Bowser; Patrick Farris; Randy Jones; Howard Kittell; Sarah Mauck; Elizabeth McClung; Gary Rinkerman; Pam Sheets; Dan Stickley.

Commission members absent: Gene Dicks, Roy Downey, Jim Smalls, Kris Tierney.

Others in attendance: Woodward Bousquet, Shenandoah University; Butch Fravel, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation; Bob Grogg, NPS volunteer; Drew Houff, *Winchester Star*; Rick Redmond, Strasburg Town Council; Chris Stubbs, NPS; Sally Voth, *Northern Virginia Daily*.

In the absence of Kris Tierney, Commission chair, Randy Jones, as vice-chair, conducted the meeting.

The meeting minutes from March 20, 2008, were approved as written.

Commission members discussed both the frequency and timing of meetings for the coming year, and how ad hoc meetings and subcommittee meeting could take place. A consensus was arrived at for continuing the meetings on a quarterly basis and to meet on the third Thursday of each quarter.

The meeting dates and locations will be:

September 18, 2008	Strasburg town hall
December 18, 2008	Middletown town hall
March 19, 2009	Warren County government center
June 18, 2009	Strasburg town hall

Prof. Woody Bousquet of Shenandoah University described the research that he and his students have been doing in the park area since 1994. He began by describing the methodologies, documentation of the research work, and moved on to make some specific statements about the merits of the environment under study. He talked, among other things, about the undisturbed upland forest areas, a rarity in today's Shenandoah Valley, and about the wood turtle population in Cedar Creek, one of only two watersheds within the state with such a significant population.

Bousquet recommended that the National Park Service and its key partners recognize the value of these areas and eliminate, where possible, any disturbances such as mowing and grazing, confine visitor traffic to trails, and establish riparian buffers. He also stressed the educational worth of these properties.

Planner Chris Stubbs noted that Bousquet's findings have been incorporated into the draft General Management Plan (GMP).

Subcommittee Report

Howard Kittell led the presentation by the subcommittee (Mary Bowser, Randy Jones, Howard Kittell, Elizabeth McClung, and Gary Rinkerman) established to review the internal draft GMP representing the entire board. First and foremost the subcommittee stated that they felt the GMP to be excellent. A compilation of all comments—typographical errors, suggested word changes, and various small items—will be forthcoming from Howard Kittell. Jones stressed that the Commission would need to be ready to submit full and public comments once the GMP is released to the public.

The subcommittee felt that they needed more time to come to a consensus on several items (e.g., a friends group, the visitor center, large events zone). The subcommittee also wanted as much clarity as possible on articulating the NPS role as it relates to the partners and across all the alternatives. Some visual representation of how all are related might be of help.

Old Business

None

New Business

As acting chair Randy Jones raised the issue of the tensions among the key partners that have arisen over the Chemstone quarry rezoning. He said that it should be part of the record that none of the tensions currently existing between Belle Grove, Inc., and the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation have ever been discussed, voted upon, or formally considered by the Park Advisory Commission. Diann Jacox reported that she is seeking a facilitator who can work to resolve the differences so that the key partners can continue their positive, collaborative relationship. [Note: that facilitated session will take place on September 22, 2008.]

Patrick Farris reported on new exhibits for the Warren Heritage Society.

The town of Strasburg is working on a new historic district ordinance.

On July 12, 2008, the SVBF will make an announcement on a major land acquisition. [Note: at the referenced press conference the SVBF announced that it had purchased the 189-acre Hudson tract within the park boundary.]

On July 9, 2008, the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the Civil War staff will meet for a planning session.

The next Park Advisory Commission meeting will be at the Strasburg town hall, September 18, 2008.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Handouts

None