

**FORT HANCOCK 21st CENTURY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING #32  
March 29, 2019**

<p>Agenda Items for Next Meeting:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict of Interest Statement/Policy</li> <li>• Regularly scheduled opportunity for dialog with Lessees/LOI Holders at each FACA meeting – 30 minute minimum. Prior to Public Comment.</li> </ul>
<p>Action Items for Next Meeting:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Open Items</b> - Create a list of ongoing action items resulting from recommendations and actions resulting from meetings.</li> <li>• <b>Conflict of Interest Statement/Policy</b> – Committee members have agreed to prepare a draft for the next meeting.</li> <li>• <b>Grant Funding</b> – NPS to determine whether DOI grant funding is available for LOI Holders/Lessees, such as Save America’s Treasures grants. NPS will also look into NJ Historic Trust grants. <b>Historic Tax Credit Application Question</b> - NPS will confirm whether Historic Tax Credits may be sought for an income producing property if the LOI Holder/Lessee occupies a residential unit of the property.</li> </ul>
<p>Committee Recommendations - ADOPTED:</p>	<p>The Committee fully supports and recommends accelerated implementation, of Gateway’s effort to engage in pilot projects such as structural assessments and roof repairs. Members noted that this effort is fully consistent with committee recommendations adopted at its December 2018 meeting. Those earlier recommendations called for park leadership to formally designate Fort Hancock as a pilot site for exploring ways (authorities, policies, and resources) to facilitate more streamlined and administratively efficient leasing processes at Fort Hancock that could serve as a model for using leasing to address national deferred maintenance backlogs. The pilot efforts described at the March 29, 2019 Federal Advisory Committee meeting are an important component of a larger recommendation for a Fort Hancock pilot initiative. As Gateway moves forward with the pilot program, the Committee asks that it underscore the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The intent of the effort is to foster rehabilitation and reuse;</li> <li>2. We are excited to see the new money available for repair and rehabilitation. However, the park does not have the necessary staff to support contracting and on site management. Allocations of staff to support this work are essential for successful obligation of the funds and execution of the work.</li> <li>3. Explore the potential for lessees/NPS to access grant funding (Sandy Hook Foundation and other Partners, Save America’s</li> </ol>

Treasures, State of NJ Grants) to support redevelopment and improve the financial feasibility of reuse;

4. Explore opportunities for NPS to invest its resources in more effective ways to improve project cost effectiveness. These may include:
  - Investing money in building rehabilitation
  - Providing materials in bulk (e.g. yellow bricks)
  - Making funding available to lease holders to close budget gaps

Attendees:

NPS: Jennifer T. Nersesian, GATE Superintendent and Designated Federal Officer (DFO); Karen Edelman, GATE Business Services; Daphne Yun, GATE Public Affairs; Patricia Rafferty, GATE Chief of Resources; Marilou Erhler, GATE Chief of Cultural Resources; Pete McCarthy, Sandy Hook Unit Manager.

Bennett Brooks, Facilitator

Advisory Committee Members: Shawn Welch, Committee co-chair, Michael Walsh, Kate Stevenson, Dan Saunders, Mike Holenstien, Tony Mercantante, Lillian Burry, Patrick Collum, Michael Holenstien, Dr. Howard Parish

Other guests/attendees: Kevin Settembrino, Municipal Official from Middletown Township; Congressman Pallone's District Representative, Dawn M. Rebscher; and Letter of Intent Holders/Lessees Barney Sheridan, Dan Ferrise, Brian Samuelson.

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Welcome from Shawn Welch
- Agenda Review. Agenda includes
  - Creating time for Dialogue between LOI Holders/Lessees
  - Revisiting recommendations from last meeting – comments on minutes from Committee Members
  - Recommendations from last meeting:
    - Request to Washington NPS leadership
      - Fort Hancock Leasing Program be designated as a Pilot
      - Delegate Leasing Initiatives to Commissioner
      - Committee take action to ensure that new budgetary considerations be implemented in a fashion that allows for use of resources and staff. Additional recommendation from Committee for NPS staff support
      - Encourage greater interest in these structures and prioritize NPS investment in these structures.
      - Designate a single Point of Contact (POC) for LOI Holders/Lessees, currently the Sandy Hook Unit Coordinator. Note: NPS is in the process of working to hire additional staff and move in that direction.
    - Review/Reissue a conflict of interest policy as discussed in the last meeting.

- Superintendent's Updates and Announcements:
  - Upcoming events: WWII Harbor Defense Lantern Tour May 17 at 6:30 PM starting at Fort Hancock museum, Ocean Fun Days/Coast Defense Days Hosted by NJ SeaGrant Consortium, NPS and Army Ground Forces Association (AGFA) on 19 May from 11AM to 3PM at Fort Hancock.
  - The Sandy Hook Foundation, our park partner, has signed a new Partnership Project Agreement (PPA). The PPA expands the types of fundraising and projects we can undertake together. Betsey Barrett has stepped down as President and has been succeeded by Pat Alcaro.
  - The John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/116/s47>) is now law. This Public Lands Package contains provisions specific to GATE. It provides broad authority to work with US Army Corps of Engineers on flood control measures. This legislation gives us the authority to move ahead with changes in our relationship with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the State of New Jersey for use of the Marine Science Building and Laboratory at Fort Hancock. The State of New Jersey will turn the Laboratory over to NOAA, the current occupant. NOAA is also the occupant of Fort Hancock building #74 which they will eventually vacate. NOAA will consolidate its operations into the Marine Lab, and the State will turn the building over to the NPS. Building #74 is historic and requires some rehabilitation work which the State must undertake before it returns the building to GATE. The State has agreed to turn the building over to the NPS in acceptable condition as per their legal obligations. Timeline is expected to take 2 – 3 years. It will come back into NPS inventory, at which time, NPS will address planned use of the building.
  - The Sandy Hook Chapel floor is being replaced.
  - Building 102 rehabilitation for seasonal housing is complete. This was a Superstorm Sandy Recovery Project. Gateway has accepted the project and is going through the final checklist. It will house approx. 38 employees.
  - Buildings 119 and 120, which are slated for demolition, are the subject of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with State. The required public comment period has recently closed. The Park funded the Building 102 rehabilitation and used that structure for housing that used to be accommodated in Buildings 119 and 120, which were in very bad shape post-Superstorm Sandy and are in an extremely vulnerable location to future storm events.
  - The contract for demolition of Beach Center D is in place. The park hopes to undertake this project in the next few months.
  - The Fort Hancock Theater is back on the docket as a Superstorm Sandy Recovery Program funded project. The Park is in the process of finalizing the contracting package for rehabilitation of the structure.
  - Draft construction drawings are underway for Buildings 23 and 24. Building 23 (and Building 56) is the subject of our partnership with Monmouth County. According to Lillian Burry, funding for the Building 23 and 56 project is secure in the county's capital budget.
  - The repairs to the potable water treatment plant roof are underway.

- Construction is still underway for the new maintenance facility. The \$14 MM project includes historic rehabilitation of a number of buildings and is expected to be complete in July.
- The Sandy Hook Ferry Barge has been repainted. Gangway is back.
- The Guardian Park restroom (the former post “morgue”) project is in contracting and expected to be awarded this fiscal year
- The Park continues to move forward with SHF on rehab of Nike Barracks for group camping. This project is funded in part with recreation fees, Helium Act Funding, and funds provided by SHF.
- Drone flights are underway at Sandy Hook. Drones are generally prohibited in National Parks but we got approval from the Washington office for limited drone use for administrative purposes and assessments where it is not safe to enter those buildings, such as Building 23 and other Officers Row Buildings.
- First Ospreys and Plovers sighted at Fort Hancock.
  - Patti Rafferty (Resources Chief, GATE): Osprey Nesting season has begun (March 15 – September 1). Committee members have expressed concern about impacts/delays this may cause to rehabilitation efforts. NPS explains its legal obligations for managing natural and cultural resources and the requirement to honor its mission and legal mandates. Explanation from Patty Rafferty, Chief Division of Resource Management: If NPS observes nesting activity, we have a biologist come out and observe the birds. Typically, a 200- 500 foot radius around the nest is necessary to avoid disturbance. Adjustments are made based on the tolerance of the birds. Outside work can probably be done by mid-summer after young have fledged. Nests can be removed from 9/2 – 3/14 without any prohibition. NPS is proposing chimney cap structures to deter nesting during the March – September season. One method we considered is a gabled top on each chimney but our chimneys are large and this is not an insignificant cost. Birds do not typically nest on structures on which there is construction.
  - Shawn Welch, Co-Chair, raised concerns about disruptions to our construction at Bldgs #23 and #56 if the birds return and nest on Bldg #23. A discussion ensued on laws and policies guiding decisions in a national park on the management of birds, the role of wildlife management within the NPS mission, and the need for balancing these with the agency’s cultural resource management imperatives and operational needs.
- Leasing Update – Presentation to be posted on FACA website.
- Superintendent’s Discussion on Pilot Programs at GATE:
  - The park submitted the Committee’s recommendations to DOI to adopt Fort Hancock as a pilot for testing leasing strategies. The Washington headquarters office concurred with Committee’s recommendation.

- In past meetings we discussed the efforts we are making to rehabilitate Building 7 and use that as the model for rehabilitation of other structures at Fort Hancock. We addressed some of the challenges presented in terms of costs and sustainability and subsequently considered shifting funds allocated to using Building 7 as the model towards other Officers Row (OR) buildings. The larger buildings, and those that lend themselves to commercial operations, have received a considerable amount of interest and are subject to LOIs. The OR buildings have been challenging. We are seeing that the cost of rehabilitation when considered against the proposed use does not allow for the same Return on Investment that proposed Lessees are identifying in connection with the use of larger or other structures.
- NPS has considered making investments in the Officer's Row buildings in hopes that might change the equation of the investment a Lessee would have to make. In support of such efforts:
  - NPS will move funds slated for Building 7 into the other Officer's Row buildings.
  - NPS will secure Condition Assessments (CAs) under a Washington HQ contract. The CAs are different from those typically undertaken by NPS. This will be a pilot program undertaken on our behalf by Booz, Allen, Hamilton (BAH). It will include a SOW and cost estimate for all roofs on OR, so hopefully, by fall, we will have a contract ready to go. BAH will then undertake an investment vs leaseability analysis so NPS can address the specifics of the investments required for each OR building to make it leasable. The outcome should help NPS produce better information that can help guide lessees so they know what to expect when they come to the table, perhaps simplify the process - employing new methods and technologies and coming out of it with new analytics and materials.
    - In response to questions and comments from the Committee:
      - The Conditions Assessments will not result in the demolition of any Officer's Row buildings
      - Comment: The consultants will look at the cost benefit analysis – there is no analysis that will show preserving those buildings is financially viable. So be prepared to hear there is not cost benefit analysis. Response: NPS has convened a stakeholder group from around the agency, brought in partners to inform that discussion, addressed leasing pain points around the agency, and is moving forward with implementation of easing the process. Of course, if you look strictly at the numbers, none of this pencils out, for us, this goes well beyond the numbers and is at the heart of the mission.
      - Comment: Spending on buildings will suit us better than spending on consultants. This Pilot Program will help tell us where we have to put NPS funding so that we maximize what we have. Response: NPS cannot undertake repair until we have a Scope of Work. Washington HQ is going to share costs for the CAs. If we are still not at the point after the CAs to determine that this is sufficient to

allow for financial investment or whether it is not enough. We need to know this. The window for the CAs is May 2019.

- In response to a comment, NPS will reach out to determine whether information gathered from one or two OR buildings is enough to identify a SOW for all.
  - Comment: Replacing the roofs is the best course of action if you are trying to preserve the buildings. It would make sense for us to consider varying expectations and disparity of cost vs benefit and possible amount of investment from USA. If these efforts fail it is not because it is not financially feasible but because it is difficult to navigate the process.
  - Comment: If the analysis comes back and says that even with a roof on Officer's Row buildings, it won't be financially feasible, why would be put a roof on that building. Response: Without a roof, the rest of the building deteriorates faster.
  - Comment: NPS has an obligation to preserve historic structures. Regardless of cost effectiveness.
- Funding is in place to address replacing roofs. How many roofs can be covered under available funding will be determined once the condition assessments and cost estimates are done.
  - NPS will have to reissue or amend the current Request for Proposals to reflect the change in condition circumstances.
  - The methods used to complete the Condition Assessments under this Pilot Program include digital and other new technologies NPS has never used before. This will allow NPS to obtain data more quickly than NPS has been able to do so in the past. The ability to get the Condition Assessments and have the data back and issue a contract all within the same fiscal year is being done at a speed that is not typical in NPS.
  - It is anticipated the CAs will identify other work that needs to be done to the buildings, perhaps that will open a new method of funding.
- LOI/Lease Holder Update - Shawn Welch Committee Co-Chair
    - Recommendations made as a result of discussion during the last FACA meeting with LOI Holders/Lessees included the following discussion topics: A global tax credit application, standing cooperator meetings, and a forum for LOI Holders/Lessees to discuss ongoing concerns and considerations. Today is the first of these efforts to address Lessee concerns in this forum. Questions to shape the conversation and facilitate productive results include the following:
      - **Describe your experience on the historic tax credits program. What makes it work? Impediments?**
      - **What is a productive way to have discussions between Lessees and GATE? Is it here? Is it offline?**
      - **What else is on your mind?**

Discussions between LOI Holders/Lessees and GATE:

Dan Ferrise/Building #52 Lessee: OR is critical to the success of the project and leveling the playing field is how you will get investors. Having someone analyses the buildings is analysis by paralysis. The market should dictate what those numbers are. Just like FMVR, where what someone is willing to pay for the rent or use is what the market really dictates. To bring someone in to analyze the buildings, what is the use, everyone knows those are buildings are in poor shape. Getting one building done is critical to getting people to go in. Some of the buildings have the third floor on the first floor. Getting people to see the buildings in rehabbed form is a way to success. Is there a way the government can say here is the necessary level of investment on building X, and the government will allocate the remaining funds? Is this a necessary process?

NPS Response: These are valuable observations and we are thinking about them too. We have to go through some kind of process in order to move ahead. We need more information to develop the scope of work. There is no way we could do this on the ground as quickly as anticipated under this pilot. We fight against time every day. In terms of roofs or something else the building needs – if the Condition Assessment identifies the roof as ok but shows some other issue requires immediate funds/attention, we may have room to reallocate funding/pivot. In terms of building visibility and getting building done to show the public, that was our thinking with Building 7. It would be the example for preservation of character defining features, use of drawings for other lessees, etc. We continue to work on building 7. We hoped to incorporate a number of sustainability features. The project is so much more expensive and slow for NPS as compared to the private market that it would be hard to justify a responsible expenditure of funds and would not serve as a good example of a model house.

We are looking at mechanisms to incentivize rehabilitation. Could we contribute towards a Lessee's costs? Undertake a bulk purchase of custom bricks? Undertake joint projects? The legal mechanisms and pathways for doing so either do not exist or are not clear at this time and that prevents us from undertaking the kind of projects and joint efforts we wish to engage in. The national conversation that is now underway is going to make a big difference in how we do that.

The mechanisms are clumsy. We cannot simply undertake work on behalf of potential lessees. The current RFP does not anticipate investments by NPS and in order to allow for such investment, the current Lessee would have to withdraw, NPS would have to contract for that work, and then select from among applicants interested in the opportunity with a revised description which allows for NPS investment.

Brian Samuelson/Building 21 Lessee: It is to everyone's credit that this is moving along but there are a lot obstacles. One of those obstacles is having boots on the ground locally at FOHA showing the buildings and being more accessible. Also, there is not

enough advertising of this program. I do what I can to promote Fort Hancock but we need more horsepower.

Comment from the Committee: Approvals are not just based on physical condition of the building but on how much historic fabric is left. That is going to impact the cost to the Applicant. For example, if the third floor is on the first floor, SHPO is not necessarily going to require a restoration of the third floor as it was.

Comment from the Committee: Different types of Grants are available for projects such as these. We should consider Challenge Cost Share Grants, Save America's Treasure's Grant (but verify whether those are available for buildings owned by NPS. Additionally, the State of NJ now has a new round of NJ Historic Trust grant funds available.

Comment from the Committee: : Consider whether there is a way to issue grant funding to park partners which allows the partner to contract the job, and spend the funds in accordance with some agreement. Municipalities often benefit from such arrangements. This allows Middletown Township to address more efficient ways to accomplish an outcome. Could NPS pursue similar methods of providing funds for related projects?

Dan Ferrise: From financing perspective, these projects are very difficult to finance. Brian Samuelson: I did it with a Home Equity Line of Credit. There was a mortgage representative at FACA approximately one year ago. After subsequent discussion, I could not get a better deal out of him.

Comment from Committee Member: Leasehold estates can be financed. Half the commercial sites you pass every day are on pad sites that are leased.

Dan Ferrise: These projects are self-funded. You put the money up front you are expecting rate of return. I look at what I think my occupancy rate will be, what I think I can get a night, and I look at what I think I will get back. If I want a 10% return in 10 years, everything else is icing on the cake. You assess a level risk in your investment and strategy. So based on what you are expecting, the investment kicks in after the first ten years.

Question from Committee Member: How do you rate the difficulty of the financing vs the difficulty of the approvals? Has it gotten easier?

Dan Ferrise: We come to the meetings and there have been a lot of adjustments to the program that have been made since we started. Hopefully the process gets easier for the people that come after us.

Barney Sheridan/LOI Holder Building #53: Fort Hancock not easily accessible, it is lonely, it is a certain type of person to live there. I am trying to get open soon but I am in this

for 22 months. I just want to use the building. The business only lasts as good as the person running it. If I go broke in the first year, NPS has a building that they can go use right away. My A&Es are making a fortune off me. It is a lifestyle that people are looking for. We just need to get one building up and running and we can have success. We need to move out of our own way. Barney just wants to open a restaurant. If it the business opportunity does not work, NPS can use that building to hold meetings.

Additionally, once you get going, you have all these entities to address such as NPS Health, Middletown Township requirements, Permits – you have to deal with the federal government on a number of levels but then have to deal with State/local considerations.

NPS Comment: Health standards apply to operations serving food and are managed by NPS. Building Permits are issued by Middletown Township upon NPS approval of the project.

Historic Tax Credits. The Committee asks what works, what could be improved, where did the process break down, and what could have made the process easier?

Dan Ferrise: Part of it was the government shut down and the subsequent tax credit point of contact who went on maternity leave. The process is cumbersome but otherwise straight forward. For the first building, I drew up plans and submitted the package for tax credits. For the second building (Building 36), I engaged NPS (historical architect) up front and submitted the initial drawings to the park first. SHPO will look the initial drawings over and issue preliminary comments. Coordinating with SHPO before you complete your final Construction Drawings, which are required for tax credits, you engage everyone in the chain on the preliminary reviews.

Also, the reason I turned back Building #80 (for which Dan Ferrise holds an LOI) is because the costs for Building 36 are going to be twice what was anticipated.

NPS Comments: The park's Division of Resource Management has been meeting with Tax Credit folks in DC to try to streamline the tax credit process. In any case, SHPO is the first line of review and so we flag the intention to seek tax credits for them right away. We raise any red flags early in the process and engage with SHPO for Section 106 review and tax credit review at the same time. The park is working to streamline the part 1 of the tax credit application for each application. We are unable to submit a one "blanket" Part 1 of the Historic Tax Credit Application because all the buildings are different. For Part 2 of the Application, NPS does not require full blown drawings; annotated drawings are fine. Part 3 of the Application requires full blown Construction Drawings. All submissions must go to SHPO before they can proceed through the remainder of the Tax Credit Application review process.

- **Summary/Conclusion:**

- Are there grants or partnership-based funding opportunities that will benefit the NPS or the LOI/Holders Lessees in the cost and/or effort to rehabilitate the buildings?
  - How can NPS make investments which are most effective and take place in real time?
  - Information about the LOI Holders/Lessees experience with the Historic Tax Credit Application should be shared so that proposed applicants can know the level of involvement and investment required in connection with these structures.
- Public Comment @ 11:30 – No commenters  
Commenters will be called in the order they sign up • Commenters will be given three (3) to five (5) minutes to speak, based on how many people sign up • Commenters should address the Committee as a whole & speak to issues within the Committee’s scope • At the discretion of the Committee and only if the commenter is willing, Committee members may ask clarifying questions
  - Continuation of LOI Holder Update Discussion:  
Committee Comment: Regarding the “complexity” of the Historic Tax Credit Application, the Washington staff is used to dealing with developers. Developers are typically sophisticated and as a result of the benefits afforded by the tax program, the Washington staff feels those developers should do a thorough job submitting the materials necessary for tax credits. Committee member acknowledges the amount of time and effort required in connection with the Historic Tax Credit Application.  
GATE Superintendent Jennifer Nersesian: The Director of the Historic Tax Credit Application Head recently toured Sandy Hook in order to gain a true perspective of what it takes to move this along. The program manager is engaged and we will strive to keep them engaged.

Productive discussions between LOI Holders/Lessees and GATE: What is the best way to manage any issues? Is it opening the dialogue at this meeting? Is it to discuss with park staff one on one?

- Open dialogue at public meetings (dedicated time for dialogue – outside of public comment).
- Monthly meetings between NPS and LOI Holders/Lessees
- Kickoff meetings between LOI Holders/Lessees, the NPS Historic Architect, and possibly Middletown Permitting Officials
- Meetings between experienced LOI Holders/Lessees and new LOI Holders who can benefit from lessons learned and in order to make it easy for the next round of successful applicants to succeed.

Historic Tax Credits discussion continued:

Barney Sheridan/LOI Holder Building #53: Mr. Sheridan did not seek tax credits for the following reasons: Belief that the Historic Tax Credit Applicant is not permitted to live in the building for which tax credits are sought. The tax credits are limited to 20% of what the Applicant spends, the time, cost and amount of paperwork required to apply for tax credits results in increased A&E fees. Mr. Sheridan wants to sell sandwiches. The above are a barrier to the simplicity of the proposed use.

NPS Response: NPS will confirm whether owner occupancy of a residential unit/area in the structure precludes ability to apply for Historic Tax Credits on an income producing property. Fully complete Construction Drawings are not required to apply for Historic Tax Credits. Annotated drawings depicting actual and proposed conditions are sufficient. Full Construction Drawings are required in order to apply for Building Permits. In cases such as this one, where the project is mixed use and requires a higher fire rating, the drawings required to obtain a permit are the same as those required to qualify for the Historic Tax Credit. Historic Tax Credits may be applied for retroactively. NPS has photos of Building 53 that can be used in support of Mr. Sheridan's application for Historic Tax Credits should he choose to pursue them.

- 12:00 Lunch
- Masonry Update - Marilou Ehrler, GATE Chief of Cultural Resources
  - NPS is working with Don Stevenson, Historic Architect to address the masonry issues.
  - The brick façade on many of the historic buildings is shearing and must be reanchored.
  - The NPS is working to identify options and a path forward. NPS will engage a contractor to match the existing brick and determine how much of the bricks to purchase. The cost of the brick decreases as the amount purchased increases. There is a pile of bricks at Fort Hancock available for use but they are not a perfect match.
  - There are two layers of brick from which the buildings were constructed. The buff/yellow brick is the skin and red bricks are the anchors. The problems with the brick façade mounting go back to the initial construction of the buildings. The bricks have been traced back to western PA. They are fire/kiln bricks and are not glazed.
  - NPS wants to identify a holistic solution for obtaining bricks so that the responsibility does not reside with the individual Lessees.
  - NPS will identify the manner by which bricks will be mounted and fastened.
  - NPS is reviewing the results of scans provided by MAST in connection with preliminary work undertaken on Building #23. MAST has done absorption testing because of the crackle finish and determined there are no absorption issues. NPS has learned that the adjacent Building #56 has mechanical anchors. Building #23 does not contain mechanical anchors but the walls were in much better condition.
  - NPS is amassing opinions from engineers who will conduct testing to determine what the final method of securing the bricks should be.

- Deputy Mayor Tony Fiore of Middletown Township - Presentation
  - Deputy Mayor Tony Fiore was an original member of the Advisory Committee in 2012 when he served as Mayor of Middletown Township (MT) but was subsequently absorbed with Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts.
  - He is here today to discuss the use of Fort Hancock Building #74 for MT veterans housing. His goal is to speak conceptually and get feedback from the Committee about MT's thoughts for a potential opportunity for a use of buildings at FOHA. MT can provide financing and it would be a real benefit to the community, the Fort, and all involved.
  - MT is one of the only townships who have a municipal Division of Veterans Affairs (VA). MT is passionate about VA affairs and issues. One issue that continues to pop up as they work with various committees and job fairs is the need for veterans housing. If you look at any of the statistics, the population of veterans in need of housing is tremendous, whether it comes as post-service, post-deployment, or other stages of veterans lives.
  - MT has looked at a number of buildings at FOHA. They looked at 74 and others and are very cognizant of the historic nature. MT has a redevelopment organization affiliated with the Housing Authority. They would like to work with the Advisory Committee to find a building they can rehabilitate to provide veterans housing at Fort Hancock.
  - The location will allow veterans to spend time in a natural habitat unlike any other which will be a tremendous benefit to those who have served our country. Deputy Mayor Tony Fiore hopes to get some feedback in terms of property use, restrictions, etc. He believes there is a way to partner and achieve the goal of helping veterans in need of housing.
  - MT is looking at a smaller scale project such as 25-40 units. MT has funds in the FY 2020 budget for veteran housing projects.
  - This is not a homeless veteran program. It is an affordable housing program. Rent is required. It is rent controlled housing for which veterans will have to apply.
  - MT has concluded Building 74 is suitable for 24 units. It really depends on the cost of the rehabilitation. Building 74 was not as cost prohibitive as some of the other buildings MT considered. MT must balance the amount of money they propose to spend against the number of units that funding will get them. The MT Housing Authority will administer the project.
- Comments from the Committee:
  - The term affordable housing means different things to different people. Limited income housing is not often referred to as workforce housing. We are looking at a population with jobs who typically require support before they can purchase on their own. There is something very nice about having veterans live at a former military installation. However, there is a concern about "affordable housing" as it relates to effective reuse and preservation of these structures. Also, a number of years ago this Committee discussed possible restrictions on use of buildings due to possible opposition from the public. Ultimately, the

- Committee determined that we were not going to restrict uses at Fort Hancock unless they are incompatible with the park mission and values.
- Some buildings at Fort Hancock are more easily translated into housing. It is recommended MT work with park staff on that.
  - Monmouth County already has a similar program underway addressing this issue.
- Deputy Mayor Tony Fiore: We have looked at a number of buildings but if there is no will to consider this project, MT does not want to pursue it. Will there be interest from the Committee to pursue this option? If so, MT would welcome further discussion and the ability to work with park staff so MT can help a small number of veterans.
    - Additional Committee Comments:
    - There is interest in workforce housing, especially since housing in Monmouth County is expensive and our workforce struggles to afford housing here. Issues to consider: Sandy Hook is isolated and presents transportation challenges. There are practical, physical, and functional issues that bear further consideration. If we address those, we will be better able to make a determination.
    - The units will have to be accessible. That issue is difficult to deal with due to the historic nature of the project. It is understood this housing is needed but there is a need to keep in mind there are many things that historic preservation prohibits.
    - We have been working to manage the redevelopment of Fort Hancock through private funds. Use of public funding is not always feasible. When there is an entity that has public funding lined up, that is a significant factor.
    - There is a requirement to set aside 25% of all new construction for affordable housing in Middletown Township. This requirement does not apply to Fort Hancock. AH is a reality. There are a number of services available to veterans in the county. The county provides transportation, job hunting assistance, among other services. The larger buildings are mostly spoken for. If MT will consider use of the OR buildings, they may want to look at the ones with the most deterioration inside. MT will be less constricted on the interior layout if the historic fabric has been destroyed.
  - Deputy Mayor: We believe that despite the isolation, there is a large population of veterans that would benefit, that have mobility, and would be able to contribute to the community. The types of units are expected to be 1 bedroom. There is no funding to address this issue in the private sector, and MT has come up with public funds to address this issue. The funds are allocated to the MT Housing Authority and must be used for this purpose.
  - Co-Chair Shawn Welch: Calling on my experience as a board member for the Lehigh Valley Military Affairs council, I have several questions for you to ponder as you move forward. (1) Have you coordinated with the county which has a veteran's services center that it is currently operating? (2) Have you consulted with the VA to ascertain the actual veteran population in the township that would benefit from these services? I ask this question because young veterans are a smaller subset of the veteran population

in this area. (3) How does the distance of the post area from services that veterans may need (medical, vocational, etc), impact the concept?

GATE Superintendent: We are very open to a discussion. The park currently works with a number of veterans organizations. The larger buildings at Fort Hancock are subject to LOIs. Building 74 is currently not on the table. The repairs the State needs to make and the subsequent transfer is likely to take 2-3 years, and we have not decided whether it will be used for park purposes or made available for lease at that time. Would MT would be interested in starting a pilot in an Officer's Row building?

**Summary/Conclusion:**

- The proposal for veteran's housing at Fort Hancock is a conceptual fit. Housing for veterans on a former military site makes sense.
  - There is a need for workforce housing in Middletown Township.
  - There is also a need to define what kind of services are needed to support the proposed uses at Fort Hancock and if they can be provided within the Fort Hancock historic post area.
  - MT will have to consider the size of the buildings required in connection with the proposed effort.
  - MT will have to determine whether it is able to address and resolve accessibility issues.
  - Consider use of one Officer's Row building and subsequent expansion to others.
  - MT needs to consult with the VA and confirm there actually is a population that requires these services and that they are not already addressed by the County's veteran's services programs.
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- Park Update: One additional announcement – new compendium prohibits alcohol and smoking on the beach. 80% of our LE is tied up in alcohol related calls. We were the only beach in NJ that allowed alcohol on the beach. That has resulted in a real management and safety issue.
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- **Committee Recommendations - ADOPTED:** The committee fully supports and recommends accelerated implementation, of Gateway's effort to engage in pilot projects such as structural assessments and roof repairs. Members noted that this effort is fully consistent with committee recommendations adopted at its December 2018 meeting. Those earlier recommendations called for park leadership to formally designate Fort Hancock as a pilot site for exploring ways (authorities, policies, and resources) to facilitate more streamlined and administratively efficient leasing processes at Fort Hancock that could serve as a model for using leasing to address national deferred maintenance backlogs. The pilot efforts described at the March 29, 2019 Federal Advisory Committee meeting are an important component of a larger recommendation for a Fort Hancock pilot initiative. As Gateway moves forward with the pilot program, the Committee asks that it underscore the following:
    1. The intent of the effort is to foster rehabilitation and reuse;
    2. We are excited to see the new money available for repair and rehabilitation. However, the park does not have the necessary staff to support contracting and on site management. Allocations of staff to support this work are essential for successful obligation of the funds and execution of the work.

3. Explore the potential for lessees/NPS to access grant funding (Sandy Hook Foundation and other Partners, Save America's Treasures, State of NJ Grants) to support redevelopment and improve the financial feasibility of reuse;
  4. Explore opportunities for NPS to invest its resources in more effective ways to improve project cost effectiveness. These may include:
    - Investing money in building rehabilitation
    - Providing materials in bulk (e.g. yellow bricks)
    - Making funding available to lease holders to close budget gaps
- **Additional Recommendations to GATE:**
    1. Tax credit process for Lessees – clear process so Lessees can understand from the outset what the process entails
    2. Hold a kickoff meeting with Lessees that brings together a kick off meeting with Lessees that brings together local, state, county offices necessary to foster development
    3. Process for FACA – have a regularly scheduled opportunity for dialog with Lessees/LOI Holders at each FACA meeting – 30 minute minimum. Prior to Public Comment.
    4. Ensure Committee member **co-chair** contact info is available to Lessees/LOI Holders
    5. Always have two maps of Fort Hancock post area and the entire peninsula with building numbers at committee meetings.
  - Other information shared with the Committee:
    - NJ is considering State level tax credit for historic preservation.
    - USACE hearings about shoreline protection are underway in the region, and some alternatives involve Sandy Hook. Public Comment period is currently open.
  - Action Items for Next Meeting:
    - Conflict of Interest discussion/policy. Draft to be pulled together by Dr. Parish and Michael Walsh.
    - Provide a standing document that tracks recommendations and status over time until final resolution/conclusion of the issue. This list will be coordinated with the NPS, Co-Chairs and Facilitator.
  - Other Considerations:
 

Additional partnerships with educational institutions – in addition to the ones NPS have with Brookdale Community College, Monmouth University, MAST, and the Mather School. Regarding previous discussions about cleaning out buildings on OR, Committee members recommend NJ Work Camp which has summer programs that may be beneficial. Other groups to consider include Fed Works and corporate sponsored volunteer projects.
  - Adjourned