

Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Advisory Council

Summary of June 29, 2011 Meeting

The Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail (“The Trail”) Advisory Council convened a meeting at 10:00 A.M. on June 29, 2011 at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine Visitor Center in Baltimore, MD. In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public from 10:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Council members present:

Virginia Apyar
Michael Bojokles
William Bushong
Robert Etgen
Celeste Furey
Elizabeth Hughes
J. Lance Mallamo
John Maounis
Kim Nielsen
Neil Pedersen
Bill Pencek, Chair
Nita Settina
Charlie Stek
Kent Whitehead
M. Hall Worthington

Others present representing absent Advisory Council members:

Bob Carter, Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Jim Gardner, Smithsonian Institution, NMAH
Jack Spinnler, Baltimore National Heritage Area
Jason Vaughan, Baltimore National Heritage Area

Others present for all, or portions of the meeting:

Liz Clarke, Wallace, Roberts & Todd (NPS consultant)
Suzanne Copping, National Park Service
Christine Lucero, National Park Service
Terry Maxwell, Maryland State Highway Administration
Abbi Wicklein-Bayne, National Park Service

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Bill Pencek welcomed the Advisory Council members to the meeting. Each person in attendance introduced themselves to the group. Bill Pencek reviewed the agenda and objectives for the meeting. Each member was given a folder with meeting materials.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent (and Designated Federal Official) John Maounis reviewed folder contents and facilitated conversation on the Charter and Bylaws.

Overview of the Trail and Byway

Suzanne Copping presented a PowerPoint to familiarize the membership with the Trail, the Byway, and the Comprehensive Management Plan process and implementation accomplishments to date:

- **Trail Geography**

The NPS, the state of Maryland and other partners are working to create a seamless visitor experience whether on the trail or byway, as they share common geography. (The major difference is the water routes of the NHT.)

 - This is the first time that concurrent NHT and Byway planning has been attempted.
- **Scope of the NHT**

The scope of the Star-Spangled Banner NHT is to commemorate the Chesapeake campaign of the War of 1812 while following historic routes, encouraging public access and citizen engagement. The trail will be one of the legacies of the bicentennial period.
- **Scope of the Byway**

The byway route is the same as the NHT on land. There is an existing 100 mile Maryland Scenic Byway that will be extended. *It was noted that although the designation currently is a Maryland Scenic Byway, MD is poised to work and make connections with Virginia and the District of Columbia. Legislation has just been passed to create a Virginia War of 1812 Heritage Trail.*
- **Relationship to the Maryland 1812 Bicentennial Commission**

The Commission is staffed by the Maryland Office of Tourism and was created in 2009. A strategic plan was created and is available on-line (www.starspangled200.org); there are five working committees and over 600 identified historic resources. The Commission is working with the United States Mint to produce a Commemorative Coin that will be available for sale beginning in 2012 to raise money for Bicentennial projects. Additionally \$1.8 million has been secured through grant funds to develop the byway through the Federal Highway Administration. Over \$24 million dollars has already been invested by federal, state and local entities.
- **Recreation Opportunities along the trail**
 - Water use
 - Multi-use trails
 - Heritage trails
 - Other national trails
- **Planning**

Trail and Byway Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP)

The CMP is an essential planning tool that is being developed with input from cultural and natural resources and recreation interests; serves as a means to co-align the Trail and Byway; will support the development of a consistent, cohesive visitor experience; serves as a 15-20 year vision for the trail and identify the means for sustaining bicentennial projects

- **Trail and Byway Alignment**

The route of the NHT is not linear and presents challenges that other trails may not. In order to provide a visitor experience that is not confusing we will have to be very clear in our marking and interpretation of the trail.

The aligned Trail and byway must:

- Conform to legislation
- Conform to routes identifies in trail feasibility study, with Star-Spangled Banner Scenic Byway, sites included in Star-Spangled Banner Trail Guide
- Follow public roads
- Follow routes with existing/potential mechanisms to protect scenic qualities
- Be as continuously scenic as possible
- Provide a unified visitor experience
- Take visitors to places providing a variety of experiences
- Provide access to existing and potential recreation sites (water access is very important)
- Provide physical and or visual access to associated with the War of 1812

Byway Advisory Committee: The committee will advise the Council and the NPS on development of the management plan as it relates to the Byway. The first meeting, held on June 22, focused on conservation and preservation. Information was requested from localities about preservation, conservation plans and policies that already exist. Signage was also discussed and may need to be a focus of the Council in the future.

Planning Schedule:

The council will be asked to review the final draft of the Comprehensive Management Plan before the public review/comment period.

Alternative Management Planning Concepts

Alternative 1-Continuation of Current Management

Alternative 2-Focus on the Chesapeake Campaign of the summer of 1814

This alternative covers a shorter time period, uses a smaller subset of resources, and has focused storytelling and geography. It has limited focus on recreation; however there are several “hubs” to orient visitors to places with 1814 connections.

Alternative 3-War of 1812 in the Chesapeake (1812-1815)

This alternative has a broader geographic focus and time period, therefore more resources can be utilized. Broader geography offers more visitor contact stations to orient visitors to area, the War of 1812 commemoration and other trails. In this alternative connections with other trails are made to encourage exploration of the recreational opportunities and there is more emphasis on watertrails and the intersection with other National Historic Trails such as the Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT.

Public Scoping workshops results:

97% of respondents had strong public support for Alternative 3. There was some concern about the costs of Alternative 3 due to its ambitious scope. There were suggestions from the public for new places for visitor contact facilities.

Comments and discussion from the members:

- Has there been any thought as to how you could get to Alternative 3? Could Alternative 2 be a stage to get to Alt. 3?
 - Alternative 2 does not include anything on the Eastern Shore or Upper Bay including Caulk's Field. This creates a strong argument for Alternative 3 to be sure that all the essential sites are included.
- Discussion on the acquisition of Caulk's Field
- Discussion on making the War of 1812 relevant by thinking broadly and creating ways to relate the trail to visitors.
- Discussion of inclusion of other events in other areas; there are 22 states and Canada with sites that relate to the War of 1812 including National Parks and State parks. There needs to be resources, perhaps on-line, to help people learn more about the rest of the story of the world. Physically establish the trail but have a way to put it in context.
- As part of the Management plan, is there is an implementation schedule? Can this be used to ensure the implementation does not lose focus?
- Will the costs associated with implementation be available to allow membership to make an informed decision?
- Can there be a list of resources that are included or excluded in each of the alternatives?
- Let's not lose the opportunity of timing to capitalize on the excitement of the Bicentennial.

Signage

The National Scenic Byway Program has provided funds for 150 interpretive waysides along the MD Star-Spangled Banner Byway. NPS has contracted with sign graphic designers to create graphic standards for a family of signage including interpretive signs, directional signs and conformational signs.

The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices is issued by the Federal Highway Administration. This has to be incorporated into state law and then each state develops its own guidelines. There are also different sets of standards for a state scenic byway versus a federal scenic byway that need to be considered in the initial planning stages. There are not guidelines for NHTs so this may give us some flexibility.

LUNCH BREAK

Council members broke for lunch for approximately 30 minutes.

Maryland Star-Spangled Banner Water Trails Plan

Bill Pencek gave a brief overview of the water trails plan. Currently there are sixteen segments identified. Eleven high priority projects have been identified along those segments. Bill noted that at this time there is no way to offer the visitor an experience on the water that would interpret the experience Francis Scott Key may have had. This is a high priority for Fort McHenry.

There is \$3.3 million cost associated with implementing the water trails plan.

- There was a “FYI” that went out from the State to all granting agencies to consider prioritizing 1812 projects. It would be good if that went out again.

Concept Planning:

Suzanne Copping continued with her presentation.

There are some areas where there is a high concentration of sites, partners and potential. In these areas we are taking a close look at the opportunities:

North Point Peninsula

There are 52 resources identified and mapped. The plan will include cost estimates. In addition, a site plan for the North Point State Battlefield/Battle Acre Park and an exhibit concept for the North Point State Park Exhibit are under development. The park can be accessed by land or by water and can act as an orientation spot for people to go out on the trail.

There is interpretive potential at Fort Howard for new development. The historic route still exists from the British landing site at Fort Howard. There is already interpretation at North Point State Park. There is a proposed county water trail along the Bay. There is a North Point Greenway plan in process as a community-based effort. This is a good example of benefiting the immediate community as well as the national tourism effort. This is an area where a few strategic investments can make a big difference.

Member comments:

Has there been thought to partnering with Main Streets?

Baltimore County does not belong to the Main Streets Program but there is money requested in the county budget for streetscaping.

There is a pending application for funding for the North Point Heritage Greenway to connect Edgemere and North Point State Park.

Concept plans will bring together existing plans and with those of the Trail and Byway and then go out to the community for review. There may have to be a reassessment of priorities.

Bladensburg

There is a great deal of development that has obscured many of the 1812 sites. There are historic structures along the Anacostia River to which the trail will help bring attention. There are safety issues for pedestrians and other transportations. The DC line is in this area and there will be some sort of plan to create a “gateway.” A plan will be completed for Bladensburg Road through a Green Streets grant. There is a planned memorial proposed in the Balloon Park. MNCPPC has been a great partner and will transform a boat house at the waterfront park into an orientation center.

Baltimore City

Baltimore National Heritage Area has led the planning effort. They have set up a committee structure and prioritization of projects. The city sees the trail as a way to bring visitors in beyond the inner harbor. The Inner Harbor promenade has potential for interpretation. There is great potential for new and improved water access. A grant was recently awarded to develop public water access at Fort McHenry.

Member comment:

Are there any plans for a bike/pedestrian trail to connect the Fort and the Inner Harbor or North Point?

There is a plan by Under Armor to extend the Promenade from the Inner Harbor via Tide Point to the Fort.

Upper Bay

There is a project in Havre de Grace to interpret the War of 1812 history by sites that are part of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. (This is an area where there are clear connections with the John Smith Trail.) This is an area identified in the water trails plan for development. Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway is working on a management plan for a scenic byway that could provide additional programming and leveraging of funds.

District of Columbia to Alexandria

This plan has not yet officially begun and partners are being identified. Cultural Tourism DC has several historic walking trails in place. Dumbarton House is an example of a partner.

Alexandria

Alexandria is a nexus of history trails. This is an opportunity and a challenge. There is a waterfront plan before the city council right now for approval. This plan includes the creation of a history center that would act as an orientation site. This should be part of the Alexandria concept plan.

Member comment:

New visitor center in Frederick is a great example of how to bring together many initiatives and present them to the public.

What about Patuxent and St. Leonard's creek? This seems like a natural place for a "hub" and it is missing.

There is a new exhibit on-site and cell phone tour at Jefferson Patterson Park. The annual reenactment occurs in September and there is planning for traveling trunks.

There is a lot of potential along the Patuxent. There is potential for a visitor contact station, perhaps at Mount Calvert.

Interpretive Plan and planning:

Interpretation and Visitor Experience

- Four themes (View them here: <http://www.nps.gov/stsp/parkmgmt/upload/Final-STSP-Interpretive-Plan-1-26-2011.pdf>)

Star-Spangled Banner Geotrail

- Connects over 35 sites in DC, MD and Virginia
- Southern Maryland Heritage Area will be creating "Geocaching 1812" Trail

Visitor Information

- NPS Unigrid (Map and Guide) will be updated.
- Website and mobile app are under development and will provide trip planner and interactive resources. The mobile app will focus on getting people around the trail.
- A Travel Guide is being developed. This full-color guide will be available in 2012 and the net proceeds will help support the maintenance of the network of signs.

Members shared Bicentennial Efforts in Maryland, Virginia and the District:

- Eastern Shore Land Conservancy is in the process to acquire land at Caulks Field.
- There is a new waterfront park being built in St. Michaels, MD.
- MHT is completing archaeology on the Scorpion in the Patuxent River in partnership with State Highways and US Navy.
- Office of Historic Alexandria is working on projects in conjunction with the Civil War anniversary and an exhibit at the Lyceum Museum.
- MD DNR has a plan to renovate the jetty at the North Point State Park.

- Susquehanna State Park and other DNR sites want to connect to Havre de Grace.
- There will be a special exhibit at the Smithsonian Portrait Gallery on the War of 1812.
- There will be a special exhibit at NMAH in 2014.
- Mattel is releasing an American Girl Doll themed for 1812.
- White House Historical Association is working on creating teacher training and classroom visits using *History Pathways*, a series of student-acted plays that are prepared before the visit and performed on site at Decatur House. They are working on creating a program related to Dolley Madison
- The White House Visitor Center (NPS) will close at the end of the year to install new exhibits
- Tangier island has soldiers buried on the island and there are state societies interested in funding preservation efforts
- Daughters of the War of 1812 are working on a project to have church bells ring on June 18, 2012 to commemorate declaration of War.
- Baltimore is working to find operational funds to run buses to Fort McHenry
- Maryland SHA has grants that prioritize projects relating to 1812, Civil War or Harriett Tubman.
- Maryland will be upgrading scenic byway programs and publications.
- Chesapeake Conservancy is working to create Fort Monroe National Historic Site. Fort Monroe was built in 1819 as a direct result of the British Invasion

Funding Opportunities and Fundraising

Bill Pencek reminded the Council that their role is to advise the Secretary of the Interior on the development of the Trail. There needs to be another entity, perhaps a Friends group to foster the Trail and help raise money.

- There is a list of funding opportunities on www.starspanged200.org.
- There are special funds available from Maryland agencies including Maryland State Arts Council, Heritage Areas, Office of Tourism, CBGN, and National Scenic Byways.
- Virginia will offer a commemorative license plate for sale to benefit programming.
- On October 10, 2011 a new documentary will launch. MOTD is hoping to do screening as fundraiser.
- Star-Spangled 200 Inc. is scheduled to sunset as a friends group but it doesn't have to. This is the time to capitalize on the Bicentennial.
- It is not the Council's responsibility to ensure funds for the trail, however it is important to have CBGN/STSP funds in order to match or leverage state funds such as MHAA and Byways funding.

Next Steps

- There is a need to revisit the long term resource protection of the trail.
- There will be a webinar in August and a meeting in the fall.
- There is a public review of the draft CMP in the fall of 2011.
- Discuss priorities for implementation in the spring of 2012.

Final Thoughts of the membership:

- The White House Historical Association would like to schedule a meeting with NPS.
- There will be a new director at the National Museum of American History in the near future.
- Alexandria would like to meet with NPS to be sure that Alexandria is included in plan.
- There needs to be more outreach in Southern Maryland in order to raise awareness and interest.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the general public were present.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

John Maounis, Superintendent

William Pencek, Chairman

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National Park Service

Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Council at its next meeting, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated into the minutes of that meeting.