

Town of Cape Elizabeth  
Fort Williams Advisory Commission  
Meeting Minutes (Approved)  
June 18, 2009

**Present:** Dan Chase (Chair), Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Maureen McCarthy, Bill Nickerson, Chuck Wilson

**Absent:** Greg Altnauer

**Also:** Carol Fritz, Fort Williams Charitable Foundation; Kathy Bacastow, Fort Williams Arboretum Project

**Staff:** Bob Malley

**Call to order:** Meeting called to order by Dan Chase at 7:03 in the Public Works Conference Room

**Minutes:**

Upon motion by Bill Nickerson, seconded by Maureen McCarthy, minutes of the May 21st meeting were unanimously approved, with slight corrections.

**Goddard Mansion workshop:**

In accordance with the recommendation by the FWAC, the Town Council at its June 15<sup>th</sup> workshop agreed to bring up our recommendations, including the request for \$6,000, for a vote at the July Council meeting. The \$6,000 is to be used to purchase and install fencing which will close off and protect the public from the most dangerous areas of the Goddard Mansion.

**Arboretum update:**

Kathy Bacastow reported about progress with the arboretum. She described the group as being at the feasibility stage in lining up funding for the project. She said they have been meeting with “people of influence” to inform them about the project and generate feedback. So far they have received overwhelming support from those they have met with concerning the merits of the project.

A decision has been made to expand the demonstration project to include all of site B, to the right of Ship Cove, rather than completing the work in three phases. In so doing the visual impact within the park will be substantially greater, but the consequence is that the initial cost will increase from \$80M to \$300M.

## **Park Update:**

Bob Malley reported on the following:

Family Fun Day - turn out was excellent with no issues to report.

Picnic Shelter – Sandblasting and painting of the building has been completed. Work, including some masonry repairs, was completed by Public Works personnel.

Following up prior commission discussions about the possibility of creating a new picnic shelter on an existing slab near Ships Cove, Bob spoke with code enforcement officials. He was told no structure can be constructed within 75' of high tide, and since the pad is 30' from high tide levels, it would fall within shoreland zoning restrictions and therefore could not be built in that location. As an aside, as part of their Senior Transition Project, several students cleaned around the pad.

Grass within the park is growing by “leaps and bounds” as a result of all the rain we’ve been receiving. DPW staff have been kept busy mowing.

The new interpretive display on Kitty’s Point is getting lots of use and receiving many favorable comments.

Budget update: The new budget setting process is under way, so there is really nothing to report.

## **Park fees and revenue generation:**

The next topics of discussion centered around the goal of creating a park which is financially self-supporting.

Following up earlier FWAC discussions about quantifying the number of automobile visits to the park, Bob engaged the Greater Portland Council of Governments (COG) to conduct several surveys. Funding for the surveys will come from the account “Projects to be undertaken by the FWAC”. Surveys will be conducted on 2 Saturdays and a Thursday in May and June with follow up surveys in July. Among other items, the surveys will track license plates, note the direction vehicles arrive from and whether or not they actually park within the Fort. A summary of results will be prepared with charts and graphs.

Dan reported on a meeting with Lise Pratt and Laura Zylstra. Laura is a Managing Consultant for Skystone Ryan. Lise who represents Fundraising Counsel to Nonprofits does her own consulting work and subcontracts with Skystone Ryan on appropriate projects. Laura is the lead person and together they will provide a proposal to work as consultants to Fort Williams for the purpose of developing a business plan to raise

funding for the Park. Options to be considered include parking or entrance fees, food vendors and event fees. They believe this should be a two pronged effort involving non-profit donations and grants as well as a business plan for park related revenue generation.

The Commission agreed that we should have specific tasks on the topic of revenue generation for each of the upcoming meetings. September will be a key month with information available from the COG. . The town budget process requires department heads to submit their budgets to the Town Manager by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Therefore the FWAC should come to a consensus about what it wants to do about fees by the November meeting.

**Other matters:**

Porta pottie complaints have been almost non existent so far this year. The more frequent cleaning seems to be paying off.

There was a brief discussion about trash in the park, and the absence of trash cans. We were reminded that Fort Williams is a “carry in, carry out” park facility. Nevertheless, not everyone is compliant with this policy. Bob made reference to solar trash compactors at Bug Light, which might be something to be considered.

**Battery Blair Subcommittee:**

Chuck Wilson reported on the first meeting of the Battery Blair subcommittee. There was general discussion about the goals and objectives to be pursued by the committee. The next meeting is scheduled for June 24<sup>th</sup>, and anyone on the FWAC is welcome to attend. The focus will be on visioning goals and the meeting will be facilitated by Rick Renner of Renner and Woodworth. The objective will be to establish a vision and goals for Battery Blair which will provide sufficient substance to apply for grants. The committee hopes to have a general plan in place by Labor Day.

**Fort Williams Charitable Foundation:**

The FWCF has a meeting scheduled for next week. The foundation hope to develop a greater focus on creating an endowment rather than project specific fund raising.

With relatively little activity anticipated for next month, the July meeting was cancelled. **The next meeting is therefore scheduled for August 20<sup>th</sup>.**

**Adjourned: 8:45**

Respectfully submitted,  
Bill Nickerson

