

Town of Cape Elizabeth Fort Williams Advisory Commission  
Workshop Minutes  
October 28, 2009

**Approved 11/19/09**

**Present:** Dan Chase, Frank Butterfield, Bill Nickerson, Bill Brownell, Chuck Wilson  
Bob Malley

**Absent:** Maureen McCarthy

**Guests:** Mike McGovern, CE Town Manager  
Dan Goodman, GPCOG

Workshop called to order by Dan Chase at 7:04 PM in the Public Works Conference Room.

### **1. General discussion with Dan Goodman regarding the traffic counts**

- The vehicle count difference between COG and CEPD was due to CEPD being a 24 hour period and COG being an 8 hour period.
- Dan G. felt that the counts were representative of the specific times and that he felt comfortable with us using them as a basis for calculations of counts and possible income as long as we documented our assumptions.
- Dan G. was asked if he could calculate the difference between a flat daily charge versus an hourly charge based upon the numbers and he said that was not part of their proposal.
- General feeling was that the numbers provided were better than anything we previously had and are representative of actual number of vehicles. They also confirmed some previous impressions that 15-20% of users are probably Cape residents and the rest, non-residents.
- There was discussion of various options for calculating the vehicle count and the income that might result.

### **2. Review of charge to the FWAC**

Mike McGovern clarified the charge from the Town Council as being that we were to develop a plan for the Park to be “self-sustaining” and that a recommendation to the Council was expected by January 2010. There has been some discussion about more urgency than the January date, but we were waiting for the vehicle counts and our focus and discussions have been on entrance/parking fees, as they have the greatest potential for income. With regard to concessions, the consensus is that the peak season is over and that needs to have a comprehensive discussion so that any plans could be implemented before next spring of 2010. Members expressed concern that we need a master plan for concessions and a model, rather than just doing one piece at a time.

Concern was expressed that all funds that are raised from the park should be dedicated to the park. There are significant needs that have been identified, beyond the operating costs. The FWAC would be opposed to income from the park going to the general fund, but certainly understands the need to replace the current operating expenses, so those funds would be available for other uses.

### **3. Listing of Priorities for income recommendations**

#### -Entrance fee versus parking fee (Pay and Display)

There is a consensus that the preference would be “Pay and Display” as it is significantly less capital intensive, lower operating costs, and less intrusive to the open nature of the park. Discussion has ranged from \$1 per hour with a maximum \$5 per day. Now that we have the traffic count data, calculations are being developed for discussion at our Nov meeting. Several alternatives were discussed, but all needed refinement.

There is a side issue with any fee, and that is the parking lot outside the fence by the old Main Gate. It has been recommended in the past that this parking be removed and become strictly an emergency entrance. It hasn't been done for a variety of reasons. However, there seemed to be general agreement that with fees being charged, no one should be allowed to park outside this entrance and strict enforcement will have to be instituted on area roads and at Plaisted Park.

#### -Seasonal car passes

Consensus seems to be we should have annual passes for residents and non-residents with a range of \$10-15 for residents and \$20-25 for non-residents.

#### -Bus fees

Dan C. reported on a discussion he had with some bus tour people. He was told that most places now have fees for buses with a wide range of prices. There is a need for advance notice, as the companies build the cost into their trip charges and they would need to know by the end of Dec 09 to implement in 2011. It was agreed that the buses from the ships should be charged the same, but may have to be billed differently. We also need to understand the relationship between the bus fee and the revenue at the gift shop as a significant part of the revenue comes from the buses. Discussion was in the range of \$40/bus. It appears that there are roughly 500 buses annually.

#### -Trolley fees

As the trolley is much more frequent and generally the same companies, it was felt that a flat annual rate should be developed and perhaps based on frequency of trips. Discussion seemed to center around \$400-500 annually.

-Concessions

There were significant reservations regarding concessions, particularly around locations and trash. Considerable discussion has taken place regarding type, location, what products, trash issues, vendor rules, bid process/RFP's, income %, whether it should be contract or town run, etc. It was agreed that we need to focus first on the parking fee, before a comprehensive look at concessions.

-Building Rentals

We need to look at broadening the uses of the rentals to attract more interest. This will involve changing the Master Plan and going through the Planning Board, once the changes are determined. A possible opportunity would be to allow professional offices, however that raises the issue of "leasehold improvements" and updates due to codes.

-Additional Picnic Shelters

Community Services have told us that the demand for the current picnic shelter is high and that they could easily rent another one, perhaps smaller, but still having a partial water view. We need to study locations, cost to build, and what process we need to go through with the Planning Board.

It was suggested that we draft a fee proposal that we all could study prior to the next meeting and then be looking at the same facts. Bill Brownell agreed to create that and distribute it.

It was agreed that Dan Chase, Bill Brownell, Chuck Wilson and Bob Malley will meet on Wed, 11/4, @ 9:00 AM at CEPW to:

1. Draft a Pay and Display fee proposal with income projections
2. Develop Capital and Operating expenses for the above Pay and Display Proposal,

The intent of this that this sub-group will create a document to be discussed, modified, and acted upon at our Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

It was agreed that:

- we will formalize a fee recommendation at our Nov meeting and
  - that the issue of concessions needs more discussion, thought and research.
- Considering that the peak season is past, we have the time for due diligence and still provide a recommendation that could be implemented by spring of 2010.

Workshop adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Charles F. Wilson  
Acting Secretary