

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes March 18th, 2010

Present:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Dan Chase, Richard Dunham, Maureen McCarthy (Chair), Bill Nickerson, and Chuck Wilson.

Also present:

Lois Carlson, FWCF; Jim Walsh, Town Council; Paul Burbage, AMEC; and Betsy Melrose, Mitchell and Associates.

Staff:

Bob Malley

Call to order:

Maureen called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Approval of the minutes:

Approval motioned by Maureen and seconded by Bill N.

Betsy Melrose of Mitchell and Associates on the Shore Road Path:

Bob introduced Betsy and Paul, and handouts were distributed on the section of the Shore Road Path that would impact the Fort Williams property.

The plan would entail moving the upper pedestrian gate further away from its present location near Delano Park, using the parking area near the old Main Gate, and possibly removing some trees.

Issues surrounding these assumptions were brought up by the commission for further consideration by the Path planning group.

Bob was going to check with the Tree Warden about the affected trees.

A meeting was scheduled with the Path committee and the DEP, and a site walk was also scheduled. (Saturday 4/18/10)

Chuck motioned that:

“We approve the proposed plan for the Shore Road Pathway with the following exceptions: 1) The paved area in front of the Old Main Gate may not be available for parking in the future, 2) The trees noted for possible trimming and removal will be reviewed with the Tree Warden and if they should be preserved, the walkway will be altered to avoid these trees, 3) The current pedestrian gate near the Delano Park fence line will be permanently closed when the new walkway gate is installed.

Maureen seconded and approval was unanimous following some discussion.

Park update:

-During the storms of 2/24 and 2/25/10 some of the park structures suffered damage through loss of shingles and sections of roof (Battery Keyes) but most notable was the damage to the new front gate caused by flexing in the high winds.

The manufacturer's warranty provided replacements at no charge, and due to the catastrophe assignment to this storm there is a chance of recouping some of the out of pocket damages through federal disaster funds.

-Stone wall repairs are progressing in various area of the Park.

Moving forward with alternative revenue concepts:

The town council has asked the commission to provide a "stewardship document outlining what we see as our vision for the future of the Fort, what upgrades will be necessary, and what costs are associated with these.

This would be a valuable document to have prior to the vote on Park fees.

Discussion continued on the process to develop and evaluate alternative funding sources for the Fort.

Jim Walsh said the Town Council would like to have a Liaison between themselves and the committee that ultimately considers these options.

Ideas for possible committees included all past chairs of the commission, as well as some professionals we have used for studies in the past.

Concern was expressed that all ultimate choices for alternative funding must not impact the character of the Fort, and this was shared by all present.

It was also suggested that we might be wise to enlist the assistance of a professional facilitator to assist us with the "nut and bolts" of sifting through the alternative funding options.

A very important aspect of all of this was that we need to somehow share this vision and process with the community so that they understand the future and needs of the Fort.

Next meeting/goals

Due to vacation schedules, discussion ensued regarding the scheduling of the next meeting. It was decided to stick with the usual schedule and continue with the meeting on April 15th.

The group then decided it would be beneficial to have a facilitator lead the group in an attempt to reach consensus on FWAC's vision for the Park. Several names were discussed, and it was decided to ask Rick Renner who has worked with the Commission before, and has done a wonderful job leading other facilitated sessions. If he is unavailable, others may be approached.

The next meeting will have a goal of determining "what do we want the Park to be".

Once that has been established, we will work on determining acceptable revenue generating opportunities which are consistent with the vision. If time allows, we would then move on to determine what support is needed to take advantage of the opportunities that have been identified.

Maureen asked Commission members to come to the next meeting prepared to discuss thoughts and ideas about what the vision should be, and what uses would be considered to be acceptable. We anticipate the facilitator will probably have some of his/her own ideas for Commission members to consider.

Charitable Foundation

Lois Carlson provided an update on Charitable Foundation activities. The endowment report has been received from the consultant, though it is premature to release the specific recommendations at this time.

Dick Kurtz and Joe Edgar have been appointed Co-Chairs of committee to raise \$18M to match the \$18M the Foundation has pledged to fund the study for resurrection of Battery Blair. This committee's mission is to identify individuals to approach for donations to raise the matching funds. The Foundation committee would like participation and support from the Advisory Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00.