

To: James Walsh, Town Councilor

From: Robert C. Malley, Director of Public Works

Date: October 5, 2010

Re: October 4, 2010 Town Council Workshop

Last night you had asked me to note ideas and talking points that evolved during the joint workshop with the Fort Williams Advisory Commission (FWAC) and the Fort Williams Charitable Foundation (FWCF). What I have tried to do below is create a document that highlights the discussion (in bullet format) of the evening, by individual, in the context of agenda prepared for the meeting. It is my hope that I have not misquoted or miss-interpreted any individual's comments with this summary.

It is my understanding that this is a working document that the Town Council, the FWAC and the FWCF will use as the three groups move forward. Nothing written below should be construed as a change in current policies, but only ideas and concepts put forth by the individuals that spoke and/or had questions at the meeting.

In Attendance: Anne Swift-Kayatta (ASK) (TC Chair), Frank Governali (FG), Penelope A. Jordan (PJ), Sara Lennon (SL), David Sherman (DS), Jessica Sullivan (JS), James Walsh (JW), Maureen McCarthy (MM) (FWAC Chair), Charles Wilson (CW), Dan Chase (DC), Frank Butterworth (FB), Bill Brownell (BB), Bill Nickerson (BN) and Alice Rand (AR) (FWCF Chair), Mike McGovern (MKM) (Town Manager) and Robert Malley (RM) (Director of Public Works)

ASK – Welcome and introductions

RM - Provided update of park and building maintenance activities for 2010.

MM - Provided an overview of the FWAC activities and projects for 2010.

BB – Stated it has been helpful having JW attend the recent meetings of the FWAC.

JW – Felt it has been a good process so far and looks forward to working on a future for the park.

AR – Provided an overview of FWCF activities for 2010:

- Reviewed origination and charge of committee
- Plan to adopt an annual budget document
- Have created a “Development Committee” chaired by new member, Steve Bates
- Planning November mailing appeal

- Proceeding ahead with fundraising for Arboretum and Battery Blair Feasibility Study
- Feels confident about direction and relationship with TC and the FWAC

FG & JW – Any endowment of funds for projects should include funding of on-going maintenance.

SL – Feels that citizens may be more apt to donate funds (to the FWCF) for facilities and amenities that they use every day, i.e., bleachers, bandstand, pedestrian paths, etc., rather than Battery Blair, which may be visited more by tourists.

DS – Inquired of AR about the feasibility study commissioned by the FWCF.

CW – Reiterated that the FWAC is requiring the Arboretum project and any potential restoration of Battery Blair include funding for self-sustainability.

FG – More people may come to the park. Do additional amenities have the potential to bring more visitors in?

JW – Potential is there and that may happen.

Public Comment Period:

Jessie Timberlake, Hunts Point Road – Provided proposal on potential seafood (lobster rolls) concession at PHL as a way to raise additional revenue.

Betty Crane, Starboard Drive – TC should consider raising taxes to pay for maintenance projects in the park. Charge tour buses. Create a better venue for wedding ceremonies that could raise more revenue, i.e., second Picnic Shelter, portable tent, etc.

Advisability of Updating the Master Plan:

JW – Recommends moving forward with an update of the Master Plan.

MKM – Last update done in 2003 and was primarily data collection. Update should be a blueprint to move forward with proposals on concessions, desired locations, utility upgrades, etc.

RM – 2003 Master Plan cost \$35,000+. Hope to provide draft scope to FWAC at their next meeting on Oct. 21st.

PJ – Recommended determining an end goal before proceeding with an update of Master Plan.

BB & BN – Include short list of ideas that meet the criteria set forth by the FWAC into update.

DS – Need to narrow down scope of update.

JW – Document should be inclusive of all ideas

ASK – Suggested looking at ideas in a broader concept. Identify potential revenue sources that are not constrained by the Group Use Policy.

Maintenance Needs:

JW – Town Manager’s memo recognizes maintenance needs.

DC – Maintenance should be main priority.

FG & PJ – Town should spend more on maintenance, but should be offset by additional sources of revenue.

CW – Amount set aside for tree maintenance is inadequate to address both removals and future plantings. Stonewalls, pedestrian paths should all get more attention.

JW – More maintenance needed and should revisit charging buses to help offset those expenses.

ASK – Agrees with priorities listed on Town Manager’s memo dated August 6, 2010 on page 5.

DS – Also agrees with ASK and that more revenues needed to offset maintenance expenses.

Capital Needs:

JW – FWAC prioritized capital needs. Challenge is how to fund that.

CW – FWAC is still in agreement with recommendations on capital projects. Projects are well defined and thought out.

JW – Some projects listed are to be funded through private sources, grants and/or donations, i.e. Arboretum, Battery Blair Feasibility Study, etc.

AR – Will capital projects be reconsidered under Master Plan update?

JW – Not sure, but unlikely.

FG – Some issues could possibly be dealt with in “isolation”, based on their potential for revenue generation.

SL – Funding of some capital needs may require amending the Group Use Policy.

JW – Review of Group Use Policy is underway by the FWAC at this time.

DS – Does the FWCF feel we are moving in the right direction?

AR – Yes

Roles of Interested Parties:

JW – Looking forward to moving forward with both the FWAC and the FWCF.

FG – Whatever we do in the park (interested parties), we need to communicate to all parties, i.e., citizens, vendors with related businesses, etc.

BN – If we (the FWAC) are headed in the wrong direction, we need to know sooner, rather than later.

DS – Some of the ideas that are proposed don't seem to raise a great deal of revenue. Don't want to spend a great deal of time on proposals that don't meet that goal.

MKM – Encouraged FWAC to get started on the Master Plan update and move forward with some of the short-term proposals as outlined in the August 6, 2010 memo.

BN – Have never had the appropriate revenue stream to adequately fund park needs.

DC – Encouraged the TC to hire a consultant to put together a business plan to facilitate what will work for revenue generation in the park.

JS – Some merit to DC's suggestion.

MKM – There is strong public sentiment to charging the buses for use of the park. What is the impact on the gift shop revenues if we charge the bus tour companies? May need the business plan to figure that out.

MM – May need a survey to see what the citizens want in the park. Not all citizens may be supportive of a tax increase to fund park needs.

FG – Surveys are not always effective.

DS – Supported the proposal for a business plan.

MM – FWAC & FWCF are moving forward and working together.

MKM – Will propose funding a master plan update on the next TC agenda.

Workshop Adjourned @ 9:20 PM