

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Workshop Minutes
February 3, 2011

Present:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Dan Chase, Erin Grady, Bill Nickerson (chair), and Lise Pratt

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

Bill called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Group Use Request:

Tucker Jordan's request to hold his wedding reception on the lighthouse green at Fort Williams was discussed in terms of location, logistics, and what the assessed fee might be.

Discussion included points brought up at the prior meeting relative to previous events where a tent was allowed to be erected at this location. These have been limited to Coast Guard change of command ceremonies, the Beach to Beacon finish line, and a governors' conference in the early 80s.

Much of the discussion was guided by the commission members' feelings that we need to keep the Park available to the public without unreasonably restricting access and passive enjoyment of this special venue.

The following points were raised:

- 1.) The size of the reception (250 guests) is well above that contemplated by the commission for such an event if it was to be held anywhere in the Park on a pilot basis this summer. Members questioned how such an event at this location fits with the 1976 Council vision for Park use.
- 2.) Concern was expressed about the adverse impact on visitors to the headlight of loud music, a large tent near the southern Cliff Walk (to be erected on Friday and remain until Monday) and the noise created by the many guests celebrating the occasion.
- 3.) FWAC members raised additional concerns about the adequacy of parking, number and location of portable toilets, enforcement of the Park alcohol policy and access to

utilities.

4.) Questions were raised about the time involved in coordinating on behalf of the Park with the various parties to the wedding i.e. the bride and groom, the tent supplier, musicians, caterers, portable toilet provider etc., compared to the potential financial gain.

5.) Commission members voiced strong concern about the precedent we would be setting by allowing a wedding reception, including a lobster bake, to take place on the lighthouse green before we've had an opportunity to establish general guidelines for wedding receptions, if they are to be allowed in the future, which will be part of the master planning process.

Bob said that we needed to establish parameters for this type of event, but that we should be guided by the group use policy that is in place.

Bob also pointed out that the only place we have allowed a tent to be used in conjunction with an event such as this is next to the picnic shelter. This has been a long standing requirement of Park use.

Bob said that if the commission and Tucker chose to proceed, he would put together a list of those requirements that we should insist upon relative to group use.

We all agreed that for the reasons articulated, especially the premature precedent it would set, we would only allow the reception to be held at the picnic shelter, and the tent could be set up adjacent to that.

Bob said he would check with Community Services to see if the Shelter had been reserved, and then would check with Tucker to let him know our decision and determine what his plan would be moving forward.

FY 2012 Budget & Master Planning discussion:

Bob referenced the notes on the 1990 Park Plan summary, and reviewed the points that were enumerated.

Bill N questioned the need to do a new Master Plan given all of the prior data and studies that have been done.

Bob pointed out that many of the Town documents reference the Master Plan, and that it needs to be an up to date document.

Also, he reminded us that the Council recommends that it be regularly updated.

But he also agreed that we did not have to write a whole new Master Plan.

He added that he, Mike McGovern, and Bill Nickerson would be meeting to discuss what should be accomplished in a Master Plan update, and work to narrow the focus of such an update.

We all agreed that the 1976 Town Council Vision of the Park should still be the guiding focus of the update.

Bob then reviewed the bullet points in the 2003 update and discussion of these followed.

Bob continued by reviewing the line items of the Fort Williams Park Capital Fund, and

by line discussion followed for clarification.

Discussion of 2011 Work plan:

In keeping with council chair David Sherman's request we discussed potential Commission work plan priorities for the 2001 Fiscal year.

This discussion included the following suggestions:

- The Bleachers.
- A business plan for revenues generation within the Park.
- Tour Bus income potential.
- Master Plan revision or update.
- Development of pedestrian pathways/walkways.
- Phase II of Kitty's point as regards landscaping and better access to the Interpretive Display.
- Attention to the natural features of the Park including the Pond.
- An additional picnic shelter.
- Enhancement of the scenic views from within the Park.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15.