

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 16th, 2011

Present:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Dan Chase, Erin Grady, Maureen McCarthy, and Lise Pratt.

Absent:

Bill Nickerson

Also present:

Steve Bates (FWCF), Alice Rand (FWCF), Mary Hodgkin (FWCF), Kathryn Bacastow (Arboretum), John Mitchell (Mitchell & Associates), Bob Metcalf (Mitchell & Associates), Betsy Poulin (Mitchell & Associates), Mike McGovern (Town Manager), other members of the public who participated during the discussion of the Master Plan Addendum.

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

Bill B called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Approval of minutes of the 5/19/11 regular meeting:

Erin motioned acceptance, Maureen seconded, and all approved.

Approval of the 5/31/11 workshop minutes:

Erin motioned acceptance, Maureen seconded, and all approved.

(A special thanks to Betsy Poulin of Mitchell & Associates for recording these minutes)

Public comment for non-agenda items:

None.

Review final Arboretum Cliff Site Plan:

John Mitchell discussed some minor changes including:

- Moving grass pathways to allow for handicapped access.

The “Accessible Walk” will be extended to join the Cliff Walk and will be all stone dust.

The amphitheater will be 3 tiers vs. 4 tiers and will reduce the capacity to accommodate 45 to 50 people.

- The stage area will be a slightly different configuration and size.

John shared the updated schedule of construction with us:

- Phase 1 consisting of erosion control, grubbing stumps, culvert installation site prep, and loaming and seeding will begin in July and should be done by late fall.
- Phase 2 will be the hard scape. Some will begin in late fall.

- Phase 3 is the planting. This is scheduled for spring.

Bob Malley added that he met with the Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and the rabbit trapping activities have been suspended until the fall.

Erin motioned that we accept John's updated report as presented and Maureen seconded.

All approved.

Park Update:

Bob presented the following update:

- Bailey Sign is in the process of refurbishing the Park entrance sign which should be back in place in 3 weeks.
- Bob met with representatives from the DIF&W to review the potential for creating a habitat for the New England Cottontail on a portion of the Gull Crest property
- He also mentioned that the commission members are all invited to attend the USCG change of command ceremony at 11:00 AM on 6/24/2011.
- The Maine State Troopers Association have approached him on the possibility of having a picnic in the Park in 2012. It could involved up to 2000 people and they may ask for permission to serve liquor.
- Family Fun Day was held on 6/11/2011.
- Graduation was not held in the Park on 6/12/2011 due to rain.
- 56 people viewed and 44 people have responded to the Park on line survey.
- Bob received a draft of the Fort land survey today and said it will need a bit of revising.
- Bob advised us that Ray Routhier from the Press Herald would be job shadowing one of the Park rangers.
- The Town Council did not approve the bus fee proposal, and proposed that it be further discussed with the FWAC at a workshop to be scheduled this fall.

Bill B inquired of Mike McGovern about the Town Council's action regarding the bus fee proposal. Mike provided some background to the group and conveyed that a more detailed discussion will be held at the yet-to-be-scheduled workshop with the Town Council.

FWCF Update:

Steve Bates updated us on the following:

- They are in the process of collecting pledges for the Battery Blair project.
- They are holding a budgeting and goal planning meeting for the Arboretum tomorrow.
- The Foundation is not looking to take on any more projects for funding until the Arboretum is done.

Master Plan Addendum- Presentation to interested parties:

Bill B announced that John Mitchell was going to leading the discussion regarding comments from interested parties on the Master plan Addendum.

John began by introducing the Commission members to the attendees.

He then outlined his PowerPoint presentation:

- 1976 Town policy on the Park
- The 6 goals for the Park
- The purpose of the Master Plan Update.
- Presentation of interested parties.

John introduced each presenter and outlined what points they should address:

The Arboretum was represented by Kathryn Bacastow who presented the goals and visions of the Arboretum.

Battery Blair was represented by Joe Edgar.

- He gave a brief history of the batteries and what the potential is for uncovering and restoring Blair.
- He said to date all but \$3000 of the \$36,500 to conduct the feasibility study has been raised.
- He estimated the total cost for restoration to be in \$1.5 to \$2 Million range.

The Dog Walker Group was represented by Theresa Fox who summarized their activities and concerns:

- They conduct periodic Park clean ups.
- They donated a park bench.
- They are considering a more organized annual clean up for different sectors of the Park that they use.
- They would like to have another dog waste station.
- They are concerned that the Arboretum's development may impact the “off leash” area and do not want that area reduced.
- They would like to have a circular loop as opposed to a “U” path to walk dogs.

Alice Rand presented for the Fort Williams Charitable Foundation.

- Need to prioritize projects.
- Gave a brief history of the FWCF.
- Discussed their 2 current projects: The Arboretum and the Battery Blair restoration study.
- Their wish is to have the Fort remain as scenic and open as possible.
- Asked Mike McGovern if a bond issue to fund Fort restoration projects was possible.
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Friends of Goddard Mansion was represented by Tom Dowd:

- They envision the Goddard Mansion ruins be utilized for ceremonies, educational events, and theater type events.
- Revenues could be generated by fees for site usage.
- They feel the ruins could be stabilized and a roof could be installed to help with preservation from the elements and to make it a usable venue; that the grounds could be landscaped; and that the tower could possibly be used as an outlook platform.
- Initial financing could be through private donations, grants, federal and state preservation funds.
- The potential for listing the Mansion as an historic structure could help raise funds.
- By September they should have a more detailed concept of their vision.
- Ken Thompson, local historian, also spoke in support of the Mansion. He felt that it should be precede Battery Blair as a priority since the Battery is buried and is protected from the elements and deterioration.

Mike McGovern suggested that the Little League and Community Services should be involved as interested parties.

Bill B thanked all the groups for attending and said their input was very valuable in the crafting of the

Master Plan addendum.

Bob Metcalf called on all present to participate in the on line survey on the Town website.

Goddard Mansion- Friends of GM proposal:

Bill B reconvened the meeting for the Goddard Mansion presentation.

Representing were Beth Wexler, Dick Gilbane, Tom Dowd, and Nancy Bolduc.

Bill gave a brief history of our decision to commit no fund to the Mansion other than to fence it off for safety. He then asked for the groups thoughts.

Tom Dowd said they felt that they could measure the interest in preserving the Mansion by the response to a fund raising effort.

Bob Malley pointed out that abutters, utilities, and access to the Mansion are real issues to be considered prior to preservation itself.

Possibilities for a stabilized Mansion were discussed

Maureen and Erin suggested that maybe the efforts of the Friends of Goddard Mansion should be more defined to the community so that all know what they are doing.

Bill pointed out that no funds could be raised without the FWAC approval, as it is a Town property, and would need to be coordinated with the Town.

Tom reiterated that their concept study should be completed by September of this year.

Bill suggested that the Friend of Goddard Mansion would be invited back to the FWAC after the concept study is done to share the results with us.

Other Business:

Bob reminded the Commission that electronic meetings cannot be held as they are not a public forum. Email should be sent only to the chair and should not be copied to all Commission members.

Bob updated us briefly on the meeting with John Thibodeau, Mike and himself regarding the Business Plan.

They asked John to put together a proposal for us and it would be first delivered to and reviewed by Mike.

Final Public Comment:

None.

Adjournment:

At 9:05 PM Maureen motioned we adjourn and Dan seconded.

The next regular meeting is on July 21st at 6:30 PM.