

# **Town of Cape Elizabeth Fort Williams Advisory Commission**

Meeting Minutes

July 21st, 2011

**Present:**

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, , Erin Grady, Maureen McCarthy, Bill Nickerson (Chair), and Lise Pratt.

**Absent:**

Dan Chase

**Also present:**

Steve Bates (FWCF), John Mitchell (Mitchell & Associates), Bob Metcalf(Mitchell & Associates), Betsy Poulin(Mitchell & Associates), Janet Hoskins (Community Services), Jeff Thoreck (CEHS Athletic Director), Mike Edes (Maine State Police), Jeremy Lombardo (CELL), Dan Sullivan (Pres. CELL).

**Staff:**

Bob Malley.

**Call to order:**

Bill N called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

**Approval of minutes of the 6/16/11 regular meeting:**

Bill B motioned acceptance, Erin seconded, and all approved.

**Public comment for non-agenda items:**

None.

**Master Plan Goals and Objectives- Reps from Cape Elizabeth Little League(CELL), Community Services, and School Athletic Department:**

Bill N summarized the process of preparing and the history of the Master Plan Update.

Bob Malley explained to the Commission that Jeff, Janet, and he were all members of the Cape Elizabeth Fields Usage Committee.

Bob Metcalf showed the group a Power Point presentation that Mitchell and Associates has prepared explaining the purpose of the Master Plan Update.

Jeremy Lombardo spoke first on behalf of CELL:

- Mentioned the usage of Stadium Field and the AA field up next to the rental buildings.
- Complimented on how the fields are always in excellent condition.
- Said there have been no complaints from spectators about the condition of the bleachers.

Dan Sullivan added:

- CELL was very grateful to have these fields for the League's use.
- They definitely needed the use of the fields and wouldn't be able to operate without them.

- 400 to 500 Little Leaguers each year use the Fort fields.
- Additional space would be nice but not expected.
- Have not had any scheduling conflicts, and always check with Community Services and Public Works to be sure no other events scheduled.
- Usually 2 T-ball games and other levels simultaneously occurring.
- There are 5 games going at once on Saturday mornings.
- Parking for parents and spectators is usually in the Parade Field lot, Ship's Cove, and the Old Main Gate, but not a problem issue at this point.

Bob asked about the use of the Multipurpose Field:

Jeff Thoreck said:

- it is not used by the schools during the the school year.
- Primary use is during the summer while other fields are being “rested”.

Janet Hoskins detailed Community Services usage:

- Travel Soccer uses this field almost exclusively.
- Travel Junior Lacrosse uses this field during the spring.
- Junior Cross Country uses this field as well.
- 4 soccer teams can practice at the same time on this field.
- The Turf Field at the high school is the one that is rented out most of the time which makes usage of the Multipurpose field at the Fort a necessity.

Bob Malley added:

- The Multipurpose Field is being “rested” right now but will be back in use again the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of August.
- Parking for this field can be an issue when the Park is busy with visitors.
- Porto-let availability is limited for this area.
- Ship Cove Field has a very thin layer of topsoil so it is not suitable for organized sports.
- Play offs are normally held on the school fields.

John Mitchell asked the groups present if they would send in responses to the questionnaire he had sent out to them.

### **FWCF Report:**

Steve Bates gave us the following FWCF updates:

- New officers have been installed, including Chuck Redman as vice pres., Pat Nicholas as treasurer, and Mary Murray Coleman as secretary. Also, Lois Carlson is heading up the Battery Blair project and Kathryn Bacastow is now a member of the FWCF.
- The Battery Blair funding will be completed by an anonymous challenge gift in December.
- The Garden Tour to support the Arboretum was very successful netting \$30,000+ in proceeds.
- They are finalizing their strategic fund raising plan to complete the Arboretum Cliff Side site.
- The next strategic plan will address the balance of the Arboretum project.
- Caron Zand, a professional fund raiser, has volunteered to help focus their fundraiser efforts.
- Alice and Steve have been discussing hiring an executive director and securing some office space.
- Maine Home and Design was the primary sponsor for the Garden Tour.
- They donated some very professional brochures for the event.
- Around 700 tickets were sold for the Garden Tour.

**Maine State Troopers Association group use request- Sgt Mike Edes:**

Sgt Edes summarized the particulars for their request after giving the Commission a bit of background on himself. He also has previously sent a letter to Bob Malley and the Commission that outlined the particulars of their request:

- The requested date is 9/12/2012, rain or shine.
- The requested site within the Fort is the Parade Ground.
- The event will start at 10:00 AM and the picnic will run from 11:00 AM till 7:00 PM.
- Set up would be before and after the event hour.
- They will have tents set up.
- There will be plastic snow fence set up to contain the event, and keep members of the public from mixing in.
- They are requesting approval to serve beer to their members. No wine or hard liquor.
- Troopers from all over the country will attend.
- There will be 1200 to 1400 attendees.
- Only troopers will attend; no family members.
- There will be camper type vehicles there during the day, but not overnight.
- They would like to use the Parade Grounds parking area as well as the area around the Fire Barn.
- A shuttle bus will be provided to allow off site parking to supplement the limited parking available. Some camper type vehicles would be there during the day as well. These would belong to those troopers who had traveled long distances to attend.
- The Association would like to have our decision by 1/1/2012 in order to continue their planning process.

Bob pointed out that we can fit 300 to 350 cars in the space by the Fire Barn, but they would have to be parked in a very organized pattern.

We have had similar sized parking requirements with the PSO concerts and the Harley Owners Association in the past.

Bill B pointed out that our new rules and fees provide for a per person charge as well as the event charge.

Bill N reminded that we currently have a no alcohol policy so we would have to deal with that in our approval process. He did also add that we have made exceptions in the past for uniformed service groups such as the USCG.

Bill N asked the group to think about this and that it would be on the agenda for our next regular meeting.

**Master Plan working session:**

John Mitchell passed out the draft copy of the Master plan and summarized work done to date on the plan:

- He had an initial meeting with the FWAC.
- He reviewed the 1990 and 20036 plans and updates, plus all prior studies done.
- Reviewed prior study recommendations done and not done.
- Reviewed current conditions within the Park.
- Has yet to tabulate results from the public survey.
- Has prepared a preliminary list of recommendations which focus on parking, pedestrian circulation, historic considerations, natural beauty, revenue generating uses.

Bob reviewed these recommendation with the Committee and the following were discussed:

#### Area 1- the Meadow and Chapel Road:

- 1.1, repair of the Central Power Station. This was very important to Bob and Mike McGovern as it is the first structure you see when entering the Park.
- 1.2, remove understory vegetation along Powers and Wheatly Road. This is everywhere throughout the Park. However, the Arboretum project is addressing many of the locations where it is found.
- 1.3, Installing a round-about at the intersection of Powers Road and Ship Cove parking area. Bob said that pedestrian safety is questionable in the area due to the confusing traffic flow at the intersection and a round-about would help define this better.
- 1.4, expand Ship Cove parking area to incorporate a turn-around area at the end. If the lot is filled to capacity vehicles cannot turn around. This would increase capacity from 47 to 71 spaces and provide for a turn-around.
- 1.5, upgrade the picnic area on the concrete slab and review potential use of a temporary seasonal canopy structure. Current measurements of slab are 60 X 70 feet. Because of its proximity to the ocean shoreland zoning would have to be carefully reviewed.
- 1.6, Review visual appearance of fence enclosures of porto-lets. Current stockade fence is very unsightly.
- 1.9, Remove invasive vegetation along Shore Road through the Chapel Road entrance. This is taking over a lot of the hardwood tree growth area.

#### Area 2- Goddard Mansion to Battery Keyes:

- Install a circular walkway around the present lawn area in front of Battery Keyes to define the pedestrian flow and restore the present lawn area.

#### Area 3- Battery Knoll:

- 3.1- provide an on-going maintenance program to remove invasive vegetation along the seaward side of Battery Knoll. The Arboretum is removing most of the vegetation along the Cliff Walk even though it may not be a part of the Cliff Site.
- Erin suggested that it might be very helpful to have an overlay of the Arboretum sites over sketches of those Park areas that are the subject of John's recommendations.
- 3.3, restrict pedestrian circulation over areas that are susceptible to erosion. "Social paths" have formed to provide a more direct route to the Cliff Walk. These promote erosion. Need to control pedestrian flow.

#### Area 4- Cliff Walk:

- 4.2, evaluate path safety along the top of the slope and identify safety improvements or modifications to the path location. Bob commented that many people climb down onto the rocks which poses a tremendous safety hazard. John added that he feels there are a few fairly dangerous areas where the path comes close to the edge of the cliff.

#### Area 6-The Green and Battery Garesche:

- 6.1, Review the potential opportunity of the southerly end of the Green for special events. John referred to the Chase-Leavitt presentation we had received. Bill B objected to this usage and said it would greatly detract from the area. Bill N referenced the existing shelter at SMCC and how unsightly it is during the off-season and how imposing it is when in use. Bob suggested that a possible location for a 2<sup>nd</sup> picnic shelter might be behind Battery Garesche.

#### Area 7- The Pond and Parade Grounds:

- 7.4, Reconstruct or remove existing stone stairs leading from the Pond to Farnsworth Road. Bob pointed out that we want to maintain these stairs and not remove them.
- 7.13, review the feasibility of a new picnic shelter at the westerly end area of the overflow parking area. John said there were excellent views of Ram Island Light from this elevated area. Bob pointed out that Wheatly Road was very narrow and 2 cars cannot pass in most areas of the road creating a severe traffic flow problem.

#### Area 8, Officers Row:

- 8.11, Evaluate the current picnic shelter fireplace for structural integrity of the firebox and safe operating conditions. Bob said that this is done on an annual basis currently.
- Discussion also followed about handicapped access and parking to and near the Interpretive Display on Kitty's point, and better pedestrian access to the area by upgrading the existing pathway

#### Area 9- Battery Blair and Central Parking Area:

- Discussion followed about upgrading the current parking area and the possible locations for a Visitor's Center in the area. Bob pointed out that any of this would be subject to the outcome of the Battery Blair restoration study as this would impact this entire area due to the expanse of the Battery that is currently buried.

#### **Park Update:**

Bob updated us on the following:

- The Pond area looks great. There is no duck weed or algae problem and there appears to be goldfish living in the Pond.
- The concession program seems to be going well. The vendors are pleased with the results. And there have been no trash issues. There is also no illegal parking by patrons while accessing the vendors. There is consideration being given to relocating the vendor by the flagpole next year.
- LP Murray is doing the Cliff Side grading and clearing over the next 3 weeks. The Murray family is donating all the stone dust and the stone for the 200 foot wall in the Cliff Site area.
- Next Thursday at 2 PM bids will be opened for the stone wall and fencing work by the Tennis Courts.
- There is a photo-shoot scheduled for 8/9/2011 by Chadwicks Clothing of Boston.
- We should be receiving VIP passes for the Beach to Beacon events. These are solely for our use and cannot be given away.
- An additional dog waste station is being installed in the dog walking area.
- A hard copy of the Existing Conditions and Survey Plan (including utilities, boundaries, etc.) was received this past Monday.
- Donations in the donation boxes are increasing this year. Erin suggested we have the bus tour drivers announce that access to the Park is free and the existence of the donation boxes.
- The grass is getting dry due to the heat and lack of rain.
- Greater Portland Landmarks has asked any interested members of the FWAC to participate in a focus group.

#### **Other Business:**

- John Thibodeau has submitted a Fort Business Plan proposal and Mike has agreed to the cost, \$25,000.
- Mike feels that the FWAC should come up with a list of priorities that John can focus on as

opposed to having brainstorming sessions. This could result in much extra time and expense otherwise.

- Bill N pointed out that we should have our Council Liaison (Jim Walsh present at more meetings. He feels that some of the issues we have experienced, such as the disconnect on bus fees, could have been avoided.

**Final Public Comment:**

None.

**Adjourn:**

Frank moved to adjourn and Erin seconded. All approved.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

**Next regular meeting:**

An August meeting is now scheduled for Wednesday 8/17/2011 at 6:00 PM.