

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

Meeting Minutes  
August 17th, 2011

## **Present:**

Frank Butterworth, Dan Chase , Erin Grady, Bill Nickerson (Chair), and Lise Pratt.

## **Absent:**

Bill Brownell, Maureen McCarthy,

## **Also present:**

Steve Bates (FWCF), Mary Hodgkins (FWCF), John Mitchell (Mitchell & Associates), Bob Metcalf(Mitchell & Associates), Betsy Poulin(Mitchell & Associates), Jim Walsh (Town Council Liaison),

## **Staff:**

Bob Malley.

## **Call to order:**

Bill N called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

## **Approval of minutes of the 7/21/11 regular meeting:**

Following several correction Erin motioned acceptance, Lise seconded, and all approved.

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

None.

## **FWCF Report:**

Steve Bates gave us the following update:

- The FWCF is pursuing a master fund raising plan to provide for:
  - 1) The total Arboretum project.
  - 2) Operating funds for the FWCF.
  - 3) Capital funds for other projects.
- They are negotiating a lease for office space in the center Cape Elizabeth in order to raise visibility of the FWCF.
- Lynn Schafer will head up a committee to create a master plan for the Arboretum.
- 5 of the Arboretum's pods are located in the "unprotected" area of the Park so they will be looking to have them relocated so as not to impair the ability to raise funds for them.
- They are considering leaving some pods for students to work on as a project.
- Debbie Kilroy, a member of the steering committee, is working on a marketing plan for consistency in promoting the Arboretum to the public.
- Bob cautioned that if we relocate sites we have to be careful not to necessitate Planning Board re-approval. He said that Bruce Smith and Maureen McGovern in Planning and Code Enforcement would give their guidance.

- John Mitchell added that 4 of the sites within the “unprotected” area can be considered as test sites. All contain invasive plant species so they may be a possible testing ground to deal with invasives. John volunteered to check with Bruce Smith of Code Enforcement to see if he thought Planning Board approval would be required.
- Some of the recent donations of note include a \$5,000 and a \$25,000 donation. There is also a challenge donation pending to be given as the final \$40,000 of the total amount to complete the Cliff Side site goal, which they hope to achieve by December 2011.

### **Master Plan Working Session/ Format for the Master Plan Public Forum on September 21<sup>st</sup>.**

Betsy Poulin reviewed the results of the Fort Williams Park Master Plan Online Survey:

- The survey was conducted from 6/7/2011 to 7/22/2011.
- There were 394 respondents.
- She sent a PDF file of the responses to Bob Malley.
- The survey results will be tabulated more completely prior to the public hearing on 7/21/2011.
- Peoples safety concerns seemed to focus on the Cliff Walk, the bleachers, the batteries, and Traffic.
- Many people skipped questions 7,8,12,16,17,20,21,and 24.
- Bob Malley asked if we could get a chart on how long respondents to question 23, “Are you a resident of Cape Elizabeth”, had been residents of our town.

John Mitchell gave us an abbreviated version of last month's slide show that addressed questions that we had at that time:

The areas he focused on were: 1) The Powers Road round-about, 2) Ship Cove parking, 3) Ship Cove swing set relocation, 4) Shore land zoning regulations impacting the Ship Cove concrete picnic area pad, 5) The Arboretum sites.

Comments by the Commission members about areas of focus 1 through 4 were as follow:

- Consideration should be given to moving the parking lot slightly toward Shore Road to create a natural berm to hide the lot from the view toward the ocean over the Meadow and adding a walkway between the parking lot and Ship Cove picnic area to provide for safer pedestrian access from the parking lot to the Cliff Walk area.
- Trees had been added to the sketch showing the proposed round-about.
- Should yield signs be incorporated to direct the flow of traffic.
- The width of the road circumference needs to accommodate buses and truck, and especially fire truck.
- John noted that round-abouts had specifics design guidelines that need to be followed.
- Possibly moving all parking out of this area and locate it on the perimeter of the Fort.
- If we add additional parking to the proposed turn around area will we be increasing the number of visitor to exceed Park capacity.
- Bruce Smith had said that the pad is legal as a non conforming structure. It can be repaired and maintained on its current foot print. A roof can be erected over the slab but no walls can be constructed. If it is reconstructed the repairs cannot exceed 50% of the market value prior to when it was damaged. The DEP would have to be consulted if we were to propose building a permanent roof.
- When asked if the picnic slab would fall apart if not maintained Bob Malley said it most likely would not as it has survived quite well to date.

John Mitchell continued on focus area 5, the Arboretum sites. Some specific needs to be addressed included:

- Eroded pathways in the Goddard Mansion to Battery Keyes area.
- Preventative measures should be taken to make certain areas of the Cliff Walk less hazardous to pedestrians. He will come up with proposals to address these danger points.
- 13 additional parking spaces could be added outside the old main gate by designating them with striping.
- The sidewalk should be extended across the current turn around near the entrance to the Cliff Walk in order to improve pedestrian safety and keep people out of the roadway.
- An additional picnic shelter could be added above the overflow parking near the Fire Barn. Near the Officers Row Buildings a walkway could be added to improve passage from Harrison Road to Farnsworth Road.
- Expand the number of parking spaces in the current Picnic Shelter parking lot.
- Add trees and plantings to break up the expanse of the Central Parking area.
- Possibly locate an additional picnic shelter adjacent to Battery Garesche and the Multipurpose Field.
- Potential event sites were suggested including the Meadow, the Parade Field, the overflow parking area, Battery Knoll, the Lighthouse Green, Battery Blair, and the Multipurpose Field. After discussion of view, utility availability, and impact on the Park it was decided to pursue the overflow parking area and the Multipurpose Field as potential locations.
- Potential visitor center sites were also listed including Battery Blair, the Maintenance Building, Humphreys Road, and an Officers Row rental building. The need for a visitors' center was questioned so it was suggested that we decide on appropriate uses of a visitors center before we select a location.

Bill N said at this point we should decide what of the alternatives John has listed for us were most important and then go back to John for further exploration. He mentioned that we do have John Thibodeau getting ready to look at revenue generation possibilities, so this would give us further guidance in what alternatives we should be pursuing.

John Mitchell gave us an outline of the 9/21/2011 public forum and discussed the format:

- The FWAC will run the forum.
  - We will give an overview of the Master Plan Update and the scope of work and goals. This should take 5 to 10 minutes.
  - Bill N will then introduce Mitchell and Associates to do an in depth review of the process, summarize interested parties' input, and solicit public comment.
  - John said the online survey results will be posted prior to the forum.
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- Bob Malley said he had contacted some of the interested party representatives and asked them not to use this forum as a platform to present their goals but rather let it be just public comment

session.

- Bob Malley said we should get the list of recommendations in the public forum outline out to the public 2 weeks prior to the forum.
- Mitchell and Associates will put this information together and get it out on the Town website prior to the forum.
- Jim Walsh suggested that the Town Council be invited to attend the forum, and will do this at the next Council meeting.

### **Park Update:**

Bob Malley advised the following:

- The Beach to Beacon event was a great success. The group were good stewards of the Park and left all in great shape. Also, next year is the 15<sup>th</sup> annual and some commemoration ideas are being discussed.
- The vendors are please with the sites and the results this year. There have been no trash problems.
- The wall repair by the old main gate is going well. It will cost \$13,000 vs. the budgeted \$30,000.
- More wall will be repaired near the upper tennis courts and the fencing around those courts is scheduled to be replaced on 8/29/2011.
- The Chadwicks of Boston photo shoot took place as scheduled for a \$1,000 fee.
- The grass is greening up well after the hot and dry spell we had.
- The Parks crew and the Rangers are doing a tremendous job in their respective duties.

### **Other Business:**

Bill N asked Jim Walsh if the Council had any feedback for us on any of the issues since Mike updates the Council on the Park status at Council meetings.

Jim said that one of the vendors is involved in a national contest of some kind dealing with vending.

Bill N suggested that since 2 of the Councilors are opposed to bus fees it may be wise to have some input as to their thoughts on revenue generation ideas in general before we engage the services of John Thibodeau and the associated expense.

### **Group Use:**

Bob said we really need to have a discussion on the Park alcohol policy in general before we approve the request for the State Troopers' picnic.

- Income potential needs to be assessed with respect to allowing alcohol.
- Lise asked if we need to review State law in terms of alcohol policy?
- Bob said we should consult with chief Neil Williams.
- Bill N suggested we invite him to our next meeting to discuss this. Bob will invite him.
- Lise asked if we could have a field trip in he Park to view the areas we are discussing in the Master Plan update.

- Bob agreed and that we can meet at the Park 2 hours prior to our 9/15/2011 meeting
- Lise asked about current budget and expense items. Bob said he will have an update for us at one of our next meetings.

**Adjourn:**

Erin motioned we adjourn and Dan seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Our next meeting will begin at 5:00 PM on 9/15/2011. We will meet at the Parade Field parking lot for a site walk, and then move to the Public Works Building.