

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 15th, 2011

Note: A site walk was held, commencing at 5:00 PM and concluding at 6:35 PM, to visit various locations under consideration in the master plan. Present were: Dan Chase, Erin Grady, Bob Malley, John Mitchell, Bill Nickerson, and Lise Pratt.

Present:

Dan Chase, Erin Grady, Maureen McCarthy, Bill Nickerson (Chair), and Lise Pratt.

Absent:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth.

Also present:

Steve Bates (FWCF), John Mitchell (Mitchell & Associates), Bob Metcalf (Mitchell & Associates), Betsy Poulin (Mitchell & Associates), Lynn Shaffer (Arboretum).

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to Order:

Bill N called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Approval of August 17, 2011 Meeting Minutes:

Following several corrections Erin motioned acceptance, Dan seconded, and all approved.

Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda:

Steve Bates delivered an inquiry from the Classic Car Club of America, New England Region to host a classic car show in June 2012. He had received a call from Glen Davis, a member of the club, on 9/14. The event would be open to the public and no admission would be charged. Approximately 30 cars would be on display; they anticipate attracting perhaps 200 people. This is case where commission should recommend specific site. Steve will get back to Glen, advising him to call Bob for process/fee information; request will be on next regular meeting agenda for further discussion and action.

Arboretum Master Plan Revisions:

Lynn Shaffer (CE resident, architect, member of Arboretum Steering Committee) presented a map showing proposed revisions to the Arboretum sites. Fifteen (15) sites had been previously approved. Five (5) of those sites are in the “unprotected area” of the park; they believe it will be challenging to raise money to improve areas that are not permanently protected. The committee is now reviewing and revisiting the sites and is proposing revisions to their master plan. Lynn walked the group through the proposed changes on a map. Some new sites were proposed, and some original sites were expanded, moved or incorporated into another site. In some cases, services of a landscape architect will be needed; in others not (services of contractor will suffice). The 5 “unprotected” sites will be removed from the list, but would become test sites where they will test methods of controlling invasive species such as knotweed, bittersweet, and

black swallowwort. The total number of sites under the revised plan remains 15. The proposed plan includes a series of pathways that create loops; many sections of the proposed pathways already exist. They are raising endowment funds for each site as part of the fundraising effort; these funds are for the ongoing maintenance of the sites so that the town will be responsible only for the cost of mowing.

Cliffside site: Fundraising continues. The preparation phase is largely complete (as the site walkers had just witnessed); this fall they hope to treat the stubborn patch of knotweed on the southern end of the embankment along Ocean Road and install the stone wall.

The sequence of site development is being worked on now as part of the master plan. However, Lynn indicated the two sites on either side of the Cliffside site would likely be a priority. Plans for these are controlling invasives and planting native species; no need for landscape architect services anticipated. They are hoping to partner with the town in this effort. Children's garden would also likely be one of the early ones developed. They have been in discussion with the Rhododendron Society about an in-kind donation of material and labor; location TBD.

Motion was made by Lise to accept the revised plan as proposed. Maureen seconded, and all approved.

Master Plan Update – Public Forum Format

The public forum meeting, for further public comment on the park's updated master plan, is scheduled for Wednesday, September 21st at 7:30 in Council Chambers, Town Hall. Commissioners asked to arrive no later than 7:15 PM.

Preparation for meeting: John Mitchell distributed documents his team had developed, including an introductory piece, an outline of process/recommendations, and a summary of survey results. Commissioners were asked to submit any comments ASAP to Bill N, who would convey to John so they can be posted online Friday or Monday. Also posted will be the 32-pg version of the survey results tabulation. Mitchell & Assoc will have PowerPoint slides to correlate with outline. Commission's role is to listen and take notes; may ask questions. Members of public will go to podium to make comments; 3-minute limit. Other options for submitting comments: 1) comment card available at meeting; 2) email to Bob Malley.

Follow-up items: 1) There is a revised draft of the 32-page summary of survey results. Betsey will email to all. 2) Commission asked if open field area between Wheatly and Fogg Road (currently used for overflow parking) was adequate size for athletic field. Bob Metcalf reported the minimum size of a youth soccer field is 165'x300' (the current multipurpose field is 220'x320'). He distributed a drawing of those dimensions overlaid onto the area in question. It fit but to very edges, absorbing the road width and not allowing any room for spectators; it was also not the recommended orientation. It was concluded this was not a viable option for this area. 3) Bob Metcalf reported on specifications of roundabouts, as questions had been asked last month about the one being recommended for consideration for intersection of Powers Road, Ocean Road and the Ship Cove parking area.

FWCF Report

Steve Bates reported there was little change since last month, as they had no board meeting in August. Arboretum: They anticipate completion of Phase I (Cliffside site) fundraising by

12/31/11. They have \$150K still to raise, but have a \$40K challenge pledge to apply to that if they can raise the other \$110K. Total Cliffside budget is \$350-375K. They are in new office space in CE but not operating from there yet; Unum donated some furnishings. They anticipate 1) raised visibility through the new physical presence and 2) hiring a staff member, either development professional or executive director. Battery Blair: They have all but \$5K for the feasibility study in hand; that \$5K has been pledged and they anticipate receiving it before year-end. Total ultimately raised for study (including last \$5K) is \$36,600; \$18,000 of that is coming from the Foundation.

Group Use Policy Discussion:

At the July meeting, we received a request from the Maine State Troopers to host an event at the park. Because they want to serve beer, we would need to either change our current alcohol policy or make an exception to that policy (as we did in March of this year for the Coast Guard's Change of Command ceremony and at a Governors Conference in the 1980's) to approve this event as proposed. The event will take place on Thursday, September 13th from 11AM to 7PM. They are expecting 1,200-1,400 people as well as 150-200 private vehicles and several campers. They will not charge for the beer, and they propose serving it "via a tap truck and monitored by assigned members of the MSTA."

A discussion ensued as to whether we were in favor of changing the current alcohol policy, and if so with what stipulations, as well about the Troopers' request. Change in policy: Many felt that, in light of our charge from the Council to develop revenue sources for the park (and with bus/parking fees taken off the table), fees for special events (e.g. weddings, corporate outings) needed to increase substantially, and to accomplish that would require allowing alcoholic consumption. Information and ideas from CE Police Chief Neil Williams (who had been invited to this meeting to help enlighten us on the liquor laws, but was unable to attend) and Bill B (also absent) were considered. Most would support changing the current policy to allow alcohol if under controlled circumstances. However, it was generally agreed that it would be premature to change the policy before the master plan and business plan were completed. The consensus was that if the policy were changed in the future, specific controls should be put in place and specific conditions would have to be met to acquire a permit for an event serving alcohol.

Controls/conditions to consider might include:

- The applicant must engage a licensed provider to supply and serve the alcohol (check with town's legal council on liability issues to ensure this is all that is necessary to protect the town from any liability exposure). Name of provider and proof of liability insurance is submitted with the application.
- The event must occur in a specific, restricted area – e.g. enclosed with fencing with one entry/exit point – and all alcohol must be kept and consumed in this area. The entry/exit point will have a sign saying "No Alcohol Beyond This Point." The applicant will hire a Police Officer to monitor that entry/exit point throughout the event.
- The event will take place only during daylight hours (regular park hours).
- The event is private (not open to the public)
- A surcharge (based on number of attendees) is levied on events requesting permission to serve alcohol.

Troopers' request: If we approved the Troopers' request without changing the policy, it would be considered an exception (based on precedence of uniformed groups) or a pilot/trial case. We would require a licensed provider, fencing, and other stipulations and would set the fee based on

the “people intensive” rate. Bob M will contact Sgt. Edes to see if they are still interested, in which case we will include the request on next month’s agenda for further discussion and action.

Park Update:

Bob Malley reported the following:

- The park received 1st place as Best Dog-Friendly Park, a Maine Sunday Telegram’s Readers Choice award.
- The stone wall repair by the old main gate is complete. It is a great job and well under budget (\$13,000 vs. the budgeted \$30,000).
- The fencing around the upper tennis courts is completed and looks terrific. The stone wall below those courts will be repaired later this year.
- The History Channel was in the park on a Sunday recently to film an interview. No charge because only there an hour. Bob noted that they gave very little notice and they absorbed a lot of his (and other town employees’) time. This kind of thing (last minute requests, no fee charged) can take up considerable time with no revenue to the town; he suggests we consider charging an administration fee in such cases in the future.

FY 2012 Budget/Revenue Report

Copies of the 2011-2012 FWP capital fund budget and revenues to date (2 mos: Jul/Aug) were distributed. Revenues for picnic shelter/gazebo seemed low to him (\$2,247 of budgeted \$20,000 = 11.24%), given it covered two of the busiest months of the year; he will check to see if all revenue had been posted. Donations are coming in nicely (\$4,520 of \$8,000 budgeted = 56.51%). Beach to Beacon has paid. Concessions will be higher; not all fees have been paid. The new extension to the guard rail at the park entrance is the only expense out of capital this year to date (\$3,780 vs. \$5,000 budgeted).

Other Business:

None

Final Public Comment:

None

Adjournment:

Erin motioned we adjourn and Dan seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 PM.

Our next meeting will be the Public Forum: Wednesday, September 21st at 7:30 PM in Council Chambers in Town Hall.

Our next regular meeting will be Thursday, October 20th at 6:30 PM at the Public Works Building.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lise Pratt (in Frank Butterworth’s absence)