

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

Present:

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

Absent:

None.

Also present:

Steve Bates (FWCF), John Mitchell (Mitchell & Associates), Jim Walsh (Town Council Liaison).

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

Bill N called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Approval of minutes of the 11/17/2011 regular meeting:

Bill B motioned approval and Erin seconded; all approved.

Public comment for non-agenda items:

Jim Walsh informed us that he was voted by the council to be the liaison to the FWAC once again this year. Jim told us that the Council appreciates all of the work that the FWAC has done and that they feel we have demonstrated a good sense of stewardship of the Park.

Bill N expressed the Commission's appreciation of Jim's support and felt the continuity of representation was good.

FWCF Report:

Steve Bates gave us the following update:

- Ed Murphy of the Portland Press Herald was the author of the Battery Blair Study article that appeared in that paper. Steve said that Ed did a tremendous job with this article, especially with only 12 hours notice prior to the copy deadline.
- Bob Malley has been acting as liaison between Renner and Woodworth and the FWCF to get the Battery Blair Study started. There will be a kick off meeting for the Study in January and Bob Malley, Mike McGovern, Steve Bates, and a Commission member volunteer will be involved. The purpose is to review the scope of the project and determine a starting date.
- The Arboretum fund raising is on target and should be complete near the 12/31/2011 target date. There has been a very favorable response from the individual large donors that were approached.
- The Annual Appeal fund raising mailing is in process but as of yet there are no results compiled.
- The planting is still on schedule for the spring. The items to be installed will be selected in February.
- The FWCF steering committee met 2 weeks ago and decided that the entrance to the magazine

that had been unearthed on Battery Knoll should be plugged and covered over. Skip Murray working on the proper method to accomplish this.

- The South Portland Cape Elizabeth Rotary Club has pledged funds to pay for the design work for the Children's Garden, as a part of the Club's 50th Anniversary celebration.
- The Rhododendron Society has committed to work on the Rhododendron Site.
- The Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens has indicated that they may take charge of creating one of the sites.
- Karen Zand will become a member of the FWCF Board in January.

Bill N added that one of the stone walls at the Cliff Side site has been completed and the second is in the process of being built.

Park Update:

Bob provided the following updates:

- The south side of the Headlight fence was replaced as it needed repair.
- The USCG has put a holiday wreath on the lighthouse.
- When asked about a possible helicopter landing near the Headlight Bob said he was not aware of any plans by the military or otherwise to do that.

Use Request: GM Bus Owners of New England:

Bob advised us that he never received an email from the Bus Owners prior to his vacation notifying us that they wanted to attend the regular FWAC meeting. They did recently send him some letters of recommendation in support of their use request.

A discussion of the request by the Commission followed:

- Bob reviewed the Park rules and regulations and said the we have never really allowed a group overnight stay in the Park except for the Boy Scout event we did allow once.
- The impact on the grounds was discussed by the Commission.
- Individual comments by the Commission members were mostly opposed to the request. There was much concern about the precedent that might be set by allowing this event.
- Bill B moved and Erin seconded that we deny the request. The vote to deny was unanimous.

Review of the Master Plan Draft:

John Mitchell passed out an update to the Prioritization section that reviewed and refined costs for several of the recommendations. Discussion and comments followed:

- Lise commended John on the quality of the report and said it was great work.
- Pedestrian access improvements at the Main Gate had not yet been addressed but will be. It was pointed out that there is a pedestrian access gate near the Main Gate but it is not that noticeable.
- The Bleachers were not mentioned as a recommendation in the Update. John suggested that the condition of the Bleachers be evaluated periodically as a safety concern and be addressed as needed. The prior study can be included in Section 7 of the Master Plan Update.
- Battery Blair and the Goddard Mansion were not included as recommendations because they are the subject of studies by independent groups.
- There was some sentiment for and against including Battery Blair as a recommendation in the Update.
- Bill B, Erin, Maureen, and Dan all made a point of individually thanking John and his associates for a job well done on the Update and all of the preparation involved.

John then reviewed cost updates:

- Priority #3 costs, Group Reception Area, include improvements, feasibility study, utility expense, and soft costs.
- Costs overall were updated from values provided by area contractors, along with the addition of soft costs. John pointed out that he had recently done a picnic shelter project at Popham Beach so he felt very comfortable with his estimates he gave us.
- Priority #2, the Picnic Slab, was inspected and findings were that the concrete pad is not serviceable and needs to be removed and replaced. The costs for this site also include a railing for pedestrian safety where wall height to the beach surface increases.
- Priority #4, Cliff Walk Safety, includes the addition of boulders or granite blocks as anchoring bases for railing stanchions to hold a railing to prevent accidental falls. The railing would be such that it would not obstruct the scenic vista.
- Priority #6, The Central Power Station, involves removing vegetation and sealing the roof with some form of bituminous covering to prevent moisture penetration.
- John mentioned that Priority #7, the intersection of Powers Road and the entrance to the Ship Cove parking lot, includes widening the sidewalk, adding a granite curb, and moving the road 18 inches away from the water to allow the sidewalk widening and to enhance pedestrian safety. Costs will have to be added in for these improvements.

Discussion by Commissions members followed:

- Jim Walsh asked if the Commission would consider naming opportunities as a way to fund some of the projects.
- Dan pointed out that we were looking to the Picnic Slab, an additional shelter, and the Group Use Area as income opportunities for the Park.
- Bill B wanted to be sure that we are all of the understanding that by prioritizing recommendations we are not prohibiting ourselves from completing these in a totally different order.
- Lise asked about a plan for updating tree planting throughout the Park. Bill B advised that this had been discussed about a year ago with the thought of planting a replacement tree each time a tree has to be taken down. Bob added that the Arboretum will meet some of the needs to address plantings within the Park.
- The use of gravel vs. pavement surfaces in parking areas was discussed and the general feeling was that gravel is preferable. John will revise his Update summary to include this.
- John pointed out that his soft cost figures included estimates for Planning Board approvals, survey expenses, and design fees, but not additional engineering studies, architectural design fees, soils investigation expenses, and structural engineering fees. Jim Walsh asked if there were any industry standard averages that could be included for these unlisted costs. John said that would not be calculable.
- Bob said that Mike McGovern would like a finished document to go to the Town Council for a January workshop. The time frame would most likely be a finished product delivered to the Council at their 1/9/2012 meeting, a workshop attended by the Council, FWAC, and Mitchell and Associates on 1/16/2012, a Council vote to accept or reject the document at their 2/9/2012 meeting, and then scheduling a public hearing.
- The workshop will most likely be in the Jordan conference room, with a PowerPoint presentation along with the hard copy document.
- Lise asked if all of the responses could be included in the Public Survey appendix in the Update document. John point out that many of these responses were in narrative form and could not be quantified in the Survey appendix. Bill N said that he did include an overview of these

responses in the Executive Summary of the Update document. John said there would be a notation made in the Public Survey appendix of the document that would make readers aware that the actual survey results would be available on the Town website.

Maureen motioned and Lise seconded that the FWAC accept the Master Plan Update to the 2003 Master Plan, as prepared by Mitchell and Associates with the addenda from tonight's meeting included. Approval was unanimous.

Vendor Concession Sub-committee Meeting- Review Draft:

Bob reviewed the sub-committee update to the Vendor Plan. Some of the items that were updated were as follow:

- The previous Battery Knoll location (Permit Site "C") has been switched to an area adjacent to, but below the Interpretive Panels at Kitty's Point for 2012.
- Generators that are used must now meet noise restrictions approved by the Town.
- Permits for sites A, B, and C are now offered for the entire season and are \$4,000 each. Site D, to be located at Ship Cove, is \$2500 for the season. A set up pad is being created by the Park staff to accommodate this new site.
- Some of the language in the Vendor Program document was revised to make it easier to read and clear up any ambiguities.
- Preference on site selection and permit renewal will be given to vendors who made an effort to present a good image to the public during the prior season.
- Jim Walsh asked how the aesthetics of the Vendor cart were checked ahead of time, to which Bob advised that 2 photos of the cart were required as a part of the application process.
- After the Commission's approval the Vendor Program will go to the Town Council for their acceptance in January.

Lise motioned and Dan seconded that we accept the new proposal as drafted. Approval was unanimous.

FY 2013 Budget Development:

Bob reviewed the Budget development process:

- The Commission should be thinking about how much we want to spend in the upcoming year.
- The Maintenance budget will be able to address some of the improvements that need to be done.
- Upgrading the Fire Station is a priority for maintenance projects.
- The Capital Fund balance as of 6/30/2011 is \$85,983.
- Bob clarified "budgeted" vs. "best estimates" when used in the budget preparation process. He pointed out that "best estimate" is based on his judgment from prior budget periods and today's costs.
- Bob, Bill N and other Commission members who volunteer will get together to come up with a list of projects recommended to be undertaken as capital improvements for this coming year. This list will be presented at our next regular meeting.
- Bob advised that the maintenance budget will be focusing on the repairs at the Tennis Courts, the Fire Station, fences, stone walls, and other necessary items that need upgrading and repairs.
- Bob advised that Greg Marles' plan is to have the Officers Row buildings 100% occupied by this time next year.
- Bob noted that the annual Operating Budget is between \$250,000 and \$300,000.

Lise handed out and reviewed the future planning/budgeting tool she had prepared to help in the process of managing our financial resources over the long term (5 years as a suggestion) to accomplish

the smaller projects we have planned, yet still be able to save for larger projects in the future.

Bus/Trolley Fee Meeting Update:

Bob updated the Commission on this issue:

- Bob, Mike, Jean Gross, and Greg Gordon of the of the local bus line servicing the cruise ships met to discuss bus fees. Greg offered to do the invoicing for all of the buses, and relieve the Town of that responsibility, in return for a reduced fee for his company. He brings in between 400 and 500 buses per year. A meeting with the trolley companies and Jean McGurn, who handles the foliage tours, has yet to take place.
- To deal with the “rogue bus” issue Mike suggested that there be a “greeter” at the Headlight to help direct people to places within the Park as well as promote local businesses. This “greeter” could also monitor the “rogues buses” and keep track of plate numbers, etc.

Final Public Comment:

None.

Bill N took this opportunity to thank Maureen for her service to the Commission as she will be completing her term this year and this was her last meeting. He recounted all she had done and that her father was a member of the Commission as well.

Don Head will fill the position vacated by Maureen.

Bill N also reminded that at our next meeting:

- We will have to elect a Commission Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.
- The Commission will also have to come up with a new draft of the Group Use Policy to incorporate criteria for allowing alcoholic beverages within the Park.
- The Commission may want to establish a finite number of large groups that will be allowed in the Park annually.

Adjournment:

Maureen moved and Dan seconded adjournment at 9:05.