

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 29th, 2012

Present:

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

Absent: None

Also present:

Steve Bates (FWF), John Mitchell and Sashie Misner from Mitchell & Associates

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

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

Approval of minutes of the October 18, 2012 regular meeting:

Bill B motioned approval, as amended. Erin seconded. All approved.

Public comment for items not on the agenda: None.

Fort Williams Foundation Update: (Given by Steve Bates, FWF Board President)

- Battery Blair: Bob would give study update later in agenda. Study budget cap is \$36,600; invoices to date total \$21,100 and study is now nearly complete; balance due hard to predict.
- Arboretum: A) The Steering Committee (ASC) is now Lynn Shaffer and Kathryn Bacastow as co-chairs. Lynn will run meetings and handle organizational issues; Kathryn will focus on fundraising and helping with FWF assessment issues. B) Two future events are planned: 1) booth at Portland Flower Show, Mar 6-10; 2) in lieu of Garden Tour, a summer outdoor Friday PM party followed by a Saturday open garden visit at same location, both days funded by ticket and brochure advertising sales. C) Four issues for future discussion with FWAC: 1) naming opportunities; 2) signage; 3) control of group use at Cliffside; and 4) custodial/trash responsibilities at Cliffside and future sites.
- The annual appeal letter (from FWF and ASC) is being mailed this week.
- Their internal assessment is still a work in progress. FWF has four subgroups on developing roles and responsibilities to be largely assumed by the umbrella organization: fundraising, finance, marketing, and administration. ASC will assist in these areas, but will be primary in project operations with subcommittees, including design and implementation, horticulture, education, and volunteers.
- New board members include Chris Straw and Bob Ayotte.

Battery Blair Feasibility Study Update:

The draft engineering feasibility study report was received by email from Renner Woodworth on November 7 and immediately distributed to FWAC members and others for comment. Two comments

have been received to date (emails via Steve, forwarded to all), one noting that design fees, permitting fees, and “next steps” were not included in cost estimates. Steve commented that FWF would likely take on only one major project at a time; the Arboretum project timeline is under discussion still. Other comments: the tone should be neutral (“could”) rather than promoting the project (“would”, “will”); grading plan needs accompanying narrative to explain the graphic; there is a lot of history and not a lot of new information. Bob commented the site presents significant grading challenges. This study must be complete by year-end. FWAC members will then consider this project within the other priorities of the master plan. Additional comments to be sent to Bob by December 7th; he will contact Renner Woodworth with feedback for revisions in final study report document.

Children’s Garden Design Overview: (Given by John Mitchell and Sashie Misner)

John and Sashie shared in presenting the conceptual design, identifying and describing the ten proposed elements. They will be getting into more detail over the coming weeks. The site is located north of the pond. It is about 80,000 square feet (just under 2 acres), offering lots of character and diversity (open and dense areas, nice topography, interesting species, and views). Design competition requirements included 8’ wide paths (ADA) and bathroom facilities. The ten design elements include a maze, a lighthouse and keeper’s garden, a fairy house, a bird nest/tree overlook, a stream, and several seating areas. The stream will be fed by a pump circulating water from the pond; it will be shut off during the winter months. Feedback from FWAC members included: 1) concern that visitors would be more likely to enter the site from the old park entrance (off Shore Rd at the pond) rather than the “lighthouse entrance” as proposed – and that this would add strain to the limited parking there; 2) the bathrooms would have to be available year-round, adding to maintenance; 3) safety of elements, e.g. heights of tree overlook, water (stream); safety re: adult supervision/control of children. All elements are designed to meet safety requirements of a typical playground; the design is programmed for toddler through age 12, but can accommodate adults. The fundraising goal for this site is about \$400,000 and includes an endowment component for annual maintenance and perpetual care. The design will conclude this winter, with bidding following in the spring. The final timing of the project, however, is contingent on fundraising.

John and Sashie suggested coming back in December with more details for another check-in before proceeding further. FWAC members agreed there was no need for that, but requested a review of the final design plan before it is presented to Town Council.

Park and Projects Update: Given by Bob Malley.

- The Group Use Policy and Fee Schedule were approved by the Town Council in November.
- John Mitchell and Bob attended the Planning Board’s 11/20 meeting; the PB approved the proposed site improvement projects. Bob will work with John on construction drawings and bidding documents. Goal is for project construction to start in April and conclude mid-July.
- The leaves have been picked up; the Park looks great.
- Jeanne Gross and Mike McGovern will get a bus/trolley report to us soon (in time for budgeting).
- The lettering has been installed on the Cliffside donation box.

2013 Concession Program

Bill B and Erin volunteered to continue FWAC reps on concession program sub-committee. RFP will be sent out in January. The fee for Ship Cove Beach (Site D) may be reduced in light of construction activity in that area during early part of season.

Other Business:

- Next month, we will commence the draft budgeting process and elect officers.
- Heartfelt thanks from all to Dan Chase for his eight years of FWAC service. Dan expressed gratification in seeing the changes and improvements over his tenure.

Final Public Comment: None.

Adjournment:

Motion was made to adjourn by Dan, seconded by Erin. All approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 17th at 6:30 PM at the Public Works Facility.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lise Pratt, Secretary