

TO: Cape Elizabeth Town Council (Town)
FROM: Fort Williams Park Foundation (Foundation)
DATE: March 30, 2018
SUBJECT: Name Change Request for Circular Stone Bandstand



The Fort Williams Park Foundation hereby requests from the Town of Cape Elizabeth that the historic stone bandstand within Fort Williams Park be officially named the “Council Ring”. Built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937 as a second bandstand for the Fort, the structure has been referred to by various names over the years since the Fort was converted to a Park in 1979. We were not aware of the Town having applied an official, consistently used name to the structure, and we only intended the name “Council Ring” to be a kind of DBA nickname for this feature that was

refurbished and repurposed by the Foundation in 2016 for the Children’s Garden project. We do not intend to install a sign at the structure calling it by name.

The Town’s facilities & transportation website refers to this structure as “gazebo”, though the 1909 bandstand in Officer’s Row Preserve is a true sheltered wooden gazebo (referred to as a “band stand” on the same website). Local historian, Ken Thompson, includes a map of the Park in his 1998 book, *Portland Head Light & Fort Williams*, on which both structures are referred to as “bandstand”.

Throughout the *Fort Williams Park Master Plan Update 2003*, the structure is referred to as a “Circular Stone Picnic Enclosure”, and in the most recent *Master Plan Update 2011*, there is no direct reference to the structure. Instead, readers are referred to the Arboretum Master Plan / Children’s Garden plans. This area of the Park – like all completed and future Arboretum sites - is one where the Town appeared to allow the Foundation some creative license as it raised private funds to improve these locations.

Throughout the 2012-13 design process for the Children’s Garden, Mitchell & Associates Landscape Architects referred to the structure as “Stone Seating Circle”. The Foundation began referring to it as the “Council Ring” in late 2013, as part of our ongoing effort at outreach and fundraising for the project. Our reasoning for this was that whereas “Stone Seating Circle” was merely descriptive, we felt “Council Ring” might connote its intended use within the new Garden; which is a community gathering spot, an outdoor classroom, and a meeting place for conversation, song, dance, and storytelling. As the Foundation replaced the old crumbling concrete floor with bricks and engraved granite pavers – each one donated by a supporter of the Garden - it has also become a commemorative space where each paver reminds us of people and stories that can be told and retold with every return.

