

November 13, 2018

To: Cape Elizabeth Town Council

From: Jessica Sullivan, Chair

Re: November 13, 2018 Workshop: Commercial Vehicles and Pay & Display Parking at Fort Williams Park

Dear Councilors,

For ease of reference, I have asked that the FWPC sub-committee research again be included as supporting documents for tonight's workshop and tomorrow's regular meeting. Below you will find 2007 and draft 2019 Comprehensive Plan references to user fees, property tax relief and Fort Williams, along with some highlights of the FWPC sub-committee's work this past year. The town manager will discuss operational plan scenarios for implementation and management.

A. A 2018 goal of the Town Council is to work with the park committee to review the mission, vision and financial sustainability of Fort Williams Park.

On March 12, 2018 the town council adopted a mission/vision statement for Fort Williams Park. This statement will help to guide the council in future decisions about the park. "The town's vision for Fort Williams Park is to provide a safe, high quality space for Cape Elizabeth citizens and visitors to enjoy. We will protect and maintain access to the park's historic elements and natural beauty for this and all future generations, and optimize the town's stewardship by managing the park through financially and ecologically sustainable practices."

At the request of the town council, the Fort Williams Park Committee formed two separate sub-committees in 2018 to gather data and make recommendations about commercial vehicles and pay & display parking. Both reports have been submitted to the council and have been reviewed at several workshops and regular meetings. These reports provide comprehensive results and structural scenarios based on the sub-committee's research data and practical concerns for the safety and enjoyment of Fort Williams Park users.

B. Though not specific to Fort Williams Park, the 2007 Comprehensive Plan noted interest in user fees as a way to offset high property taxes.

From the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, page 87:

Fiscal Capacity Goal 2: The town will continue to balance residents' request for services with residents' request to minimize property taxes.At the same time, however, residents have expressed concern that property taxes are too high, especially for the growing number of retirees.

Implementation Steps

45. Evaluate a shift to user fees to partially fund services in place of increases in the property tax. Examples could include pay per bag for trash disposal, library cards, and fees for athletic field use.

C. The 2019 Draft Comprehensive Plan specifically references Fort Williams Park and raising “ revenues from non-resident visitors.”

From the Draft 2019 Comprehensive Plan:
(goals and recommendations noted below may ultimately be moved to other sections)

Page 43:

Economy Goals:

Goal 1: The town shall evaluate trends, positive and negative impacts, and opportunities that arise from the rapid increase in tourism. The town shall develop strategies to welcome visitors while preserving our parks, open spaces, and neighborhoods.

Recommendations:

1. Strengthen the management program for the use of Fort Williams Park to prioritize the enjoyment by residents and balance the burden on municipal taxpayers, including increasing revenues from non-resident visitors.

Page 221:

Recreation and Open Space

Key Findings:

•There is majority support for using Fort Williams to raise funds for the town.*
*2017 Comprehensive Plan Public Opinion Survey

D. Commercial vehicle / pay & display report recommendation highlights:

Commercial vehicles fee schedule:

FWPC Chair Jim Walsh has since recommended increasing the individual motor coach fee from \$75/visit to \$150/visit.

Pay & display parking at Fort Williams Park:

Cape residents free

Implement for high season from May 1 to November 1

Outsourcing possible for minimal/no start up costs

Ordinance Committee to study parking ordinance changes

Fee schedule recommended for 270 spots: 144 additional spots free of charge

Communication outreach plan included

Attached vendor / revenue /vehicle structure chart

Estimated revenues may reach \$1,000,000/year