

**Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
New England Aquarium
Central Wharf, Boston
September 3, 2003, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Greg Ketchen, Chair, welcomed all. There was not a quorum present (see attached attendance sheet). The approval of the March and June meeting minutes was tabled.

Renewable Energy Feasibility Study

Jack Wiggin gave a presentation on the predevelopment of renewables in the Boston Harbor Islands national park area. The project goals are to: advance sustainable development policies of the park; provide a source of revenue to support the park; educate the public on renewable energy; contribute to the supply of green power and a greater reliance on renewable energy. The study was conducted within the Partnership criteria for evaluating revenue generating concepts as stated in the Economic Strategy report. The team is also doing a thorough environmental assessment of impacts to natural, cultural and archeological resources and a study of community acceptability. Also, the NPS has suggested looking at viewsapes. Are there particular views of the harbor that should be protected as part of the visitor experience? George Price added that it is particularly important to identify these locations because other wind projects have been proposed by Hull, Quincy, Weymouth and MWRA.

Jack responded to a question if wave or tidal power was looked at. He said that it was, but there is not currently an appropriate place for it, it would be difficult to place in the inner harbor. Also, the conditions are not ideal, even Hull Gut is well below the speed considered viable. He did say that it is still in the mix, and that new technologies are coming along. There may be a way to take advantage of it in the future. George Price said that it was hoped to get more photovoltaics and tidal projects going, for educational purposes if not commercial use.

It was thought that the Advisory Council can play an important role in this process, specifically to help define the concerns of the public through public outreach. A study session on renewable energy will be scheduled this fall.

Visitor Experience and Resource Protection

Bruce Jacobson gave a presentation about the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) approach. Visitor use management is needed at the park to protect resources and to provide for quality visits. This VERP approach is endorsed by the park general management plan, and is supported by research from the University of Vermont's study of current use patterns and North Carolina State University's study of recreation related impacts on the island environment. The research findings indicate that there is an opportunity to substantially increase use of the park.

Bruce explained that no "magic number" can be predicted for the number of visitors for any island or for the park as a whole. The impacts resulting from use are more important than the number of visitors in the park. Also, there are many actions managers may take if standards are exceeded other than to simply limit visitation. A volunteer monitoring system has been recommended.

The council discussed the approach. It was thought that for this approach to be effective there has to be visible action by managers if problems are found.

Park Update

Water Transportation

Peter Lewenberg reported that this has been a challenging season, especially with the park's water transportation system and the state's budget situation. Peter stated that the *Abigail* did not come on as a water shuttle until mid- to late-August. Up to that point the *MV Irene* was the only shuttle running and inter-island service was therefore very limited. The island staff worked commendably to compensate. Richie Sutherland, Captain of the *MV Irene*, has exceeded expectations as an operator and has been an outstanding park representative. The Department of Conservation and Recreation assigned a ranger to the Project Office to work with the NPS rangers. He was stationed on the Georges Island dock on weekends to facilitate passenger flow.

Peter reported that a RFR had been sent out for water transportation. They should receive the responses in late October. Hopefully, it will lead to a better situation next year. George said that the park would be in a better contract position if the park had more visitors. It is a "chicken and the egg" situation indeed. We need to get more people coming to the park to have a better water transportation system, and we need a better water transportation system to get more people coming to the park.

Steve Marcus stated concern that the focus had shifted to all this public outreach when managers are having trouble maintaining core park functions. He thought that operations should be a focus of the Advisory Council and the Partnership. Peter Lewenberg welcomed all input and agreed that we all have to work together. Kathy Abbott stated that Island Alliance strategically did begin a marketing blitz at the very beginning, hopefully to drive demand to get the support the core services needed. She admitted that this strategy has risks.

Spectacle Island

Kathy Abbott reported that the Spectacle Island legislation is now in committee preparing to go for a vote. She said that she and Joe Ferrino met with Senate President Travaglini, and that it was a very positive meeting. The mayor is also supportive and held a very positive press conference.

Kathy announced that a new part-time project manager for Spectacle Island has been hired, Diane Haynes. The construction schedule is still on track. It is expected that the Artery will turn it over to the owners in late spring 2004. It is hoped that a grand opening or a soft opening be held in early July in time for Harborfest.

Seth asked how much alternative energy planning survived. Peter stated that it was not as much as was hoped, but that there are some photovoltaics, gray water, composting toilets, and electric vehicles. The owners are also working with UMASS Boston on the green management of the marina. Alternative energy will still be a major theme for interpretation on the islands.

Little Brewster

George Price reported that last year funding for a permanent dock was approved through the NPS system. There is a final design contract ready to be put out to bid. There have been management changes on the island. The Coast Guard has changed the keeper position from an active duty position to a civilian position. Sally Snowman has been hired. This new position will be less on-site watch keeping (which will continue to be handled by the Auxiliary), and have more education and planning duties.

Nixes Mate

The restoration efforts on Nixes Mate have begun and should be complete by mid-October. The project to stabilize this 1805 structure has gone from a cost of \$40k to \$240k.

Peddocks Island

Kathy Abbott reported that a request for proposals for project management has gone out and that Island Alliance has received 5 excellent responses.

Public Comment

The Boston Harbor Islands photography exhibit by Pat Morss is moving to New Directions, at the end of Long Wharf. There is an opening reception on September 18.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council

September 3, 2003

Meeting Attendance

VOTING MEMBERS

1. Edith Andrews	
2. Regina Burke	
3. Stephen Comer	
4. Mary Corcoran, Vice Chair	X
5. Peter Davidoff	
6. Theresa Czerepica*	X
7. John Dinga	
8. Bernie Dreiblatt	
9. Marianne Farrington* Heather Deschenes	x
10. Joe Ferrino	
11. Patricia Foley* (Krysten Lynch)	
12. Bill Hale*	X
13. Carl Johnson	X
14. Seth Kaplan	X
15. Greg Ketchen, Chair	X
16. John Lewis	
17. Vivien Li	
18. Suzanne Gall Marsh^LOA	X
19. Chris McCabe*	X
20. Ed McCabe Beth Harris	x
21. Sherman Morss	X
22. Linda Poolaw*	
23. Kristin Priscella*	
24. Bill Reardon*	
25. John Sam Sapiel	
26. Claudia Smith-Reid	
27. Ben Walker*	
28. Jack Wiggin	X

^Leave of absence

* Does not have voting status yet

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Ex officio (Education)

Russ Bowles	
Johanna Mendillo	
Dotty Merrill	
Peter Rosen	
Linda Smith-Mooney	
David Weinstein	

Ex officio (Community)

Sha-King Alston	
Lorraine Downey	

Ex officio (Advocacy)

Karen O'Donnell	
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Ex officio (Environmental)

Bill Geizentanner	
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Ex officio (Municipalities)

Jim Gordon Congressman Stephen Lynch	
Gregg Nolan Congressman Michael Capuano	
Mark Racicot Metropolitan Area Planning Council	
Corrine Young Congressman William Delahunt	

Ex officio (Native American)

Hiawatha Brown	
Mildred McCowan	
Chris Montgomery	

OTHERS

Kathy Abbott	X
Sam Overton Bussell	
Bruce Jacobson	
Peter Lewenberg	X
George Price	X
Steve Marcus	X
Mary Raczko	X
Chuck Smythe	
Doug Welch	X
Jennifer Whitman	X