

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Workshop Notes
Partnership Office, 408 Atlantic Avenue, 2nd floor
November 9, 2005, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Council members present were: Mary Corcoran, Bill Hale, Mary Anne Hendricks, Carl Johnson, Greg Ketchen, Paul King, Ed McCabe, Pat Morss, Karen O'Donnell, Bettina Washington, David Weinstein, and Matt Wolfe. Susan Reid attended for Seth Kaplan.

Pat Morss, Chair, welcomed all. He explained the purpose of the workshop was for the Advisory Council to begin forming a position on the proposed LNG facility on Outer Brewster Island. It is hoped that the Council will reach a consensus at the next official meeting on December 7.

The group discussed forming a subcommittee on the LNG issue; there was general agreement that an ad hoc subcommittee be formed. Council members had an opportunity to sign up for the subcommittee and a notice will be sent out to the rest of the committee. A meeting will be scheduled after the holidays.

Susan Reid, Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), gave an update on three bills that are under review by the legislature: a bill that would remove Outer Brewster from the state park; a bill to create a commission to review LNG siting (this passed and has gone to the senate); and a bill that would require more stringent review of issues before action on Article 97 land disposition could occur (this has been referred to the Senate Ways and Means Committee). The general feeling was that the current bill to remove Outer Brewster had many weaknesses and it was not likely to pass by the end of the legislative session on November 16. Susan said that the lobbyists from AES that are pushing the bill have been very aggressive and that there is much misinformation. Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, Save the Brewsters, CLF, MASSPIRG, Mass Audubon and other environmental groups have been reaching out to decision makers.

Many members of the group expressed very strong feelings against the proposal. One common public misconception is that having a facility on the island would halt LNG traffic in the inner harbor. If there were a facility built on the island, it would be in competition with the Everett facility. The Everett facility is connected to a different pipeline and serves different customers, including the local power plant, and also has a trucking connection that could not be replaced by an island facility. There are 16 proposed LNG sites in the region and no regional assessment. There was general agreement that the Council would not support the proposal, though one member voiced that the proposal should be looked at thoughtfully and not immediately dismissed, while others thought that there should be a "plan B" if it were built so as to retain as much revenue as possible for the park. Bruce Jacobson handed out a natural resource review of the island prepared by NPS, and information about potential impacts of such a facility on the park.

The group discussed the role that the Advisory Council could take. There was a suggestion to write editorials, blogs, and push for answers to questions that are still outstanding. Pat reminded all that the Council can not lobby as a group; it is a federal organization. Individual members are free to advocate as citizens. The Council's role is to advise the Partnership and to encourage public involvement in the park. There was a suggestion for the Council to make a statement on the importance of state and national parks because now, very little focus is on the

value of protected lands. There was a suggestion to engage individuals that are associated with the park such as Gerry Studds and Bill Golden.

There were questions about the position and role of the National Park Service. Bruce said that the mission of the park service is to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources for future generations. Outer Brewster is owned by the Commonwealth, if it is removed from the state park system, it would still be within a national park. Bettina Washington stated that the Wampanoag Tribe is watching the issue.

The group discussed a draft position statement that was prepared by Pat Morss, Chair. Pat will compile the suggestions and revise the statement. The draft position statement will be sent to the Advisory Council for review. It is hoped that the Council can reach consensus at the December 7 meeting.