

**Minutes: Meeting of the Ad Hoc Fort Ward Park and Museum Area Stakeholder Advisory Group  
September 12, 2012**

**Present:**

Tom Fulton  
Bob Moir  
Ripley Forbes

Chuck Ziegler  
Ellen Stanton  
Linda Ries

Adrienne Washington  
Lena Rainey  
Jim Walpole

**Staff Present:**

**OHA:**

Lance Mallamo  
Susan Cumbey  
Fran Bromberg  
Garrett Fesler  
Pam Cressey

**RPCA:**

Laura Durham

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**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by chair Tom Fulton at 7:00 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of May 9, 2012 were approved as submitted.

**Overview of progress to date:**

Chair Tom Fulton provided the group with an overview of the archaeology that has been completed in phases 1, 2A and 2B, as agreed to by the SAG. The first phase was completed by the Ottery Group and has yet to be written due to numerous errors in the report. This report is forthcoming. Stage 2B consisted of an interim drainage plan to address erosion and damage to the site by water runoff. The later part of Stage 2B, a final drainage solution, will be conducted later after the SAG has completed the management plan for Ft. Ward to prevent damage to graves and resources. Phase 2A was recently completed in July 2012 and included shovel test pits every 30 feet and test plots of the entire park to determine cultural features.

Lance Mallamo noted that there is money for additional archaeological investigation but that it should be targeted and based upon the recommendation of the SAG. He suggested that all members review the website to familiarize ourselves with the data that has been collected to date.

The City Council envisioned the Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting for two years, until September 2013, in order to complete the task at hand.

**Old Business:**

**Status of RFP: Laura Durham**

Laura Durham reported that the procurement document has not been issued as yet but should be ready in 3 weeks. The process has taken much longer than envisioned. She expects the contract to be awarded by mid November and the work to begin by December 1. Laura states that City Council, if requested, will extend the SAG beyond September 2012.

### **Archaeology report by Garrett Fesler and Fran Bromberg:**

Garret presented the SAG with an 8 page report of the Stage 2A findings. Significant presence of artifacts, unmarked graves, cemeteries, and buried house foundations of African-American residents of a community that lived on the land after the Civil War until the 1960's were identified. In addition, Civil War artifacts were found beyond the military features of the park and probably exist as well beneath the parking lot north of the museum. More than half of the test holes contained artifacts; the total number exceeds 10,000. The report elaborates on the building foundations and Civil War artifacts that were discovered.

A total of 43 graves have been identified as a result of the archaeological investigation to date. These include graves found in the Jackson Cemetery (16 additional graves), the Old Grave Yard (1 additional grave), Adams Cemetery (2 additional graves) and a new burial area tentatively called the Clark Cemetery (2 graves).

In the analysis phase the information will be entered into a data base to inform the decisions made regarding the management plan for Ft. Ward.

Pam Cressey noted that the Archaeology team would like to interview more descendents to obtain oral history that can assist in guiding future archaeological investigation. Lena Rainey states that there are 23 descendents who would like to offer their services; meetings will be arranged.

Garret mentioned that it would be helpful to remove the "park noise" (park related artifacts) so that the cultural resources can be clearly mapped.

Please refer to report submitted by Garrett Fesler.

Fran Bromberg reviewed the maps that have been developed and the archaeological work in each section of the Fort in which graves were discovered. Shovel tests do not yield results in looking for graves; trenches or scraped areas are utilized for this purpose. Fran reviewed the findings and the temporary boundaries of the cemeteries that will change as more information is gathered and data is recorded.

Please refer to the maps presented by Fran Bromberg.

### **New Business:**

Chuck Ziegler presented a draft of the chapter on Civil War Resources. He noted the assistance of Susan Cumbey in completing this chapter which was provided to the members prior to the meeting. Chuck focused on 10 site issues that he delineated as important to the SAG task of developing a management plan for the fort. These include funding for preservation and maintenance, maintaining communication between OHA and RPCA, preventing erosion of the earthwork walls of the fort, continuing tree maintenance and preventing invasive species that affect the historic resources, improving ADA accessibility (Susan will update at the next meeting) and maintaining an appropriate balance of the layers of cultural resources within the park.

The members thanked Chuck for his detailed report.

**Next meeting**

Wednesday, October 10, at 7 pm at the Minnie Howard School library.

The meeting was **adjourned** at 8:40 pm.

Submitted,

Ellen Stanton, Secretary