

Cape Cod National Seashore
Subcommittee on Dune Shack District Preservation and Use Plan
MEETING ONE
November 9, 2009 11:00 – 5:00 pm

Draft Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Subcommittee Members: Sally Adams, Janet Armstrong, Regina Binder, Brenda Boleyn (interim Chair), Bill Burke, Carole Carlson, Rob Costa, Hatty Fitts, Bill Hammatt, Joyce Johnson, Richard Philbrick, Austin Smith, Paul Tasha, John Thomas

NPS/CCNS: George Price, Sue Moynihan, Sandy Hamilton (by phone), Trevor Staubli

CBI Facilitation Team: Stacie Smith, Patrick Field, Meredith Sciarrio

Members of the Public: Gil Burke, Marianne Benson, Peter Clemons, Nat Champlin, Mildred Champlin, Rich Delaney, Priscilla Jackett

Welcome and Overview of Purpose

As interim Chair for the Advisory Commission, Boleyn welcomed everyone as members of the subcommittee and thanked them for taking on this responsibility. She stated that members have been asked to serve on the subcommittee because they have important experiences to share and can help develop a preservation and use plan. She announced that the new Chairman of the Advisory Commission will be Rich Delaney, and she and he will share this “seat” on the subcommittee. She also noted that she is very optimistic about the process and pleased to have CBI to facilitate. George Price thanked the subcommittee and reminded members that CCNS staff – Sue, Bill, and himself – were available for any necessary clarifications concerning NPS and CCNS.

Introductions and why you value the Dune Shacks District

Participants were asked to introduce themselves and provide an overview of their relationship to the historic district and what they value about it. This was noted as a way for everyone to learn more about the history and passions within the subcommittee. One participant requested that subcommittee members also share their histories of use of the shacks, and clarify relevant affiliations.

Participants shared the following experiences with and values of the Dune Shacks:

- Many participants shared personal stories from the years they have spent with their families and friends in various shacks. Some current users have lived in their shacks for

much of their lives and felt very passionate about maintaining access to their shacks. They were very concerned about losing what have become their homes. Others recalled extended times in shacks that were temporarily under their care, or short visits to one or more shacks, that were deeply meaningful to them.

- Many participants recalled the history of conflict and poor relationships between NPS and the community when shacks were removed or usage was changed by the Seashore. Many expressed hope for a better relationship between the community and the Seashore. CCNS offered the hope that the future plan would balance the interests of the community, the traditional families, and the bureaucratic requirements of NPS.
- Most participants commented on the value of solitude and contemplation of and unity with nature while living in the shacks, especially in this disconnected modern age, and wanted to preserve that. People spoke of the beauty of the landscape, and appreciation of and respect for both nature and cultural history that visitors and users experience. Some mentioned the sense of personal freedom and independence that comes with the experience in the shacks.
- Many also noted that although connection with the history and on-going creation of arts and literature are important values for the district and are part of the original historic designation, these are not the only valuable history, nor are they essential to appreciating the shacks or being a part of the culture.
- Members also stressed the need to capture the history of the dune shacks and continue adding to it for future generations. One participant commented that the shacks have preserved a human element that has been lost in today's society and so should be treasured.
- Some participants spoke of current and past shacks and wanted to acknowledge that each has a different, individualistic history and personality. They thought this was necessary for the subcommittee and greater community to understand moving forward.
- Most participants noted that they are hopeful and optimistic for this process to produce a result that is agreeable to all. Many felt appreciation for this sharing of experiences and values among the subcommittee members.
- All participants stated that some type of mixed use, somewhat similar to the existing mix, would be the best solution for the shacks. This would be balanced between those managed by long-term dune dwellers, non-profit organizations, and other arrangements, which would preserve the cultural traditions of the traditional families while providing access to a valuable experience for the public. There were testimonials to the value of both long- and short- term use of the shacks. Many noted the importance of committed stewardship of the shacks over time. Some also commented that long-term dune dwellers should be able to pass down their shacks to future generations, and that they had put innumerable hours of work into maintaining their shacks.

Identify Information Needs for Process

Participants listed the following information that they thought would helpful for people to have as a resource moving forward.

- Anthropological map which shows shacks and their history of use
- Complete hard copy of documents from public scoping meeting
- Timeline, process and progress on the Historic Registry Nomination
- Models of similar experiences such Acadia, Mineral King, Stiltsville, FL, Boston Harbor Islands, Alaskan examples, Park with Aboriginal huts in Sydney Australia, and others, including those in a catalog of programs listing structures with public access in parks
- Timeline of Seashore History, including key federal actions
- List and Timeline of all on-going activities relating to the Dune Shacks, including the Historic Registry Nomination Document, and how these connect with Subcommittee work
- Environmental Assessment Timeline and Process Description
- History of town meeting notes involving Dune Shacks
- Past Dune Shacks Subcommittee's work
- Refresher on enabling legislation (book from CCNS, John Thomas's articles)
- NPS: Historic Structure Report, Cultural Landscape Report (both in draft form currently)
- Wolfe Report

Review Next Meeting Agenda Items and Meeting Scheduling

The group discussed the proposed items for the next meeting's agenda. Participants noted that they want to be sure that shacks that are no longer in existence would be included in the timeline. They discussed when the starting date of the timeline should be. In addition to the current agenda items, participants wanted to add time to discuss the process for the drafting of the Determination of Eligibility Document for the National Historic Register, and how it might inform/be informed by the Subcommittee process.

Participants scheduled the next subcommittee meeting for the morning of Tuesday December 8th.

Public Comment

The discussion was opened up for public comment, and one person said that he immensely enjoyed the meeting. He thought everyone was doing a great job and now understands the benefit of having meeting facilitators.

Dune Shack District Tour

Participants went on a tour to view each of the Dune Shacks. Some participants shared personal stories and experiences while at various shacks, and some participants welcomed the subcommittee to enter their shacks and see the individuality of them.

Adjourned at 5:00pm