COLLABORATIVE RECREATION AND TOURISM PLANNING WITHIN A NATIONAL PARK CONTEXT: THE PROCESS, STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION, AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

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Abstract: Recent economic, political, and social forces have resulted in collaboration and public-private partnerships being endorsed as sound mechanisms for planning, developing, managing, and marketing recreation and tourism on public lands (Selin and Chavez 1995; WTO 1996; Selin and Myers 1998; Crompton 1998; Bramwell and Lane 2000). Generally, many commentators contend that stakeholder collaboration has the potential to lead to dialogue, negotiations, and the building of mutually acceptable proposals about how tourism should be developed (Bramwell and Lane 2000). However, despite their endorsement, little empirical research has been conducted to explain the processes that occur when interactions take place within recreation and tourism partnerships (Selin and Chavez 1994). Little is known about how the objectives, processes, and outcomes of collaborative alliances are shaped by the nature of their participants (Wood and Gray, 1991). This study used qualitative research methods including participant observation, document analysis, informal discussions, and personal interviews to investigate the processes through which conveners identified potential stakeholders to form the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership and to participate in the park's General Management Planning process. The study documents the influence of stakeholder groups on the outcomes of the planning process and raises specific issues for future research.

Introduction

According to Jamal and Getz (1995), inter-organizational collaboration theory offers strong possibilities for managing tourism and recreation related issues at the destination level. Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures to act or decide on issues related to a particular problem domain (Wood and Gray 1991). As a process, collaboration emerges out of an environmental context called antecedents and then proceeds sequentially through a problem-setting, direction-setting, and structuring phases (Wood and Gray 1991; Selin and Chavez 1995). According to Gray (1989), five features that are critical to the process of collaboration are: 1) the stakeholders are interdependent, 2) solutions emerge by dealing constructively with differences, 3) joint ownership of decisions is involved, 4) stakeholders assume collective responsibility for the future of the domain, and 5) collaboration is an emergent process.

One form of collaboration that is increasingly gaining recognition and acceptance as a mechanism for planning and managing recreation and tourism is the public-private partnership. Partnerships are regular, cross-sector interactions between parties based on some agreed rules or norms, intended to address a common issue or to achieve a specific policy goal or goals (Bramwell and Lane, 2000). Within the United States, recent economic, political, and social forces have combined to make collaboration and partnership an explicit priority of agencies responsible for planning, managing, and developing recreation and tourism on public lands (Selin and Chavez 1995; Selin and Myers 1998; Crompton 1998). Elsewhere in the world, public-private partnerships are increasingly being adopted as new mechanisms for developing, marketing, and promoting tourism (WTO 1996). Thus, one may observe that public-private partnerships have been endorsed globally.

The increasing significance of collaboration and partnerships has led some scholars to suggest that collaboration offers a dynamic process-based mechanism for resolving planning issues, and coordinating recreation and tourism development at the local or community level (Selin and Myers 1995; Selin and Chavez 1994; Jamal and Getz 1995). Generally, many commentators contend that stakeholder collaboration has the potential to lead to dialogue, negotiations, and the building of mutually acceptable proposals about how tourism should be developed (Bramwell and Lane 2000). However, some scholars have serious conceptual and practical concerns related to collaboration and partnerships.

First, Wood and Gray (1991) contend that no firm conclusions have yet been drawn about 1): how the convener uses various forms of authority to identify and persuade stakeholders to participate, 2) which differences can be observed when conveners are responsive to stakeholder initiatives instead of implementing their own ideas, and 3) which specific roles conveners might play in helping to organize the problem domain. Second, Reed (1997) contends that despite its contribution to understanding community-based planning processes, research on collaborative tourism planning relies on rather weak theories of power relations within community settings. The author contends that no effort has been made to explain why, how, and under what conditions those with power would be willing to distribute it to others. Third, according to Hall (1996), community-based approaches to planning may be inadvertently ignoring broader issues of power and the inability of some interests to effectively participate in the decision making process. The pluralistic basis of much of community-oriented planning fails to account for how certain values and interests are excluded from the tourism decision-making process. As a result, it is not known to what extent the patterns of shared, differing, and opposing interests among the stakeholders influence the collaboration's potential for successful outcomes (Wood and Gray 1991).

In conclusion, one may observe that, in-spite of their increasing significance, little empirical research has been conducted to explain the processes that occur when interactions take place within recreation and tourism partnerships (Selin and Chavez (1994). Little is known of the process through which conveners select stakeholders. Furthermore, it is known how the objectives, processes, and outcomes of collaborative alliances are shaped by the

nature of their participants (Wood and Gray, 1991). Therefore, more empirical research on collaborative recreation and tourism partnerships is needed in order to make their outcomes more predictable.

The Study

This study was undertaken as part of a wider study that investigates factors that influence efforts by the National Park Service to promote racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in the planning, management, and use of natural recreation resources. The study is based on the newly established Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership. The two major purposes of the study are: 1) to explain the processes through which conveners identified potential stakeholders to form the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership and Advisory Council, and to participate in the park's General Management Planning process; and 2) to document how members of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership and other stakeholders influenced outcomes of the planning process. The guiding research question was 'How did the conveners of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership identify stakeholders and stakeholder representatives, and how have these influenced both the planning process and expected outcomes?'

Method

This study used qualitative research methods including participant observation, document analysis, informal discussions, and personal interviews to collect and analyze data related to the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area collaboration and general management planning process.

Sampling

Three types of non-probabilistic sampling techniques including convenient, purposeful and snowball sampling were used to select participants for the interview phase of the study (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). Convenience sampling involves selecting respondents on the basis of availability and ease of data collection. It includes the use of captive samples. Purposeful sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained as well from other choices (Maxwell 1996). In purposive sampling, individuals are selected based on specific questions/purposes of the research and on the basis of information available about these individuals/groups (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). On the other hand snowball or chain sampling involves selecting respondents on the basis of information obtained from other selected sample members or from other individuals. Since each new person has the potential to provide information regarding other suitable cases, the sample mushrooms as the study continues (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998). All representatives of the Boston Harbor Islands National Part Area partnership and the Advisory Council listed on the mailing list were requested to participate in the interviews. Initially all 41 partnership and Advisory Council members had indicated their intention to participate but due to logistical and other unforeseen circumstances, only 27

individuals representing the Partnership, the Advisory Council, NPS staff, and purposely selected members of the local racial and ethnic minority communities and neighborhoods were interviewed.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data for the study was collected in two distinct phases. In the first phase, the researcher participated in a daylong familiarization tour of the Islands, attended public meetings and workshops related to the General Management Planning process, and examined documents related to the partnership initiative. During this initial phase, the researcher obtained and studied the enabling legislation, official brochures, written public comments from the issues scoping phase of the park planning process, formal correspondences, and minutes kept at the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership offices. The goal of this exercise was to identify some of the factors, processes, and issues involved in establishing the National Park as a partnership, to identify the relevant stakeholders, and to document aspects of the park's General Management Planning process. Subsequent visits were organized in order to attend public comment workshops organized for various municipal and neighborhood groups, Partnership and Advisory Council meetings, and Native American consultative meetings. The researcher also attended two workshops organized by the Boston Community Partnership Initiative to identify some of the views and concerns of the area's minorities about the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership process. Some of the Partnership, Advisory Council, and public workshops were tape and video recorded. As a result of the extensive involvement, the researcher was able to gain entry and develop close relationship with key players in the partnership, advisory council, and the National Park Service office in Boston. Content Analysis technique was used to analyze the data from the first phase of the study. Through this technique, the researcher identified a number of themes and concepts related to the collaboration, partnership, and public involvement in the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area planning process. These themes and concepts were used to develop a semi-structured interview guide for the second phase of the study.

The second phase of the study involved semi-structured interviews with members of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership, the Advisory Council, and the National Park Service Staff, and selected members of various racial and ethnic groups. The advantage of the semi-structured format is that it provides an outline of the main areas to be covered by the researcher while allowing for the flexibility necessary to diverge and explore new ideas and areas in more depth (Clarke 1999). The semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to explore motives and feelings, and to probe responses in a way that is not amenable to structured interviews or questionnaires (Clarke 1999).

Interview Administration

The interviews were conducted between November 2000 and March 2001. This was necessary because many of the potential interviewees are very busy people involved with other civic and business related issues. Initially, an introductory letter explaining the

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purpose of the study and an interview guide were mailed to potential interviewees who had agreed to participate. A total of 27 interviews were conducted with key representatives of the partnership, advisory council, the National Park Service, and selected representatives of racial and ethnic minority groups. The interviews were either conducted at the partnership offices, the interviewee's office or home, or at a restaurant whichever was most convenient. Due to pressure of time, some interviewees requested to be interviewed twice either because they had other engagements or had a lot to say about the issue. Six interviews were conducted by telephone. The interviews lasted for 1 to 2 and1/2 hours and all were tape recorded and later transcribed by a professional transcriber. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

Computer Assisted Qualitative Research Data Analysis

A computer-based qualitative research data analysis program, QSR N5, which is the latest version of NUDIST, was used to analyze the data. To prepare the interview data for analysis and interpretation, the interview transcripts were imported into the N5 program in text format. Using sentences as the unit of analysis, the browser feature of the document explorer was used to browse the contents of each transcript for main ideas, issues, concepts, and themes. The emerging ideas, concepts, and themes were coded and stored as nodes in the Nodes Explorer facility of the N5. The nodes index system is designed to allow the user to create and manipulate concepts and store and explore emerging ideas (Richards and Richards 1998). The nodes of the index system, where indexing is kept, are optionally organized into hierarchies, or trees, to represent the organization of concepts into categories and subcategories, a taxonomy of concepts, and index codes. A tree node system was developed for purposes of this study. The researcher adopted a strategy that allowed the major categories identified from the mainstream literature to be used as initial codes while allowing case specific issues, concepts, and themes emerging from the interviews to be coded as new categories.

The researcher made a nodes report for all categories and subcategories and made printouts of all texts coded under each node. This exercise was undertaken to allow the researcher to abstract from the data in order to study the emerging patterns, refine the categories, edit the relevant texts, and note any necessary changes. Generally speaking, N5's indexing system allows the researcher to select a node, explore, and change it, or move it elsewhere in the tree system as appropriate.

Findings
1) Establishment of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area and Partnership
The evidence available indicates that over the years several factors provided impetus for the park to be established. However, it is only recently that the commonwealth of Massachusetts established the 17 Boston Harbor Islands State Park to protect the islands' resources. Unfortunately, the state could not afford the resources necessary to develop the park as a prime recreation area and there were also private property owners within the islands whose involvement was needed. As explained by one voting

partner there was need to bring in new money to upgrade the park's facilities and services. *We couldn't get enough money from the state legislature to improve it. So.. find ways to tap all the different public resources and stop subsidizing the public park, but get the private sector pay, which is brilliant.'* One way of attracting the much needed federal funding and status that comes with a national park was to establish a unique park that was collaboratively managed by all interested stakeholders. This was achieved by formalizing an informal arrangement between different groups that had been working together to ensure the islands were utilized in a manner that did not compromise their integrity. The group got local leaders and key players to buy into the idea of petitioning Congress to consider special legislation establishing the islands as a National Recreation Area.

The full context within which the Boston harbor Islands National Park Area partnership is captured in the following excerpt from a report of an interview between another researcher and the chief of legislation and planning, *'....what I was trying to do when drafting the Harbor Island legislation was to make sure we had the right players at the right level to make things happen that needed to happen. It was not just the staffers, the staffers are important. But, it needed to be a board of decision-makers. It couldn't be too big because if it were too big it wouldn't work.... We had this dilemma. The board had to be workable, and it had to be decision-makers who could really manage this thing. These were the accountable people who could make this happen. But then there are all these supporters and constituencies, and interest groups that you also need. I think the most important thing about it, and where we got the idea for the park, was we had a working committee that was working on this project. In a very simplistic way, all we did was to write legislation that formalized what we were doing informally. We realized that if we just had a forum where we could continue doing this, we should all talk to each other more. It was ideas like that. ..It was an enormous amount of work to get something that was acceptable for everybody and could actually be put into place, people could understand, would meet the national park concerns as well the concerns of all the different organizations and constituencies, and so forth* (Moir 2000).

The Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area was created as unit of the National Park System by a legislative act of the US Congress. A major stipulation of the enabling legislation (Public Law 104-333 of 1996) is that Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area will be managed in partnership with the private sector, the commonwealth of Massachusetts, municipalities surrounding Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bays, the Thomson Islands Outward Bound Education Center, and the Trustees of Reservations, and with historical, business, cultural, civic, recreational, and tourism organizations. Section 1029 e (2) of the legislation specifically established the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership comprising of 13 members.

Section 1029g 9(1) directed the Secretary of the Department of Interior to establish the Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council whose purpose is to represent various groups with interests in the recreation area and make recommendations to the Boston Harbor Islands

Partnership on issues related to the development and implementation of an integrated resource management plan. The council, which currently has 28 members, includes representatives of municipalities, educational and cultural institutions, environmental organizations, business and commercial entities, including those related to transportation, tourism, and the maritime industry; advocacy organizations, Native American interests, and community groups. The Partnership is unique in that, within the National Park System, it is the only partnership within the park system that has a permanent advisory council that has voting powers and a non-profit organization, the Island Alliance, whose purpose is to help with fundraising activities. Administratively, the National Park Service provides staff to the Partnership and its Advisory Council through a dedicated project office from the Boston Support Office.

2) The Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership Planning Process

The general framework for planning and decision-making within the National Park Service consists of a number of legal requirements and policy documents (NPS-1998). First, a 1978 amendment to the National Park Service General Authorities Act of 1970 requires comprehensive general management plans for all units of the national park system. Second, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and other federal laws require analysis of potential impacts of management alternatives, which is documented in environmental impact statements or environmental assessments. Third, the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 both require that results-oriented goals be identified and evaluated through park strategic plans, annual performance plans, and annual performance reports. In addition to these laws, planning and management within any park unit must take relevant local state laws and other municipal bylaws into consideration.

i)   Partnership   structuring,   Stakeholder Identification, and Problem Definition

The Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership and the project office used a number of methods and techniques to obtain public input into the park's planning process. The main methods and techniques used included representation through the Partnership and Advisory Council, wide distribution of the Park's Draft General Management Plan, public comments, partnering with national/local environmental organizations, posting notices at strategic positions and venues, formal public workshops and meetings, legislated consultative meetings with Native Americans, outreach through community organizations, direct mail using lists developed through community groups, educational outreach through the local school system, representative through open partnership subcommittees, use of newsletters, the media, and Internet, informal networking with notable members of local racial and ethnic groups. To jumpstart the park planning process, the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Project Manager/Superintendent called a highly publicized public meeting that was attended by all representatives of the

organizations and agencies named in the enabling legislation and the general public. The purposes of this meeting were to introduce the newly established park unit to those attending the meeting, to fill the vacant positions in the partnership and advisory council, and to start groundwork for public involvement in the park planning process. The project office used both electronic and print media to publicize the meeting.

The evidence obtained indicates that the project office staff also made personal calls to individuals belonging to organizations that had long been associated with the Boston Harbor Islands issues. For example, one informant stated, '*There was a series of four meetings that...I recall how this was done. We got one of the calls because we had been involved early on in the process and what they were asking for was mailing lists. Who is it that we were working with around the harbor? And I think they asked that to all of these identifiable advocacy groups...like Urban Harbors Institute here at the University, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, the Boston Harbor Association, and a whole bunch of different groups that they knew were working in the Friends of Boston Harbor Islands.. And they did that to invite them to come to a series of meetings at which this whole park was described and some time was spent on that...what it was that would be expected of the Advisory Council, the fact that it had a certain structure that was defined by the legislation and this idea that they needed to fill these different categories and they were hoping that people would identify individuals who would be able to be nominated to the Advisory Council. Well those meetings...there were, as I say, 3 or 4 of them very well attended. I remember the last one there were over a hundred people there...and the people were there I think to try to participate in the Advisory Council.*

Several issues had to be addressed before the chair, vice chair, and two voting members of the Advisory Council could be elected. Having agreed that the first order of business for the new park was to constitute the Advisory Council, it became apparent that the legislation had overlooked communities and neighborhoods as a legitimate category of stakeholders. The group decided to constitute communities and neighborhoods as a new category and decided that each category of stakeholders would have four individuals instead of the minimum number of three provided in the legislation. Meeting participants were requested to join the group that best represented their interests. Participants ended up negotiating among themselves how to distribute the seats in the Advisory Council. However, negotiations only occurred between the various non-profit advocacy groups. All agencies and organization named in the legislation had guaranteed seats in the Partnership and the Advisory Council. Some interest groups agreed to either rotate the seats between themselves or be represented by one individual.

Recognizing the absence of minorities in the partnership, members of the Advisory Council deliberately made the decision to elect a Native American to joint the Partnership as a voting partner and an African American as an alternative. It took twelve months after the first meeting, to fully constitute the Partnership with two representatives of the Advisory Council as partners. The partnership has 28 organizations represented on the Advisory Council and

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eleven federal, state, municipal and private agencies. Once the partnership was constituted, the following committees were established: planning, operations, education, finance, and marketing. A decision was made that these committees would be open to anyone, including members of the general public with interest and important contribution to make. Participants were informed that all committee, partnership, and Advisory Council meetings would be announced well in advance to allow for adequate preparation

ii) Public Involvement in the Park's General Management Planning Process

The public involvement process had two distinct phases: issues scoping and public comment on the Draft General Management Plan. To identify or scope the relevant issues and concerns, the Partnership sponsored a series of seven public workshops throughout the Greater Boston Metropolitan region between January and March of 1998. Public workshops were only conducted in places where Advisory Council members volunteered to sponsor meetings. The format for the public involvement workshops was standard in all cases. After formal introduction and presentation of the resources, facilities, issues, and the mandate, participants were given time to work through the issues and make recommendations. The Native American input was obtained through a separate process involving daylong consultation meetings between the National Park Service and the tribal council representatives. In total, more than 400 people attended the meetings.
Each group of workshop participants worked with a moderator through a number of questions. The input from the public involvement workshops and comments were collected and summarized. Generally the results reflected two polarized views: pro-development and pro-preservation.

iii) Outcomes of the Scoping Phase of the Planning Process

The pro-development participants requested that the park partnership respect the scale of the islands when planning for new development, ensuring that any new construction fit well into the fragile island environment. These participants suggested that explained that the partnership pursues some type of economic generators to support desired programs and services. However, a few felt that some islands should be kept as "natural" as possible, but with a few added perks, like: clean restrooms or outhouses; potable water; changing rooms; piers; "limited" overnight accommodations; food concessions (along with a non-franchise coffee shop); a bait shop; and a monument to the islands' initial occupants. Participants also suggested that the partnership consider harbor-side sites for facilities to support public use of the islands, and proposed the use of renewable energy sources such as wind, sun, and the tides for the islands.

On the other hand, the pro-preservation participants constituted the majority and expressed a strong desire to preserve the natural and cultural aspects of the islands. Recognizing that some development would take place on certain islands, many participants suggested preserving the undeveloped islands in as natural a condition

as possible. Others participants were against opening up all the islands for human activity and suggested some islands be reserved for wildlife. Participants also emphasized the protection of the islands' botanic resources and even suggested reestablishing vegetation that was present prior to European settlement. A number of people called for the continued protection of the waters and beaches of Boston Harbor, pointing out that motorboat traffic and pollution would increase with greater visitation. However, many in this group also suggested that the traditional recreational activities be maintained and enhanced where possible. The most commonly identified activities included swimming, fishing, boating, kayaking, canoeing, camping, hiking/walking, and picnicking. The general perception was that the Boston Harbor Islands should provide a wide range and variety of resource-dependent recreational activities. The group suggested that commercial activities be avoided because of their inherent conflict with the natural setting. The group also suggested that the public be provided recreational opportunities that suit all levels of income and sophistication, and that the programs should have educational value as well.

iv The Preparation of the Drafting of the General Management Plan

To prepare the General Management Plan, a National Park Service planning team constituted a planning committee that consulted with the various partners, the Advisory Council, and various advocacy and interest groups. Resource data on the island system was gathered and analyzed on an ongoing basis. This data was combined with input from the scoping phase to develop two alternative concepts for the park. Alternative A emphasized preserving the resources while alternative B emphasized providing activities for the visitor. After discussion with Partnership and Advisory Council members, the planning committee identified the need for a third Alternative C. Alternative C emphasizes preservation of resources while letting visitors to discover the natural and cultural history of the islands. The idea is to develop creative and educational programs that entertain visitors and give meaning to the resources. Also, the plan is to protect resources by instilling stewardship in visitors who return repeatedly to experience the park's multifaceted possibilities through an array of creative activities. The focus of alternative C is on a setting that attracts visitors with much activity being concentrated on larger islands while giving ample opportunity for visitors to escape crowds, enjoy nature, and explore historic sites. It is planned that there will be frequent ferry services to developed island hubs from where water shuttle services will take visitors to other islands. It is foreseen that there will be programs and recreation facilities developed for diverse populations and that visitor programs, rather than facilities, will provide enticements to the islands. Visitor accommodation to the park will consist of overnight stays at primitive and improved campsites and in lodging facilities on a few islands where appropriate. Generally stronger emphasis is on balancing resource protection and visitor enjoyment by only providing recreation opportunities that are compatible with resource protection. The implications is that appropriate management areas will

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be established within the Boston Harbor Islands National Park to reflect the desired resource conditions. The management areas identified include: potential mainland gateways; visitor services and park facilities areas; areas of historic preservation emphasis; areas of managed landscape emphasis; areas of natural features emphasis; and special use areas. By consensus, alternative C was endorsed by both the Partnership and the Advisory Council as the preferred alternative for the Draft General Management Plan.

Discussion, Recommendations, and conclusions

This study set out to answer the question "How did the conveners of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area Partnership identify stakeholders and stakeholder representatives, and how have these influenced both the planning process and outcomes? The evidence available indicates that stakeholders were identified at three different stages of the collaboration process. First Stakeholders were identified through an informed network of agency staff, advocacy groups, and property owners with an interest on the Boston Harbor and its Islands. This network consisted of individuals, agencies, and organizations with interest in improving the social, economic, and environmental conditions in the Boston Harbor Islands general area and adjacent communities. However, some individuals and groups within the network were simply interested on historical, cultural, and recreational aspects of the harbor and its islands. There is over whelming evidence that this network was responsible for bringing about legislation that created the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area and the Partnership.

Second, the legislation (Public Law 104-333 of 1996) that created the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area also specifically named public agencies, private business organizations advocacy groups, and, Native Americans as stakeholders with legitimate interests. This resulted from lengthy and complex negotiations involving local, state, and congressional representatives and a special Congressional delegation from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to Washington D.C. Third, other legitimate stakeholders were identified during the partnership structuring and public involvement processes. The open nature of the process used to identify stakeholders enabled diverse interests to be represented both in the Partnership and the Advisory Council. Theoretically, any individual who learned about the partnership and advisory council meetings had the opportunity to attend and volunteer to be involved with any committee.

It is clear that the Partnership structure was cleverly designed not to give any one party the overall authority. However, the legislation ensured that whatever is done within the park area conforms to National Park Service standards. The consequence is that while property owners remain autonomous, the National Parks, through both the Northeast Regional and the Boston Harbor Islands project offices, is in a stronger position to guide the planning process and so the NPS has a stronger influence on outcomes of the planning process. This is especially important because the language of the planning documents must meet the standards of the Office of Management and Budgets if Congress is to endorse it and allocate the necessary operational funds . On the other hand, individual property owners have a greater influence on projects that may be funded and built on their properties. Property owners have greater influence on the contents of both the Park's Strategic and Implementation plans. Since within the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area real estate ownership gives stakeholders greater negotiating powers, it is possible that Native Americans as a group were not named as a partner because they hold no real estates within the Islands.

However, because federal and state laws recognize Native Americans as a legitimate interest group, of all the non-mainstream racial and ethnic groups, Native American interests seem to be taken more seriously in both Partnership and Advisory Council deliberations. Other than the mainstream and property owners, as a racial or ethnic group, Native American had the most extensive and intensive involvement with the planning process. It is evident that the legal mandate requiring continuous consultation with Native Americans, the extra effort by the leadership of the partnership, and the long-term vision of the NPS Northeast regional and the Boston project office staff all contributed to greater Native American involvement

The special accommodation accorded Native Americans has resulted in the group making significant contribution to the planning process. The group has made two significant proposals. Furthermore, because Native American have special recognition as an interest group with government to government relationship at both the state and federal level, this group has sufficient power and was able to negotiate with the National Park to request for an extension of the public comment period to allow for meaningful involvement by the group. Thus one can conclude that, compared to other racial and ethnic groups, Native Americans had greater impact on the outcome of the planning process. This effect is attributable mainly to the force of legislation but also to the skillful and accommodative approaches of the partnership, NPS regional, and Boston Harbors project office leadership. Therefore, legislation both empowers and legitimizes stakeholders.

Generally, it is the finding of this study that involving diverse communities of interests resulted in a compromise or consensus decision on what type of recreational activities and services should be allowed on certain areas of the islands within the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area. The involvement of different stakeholder groups has resulted in a consensus plan that accommodates the diverse and at times conflicting interests. The public involvement and review processes has produced a General Management Plan that allows for a multiplicity of use by designating desired activities and programs to islands that can support them with minimal negative impacts. Specifically, the General Management Plan identified the following six management zones: areas for visitor services and park facilities, areas with historic preservation emphasis, areas with managed landscape emphasis, areas with natural resource emphasis, areas for special use facilities, and potential mainland gateways. In this regard, one can conclude that the Boston Harbor

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Islands National Park Area Collaboration and public involvement process was successful because the outcomes from the process reflected input from the different participating stakeholder groups. Therefore, from public policy perspective, it appears that public involvement and community participation in recreation and tourism resource planning and development on public lands would be greatly enhanced by formulating policy that explicitly require direct participation by various interest groups in planning and managerial decision-making. Greater emphasis or effort should therefore be placed on providing for interest group and citizens representation on partnership boards and advisory councils as opposed to merely attempting to influence planning and decision making through traditional public involvement or comments processes

However, this study raises a number of issues. To begin with, Bramwell and Sharman (1999) and Bramwell and Lane (2000) state that collaborative planning must be evaluated in terms of its scope, intensity, and extent to which consensus emerges. One issue that still needs to be investigated is the extent to which the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership was successful in getting all relevant parties and interest groups involved with the collaborative planning process. An important question that still needs to be answered is, 'How inclusive was the planning process of all racial, ethnic, and interest groups within the Greater Metropolitan Boston general area? A related question relates to the extent to which participants from various racial and ethnic groups fully represented those group's interests? These are issues and questions worthy of further investigation.

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