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Metropolitan Beaches Commission To Hold Public Hearings In Nine Communities This Summer

PR Newswire

BOSTON, May 16, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The Metropolitan Beaches Commission (MBC) recently completed two public hearings on Beacon Hill to assess the state of the Boston Harbor region's public beaches and announced that they will hold a series of 9 public hearings in the region's beachfront communities this summer.

"These first two hearings focused on the important contribution these beaches make to the quality of life in our communities and the region," said Commission Co-Chair Representative Kathi-Anne Reinstein, who represents Revere, home of America's first public beach. "I am very much looking forward to holding additional public hearings in every community with a DCR beach to find out what we can do to help move our metropolitan beaches forward."

"We are looking to move these beaches from good towards great," said Commission Co-Chair Senator Tom McGee, who represents Lynn, Nahant and Swampscott. "Working with Save the Harbor / Save the Bay and the public, we intend to build on the success of our work in 2007 and are seeking new ways to enhance public access, increase beach programs, expand water transportation and improve water quality and beach flagging."

At Monday's hearing MBC Commissioner Paul Grogan, CEO of The Boston Foundation, stressed the importance of the region's beaches and the Boston Harbor Islands to the region and the contribution they make to the economic vitality of our coastal communities. "These beaches are important civic assets with the power to improve the quality of life for all the region's residents," said Grogan. "They are also economic drivers in many communities. These hearings are a great opportunity for us to work together to get it right."

The Commission was originally established in 2006 by the Massachusetts Legislature to recommend improvements to the Boston Harbor region's public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket. It has begun to examine the impacts of the recommendations made in its first report and intends to make additional recommendations for further improvements in 2013.

So far this year the Metropolitan Beaches Commission has held two public hearings at the Massachusetts State House. Commissioners have heard from DCR Commissioner Ed Lambert about the agency's budget, staffing and plans for the metropolitan beaches. Secretary of Transportation Richard Davey also addressed the Commission about the economic benefits of water transportation to coastal communities and the need for a coordinated and strategic approach in the region. They have also heard from expert panels on beach and harbor island access, programming and partnerships, water transportation and excursions, and water quality and beach flagging.

EEA Secretary Richard Sullivan, who also attended Monday's hearing, praised the Commission's efforts, saying "Their work has served as a roadmap for improvements to our beaches and parks across the Commonwealth."

The Commission will hold nine public hearings in Nahant, Lynn, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy, and Hull this summer. The first will take place on June 11, 2013 in Revere. These hearings and the Commission's report will also identify and showcase economic development opportunities for local communities made possible by public investment in clean water and better beaches in our region's waterfront neighborhoods and beachfront communities.

If you are interested in being informed of the hearing date in your community, please email info@savetheharbor.org.

SOURCE Metropolitan Beaches Commission