

**St. Albans City Parks Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, September 11, 2014
Barlow Street Community Center**

A meeting of the St. Albans City Parks Commission was held on Thursday, September 11, 2014, in the Barlow Community Center at 6:00 pm.

Commission Members Present: Peter Chevalier, Chair; Jeff Young; Barbara Weinstein; Brianna Haenke, Wendy Stous & Joan McGinn.

Commission Members Absent: Angie Sturm.

Staff Present: Kelly Viens, Director of Recreation & Liz Gamache, Mayor.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance.
Peter Chevalier called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and asked for a moment of silence to honor those that lost their lives on September 11th.
2. Introductions.
Each member of the Parks Commission introduced themselves.
3. Review Parks Commission Charge.
Mr. Chevalier read aloud the following Parks Commission Charge.

The St. Albans City Parks Commission is hereby created. The Parks Commission shall consist of 7 members with 3 three-year terms and 4 two-year terms. Commissioners may be appointed by the City Council and may be removed upon majority vote by the council who shall likewise fill all vacancies. The City Council shall also designate a Chair who may be removed upon majority vote of the council. The Parks Commission may perform the following duties as they pertain to Taylor Park, Houghton Park and the Barlow Community Center Park:

 - Review all Parks Improvement Projects and forward any comments to the City Council for approval.
 - Prepare planning documents that reflect the community's vision for its parks and forward to City Council for approval.
 - Facilitate public input on park improvements.
 - Develop rules and regulations for City parks and forward to City Council for approval.
 - The Parks Commission shall receive staff support from the City Manager's designee and shall function as a public body under Vermont's Open Meeting Law approved March 10, 2014.

Mayor Gamache expressed her thanks to the board for their participation.
4. Consider request from local artist to loan Raid inspired sculpture to City for placement in Taylor Park (D&V).
Mayor Gamache explained that she received an e-mail from Louisa Ulrich-Verderber, a 17 year old artist who creates welded sculptures. She was inspired by images of the Raid showing raiders riding out of town on horseback and decided to create a welded horse sculpture. Mayor Gamache stated that as the project evolved, to Louisa, the sculpture could represent a horse that belonged to one of the posse's that went after the raiders or something entirely different left to the beholder. Louisa was also inspired by the Taylor Park fountain given to the City as a gift from Governor Smith to represent prosperity and new beginnings.

Louisa is proposing to allow the City to display the sculpture on loan and thought it would be best suited in the round garden in Taylor Park. Installation would involve bringing in a boom truck which would be provided by Louisa. Mayor Gamache stated that council is eager to get the Parks Commission's feedback and consideration for installation of the sculpture and needs a decision made within the next day.

Barbara Weinstein noted her concern over safety as well as the disturbance that would be created by placing the sculpture in the round garden. Mayor Gamache responded that the sculpture was designed with safety in mind and would be challenging for children to climb but would have to make sure the City had adequate insurance coverage. She added that staff would also be looking into safety concerns.

Ms. Stous asked whether the sculpture could be displayed just for the length of the Raid celebration. Mayor Gamache responded that she did not know but could ask. Mr. Young asked if the sculpture sits on a square base. Mayor Gamache responded affirmatively and another member of the commission noted that it is rectangular in shape.

Mr. Chevalier stated that he would be interested to know how the Raid Committee feels about the idea. Mayor Gamache responded that she did speak to Warren Hamm and he is open to the idea based on the location and the concept. Council also agreed that they did not want to allow anything related to the Raid without the committee's consent.

Mr. Chevalier asked Mayor Gamache if she is looking for a motion and vote from the committee. Mayor Gamache responded that the commission could form a motion if they chose to. Mayor Gamache suggested including a time limit in a motion and also suggested that the committee develop a process for public art in the future. Ms. Weinstein noted that she would be concerned for the Garden Club who spent countless hours maintaining the garden if it were to be destroyed by the sculpture. Mr. Young responded that he would prefer to place the sculpture on either side of the civil war memorial surrounded by a fence. Mayor Gamache responded that that idea would violate what the Raid Committee is willing to accept. Mr. Deslauriers stated that he would want to take caution for the gardeners that have worked so hard to maintain the round garden but does like the idea of placing the sculpture somewhere during the Raid celebration.

Mr. Young asked where the alternative site is located if the park location is not approved. Mayor Gamache responded that it would be located at Fiddlehead Dentistry on Congress and Messenger Street. She added that she believes there is one other alternate site as well. Ms. Weinstein commented that the lawn at St. Luke's might also be a good location. Mayor Gamache noted that there is a grant that is available for communities interested in public garden installations that the commission might want to look into toward the future. Mr. Young asked when the sculpture would be installed. Mayor Gamache responded that it would need to be installed on Sunday.

A motion was made by Jeff Young; seconded by Wendy Stous to pursue a conversation with City Council to place the sculpture in the long garden instead of the round garden in Taylor Park while addressing safety concerns and to be removed within 6 weeks. Mr. Young commented that he believes the long garden would be a better location for the sculpture as it does not have permanent shrubbery like the round garden. **Motion passed unanimously.**

5. Establish regular meeting time and location.

The Commission established their regular meetings to take place on the first Monday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Barlow Community Center beginning Monday, October 6th. Additionally, the Commission decided to meet on Monday, September 22nd. The Commission exchanged their contact information.

6. Begin strategic planning analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing City parks.
Agenda item was tabled for a future meeting.

7. Election of Vice Chair (D&V).

Agenda item was tabled for a future meeting.

8. Other Business.

Mr. Young suggested that the Commission take a walk and photos in each of the three City's parks at some point before it gets too cold.

Ms. Viens added that another topic for discussion at the next meeting is a solution for the flag in Taylor Park that gets torn by a tree when it is lowered to half-mast. Mr. Young noted that there is a canvas flag that could be purchased which would withstand high winds.

Ms. Weinstein stated that she would like to discuss the trees in the park at the next meeting.

9. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristen Smith
Administrative Coordinator

Approved