

**ST. ALBANS CITY PARKS COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**DECEMBER 6, 2016 6:00 PM**

**RECREATION DEPARTMENT, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR**

In Attendance: Tom Koldys, Angie Sturm, Jeff Young, Barbara Weinstein, Stina Booth

Absent: Joan McGinn

Staff Members Present: Chip Sawyer; Director of Planning & Development, Therese Carlisle; Minute Taker

Topic	Discussion	Action
1. Call to Order		Tom Koldys calls to order the meeting of the Parks Commission at 6:04 pm on December 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
2. Discussion with Chip Sawyer regarding the Taylor Park planning grant and related issues/events	The discussion begins, Chip Sawyer refers to a packet of information that he has provided for all members. The front page of the packet provides a flow chart, outlining the progression of how the planning will follow for the Taylor Park grant. Mr. Sawyer explains that he has included all of the stakeholders he can think of and is happy to add any others that the Commission thinks of. Mr. Sawyer proposes that each group of stakeholders appoints a representative. The representative will then work with the steering committee. Through a previous conversation with Mr. Sawyer, Kelly Viens and Tom Koldys; the plan is for a member of the Parks Commission to Chair the steering committee, this is likely to be Mr.	<b>Additions to the list of stakeholders:</b> Daycares and a mothers group, as they are often using the park. Rise VT Rotary Churches that surround the park Chief of Police

Koldys. Ms. Weinstein comments in support of this idea and adds that the flow chart is very helpful to make the process more clear.

Mr. Sawyer continues, stating that if funding is approved these groups would need to be contacted immediately and asked to appoint a representative; he would begin work on a RFP (Request For Proposals) from the consultants. Getting the consultants involved as soon as possible, depending on how many items can be achieved simultaneously. It is then expected that the consultants will put together the Project Deliverables, with input from the Steering Committee and City Staff. It may require a few meetings to reach this point. The Steering Committee would then submit the Project Deliverables to the Parks Comm.; Parks Comm. then submits to City Council; and eventually City Council will Adopt the project; at some point this is required by the grant committee as they no longer want control.

All of these would be public meetings and there will also be a website providing information and updates for individuals wishing to follow the process or gain more information.

Mr. Sawyer then calls attention to page 4 of the informational packet. He then reads from page 4.

“Describe citizen participation activities.” The following is a list from this page that Mr. Sawyer would like to see accomplished.

- Summary of the history of Taylor Park
- Inventory of current park uses and possible/desired uses of the park
- List of needs associated with current and contemplated uses
- Review of current financial resources dedicated to Taylor Park
- Update of Taylor Park base map

**Put up a table at the next Town Meeting Day to get ideas from the community about what they would like to see in Taylor Park.**

-Review of park circulation and desired addition or retirement of walkways

-Consultation of further storm water infiltration opportunities in the park

-Development of 5-year vision for uses and improvements in Taylor Park

-Development of 10+-year vision for uses and improvements

-Compilation of associated maps and visuals

-Development of capital cost items, timelines and implementation strategies

-Suggested funding source development for the park  
5 year items; more trash cans, lights in the park; things we can get to work on right away.

10 year to be on a larger scale, may require the need for further grants. Jeff Young adds that this would be an 'ultimate design'.

Mr. Young comments that this is a lot of work. Angie Sturm agrees and adds that this is what they had hoped for. Mr. Young adds that he has a copy of the 2011 plan that was submitted to City Council and was accepted. It is a bit out of date but worth revisiting as it includes some 10 year visioning. One of the things on the 2011 plan was setting up the green, which has been a great success. Mr. Young talks about when Katie's Yarn Shop (What a Yarn) on Main St. was vacant and they hosted an open house for people to explore the space and share ideas, this also was a great success. Mr. Young is hoping that some similar actions will be taken on this project. Mr. Young inquires on a time frame. Mr. Sawyer responds that the funding will not expire until May of 2018. Mr. Young suggests that Town Meeting day is a great time to put up a table and ask for ideas from the community.

Ms. Sturm questions Mr. Sawyer about his vision for the meeting format when bringing all the stakeholders together, how this will run and be moderated. Mr. Sawyer

responds if a microphone is needed it can be used, depending on the venue and the size of the turnout, # of people in attendance. Really good meeting minutes will be needed. Mr. Sawyer states that there are some useful methods of gathering all this information and having it as a record to carry with you and sort out. It is important to note that all individuals be heard, but may not agree. It is hoped that they will be able to avoid stakeholder conflict during this time. He went on to explain the process of elimination.

Ms. Sturm voiced the concern of having a Planner that is good at communicating with the Committee about what is happening. Key to the process is a good facilitator, and Mr. Sawyer agrees.

Mr. Young voices his experience in the past with lack of funding. He is hoping the Planner will have some ideas to help develop a budget for the parks.

Discussion proceeded about the importance of the surrounding churches.

**Mr. Sawyer exits the meeting.**

Mr. Young has a short history of Taylor Park. The Historical Museum keeps records of this as well. Tom Koldys brings to attention that there is already a really great start to a list of current uses for Taylor Park. Mr. Koldys also refers to the planning and steering of this project, he feels that it is important to include as many members of the Parks Comm. as possible at the meetings. Mr. Young voices that he is very pleased with the idea of Mr. Koldys acting as Chair for the Steering Committee. It has been a great success having Mr. Sawyer at this meeting, making the project much more transparent and clear of the process.

This discussion begins with brainstorming the strong feelings of finding a way to create a budget for this Commission to run on. Mr. Koldys presents Taylor Park

A) Follow up discussion based on information shared.

3. Update Taylor Park priority list.

Mr. Young will review and revise the history of Taylor Park that he has.

\*Please see attached to view the Taylor Park Priority list

- A) Include discussion of key points from “The Role of Parks in shaping Successful Cities: A White Paper” shared by Jeff Young via email.

as being an asset for Main St. business; drawing more patrons into town and feels that it provides a relationship where the businesses should desire to invest into the Park. Ms. Sturm then adds information regarding public art in the parks. She has learned of other towns that create a budget using a tax on development over a specified dollar amount where a small percent is paid to provide art in that community. Ms. Sturm suggests the possibility that these funds could be used in a way that would benefit the Parks Commission. Barbara Weinstein adds that in many cases a developer is required to incorporate the cost of art into the project (entry ways, flowers, landscape etc.). Mr. Young voices his belief that there is a lot of prospect for incorporating fundraising; referring to the Recreation Department as a prime example of good fundraising.

Mr. Koldys refers to his copy of the list of Priorities for Taylor Park. He begins by reading aloud the Strengths (please see attached). Ms. Weinstein would like to add the musical instruments to the list of strengths. This topic leads to a conversation about having appropriate substrate surrounding the musical instruments and the space surrounding the Houghton St. playground. While reading from this list some time is spent discussing the need for adequate lighting and electrical work. It is stated that some work has been performed on the electrical but not to the whole park. More is still needed. In the current state the electrical wiring is not able to support the Holiday lighting that is present in the park. Ms. Weinstein voices her concern for the deteriorating state of the Civil War Memorial; the concrete has become disgusting and is in need of repair. Mr. Young responds that a professional has addressed the situation and determined in order to correct the problem the monument would need to be raised and a new base put

in. This item will be added to the list of priorities to ensure that it gets an extra push.

Mr. Koldys continued reading from the list. A discussion ensues about benches in the park. It is the hope of the Commission to have the benches surrounding the fountain uplifted and spread throughout Taylor Park. **It is also called to attention the need to have the rest of the stone removed from around the benches!** These stones have become something to be thrown and have cause significant damage to the statue.

The next topic on the Priority List is the condition of the trees in the park. Mr. Young suggests that this time of year is a great chance to look at the trees and see the health. He points out that there are three maple trees in the south end that have rotted leaders and will eventually have to be removed. Ms. Weinstein suggests removal during a season when the trees are not in bloom in an effort the cause less upset in the community. Ms. Weinstein also suggests taking photos of leafed and not leafed to provide greater understanding of why they need to be removed. Mr. Young also presents the issue of cabling trees and fixing a tree that has a broken cable. Ms. Booth calls attention to the time; Mr. Koldys continues reading through the Priority List.

The exposed aggregate sidewalk is presented by Mr. Young as a safety concern/threat. This was not sealed properly and has become crumbly, falling apart.

Mr. Young states that the City has decided to keep the two portable toilets behind the monument, building a wooden screen for a more appealing visual solution and paying the low monthly charge to have them present as a short term solution.

Ms. Weinstein keys in on the topic of signage and the desire to see more of it in Taylor Park, regarding rules of the park. Comparing it to the great signage at Houghton St. Park.

This will be passed on to the planner in an effort to brainstorm what the best process is for removing these and what they should be replaced with.

4. A look ahead to next month's agenda.

Mr. Young present the subject of the water in the Taylor Park water fountain. Throughout this summer the water was untreated and not circulating due to mechanical issues in the fountain. The problems are scheduled for repair, subsequently in the following summer the water will be treated with copper sulfate. Mr. Young states that some people and dogs can have an adverse reaction to copper sulfate, causing them to lose their hair. Ms. Booth questions if this is a common practice in public fountains and will there be any legal ramifications if that reaction was to occur. Mr. Young responds that it is common, but most fountains are designed in a way that people cannot easily get into them and that proper signage is needed to ensure safety.

Ms. Sturm encourages the development of fun things in the park for the children. Some brainstorming takes place. Ms. Weinstein adding bocce and other old fashioned Victorian type games. Ms. Booth would like to extend it to fun for all ages.

Josh Lareau has been invited to the Jan. or Feb. meeting, as well as Mike, the concrete designer.

Revisiting the skate park and trying to find a guest that would be able to provide more information about what is needed. Ms. Weinstein has viewed a catalog that Kelly Viens has. Ms. Carlisle shares that Swanton has recently installed a skate park and taking a look at it might prove beneficial.

5. Other business.

Tom Koldys calls to attention a topic in Meeting Minutes from Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> where Mr. Sawyer is quoted questioning what would be gained from enrolling in the National Parks and Recreations. Discussion ensued surrounding this topic and more about what this is. Ms. Sturm voiced her desire for furthering her knowledge base. Mr. Sawyer

Mr. Young to create a slideshow representing some of the great ideas of things for children in the park

-This is a formatting mistake from the Minute Taker, a correction will be issued. The statement was delivered by Kelly Viens, as referring to Mr. Sawyer.

states that these funds would not come from his budget but believes that it would be Rec.'s responsibility. Conversation then carried to fences; Houghton Park and the hopes that this membership and the classes they provide would help the Commission find a good solution for this space.

Mr. Young requests information about the Steven's Brook plan, wondering if there are any specifics addressing the erosion of the bank. This is not addressed in the Steven's Brook plan; the plan focuses on the rain water runoff before it reaches the Brook. Other thoughts and ideas are mentioned, it is Mr. Sawyers hope that by implementing flow reduction of rain water going into the Brook, the Brook will not run as swiftly and result in less erosion. There is a large concern about the removal of the cotton woods and the adverse effects that is going to have on the Brook.

Mr. Young provides feedback from members of the community that he has spoken with and have voiced that they are pleased to see Mr. Koldys acting as Chair of Parks Commission.

Mr. Young addresses Therese Carlisle, unsure if she is the new Commission member. Ms. Carlisle informs him that she is the new minute taker for the Commission. There are believed to be three candidates that will be interviewed next Monday 12<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Sturm tables the idea of incorporating more, simple, tasteful, interpretive signs. Example is the rotting maples and trying to explain why it will be coming down within the next 2 years. Mr. Young states that these signs are expensive as is the machine to make them. It just so

Mr. Young is a member of this organization the invites the Commission the access this information through him.

Mr. Young will also provide more information to Mr. Sawyer regarding this membership.

Mr. Koldys hopes to be present while the interviews for an additional Commission member are taking place.

6. Consider approval of meeting minutes:  
10/04/16; 10/14/16;  
11/01/16 (D&V)

happens that the City School has purchased one and the Commission talks about the possibility of using it.

Discussion ensues about which formatting is best going forward.

Ms. Sturm moves to adopt the new, linear format. Ms. Booth seconds the motion and all votes are in favor of using this formatting going forward.

Mr. Young moves to approve all minutes, Ms. Sturm seconds the motion and all vote in favor.

Ms. Carlisle will make revisions to Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> minutes regarding the statement from Chip Sawyer.

7. Adjourn

Tom Koldys moves to adjourn, the motion is seconded by Angie Sturm and all vote in favor.

December 6, 2016 Parks Commission meeting adjourns at 7:28pm.

**Chip Sawyer exits the meeting at 6:35 pm**