

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY TAYLOR PARK MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:00 PM TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2017**

Approved June 15, 2017

Participants:

Amy Paradis	Laz Scangas	Angie Sturm*
Barbara Weinstein*	Jeff Young*	Stan Bradeen
Bill Kelley	Robin Morrill	Lisamarie Charlesworth
Tom Koldys*, Chair	Stina Booth*	Joanie McGinn*

(* indicates members of City Parks Commission)

Staff:

Jeff Hodgson, Wagner Hodgson Landscape Architects
Hannah Loope, Wagner Hodgson Landscape Architects
Chip Sawyer, City Director of Planning & Development

- 1. Open Meeting. Chair T.Koldys opened the meeting at 6:02 PM.**
 - a. Introductions of participants and consultants - Introductions were made.
 - b. Discuss additions or deletions to agenda – There were none.

2. Committee Download / Discussion

The consultants began by saying they'd like to start with a broad range of input from the group and had a list of questions.

Does the park accommodate the functions that happen there well, and are there things that could be improved? Are there any pedestrian desire lines of note?

T.Koldys : A main destination is Main St. A lot of access from the southeast corner too (high school). Otherwise scattered.

J.Hodgson noted recently removed paths. J.Young showed some of the paths recently moved.

S.Bradeen mentioned how the eastern edge gardens form a barrier along Church St. and most residential folks enter from the northeastern or southeastern corners.

The background behind the pervious sidewalks was also explained for the consultants – a desire to try out the technology and infiltrate more in the Park. The difficulties of pervious concrete in this region were explained.

L.Scangas noted that a lot of people come down from Bishop St. There were general comments that the Church St. crosswalks were appreciated.

R.Morrill noted that, during the Farmers Market, you rarely see people cutting across the grass; they use the walkways.

H.Loope noted that the Main St. midblock seemed successful. J.Young stated that a goal had been to move the central walkway north to match the mid-block crossing.

J.Hodgson noted that there was no sidewalk along Church St., and there was general agreement that was an issue.

J.Young gave the background of the Church St. velocity reduction gardens and mentioned that the park has very good sand/gravel substrate.

C.Sawyer mentioned the telecommunications duct bank under the eastern sidewalk.

L.Scangas mentioned that a sidewalk along Church St. would not feel as much in the park as the current eastern walk and wondered if the design could be changed so that the Church St. buildings feel more like the back of the park.

J.Young talked about integrating the other side of Church into the park aesthetic as well. S.Bradeen suggested doing the same for Bank St., even shifting it over a bit.

L.Scangas and others mentioned making provisions for closing Church St. more often for special events. R.Morrill stated that Church St. was important for Farmers Market parking.

J.Young talked about getting power down into the green. That started a conversation current, recent, and desired power in the park, including along the western edge, in the center and in the south end.

S.Bradeen mentioned that the south end needed a new personality, and a new concert venue is needed, rather than the gazebo. There was extensive conversation about a concert venue and the Civil War memorial.

R.Morrill mentioned getting a better Church St. viewshed for wedding photos.

There was extensive talk about where the gazebo/event space should be and what should be in the south end.

L.Scangas mentioned that the south end is very dark and could be deforested. He also mentioned that he liked the intimacy of the current end where the gazebo is located.

When asked, R.Morrill explained where vendors locate during the Farmers Market. She said that the sidewalk widths were good, and the deteriorating pervious sidewalk is a problem.

S.Bradeen advocated for quiet, contemplative spaces.

L.Charlesworth asked about law enforcement input, and C.Sawyer said that the Police Dept. would comment on the ideas coming out of this effort. J.Young discussed the cameras currently in the park.

J.Young mentioned that there needs to be a plan for truck-proof walkways in the park.

3. Review of existing Park photo boards

This item was skipped for item #4.

4. Review of Group Emphasis Exercise

	Emphasis	De-Emphasis	Difference	Reaction Strength	
Connectivity and Wayfinding					Clarification and Elaboration
Walkway alignment/connectivity	7		7	7	
Signage for fountain and interpretive	5		5	5	The Museum does plan a walking tour.
Tourism kiosk (sell space?)	4		4	4	Currently accomplishes a public notice goal, but not good for tourism/wayfinding.
Wayfinding (signs, etc.)	2		2	2	For starting your Downtown/City journey in the Park.
Events and Activities					
Gazebo: improve/reorient?	14		14	14	
Ice-skating rink or trails	5	8	-3	13	Including loops. Getting more winter use from the park, when it is lit up for the holidays.
Accessible water feature	4	8	-4	12	Something the park has had before. Something kid-friendly should also be explored.
Event/concert spaces	9		9	9	
Places for weddings	7	2	5	9	Photography is big in the Park. Potential revenue source?
Kid play areas	2	7	-5	9	The instruments are popular. Something non-traditional would likely be more well-accepted. A children's garden has been mentioned in the past.
Horse rides		5	-5	5	Will probably need to accommodate a circuit for horse wagon rides, regardless.
Walking tour	2		2	2	Historical, fun, scavenger hunt, etc.
Gardening demos		1	-1	1	Spaces for Gardening Night Out and similar events and displays.
Movies		1	-1	1	Doesn't happen very often.

Public gardening station		1	-1	1	Would be nice to have gardening tools on hand and encourage park goers to help with some of the gardens. Maybe also something like the Tiny Library trend. Could tools be rented from the library?
Seeing, Viewing, Feeling					
Redesign Civil War Monument	5	5	0	10	
Public art	5	3	2	8	The Parks Commission has discussed a policy for this. There is currently no rotating art in the Park. This effort would probably provide the location for the art, not the designs for the art, itself. There is a growing arts community in the City.
Personality for the south end	6		6	6	
Tree Inventory and plan	5		5	5	
Lighting to match streetscape	4		4	4	
More design around fountain area	4		4	4	Can more be done around the fountain to build upon what was installed during the restoration?
Screening from traffic		4	-4	4	
Endowment for memorials	2		2	2	
Redesign base of the fountain		1	-1	1	Should there be an alternative to the sod?
Art in process			0	0	E.g. folks joining together to paint.
Facilities and Infrastructure					
Bathrooms	5	5	0	10	A polarizing issue. Many see a need for it and others are worried about maintenance, safety and aesthetics. Would be interested in ideas from the consultants. Currently the City puts portolets behind the Civil War Memorial, and they get used very often.
Walkway surfaces	8		8	8	Recommendations for durable, slightly walkways that either infiltrate themselves or can infiltrate easily along the sides. Keep in mind that the City cleans the Downtown sidewalks with a spinning brush plow in the winter.
Food service area(s)	1	6	-5	7	Where food trucks or others could set up in the park.
Transit Shelter		7	-7	7	There had been a meeting with CCTA and design suggestions were made to them, but they never got back to us. Could be an opportunity to think outside the box? Could it be public art?
More sitting areas	6		6	6	
Reflecting Pool	5		5	5	
Improve Stormwater Planters	3	1	2	4	They need work and new ideas.
Trash/recycling receptacles	2	2	0	4	Do we need more than the 6 we have now and what would be good locations?
Water fountain (drinking)	2		2	2	
More Stormwater treatment			0	0	

5. Next steps and project timeline

WHLA will return with the intent of “whittling down” the list and identifying points for more discussion.

6. Other Business.

- a. Approval of minutes.

Motion by S.Booth to approve the minutes of April 11, 2017 as presented. Second by J.Young and approved with all in favor.

- b. Next meeting date. Chip will use Doodle to set up a meeting in mid-June.

7. Public Comment. There was none.

Motion by J.Young to adjourn at 8:14pm. Second by R.Morrill and approved with all in favor.