

City of Gardiner Parks Committee
February 27, 2024 5:30 pm City Hall

Present: Melissa Lindley (City Economic Development Director), John Cameron (Public Works Director), Robert Abbey, Marg Barter, Dorothy Washburne, Marc MacDonald, Tamara Whitmore, Kathy Galgano, Councilor Veronica Babcock, Councilor Shawn Dolley

1. Introductions
2. Appoint Note Taker - Tamara Whitmore
3. Review Committee Charge ~ Established by Gardiner City Council on October 11, 2023

Parks & Public Space Committee

A standing committee to meet monthly

Membership: Staff representatives from Buildings & Grounds, Gardiner Main Street, Age Friendly Committee, City Council as well as members of the community.

Charge: Produce thoughtful plans for maintenance, improvement, protection, utility, and access for all of Gardiner's public spaces, including:

- Collaborating with Public Works for maintenance, improvements, and addressing needs and issues as they arise.
 - Conducting annual audits to determine use factors, conditions, and to itemize needs.
 - Develop short-term and long-term goals and work plans to address needed improvements. Provide recommendations for budget expenses and planning.
 - Coordinating resources for maintenance, improvements, and future development.
 - Promoting and reviewing responsible and sustainable use of parks for general use and for major events.
 - Receiving public input on the maintenance, use, and changes to parks and public spaces and working to develop community-based support for changes or improvements.
 - Collecting and sharing information with the public on the history of Gardiner's public spaces.
 - Supporting and encouraging volunteer efforts to clean up, maintain, and improve parks and public spaces through partnerships and collaboration with community groups.
4. Public Works/Buildings & Grounds Maintenance Concerns
 - a. John - the Waterfront needs a lot of work. Silt is still there from the December 18, 2023 flooding. Boardwalk needs continual maintenance, such as replacement of boards. Piers for the boardwalk need repair, as well as the docks.
 - b. There is not enough staff time available to take care of the more time intensive tasks, such as weeding, planting, landscaping, planters, etc.

- i. Volunteers are needed for these types of tasks that greatly enhance the beauty of downtown.
- ii. Groups that can help include: Gardiner's Gardeners, Rotary, Interact and Day of Caring (student groups), etc.

5. General Discussion

- a. Number of parks within the City: The Common, McKay, Dearborn, Waterfront, Playground in South Gardiner, Dog Park. (Six? Or are there more?)
- b. Robert Abbey and Curt Label (?) identified 21 points of interest within the community, including KLT properties, City Land and private properties. (see separate map provided)
- c. Dorothy Washburne has a parcel of land she has worked with KLT to place under a conservation easement; behind that there is another parcel of land in a conservation easement and behind that is 50 acres of City of Gardiner Land.
 - i. Located along Marston Road.
 - ii. Dorothy thinks it would make a great "City Forest".
- d. Parks Committee can be a group that bats ideas around and digs into specific issues because the City Council does not have time to do so, and take recommendations back to the Council.
- e. When we install major infrastructure we need to plan ahead regarding how much it will take to maintain and/or replace.
- f. Waterfront: Concern about allowing the cruise in to park on the grass. Maybe we could allow them to use all of the paved parking space instead of parking on the grass?
 - i. May be an annoyance to boaters, but it is only one day a week and they could still launch and find another place to park their truck and trailer.
- g. The Common:
 - i. Drainage on the Common grounds is somewhat of an issue; paths have holes and puddles
 - ii. Dorothy idea: In 1976, Gardiner was deemed a "Bicentennial City" and had to pick a project to work on. It was decided to form a group that worked on The Common and that is when the Lady and the Birds fountain was installed.
 - 1. In 2026 it will be the country's 250th anniversary - if there is another grant program, perhaps we could advocate for better lighting or a drinking fountain in the Common?
 - iii. 2024 is the 200th Anniversary of The Common being gifted to the city.
- h. There is a need for signage in many of our parks.
 - i. Example: Dilly Dally by Sasson Soffer, located at the Waterfront Park. There is a story about how the work came to be here in Gardiner - something about TW Dick's metal was used to create the work?
 - ii. A second Soffer sculpture has been given to the City and is to be placed in McKay Park - a sunflower?

6. Grant & Funding Programs

- a. Melissa: There are several significant grants available for implementation, but you need to have the planning work already done.
 - b. City Council is very in favor of “climate and community resilience” given the recent flooding events.
 - c. Might be an opportunity to acquire funding to do a study on flood prevention/resiliency at the waterfront?
 - i. FEMA grant
 - ii. Land & Water Conservation Fund
 - iii. KVCOG could assist in pulling together applications.
 - d. Melissa put out a Request for Proposals on redesigning the Arcade Parking Lot (just redesign, not implementation)
 - i. Only two proposals submitted
 - ii. One was \$80,000 and the other was \$120,000
 - iii. The higher proposal was submitted by the group that consulted on the Downtown Master Plan.
7. Committee member’s input on highest priority location:
- a. Waterfront (Five votes)
 - b. Waterfront AND Arcade (Two votes)
 - c. Resiliency (One vote)
8. Councilor Babcock makes the motion to accept Robert Abbey as the Chair of the Parks Committee. Seconded by Marge Barter. Motion Passes.
9. Next meeting: Wednesday, March 27, 2024
10. Adjourn at 7:00 pm