

MINUTES

Park, Arts and Culture Committee Meeting

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

5:30-6:45 PM

Room 12, City Hall

Participants

Committee Members: Councilor Kurt Wright, Ward 4 (KW)
Councilor Vince Brennan, Ward 3 (VB)
Councilor Karen Paul, Ward 6 (KP)

Staff: Jen Francis, Parks Planner, BPRW (JF)
Jesse Bridges, Director, BPRW (JB)
Nate Wildfire, Assistant Director, CEDO, (NW)
Kirsten Merriman Shapiro, Special Projects Manager, CEDO, (KMS)
Rubi Simon, Director, Library (RS)
Doreen Kraft, Director, BCA, (DK)
Bruce Bovat, Deputy Chief, Police Department (BB)

Others: Jim Lockridge, Big Heavy World
John Gonter, BCA Board Member
Steven Polli, Squash Ball
Matt Tucker, Squash Ball

1) Approval of agenda & draft minutes from 10/15

- Meeting came to order at 5:33 PM
- Request to amend agenda to include update from BCA after Squash Court Conversation
- Motion to approve October minutes and amended November agenda (Brennan/Wright); approved

2) Public Forum

- Jim Lockridge
 - Update since last PACC meeting: Doreen and Jim will be conversing and preparing a collaborative path forward for members of the public to be involved in the BCA board

3) BCA Update (Kraft)

- In conversation with community members with varying voices
- Ultimately it is BCA's job to manage the resources they have well
- Always open and eager to expand the role of BCA to better support the community

- BCA has a board, by resolution, a board of commissioners; not a governing board, but leverages the money that the city receives through fund raising
- Will bring recommendations that Jim and Doreen (and others) develop
- John Gonter describes his role as board member to the BCA
 - Mission to ensure that city continues to advocate for all forms of the arts
 - John is a local artist who has been working in the south end for seven years
 - His charter is to represent and be in dialogue with the community on how to advocate for and fund the arts
 - John donates sales from his own work to BCA
- (VB) Was there an outcome from the meeting with Doreen, Jim & Melinda as mediator?
 - (DK) No specific outcome – need to be vetted with partners; there are differences in methods, but lots of people in dialogue and spirit of cooperation
 - (KW) We are at the beginning of a conversation that is a good step forward
 - (JL) The outcome of the facilitated meeting was to secure/identify some number of seats that are filled by community members; there was disagreement in number of seats – Jim advocated for five, but there are currently three open seats – potential for phasing; make opportunity for transparent public participation
 - (DK) The board has an open process for becoming a member; there’s hopefully a lot of dialogue that will happen over the next few months in this regard; the board believes they are an open board; we must allow this to take shape and keep open minds moving forward

4) Leddy Squash Court Conversation (Tucker)

- Comments from Matt Tucker
 - Only public squash court in the country
 - The court could be maintained better: have a broom on site, make better awareness of etc.
 - Potential for programming
- Comments from Steven Polli
 - Steven raised funds for the court in 1999 and helped build it
 - The agreement was the city would light the court and maintain it
 - The city put a street light on the back of the court and put up netting
 - Steven painted the walls with anti-graffiti paint
 - There were supposed to be some kids programs
 - Request from Steven to contact him directly for future maintenance guidance
- (JB) Would be great to have people reach out directly to the department if there are questions or concerns.
 - Squash ball is a specialty sport that does not have high levels of participants
 - The court was not identified in the recent Parks Master Plan as a facility that will be maintained in the future
 - BPRW does not have staffing capacity for additional programs in this location, though Burlington has models for community-supported programming (little league, bocce)
- (VB) Are you available to help with squash training?
 - Steven would be happy to help

5) Fletcher Free Update (Simon)

- Update on strategic planning process
 - Consultant came out in October for staff & interdepartmental forums
 - Winter data collection
 - Planning more forums for Spring

- Applied for Smithsonian exhibit on human evolution (with partners); 19 library locations will be selected across the country and exhibit will travel between 2015-2017 for four-month installations
- Upcoming capital projects; re-carpeting, repainting balcony

6) PIAP Update (Wildfire)

- Parking forum tonight at 7pm Contois featuring presentations on data collection
- PIAP update
 - Marina
 - MOU conversations moving ahead
 - Erin Moreau has been critically helpful in thinking through marina development and is a huge asset to the city; developing term sheet over next several weeks
 - ECHO
 - Final draft of MOU has been developed, waiting for final feedback from ECHO
 - Sailing Center
 - Lease development under way
 - New Moran
 - Findings report submitted, 51 pages
 - Reminder of upcoming timeline: project assessment (Dec. or early Jan.), City Council term sheet (Jan. 26)
 - (VB) Does it feel like the New Moran team is moving forward?
 - (NW) CEDO is digesting contents of report but it includes letters of interest, feasibility report, fundraising update (\$1.4m) with potential lead major gift (\$3-5m)
 - (KP) Nice event last week where they presented some of the findings

7) WAN Update (Shapiro)

- WAN moving ahead, experiencing challenges with high ground water
- Additional dewatering is necessary, involving the installations of a temporary PVC pipe to remove water from site; requires construction easement with Burlington College and CHT
- Coordination with Parks for marathon next Spring
- Construction shut-down will be happening in about a month or so depending on the weather
- Offer from Kirsten to facilitate site tour
- (VB) Provide WAN change order & budget update for next PACC meeting

8) Bike Path Rehabilitation (Bridges)

- Construction update
 - New alignment in at WFP with temporary painting
 - Concrete work still underway, cracked blocks repaired at WFP
 - Drivable grass installed
 - Phase 1b construction in Urban Reserve will minimally impact users
 - There is an upcoming change order for Phase 1a construction
- Design & security lighting (“blue light”) system
 - Blue lights are intended to provide a sense of security and safety
 - Cell phones have reduced the need for blue light systems
 - The bike path rehabilitation design is intentionally incorporating improved safety and visibility features
 - Budget is a factor, blue lights are costly to put in and maintain; have many maintenance projects throughout the parks system that also need support
 - Parks recommendation is not to pursue blue light system along the bike path
 - Comments from Chief Deputy Bruce Bovat

- Blue light systems are primarily used on college campuses
 - UVM & Champlain college both have these systems in place with mixed results
 - Concur with cell phones replacing
 - Mile marker system could improve security along the bike path
 - Blue lights could create a false sense of security
 - Not the best use of resources
- Current project financing
 - \$2.56m in TIF available for Phase 1a&1b; this will take us through majority of next year's construction season
 - The city has not been winning grants on this project (both state, federal) because the project is already an existing facility and grants are typically awarded to new amenities and connections; there are some opportunities ahead near Home Ave that we can pursue grant funding on
 - Movement coming in near future, including possibilities for east-west connections

9) Parks Project Update (Francis)

- Bike Path rehabilitation construction Phase 1a wrapping up and will resume in spring
- Parks kicking off winter projects
 - Parks wayfinding & signage design for entire park system and bike path
 - Parks developing bid requests/RFP's for the following upcoming projects
 - Oakledge Park restroom renovation (upper pavilion) & standards development
 - North Beach overpass design
 - PIAP Waterfront Park improvements (lighting, water, boardwalk renovation)

10) Other items

- (VB) concerns with spacing between barn board on the Roosevelt shed; Parks will investigate

11) Confirmation of next meeting date

- Tuesday, December 16 at 5:30 pm, location to be determined

12) Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM