

Minutes of the Binney Park Advisory Committee - April 30, 2019

Attending: P Uhry, N Chapin, J Messina, G Kramer, D Wigglesworth, B Rutherford, M Hull, L Stenberg

Absent: F O'Gorman, L Davenport, L Beebe, J Siciliano

Gathering and Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 3:34pm and the minutes of the April 16th were approved on a motion by Mary Hull and seconded by Joanne Messina.

Club House Progress Report:

1. All were eager to have the planned work started. Nothing has been done. Completing the hardscape (terrace) is the top priority and hinges on the BPAC's acceptance of a quote for the work from Vitti.
2. The tree work will proceed and if Darrin feels John's plan for the west side landscaping can move forward then it will be done. At the very least, ground prep and some plant purchases, while supplies are available was recommended.
3. Nancy Chapin made a motion to approve the overall work as previously discussed. The terrace on the east side of the building is part of that plan and will still need a final approval of the BPAC as it is a budget item. However, the work on the trees, the shrub and floral landscaping and the drinking fountain hook up are to move ahead as schedules allow. Darrin Wigglesworth seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
4. Work on an adjoining Arch Street parking space to allow safe parking for a food truck was favored but considered a secondary priority and will be readdressed later in the year. (Approx 110')
5. Greg Kramer is taking responsibility for executing the tree plantings. With the assistance of the Tree Conservancy

Island Plans:

General Discussion:

Committee members engaged in a general discussion about the island. The consensus of thinking at the end was that outside Landscape Designers would be contacted and asked to submit proposals for upgrading the island as a whole. (excluding the terrace already approved). All agreed that the quality of design should be high while the end effect should not prove "out of character with the rest of Binney Park."

Members felt that the island is a showplace. A gathering point for viewing, relaxing, photographing and especially taking celebratory pictures. Consequently, it should have a special appeal.

The Crucetti family gift of nearly \$30,000 for use in Binney was discussed and the committee recommends putting the gift towards work on the island.

Nancy Chapin, Pete Uhry and Greg Kramer are to spearhead contacting the Greenwalds, Eric Rains and others if necessary to get plans. Each designer will be interviewed separately. Landscape Architect, Bill Rutherford, tactfully excused himself from this activity to avoid any sense of conflict of interest.

Specific Discussion:

1. Vitti submitted a bid for completion of the south side patio work which will cost \$9,427.12. The expenditure was unanimously approved on a motion by Pete Uhry with seconding by Joanne Messina.
2. While tempting to remove the junipers on the bridge approaches now, it was decided to only trim them and wait until the new landscape plan for the whole island was seen and approved.
3. Bill Rutherford encouraged the completion of the hardscapes before any other work was started. This means accomplishing the terrace work (with no retaining wall but border plants to inhibit issues along the pond edge) and shelter repairs including the chimney, roof and stone work as appropriate. Darrin is the lead on these activities.
4. Darrin stated that he has contacted IWWA regarding this project.

Loop Trail:

1. The BPAC recognizes the loop trail will be a big budget item. We have no proposal from Vitti at this time.
2. Uhry submitted a draft letter to share with neighbors to alert them to the work planned and seek their thoughts about landscaping near their properties. It will be a while before the copy is finalized.
3. Darrin to recontact Vitti and get a quote to do the work.
4. Nancy shared Joe S. recommendation to temporarily mark the path in order for neighbors to see prior to building the trail.

June 1 Volunteer Day

1. We will plan a volunteer day for Binney to occur on Saturday morning June 1 with a rain date on Sunday afternoon June 2. Uhry to draft a PR release. Focus will be on encouraging members of garden clubs and neighborhood associations to participate. Weed and mulch will be the primary projects. Cleaning up the Park will be a wider goal. Will need organizing and support from everyone and all should submit to Uhry things they would like to see done during the clean up. Darrin will discuss with John Fasone at Binney.

Suggestions are needed for this event...and we need many....but having people register in advance by email would give us some sense of the amount of work we could accomplish.

June 23 Art in the Park

Marcos Torono of Images in Old Greenwich plans an art in the park day on Sunday June 23rd and we are being allowed to have an informational table to alert people what we are doing. Linnea Stenberg and Mary Hull will work on this project. Uhry will get back to Marcos and confirm our interest in participating. 300 people came last year.

Signage:

Linnea Stenberg suggested that signs might work well in several locations. Across from Perrot Library and near the intersection of Sound Beach and Wesskum Wood were two key spots. We are to recommend what we want and it will be approved by P&R administration. Mary Hull said she would help Linnea and together they would develop specific recommendations....including the degree of formality of the signs and the appropriate wording and specific locations.

Bridges:

Pete stated his concern with DPWs bridge plans and sees the BPAC as a way to increase public awareness of their plans.

Moving Trees and Shrub

Nancy Chapin will organize a walk with Pat Sesto to discuss the committees concerns with grasses and plantings around the pond.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45pm. Next meetings will be on Tuesday May 14th and May 28th at 3:30PM in the P&R conference room. Nancy Chapin noted we may cut back on summer meeting frequency and the topic will be addressed again at the next gathering.

Respectfully submitted:

Peter L. Uhry - BPAC Co-chair