

BILLINGS PARK COMMISSION
Minutes of our 4 February 2019 Meeting
Held at the Norman Williams Public Library

We gathered at 4:30 – those present: Alison Clarkson, Josh Pauly, Sam Segal, Jennifer Waite and Don Wheeler. Mary MacVey and Barbara Barry joined us.

Woodstock is asking all boards and commissions to conform to the open meetings law – and do a better job of posting meetings, agendas and minutes. We will do our best. With gratitude and regret we accepted the resignations of Kathy Avellino and Marc Weinstein from the BPC and will look for new members to propose to the Select Board.

There was general discussion about the response from foresters about the Park Management RFP which we have sent out to 4 foresters. Only 2 are interested so far – and we are hoping to add one or two more. The proposals will be due back in the spring – as the foresters need to see the parks in the winter and post snow.

Jennifer and Alison updated the BPC about their meeting with the Town and the Faulkner Trust. They had met with the Faulkner Trust, Phil Swanson and Jill Davies and the National Park's Rick Kendal in December 2018 – to begin the discussion about the Trust giving the Faulkner Park and Trail (25.2 acres) to the Town. It is very different from anything else they own and the Trust is not really interested in continuing to oversee the challenges involved in managing a public park and trail. We discussed what it would take to endow the ongoing management and maintenance of this treasure in the heart of Woodstock. There is quite a bit of work involved – finishing the restoration of the historic trail, mowing, dealing with fallen trees, requests for private use of the park etc). The Trust will get back to us as soon as they have a proposal.

We will ask the Trustees for Public Funds to update us at an upcoming meeting on the progress they are making on better managing the BPC Trust funds.

Mary MacVey and Barbara Barry came to discuss with the BPC the long term oversight, maintenance and management of the East End Park. This park has been developed on Village land by the East End Action Group (EEAG) of Sustainable Woodstock. Now that it is no longer the site for the Town's 'snow dump' the EEAG is interested in finishing the development of the Park and is concerned about its long term care. They are interested in the BPC taking on this role. A number of us feel this makes sense. As with the Faulkner Trust proposal, the BPC, as the town parks commission, is a natural umbrella for all the town parks. We would however need to build our oversight capacity. The EEAG is developing a fundraising plan (for stairs, trees, amphitheater, pergola, improved public access, plantings etc) which might include an additional amount to add to the BPC Trust to support future maintenance and management. We are considering next steps.

In the last few minutes of our meeting we discussed the new map and kiosk for the top of Mt Peg which we hope to have installed this spring.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Feb 25th at 4:30 pm. We adjourned at 6 pm.

Alison Clarkson
Scribe and Chair of the BPC