

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board  
Halley Park Board Room  
July 11, 2013  
(Excerpt from Minutes)

The meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was called to order at 5:30 pm on Thursday, July 11, 2013 with the following members present: President Jeff Schild, Vice President Karen Olson, Nick Stroot, Domico Rodriguez, Chuck Tinant, Rick Askvig and Heather Thompson. Members Absent: None. Also present were Council Liaison Chad Lewis, Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Biegler, Parks Division Manager Lon Van Deusen, Recreation Division Manager Doug Lowe, Landscape Designer Alex DeSmidt, Recreation Specialist Kristy Lintz and Administrative Assistant Jeri Taton.

**First Nation's Sculpture Garden**

Elizabeth Cook Lynn, Director for the First Nation's project, explained that they are here to request that the Advisory Board approve a Memorandum Of Agreement between the City of Rapid City and First Nations for a Sculpture Garden to be located in Halley Park. Cook Lynne added that they have had many meetings and many plans and she presented the most current version of the sculpture garden they are developing. She also thanked many individuals who have participated in the planning of this project as well as the Board members who represent all the tribes in the State of South Dakota.

Cathy Robeson stated that from the beginning she has thought this was a wonderful idea; however she does not agree with the location. She also disagrees with the idea that it will not be a destination point for people to stop and visit. If it is constructed in Halley Park it will be seen by travelers on two very busy streets and people will want to stop and see it. It is also a poor location because of the lack of parking. Robeson stated that she feels this is the wrong location for a very good idea.

John Wagner stated that he feels this is a great idea; too good of an idea for the proposed location. He doesn't see how we can honor prominent Native Americans at the proposed location. The tip of Halley Park serves as a divider for a 6 lane highway. The traffic moves very fast through this area. If you put up statues and you want people to learn about individuals of Native American prominence, they have to be able to come out and look at them. It is just not the right area for contemplation. There are so many other areas in Rapid City where this could be viewed by the community and visitors to the area.

Margie Jurens, great granddaughter of James Halley II, stated that her family feels this is a wonderful idea and we need to know more about the Native American people who helped settle this area. However, this is a bad location for a sculpture garden because of the high-traffic streets surrounding the park, as well as the limited parking area.

Tim Giago spoke in favor of the project in Halley Park. He indicated that it is not the type of project that will create a lot of traffic from the public. He added that no one complained about the traffic and parking for the museum when it was at this location.

James Swan stated that he feels this park would be an awesome location for this project. When the project is first done it will create some interest and traffic, but the interest will fade when the project is no longer new. Most importantly however, is that it should be in this location because that is where the native community wants it to be.

Toni Martin spoke against the project being located in Halley Park. Bonny Pederson spoke in favor of the project at this location because that is the location that was chosen.

Motion was made by Tinant and seconded by Askvig to deny the proposed Memorandum of Agreement at this location and strongly recommend that First Nations work with Parks and Recreation staff to find a better location for this project.

Askvig stated that he feels this is a wonderful project but the proposed location is a big concern (traffic and parking). The Advisory Board is charged with doing what is right and best for the entire community. He added that he feels this project will become a destination for citizens and visitors to Rapid City.

Cook-Lynn explained that the Halley Park location was chosen because of its history and meaning to the Native American people living in the community as well as its location relative to treaty lands. She added that this is an historical place which formerly housed the Pioneer Indian Museum which was moved when the Journey Museum was built. She added that the project is not about individuals; it is about the kind of world we want to live in. She wants her children and grand children to know this is an historical place. She understands the traffic issues, but this project is not a tourist attraction; it is a contemplative garden that intends to show the accomplishments of Native American people in the community. She stated that it is time for the community to recognize Native Americans and it is time for our children to be able to look at these faces and say yes, my relatives were here.

Heather Thompson stated that what strikes her about this project is the simple nature of it being placed here; the normalcy of the project. It might feel overwhelming if it is just one; this might be the first but it is not intended to be the only. For example the presidential statues; there are so many you don't notice them anymore. They have become an everyday part of the downtown area. That is what strikes me about the design of this project and the location. It is not intended to be the only one; it is supposed to be the first of many. But it is always hard to be the first. Thompson urged everyone to promote this project because it will be one of the amazing places in the community to see. Motion was made by Thompson to approve the MOA with two adjustments: 1) Include a time period, and 2) include a list of the board members. Motion died for lack of a second.

Olson stated that she feels the sculpture garden will be the same as all the presidential statues in the downtown area. People will walk around and see them, but they will not be a destination for visitors to the community. She added that the issue of this being a high traffic location and therefore inappropriate doesn't seem to distract from this park which has had a Veterans Memorial and other historical things.

Tinant submitted information on the history of Halley Park as well as trust and treaty lands. His research shows that Halley Parks was not part of trust lands; it has always

been deeded land. He added that he supports the project, but not in the Halley Park location. Tinant also introduced five descendants of James Halley who were in attendance at the meeting. They concurred that the sculpture garden is a great project, but Halley Park is a bad location.

Karen Eagle stated that her great grandfather signed the treaty for this land and she wanted to be sure that is in the record. Cook-Lynn gave additional history on treaty and trust lands and the boundaries of each. She stated that this is going to be a beautiful project and Rapid City will be proud of it. First Nations is asking to use a small amount of land that is shared. Rodriguez called the question and there were no objections.

Roll call vote was taken: AYE: Stroot, Askvig and Tinant; NO: Thompson, Rodriguez and Olson. President Schild voted AYE and the motion carried, 4-3.

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