



2834 Jackson Blvd.

Rapid City, SD 57702

<http://friendsofrepublicparks.com/>

29 July 2013

By E-mail

Dear Mayor Kooiker:

We were disappointed to see that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was divided last week in its review of the First Nations Sculpture Garden project.

While Friends of Rapid City Parks has protection of the greenway and flood plain along Rapid Creek as its primary mission, and Halley Park is not directly within that purview, we want to express our support for the sculpture garden.

We understand that reluctance to site the four pedestal sculptures at Halley Park is based on concerns with parking and access.

As proposed, the sculpture garden would not be the kind of area that draws crowds of visitors. It is intended, according to proponents, as an art installation, "meant to be a contemplative garden which does not disturb the rose garden nor the veterans memorial." The existing veterans memorial elements at Halley Park (even though now are proposed to be moved) were installed without any concern for parking or access. Why is this different?

We urge the Public Works Committee to continue to work with First Nations Sculpture Garden advocates to shape the project in a way that ensures the safety of users crossing Main Street to access the park to view the sculptures, just as they do now to enjoy the rose garden. Parking in the neighborhoods adjacent to the area would likely be sufficient for occasional visitors.

Many of Rapid City's parks are places of recreation, sports, activity and action. We think it is appropriate that one of the oldest parks, and one that holds significance for Rapid City's Native American residents, should be the place where they tell their own story.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Iudicello Martley
Executive Director

cc: Public Works Committee Members