

Bartlet Mall Commission Meeting
September 20, 2012

Date: September 20, 2012

Time: 6:00-7:00

Location: City Hall 2nd Floor Auditorium

Attending: Sadie Cathcart, Ellen Hanick, Danny Hollbrook, George Masterson, Alex Pittman, Lisë Reid, Andrew Simpson, Patty Spalding, Victoria Swain, Walt Thompson, Sam Wahlgren

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes of last meeting
3. NHS and water quality testing (George Masterson and students)
4. Review of projects/funding
 - John Kelly... Global gas station/High Street... fountain maintenance
 - Bob Welsh... Phragmites and other maintenance
 - Kim Noble... Water Structures LLC... Fountain work
 - Rika Smith McNally... Rika Smith McNally & Associates... Refinishing
 - Dan Wilson... Wilson Welding... Structural integrity
5. Fountain (\$79,800)... New pump and motor with piping, four aerators/bubblers to reduce algae, new access door at base, refinishing, stabilizing basins and five year contract to open/close and repair
6. Playground (\$14,500)... certified playground mulch, replacement of swing chains and mats, touch-up painting of play structures and pavement repairs
7. Plantings at the base of the George Washington statue/flagpole and tree (\$12,400)... replace stones and weeds and new tree to the left of the statue
8. Dock... (\$11,600)... replacement with Trex-type boards and supporting braces
9. General Maintenance (\$9,700)... lighting ballast units and bulbs, sanding/painting all railings, weed control on all walkways and annual repairs
10. Bench refinishing, weed control, and other (\$TBD)
11. Proposed signage to reduce contaminants
12. Other topics of interest
13. Select date for next six months' meetings
14. Adjournment

Notes

Approval of minutes of last meeting:

- Minutes approved

NHS and water quality testing

- NHS water quality report:

Issues on the pond that we are presenting to everyone:

- Extensive amount of blue green algae

- Possible sign that there is a low oxygen level in the pond due to the evidence there isn't any bacteria in the water to be eating the algae.
- Might be showing that there may be an excessive amount of nutrients such as phosphates and nitrates in the water because these nutrients often cause large blooms of plants and algae in general.
- Low pH level
 - The pH was around a 5 which is considered acidic and makes it hard for many aquatic organisms to live and survive in.
 - It is said that fish thrive in pH levels that range from about 6.5-8.2.
 - The possible cause of the acidic pH level could be from acid rain, winter road salts, or uric acid from the pond ducks. For all anyone knows it could be a possible combination of these or just acidic materials that have built up over the years.
- Turbidity of water was very high
 - The secchi disk could only be seen 6 inches into the water.
 - If there is a high turbidity in the water, it's very dangerous to water animals because the sediment makes it hard for them to breathe.
 - It causes the temperature of the water to rise because the cloudiness in the water absorbs the heat and traps it.
- A lot of pollution (litter)
 - This is especially dangerous to aquatic animals because if they ingest any litter or foreign materials, it could make them very sick and bring a decline to any of the species.
 - There were a large number of pond ducks and seagulls, who excrete inside the pond which is a concern because that takes oxygen to break down and also adds to the low pH level.
- Barely any sight of any indicator species (frogs, fish, bugs, etc.)
 - It wasn't apparent that there were any species at all at the pond, but, our class did catch at least one frog.
 - There was a sighting of a few cormorants, which isn't good to have a predator species that feed on fish because if there are any species of fish, there are a small amount and the cormorants are wiping out what it left.
 - This may be an indicator that the pond's life cycle has either been interrupted because, as an example, the bugs that would naturally be there would be eaten by frogs, etc.
- Shallow/inconsistent water level
 - The aquatic plant life there wasn't getting any water when the pond's level was lower than usual, so they were ultimately dying.

- It also makes it easier for the temperature of the water to rise quicker due to the fact there is a less amount of water for the sun to penetrate and cover.
- The temperature of water was higher than normal
 - When the temperature of the water is higher than normal, the species begin to feel uncomfortable or even ultimately cannot survive.
 - It also causes the growth of herbaceous plants to go out of control, which isn't good because it will over crowd the pond's ecosystem.
- Low dissolved oxygen amount
 - This is bad for the fish, frogs, and other native species of the pond because they cannot breathe which, for any organism, is vital for their survival.
- Non-source point run off
 - This is a major problem because run off doesn't get buffered what so ever, so many types of materials enter the pond environment. Things such as soaps, fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides carry phosphates and nitrates which have the plants grow like crazy when there is an extensive amount in the pond. Other materials like animal urine and feces, uric acid from pond ducks, road salts, and other things also cause pollution to the ecosystem and put the species survival at risk.

What can everyone do to help fix the problem in the pond?

- Try re-introducing the native herbaceous/aquatic plant life of the pond to provide hiding organisms, providing food, etc that they currently do not have.
- Different landscaping such as planting un-invasive trees (or evergreens) to help shade the pond, planting shrubs on top of the hill to help buffer run off and rain water, and also allowing the grass to grow longer to help buffer rain fall.
- Enforce or re-enforce waste and littering laws such as putting up more warning signs of animal waste and more trash/recycling barrels for people to utilize.
- Use more natural/organic ways in cleaning the pond statue so the chemicals won't be getting into the pond.
- Use more natural/organic ways in treating the landscape or even just cutting down on the use of herbicides and pesticides.
- Use a rain barrel system by the court house to catch the run off on the roof.
- Recycle rain water trough some sort of filtering system and re-introduce it back into the pond to help it get back to a normal water level.

- Fix the fountain to help aerate the water to keep the dissolved oxygen levels to a normal level.
- Trying not to litter and picking up after pets.

Trying to re-introduce native species to the pond AFTER it has reached a healthier state.

Review of projects/funding:

- Walt, Geordie and Lisë talked recently about Walt's improvement plan
- Seek city funding for maintenance, sources for grants are often turned off by maintenance
- Andy is working on bench details, \$1000 to put name on existing bench, possibility of using bench money for mall improvements? Will communicate with Parks Commission about this
- No guarantee that placard on bench will always be there (guarantee for lifespan of bench)
- \$1000 for refinishing benches as well as for upkeep
- Dan Wilson, structural integrity inside foundation of structure
- Rika- knowledgeable sculpture refinisher- looking into the stability of bowls
- Door to fountain was opened and broken during repairs, Kim Noble is working with Alan Frost to replace a door to the fountain base
- John Kelly put in intake valve that Kim made
- Geordie feels that gazebo should be further down list of priorities
- Things for safety should be higher priority- high priority on the supplemental funding request
- Round up pro ok with water
- When city goes out to do jobs, projects over \$25,000 require the submission of a bid
- Support a spot program- plantings could be a good candidate for that
- Electrolysis could degrade metal, consider in planning lighting for fountain
- Going for pump, fixing motor on fountain is good

Proposed signage to reduce contaminants:

- Bob Gracy- Proposed signs to reduce contaminants
- Could we add a trash barrel near part near Green Leaf?
- Temporary signs to enroll everyone in changing their behaviors
- Assess where signs are needed

Dates for the next meetings:

- Thursday, October 18, 2012, 6:00
- Thursday, November 15, 2012, 6:00
- Thursday, December 13, 2012, 6:00
- Thursday, January 17, 2012, 6:00

Next Meeting

Thursday, October 18, 2012

6:00 PM

Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall