

**Beautification Task Force
Minutes of the Meeting
August 27, 2008
Conference Room – Memorial Building**

The meeting of the Beautification Task Force was held on Wednesday, June 25, 2008 in the Conference Room of the Memorial Building and was called to order at 12:07 p.m.

Present: Brian McElwain, Dr. Joe Ryne, Candy Cleveland, Nancy McKeague, Penny Bohnen
Absent: None

Also Present: Stewart Seman, Public Services Director George Franco, Village Horticulturalist Dan Hopkins, Village Forester John Finnell,

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the June 25, and July 23, 2008 meetings were approved.

Old Business

- a.) Mr. McElwain reviewed the history and origin for the Beautification Task Force. Ms. Bohnen requested the task force review the pros and cons of the status of a task force versus a committee. Ms. Bohnen then suggested the members consider remaining as a task force in order to have the flexibility to develop firm goals and objectives. Mr. McElwain agreed with Ms. Bohnen. Ms. McKeague agreed with the need for further development but suggested remaining a task force for an additional year, and at that time reassessing the task force's status. Dr. Ryne noted the time constraints involved with the being a member of the task force. He then discussed the need to improve the communication, coordination, and cohesiveness among divergent groups with involvement in beautification issues. He suggested that a Beautification Committee would have improved over-site on various Village projects. He agreed that additional time as a task force would be beneficial, but suggested committee status could be an asset. Ms. Bohnen suggested the task force update the EPS through concise memos to improve communication. Members discussed this option and decided that with time constraints, that including the task force meeting minutes in the EPS packet would work. Mr. McElwain proposed that the task force request to maintain its present status and membership for six months in order to set goals. Mr. Franco suggested the task force request a six month extension from the EPS committee and then consideration to review status. A voice vote was taken and all agreed with this suggestion.
- b.) Mr. McElwain asked if the task force could report to the EPS in October rather than September in order to develop a presentation. Mr. Franco checked with staff and reported to the task force that this could be done. Dr. Ryne urged the members to base the report to the EPS committee on the S.E.G. where the directives are detailed. Ms. Bohnen suggested the committee report on the past year's success with the Memorial Building's grounds improvement, but raises the concern with the overall architectural integrity. Ms. Bohnen suggested Village owned sites as one area where improvements can be made with directives from the task force in the coming year. Mr. McElwain asked the individual members to develop the following areas of the report, Ms. Bohnen – overview of the Municipal Building project; Dr. Ryne – outreach with other Village sponsored groups; Ms. McKeague – outreach/information for Village residents; Ms. Cleveland – Tree Preservation; Mr. McElwain – fulfilling the S.E.G. mandate. Members would return to the next meeting with drafts of a report

- c.) Mr. McElwain briefly discussed a gateway improvement proposal, but tabled the issue to a later date.

New Business

- a.) Tabled to a later date.
- b.) Mr. Seman outlined his desire to have the Village develop a public area along the northwest corner of Stough Street and Railroad Avenue into a “mini-park” gateway into the Village. He was asked by the Parks and Recreation committee to inform the task force of his proposal. Ms. Cleveland raised concerns of funding for increased maintenance for the area. Mr. McElwain noted that the proposal ties in with the S.E.G. call for improved Village gateways. Dr. Ryne asked if the area is in the bike path plan. Mr. Seman reported there is currently a walking path that extends from Stough Street east along Stough Park to Ehret Park. Mr. McElwain asked to have the proposal incorporated into the minutes.
- c.) Members agreed to an additional meeting on September 10, 2008 at noon in the conference room in order to prepare for the EPS presentation

Adjournment

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote taken, all in favor, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Finnell
Village Forester

West Hinsdale Gateway Mini-Park Proposal

A proposal to create a mini-park on Village of Hinsdale property located across from the West Hinsdale train station was introduced at the Park and Recreation Commission's April meeting as an affordable opportunity for park expansion at a time of spending constraints.

Background: The village purchased this property in the late 1960's as part of a larger parcel. The parcel was zoned residential and the village subsequently divided it into lots that were sold to build several homes along Stough Street. The remaining lot, although zoned residential, was unbuildable because of its size.



It has remained undeveloped except for a parking area installed along Railroad Avenue. Maintenance has been minimal, consisting of peripheral mowing, however, Village staff began cleaning the property of brush and weeds on August 25th.

The property is a Gateway Property. That is to say it is one of the principal entrances to our community. A significant amount of vehicular traffic between downtown Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills passes by this area daily. Likewise for thousands of Chicago-bound rail commuters this is their first view of Hinsdale each day.

The village's 2025 survey found that 71 percent of our village residents strongly support improving village entrances. Given this location's high visibility it would seem to be a good candidate for consideration in the village's gateway beautification efforts.

Potential Park Use: The lot, while too small for group sports, would be well suited for use as a picnic area or rest area like that provided by Eleanor's Park which is similar in size. The property is located along one of the main North/South legs of Hinsdale's premier bicycle route, where it intersects the connection with Clarendon Hills. DuPage County approved a grant this year which will fund construction of bicycle parking on the West Hinsdale train station's north platform directly across from the gateway property. Thus it is an ideal starting point and/or rest stop along the bicycle route and would be a welcome enhancement to the Village's Bicycle Plan. A mini-park would expand the family friendliness of the neighboring Stough Park and create an attractive longitudinal park a third of a mile in length extending from Route 83 to Monroe Street.

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