

# WATERDOWN MEMORIAL PARK PUBLIC ART PROJECT



## FOCUS GROUP REPORT

**Date:** Wednesday, June 05, 2019

**Location:** Waterdown Village BIA Boardroom, 5 Mill St

**Time:** 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

### Attendees

Susan Pennie	Waterdown Village BIA
Maureen VanderMarel	Village Theatre
Garry Flood	Rotary Club of Waterdown
Mike Manzoni	Waterdown District Lions Club
Lyn Lunsted	Flamborough Archives
Robert Thomas	Legion, Branch 551
Donna Redl	CreativWorks Art Studio
Graham McNally	Toms and McNally Design, McNally Foundation
Magy Olszewski	M+M Photography
Nathan Tidridge	History Teacher, Waterdown District High School
Jessa Boers	Student Parliament, Waterdown District High School
Aman El-Duweini	Citizen
Laura Marotta	Artist, previous public art call winner 'Bead Maze'
Scot Cameron	Hamilton Skateboard Assembly, Waterdown Rep
Ken Coit	Facilitator, City of Hamilton, Public Art and Projects
Meredith Plant	City of Hamilton, Public Art and Projects

### Purpose

This group was brought together to review plans for a public art competition for Waterdown Memorial Park and to advise on specific goals and themes for an artwork that is potentially interactive, either functional or aesthetic.

## Background

Ken Coit and Meredith Plant gave a presentation outlining the public art process, site history and context, potential themes and goals, review of precedents and possibilities for public art and a discussion of next steps.

It was noted that the project was identified and approved in the City of Hamilton Public Art Master Plan (2016). Public Art at Waterdown Memorial Park Skating Loop has the following description in the Public Art Master Plan: “this newly constructed skating loop is a place for families and the community to come together to enjoy winter in one of the area’s busiest parks. There are opportunities here for an artwork that is functional or aesthetic. Public art that is interactive would be well suited to the site.”

The public art project has an overall budget of \$75,000.

**A brief review of the history of the area was provided:** *(with thanks to The Flamborough Archives; ‘The Historic Village of Waterdown’ story map and ‘The History of Memorial Park’ brochure, published June 2019)*

There has been an indigenous presence on the land since 7,500 BCE, the Chonnonton Nation followed by Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe presence and the ‘Dish with one Spoon’ Wampum treaty in the 1700’s. In 1792 the Euro-Canadian settlement grew with the ‘Between the Lakes Treaty, #3’ which opened 3 million acres of land to the British Crown, including lands now known as Waterdown. Development followed Augustus Jones surveying of the area and lumber and flour mills were established along with agricultural development and the first school built by Alexander Brown in 1815.

Memorial Park was dedicated in 1949, the project originally spearheaded by the Waterdown Amateur Athletic Association, the Waterdown Women’s Institute and the Waterdown Board of Trade, as ‘both a memorial to those Village residents who had served in World War II and as a park large enough to hold a variety of activities and events that would be for the enjoyment of the community’. The park was donated to the Corporation of the Village of Waterdown with the ‘understanding that such land and park property be maintained as a Community Park for the use of the Community as a whole’.

## Discussion

Members of the focus group were asked to address the following question as part of a general discussion

**What unique and meaningful stories, qualities and characteristics of Waterdown and the Memorial Park do you think artists should be asked to reflect in proposals for Public Art in the Park?**

**The following responses were provided:**

Art work should be functional

**Art work should be Interactive**

Could provide shade

Watch for Skateboarders on Art

### **Make connection to the northern parts of the Park**

Women's Institute memorial (plaque – outside of public art scope)

WATERDOWN sign (the word – maybe too prescriptive)

### **Playful**

#### **Interactive**

Iconic Waterdown

Green space legacy

One Park, centre of Village life

### **Use the topography**

Seating on the hill for potential performance

Children in action

Motion

### **Play and Community**

Families

Sports and Fireworks for a long time

Loop a gathering space

### **“Community coming together”**

### **Accessible (conceptually and physically)**

Inspire

Engaging

Drawn into it

Walking

### **Interactive**

## **“Winter and Summer”**

Heart of Town

## **Interactive over Functional**

## **“Reflection” as an example of interactivity**

Car Show

Fire Works

Injuries

Coming of Age moments

Baseball

Summer Camp

Market

Fall Fair

## **Waterdown’s “Public Backyard”**

Dogs

Skateboarding and teaching next generation of skateboarders

Walking

BBQ

## **“The Home Park”**

Tradition

Connecting New and Old Waterdown

## **Waterdown’s Public Backyard**

## **Community Gathering**

## **Interactive**

## **Playful**

## Integrated with the Physical Context

### Summary

The group identified what they felt to be the most important concepts as the evening ended. These are highlighted in **green** above. Based on these concepts, public art staff has developed the following Project Goal:

**That the proposed Public Art work(s) enhance and reflect the atmosphere of the park as Waterdown's Public Backyard through an artwork that recognizes the park as a community gathering place and responds to its' historical and physical context in a way this is playful and interactive.**

The work may be functional or aesthetic.

The work shall be sited in that part of the park north of the parking lot.

### Next Steps

This focus group report will be posted on the City of Hamilton's Public Art website at [www.hamilton.ca/publicart](http://www.hamilton.ca/publicart) for public comment.

The possibility of a plaque to memorialize the Women's Institute will be investigated outside of the scope of this public art project.

A Call for Artists, including the above project goal, park history, recent park uses, site constraints and technical requirements will be issued in summer 2019.

A jury of citizens, local artists and arts professionals will short list up to six artists' proposals to be posted on the city website and displayed at a Waterdown location for public comment later this Summer.

The jury will select a winning proposal based on artistic excellence, response to the competition goal, technical concerns and the public response in fall 2019.



Hamilton

Tourism and Culture Division  
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