

Comments on Montpelier's One Taylor Street Redevelopment

from Geoff Beyer and Bryan Pfeiffer on behalf of the

Montpelier Parks Commission

May 21, 2014

On behalf of the Montpelier Parks Commission, we're thrilled to offer and echo ideas for public green space at One Taylor. Geoff Beyer has served city parks for 33 years, 17 of which as Parks Director. Bryan Pfeiffer is one of five elected parks commissioners.

For those of you unaware, the Parks Commission's responsibilities include the city's current and future needs for park and recreation land in Montpelier.

As many of us already know, One Taylor is a rare opportunity for our city. And it's too bad that it's rare. Montpelier is a city of rivers. But opportunities along our four rivers are scarce. We dwell not enough beside these waters.

So while we recognize the merits of commerce along the Winooski and North Branch, the Parks Commission also sees opportunity and benefits in the form of recreation there as well. We're already hearing the green aspirations of city residents for One Taylor. We're eager to hear more.

But we shall leave you this evening with four general thoughts to help guide your deliberations for the site:

- A meaningful portion of the property (and, when possible, adjoining properties) should be dedicated to green space where city residents and visitors can enjoy a closer relationship with the two rivers in a park-like setting. It's long overdue for downtown, and would make the project even more inviting for commerce and neighborly gathering.
- River access would be essential – either for launching unmotorized boats or for simply relaxing or picnicking in the company of the main-stem of the Winooski or the North Branch.
- The recreation path's route and landscaping should invite enjoyment of a healthy riparian zone.
- Finally, please recognize that the Parks Commission and our city's dedicated park staff are ready and willing to take on the responsibilities necessary from designating green space in and around One Taylor as official city park land.

Thanks for your time tonight. The Parks Commission hopes to hear more from city residents. And we look forward to developing our general ideas into a determined strategy for turning the city – in a greater way – toward its rivers.