

Town of Blowing Rock

Request for Council Action

FROM: Ed Evans, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Charters of Freedom
TO: Town Council
DATE: October 9, 2018
REQUESTED BY: Charters of Freedom

Public Hearing Yes No Not required NA
Properly Advertised Yes No Not required NA

BACKGROUND:

During the September 11, 2018 Town Council meeting, representatives Ron Lewis and David Streater, from the Charters of Freedom presented a proposal to install replicas of the Declaration of Independence, The United States Constitution, and The Bill of Rights in Blowing Rock at no cost to the Town. Town Council requested that they go to the Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission for their approval and recommendation first and then it come back to Town Council for final approval.

BRAAC had a meeting September 13, 2018 and watched the Charters of Freedom presentation that was shown at the Town Council meeting. After short discussion, it was unanimously voted to approve the Charters of Freedom installing the replicas in Blowing Rock and for staff to determine an appropriate location for the installation.

Town staff has determined two locations that would be appropriate and that would have a significant amount of foot traffic that the Charters of Freedom require. One location is in front of Town Hall and the other location is the corner of Memorial Park near the 1888 museum. Attached are maps of both locations and how it could possibly be positioned.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Maps of Possible Locations for the Charters of Freedom
2. BRAAC Minutes of Approval

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

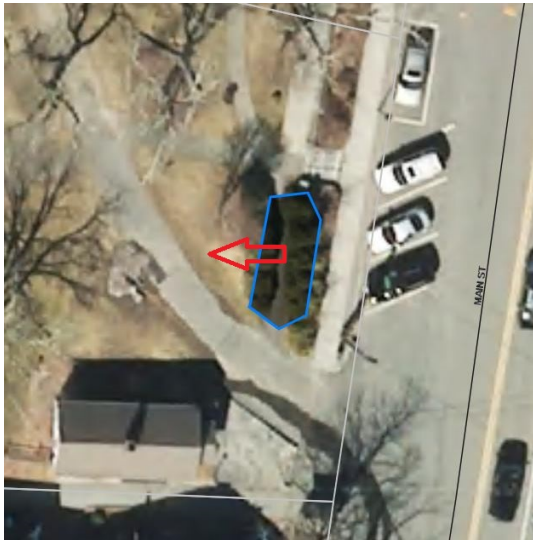
Recommend that the Charters of Freedom be installed in the Town of Blowing Rock at one of the two locations that are recommended.



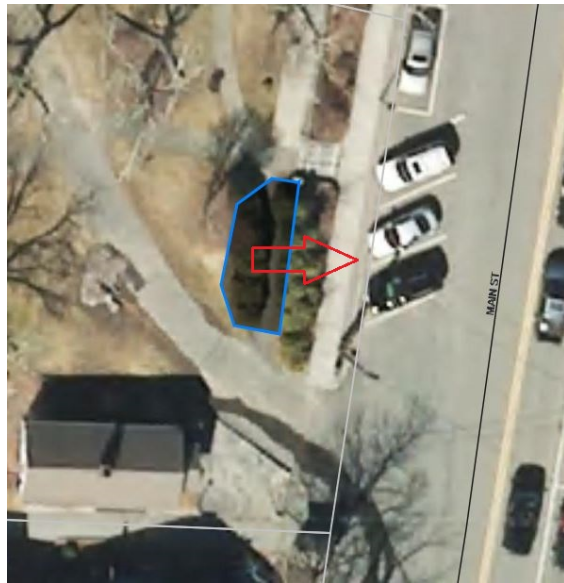
Town Hall facing Main Street



Memorial Park Facing 1888 Museum



Memorial Park - Facing Into Park



Memorial Parking- Facing Main Street



Charters of Freedom Exhibit – Burke County

Blowing Rock Appearance Advisory Commission
Minutes
September 13, 2018

BRAAC Members Attending: Melissa Pickett, Bo Henderson, Carol Knapp, and Chris Wetmore

BRAAC Members Absent: Karen Diamond

Staff Members: Jennifer Brown, Chris Pate, and Ed Evans

Guests: Charlie Sellers

Approval of August 2, 2018 Minutes: Chris made a motion to approve, Carol seconded it, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

Budget Update/Annual Fundraising Collection/Hanging Basket Collection: Jennifer stated that the fundraising letter was sent, and people should begin receiving them if they have not already. She stated that \$75 has been collected so far and \$130.72 has been spent on the water truck. She also stated that BRAAC needs to be thinking about replacing the water truck because it is needing more maintenance done to it, it used to be a diesel and was converted to a gas engine, and now it is starting to have other problems. Chris Wetmore stated that he has been in contact with the Blowing Rocket and High Country Press and they stated that BRAAC may have to purchase an add to be able to recognize hanging basket donors. He asked if there was an alternative to recognize them. Ed suggested that we put in the next newsletter, on our website, can send out an email to all citizens, and then put a small blurb in the newspaper directing them to look at one of these options.

Tree Fund Recognition/Wording for Tree: Jennifer stated that the tree for recognizing donors of \$2,000 or more is close to completion. She stated that the tree is here and is in the process of installation. She asked if the board had a recommendation for the wording that needs to go over the sign. After discussion, Melissa asked that everyone email Jennifer by next Friday with their recommended wording for the sign.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Jennifer stated that she has not heard from McGill in a few weeks; however, the Recreation Oversight Group has reviewed three sections so far. She stated that she would contact them to see where we were in the process.

Charters of Freedom: Ed showed the Charters of Freedom video and stated that Town Council asked for BRAAC's recommendation. He also stated that there are a couple of locations that are being investigated for installation. One is the corner of the Library which he is going to meet with them next week and one is in Memorial Park next to the 1888 museum. The only requirement is that it is in an area with foot traffic. Bo made a motion to allow the Charters of Freedom to be installed in a location worked out by Town staff, Chris seconded it, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

BRAAC Meeting Times: Melissa stated that having BRAAC meetings in the morning would be better for her because she would not be in the middle of projects and have to stop for the meetings. She asked everyone else's opinion of the meeting time. After discussion, Bo made a motion to approve moving BRAAC meeting times to 9:00 a.m., Melissa seconded, and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

Bo then brought up that he would not be able to be at the October 4th meeting. Melissa stated that she would not be able to be at that meeting either. It was unanimous to move the October meeting to October 11, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

Public Art Policy: Ed stated that during the Town Council meeting there was confusion on the Public Art Policy and what guidelines needed to be followed for art on private property and if it needs to be approved by BRAAC and Town Council. He stated that he sent copied minutes from previous BRAAC and Town Council meetings, as well as the two copies of the Public Art Policy for the Town attorney, Allen Mosely, to review. He suggested that BRAAC take the policy, review, and send any changes that they feel need to be made to Jennifer by next Friday. The discussion then came up about Blowing Rock Inn's request to have a mural painted on their building. Melissa recused herself from the discussion. After discussion, Bo made a motion that BRAAC feels that the public art that the Blowing Rock Inn wants to put up on their private property should be allowed without permission from the Town; however, if Town Council desires an approval, then BRAAC recommends allowing Blowing Rock Inn to put up the mural. Carol seconded it and it was a unanimous vote to approve.

Other Business: Chris Wetmore asked if we were going to get the hemlocks replaced in the median at the Parkway and if so could they be replaced with a different type of tree. Jennifer stated that if it was her understanding that DOT was going to try to help get the median fixed since it was not done right from the beginning and Chris Pate stated that he would talk to them about the species that they plant in their place.

Chris Wetmore stated that after looking at DOT's landscape plan, he felt like it was not a mountainy feel. He felt it was more of a city, urban feel. He stated that he would like to see more conifers such as, blue spruce and frazier furs so that there would be green year-round. He stated that people look at this area as a Christmas tree area and there should be more trees of that nature. Bo agreed, and Carol suggested that they also add some more azaleas as well. They asked that Chris Pate have a conference call and see if some of the plant material can be changed out to reflect their suggestions.

Chris Wetmore asked if more benches could be placed around the playground area. Jennifer stated that yes, they could put more in that area; however, a new playground structure really needs to be installed. The current playground structure is aging and the company who manufactures it went bankrupt, so we cannot get replacement parts.

Melissa stated that based on how she was verbally attacked Tuesday night during the Town Council meeting, that maybe she should step down as chair to not have personal issues and decisions from Town Council affect BRAAC. She did state that she was not going to resign. The board unanimously recommended that Melissa remain chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 11, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.