

carol lolatte

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**From:** Leslie Montgomery [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 28, 2014 9:45 PM  
**To:** skateparkideas@brattleboro.org  
**Subject:** Crowell Lot

Committee Members,

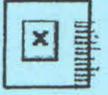
I would like to please encourage all committee members to thoroughly review the arborist's report professionally conducted at Crowell Lot and funded by the compiled efforts of concerned park users and neighbors alike wishing to address/evaluate the possible detriment to surrounding park trees still standing to be harmed directly by the development of a concrete skate board park if located there, ( a full copy of which I handed to your chair at a one of your public meetings early on in the site selection process). As your group moves forward considering the last remaining locations chosen, I think it is necessary to come up with an estimate of the tree removal and replacement costs outlined in this report and possibly concur with the Tree Advisory Committee in order to make a more informed decision questioning the complete rationale of locating the skate park there and the dire consequences it will have for these trees. This is important realizing the possible loss of valued park shade trees combined with a drastic alteration/reduction of green playground/picnic space they are identified with also valued and currently utilized.

No version of the skate park development proposed at Crowell Lot can avoid the invasive impact that will take place with in- ground disturbances of earth removal during excavation causing major wide spread devastation to critical root support belonging to these trees. Doing so will significantly and permanently sever the extensive network of vital root systems laying beneath making up critical root zones areas which extend well past these trees more visible canopy drip line and unfortunately in the direct line/path of their destruction to make way for the skate park. The Critical Root Zone is formulated (using the diameter at breast height or girth of any given tree as explained in report) to make a determination for what protective allowance will be required to keep the main surrounding root system intact enough for the tree to remain upright, stable and alive, especially applicable for the fragility of older trees with very established root systems. These same CRZ areas that presently occupy, overlap and spread out intertwined throughout the entire proposed skate park footprint at Crowell Lot would be replaced by concrete coverage therefore immediately resulting in a tree's steady decline. Excavation in this common area will severely limit these trees chances for survival eventually posing a safety hazard from falling branches as they die off if not removed. These trees fate will be also compounded subjected by the overall impact of compacting what remains of their soils with increased foot traffic on the perimeter pathways running alongside their base further compromising these older established trees ability for adequate absorption normally maintained by healthy roots in a more respected environment and will no doubt finish them off as the last blow. Thanks for listening, Les Montgomery 4/28/14

Other Concerns at this location are:

- \* Loss of Neighborhood Green Areas and Existing Natural Aesthetic Features.
- \* Adequate Skate Park set back from major artery into town with speeds well exceeding 25 mph.
- \* Historical Significance ( Pete Seeger had ties to Crowell Park and had admired it's towering trees)
- \* Affect as a Scenic Byway, entrance to town.
- \* Poor Sightlines for Patrol, most sides.
- \* Existing Park Use Displacement and Costs
- \* Crowding of Park Uses in Proximity
- \* Lack of Restrooms
- \* Abutting Dangerously Steep Hill without Side Walk
- \* Next to a Notoriously Dangerous Intersection for Vehicle and Pedestrian Collisions.
- \* Insufficient Neighborhood Buffers for Noise

- \* Inadequate Space to Accommodate Crowds at Events.
- \* Significant Loss of Parks Wintertime Use.
- \* No Room for Expansion
- \* Impact of Drainage Redistribution
- \* Increase of Traffic Hazards
- \* Unsupervised
- \* Bordering a Wooded Area over a Bank



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**From:** Tom Jandernoa [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 22, 2014 12:05 PM  
**To:** skateparkideas@brattleboro.org  
**Subject:** Re: Skateboard Park and Elliot Street or Elm Street

Greetings skate park selection committee,

I am a local landscape designer and a huge supporter of the skate park, YES IN MY BACKYARD! Although I am not a skater myself, I do long board and would love to see the park in a central location. I think it's great that this town is working to create more recreation areas for kids and adults in the community.

I assume that the committee has seen plenty of info on successful skate park design, and the committee members have their top spots picked out at this point, but as an advocate and local designer I wanted to provide my opinion.

**The following sites are located too far outside of downtown, and are doomed to fail:**

Memorial Park  
BUHS  
Austine School  
Famolare  
Cedar Street/Ski Jump/Outing Club  
Fort Dummer

**The following sites have the most potential for success:**

Crowell Lot  
Brattleboro Commons  
Elm Street Parking Lot (if the design includes shade trees, green space & social space)

As a landscape designer and environmentalist I believe there should be much more green space downtown, and much of the parking should be depaved, but I also think it's necessary to design a skate park that has the potential to be successful. I don't think placing a skate park in an existing green space has to be unattractive. There are many example of beautiful, sculptural skate parks that include gardens and social space.

I based my choices on the information below.

**According to the Tony Hawk foundation, to have a successful skate park, you should consider the following criteria:**

- It needs to be easily accessible, in a central location that can be accessed by foot or public transportation
- It should be near a street, not tucked away in a hidden location, and easily viewed by neighbors and passers by
- It should be located where the general public is likely to walk, not just the skaters or the residents that live close by

3

- Existing public parks are ideal locations because they provide several necessities for a successful park: parking, restrooms, lighting, shade, seating. They also attract a variety of people to enjoy the park.
- Repurposing under-utilized parks can bring new life to existing overlooked parks and spaces, and add new interest.

**The #2 reason of why skate parks fail** (according to <http://www.skatepark.org/park-development/vision/2010/12/how-skateparks-fail/>) **is locating the park in a remote location:**

In a remote location, the skatepark is a haven for questionable teenage behavior.

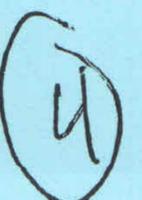
The best site for the new skatepark isn't necessarily the least controversial one. *When we allow the people who don't want to be anywhere near the skatepark to decide where it goes*, we end up with a skatepark away from the community and remote enough that it has a degree of privacy. This provides the perfect environment for people to engage in illicit activities...they have an audience, (a group of teenagers and young adults), and privacy.

Skaters have been subject to "least controversial" sites for decades and these parks consistently struggle to be the places that their communities desired. The unfortunate result of the failed skatepark is that the people who encouraged it to be built away from the community feel justified, (even though their influence contributed to its failure), and the chance of creating a new skatepark somewhere it can be positioned for success are more remote than ever.

Thank you for your time and effort.

Best,

**TOM JANDERNOA**  
Landscape Designer, MALD



**carol lolatte**

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**From:** Lisa Kuneman [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 22, 2014 5:26 PM  
**To:** skateparkideas@brattleboro.org  
**Subject:** some input

Dear Skatepark Committee,

I appreciate, very much, seeing the list of criteria for consideration early in the process at the town website- before we are looking at an up/down vote on a specific site or design proposal. I am a huge fan of transparent planning like this- though there will be disagreements and misunderstandings, it's bound to build community overall, rather than acrimony and panic.

Meanwhile, I've conversed with Sandy Klein, the interim artistic director at NEYT, on the matter. She said she wonders if her board might have an interest in looking into their role in the conversation. Apparently they have reached out in the past. Anyway, she's thinking her board, the boys and girls club board and the town committee should talk.

Teamed up with parks and rec- I think that sounds like a best case scenario! Between them - with their combined experience - they are bound to come up with a plan that serves youth well, with considerations for all who would be impacted by the plan. Though, I realize this may seem a cumbersome approach to anyone who is interested in a streamlined planning and implementation process.

Then there was the input from the state funded post-Irene planning/visioning team that came through town. They recommended making the skate park a centrally located, downtown phenomenon- suggesting strongly that the flat street parking lot (across from the parking garage) be offered up. Given this, the lack of abutting gardens and private yards, and the lack of a particularly dangerous intersection (as far as I am aware), the Elm street lot seems a very good idea to me.

In any case, I strongly recommend that the final plan include reasonable consideration for access to toilets by park users. Failing to have this in mind would be a set up for park users to be in an antagonistic relationship with abutting property owners. Lets not put them in a bad position.

Thank you,  
Lisa Kuneman  
7 Stewart Place  
Brattleboro

**carol lolatte**

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**From:** Mary Gembarowski <~~midge.gembarowski@gmail.com~~>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 28, 2014 7:36 AM  
**To:** skateparkideas@brattleboro.org  
**Subject:** Skatepark

Dear Committee Members,

My mother was born in Brattleboro 92 years ago and at the time, Mr. Crowell's mansion still stood on what today is referred to as the Crowell Lot. By 1944, with the buildings gone, the area became a park. The title to the property was transferred from the Vermont National Bank to the Brattleboro School Board to possibly build a new high school. The high school ended up being built elsewhere and the property has been a neighborhood park ever since. When I was little, my mother took my siblings and me to play in the park. When I became the mother of three girls, I took them to the park, and now that they have children of their own and all of us go to the park to the very spot where my Mom took me. This lovely shaded area that is now being proposed for the skate park has been a playground for generations of young children and I would say it is the most used area of the park. I see that one of your site criteria is "how is the site currently being used". The current use of this portion of the Crowell Lot is, and has been, since the 1940's, a children's playground and I know my family is not alone in hoping this does not change. Sometime the "cost" of something cannot be determined by dollars and cents.

Sincerely,  
Midge Gembarowski



**carol lolatte**

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**From:** Adam Hubbard [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 25, 2014 12:08 PM  
**To:** 'Rod Francis'; carol lolatte; skateparkideas@brattleboro.org  
**Cc:** pethier@brattleboro.org; Jeff Clark; Joe Bushey  
**Subject:** Memorial Park questions

Paul and I just spoke about using the Basketball Court area of Memorial Park for the Skatepark.

From a practical point, the idea of laying back and armoring the streambank makes sense. It will chew into buildable area and extend the riparian buffer deeper into the lot and (buffers are measured from the top of bank). I don't believe ANR will like the alteration of the stream bank so much, but don't know that. (on the other side of Memorial Bridge, they were saving homes that were already built, not accommodating new construction)

Also, Memorial Park is an Act 250 parcel which means that any site plan changes will need review from various agencies. The River Management Section will ask for a 50' riparian buffer from the top of bank, as I believe they did at West River Park. Also, this will require a Stormwater Permit, which means design, permitting and construction of stormwater treatment and detention infrastructure.

As for the right of way, I believe that was a town mandated right of way to provide alternative access to Brookside should the Brookside Bridge be inaccessible. The location of the Right of Way could be re-negotiated with Jonathan Chase, Brookside residents and the Town, but given Mr. Chase's past attempts to work with the Town, I'd imagine this may be a somewhat challenging negotiation.

As for including rideable, paved areas in the R.O.W., that makes perfect sense to me, but no obstructions to vehicles would be allowed

In general, I think the location is OK, because of the multi use recreation aspect. It's good decent visibility during high use times, but is somewhat remote from general street and pedestrian traffic and 'eyes on the street' during other hours.

Just another two cents worth of input.

Feel free to call or email with questions or clarifications.

Adam

**Adam Hubbard, RLA**  
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