

Dog Park Application Review Committee Meeting

May 25, 2017

Meeting Notes – *DRAFT*

Attendees

- Ms. Diane Davis, DOEE Stormwater Management Division
- Dr. Sarah Bowman, Veterinarian - CityPaws Animal Hospital
- Dr. Vito DelVento, DOH Animal Services | Board of Veterinary Medicine
- Investigator Jeremy Daniels, Washington Humane Society
- Mr. Michael Cohen, Northern Ward Four Dog Park Initiative
- Mr. Luke Turner, Takoma Community Member
- Brent Sisco, DPR Landscape Architect

TAKOMA DOG PARK APPLICATION DISCUSSION

Environmental Discussion

- Diane Davis from DOEE spoke about the environmental aspects of the site. After initial assessment, the proposed location is a viable site and raises no environmental concerns. The location is almost completely flat and is not close to any surface waters.
- DPR verified that the proposed location has less than a 2% slope. Per the dog park guidelines, the maximum allowable slope is 20%.
- If the location is approved, DOEE prefers that all healthy trees in the location remain untouched and landscaping (shrubs) be planted around the dog park to assist with sediment control and noise buffering.
- DPR further reiterated the dog parks surfaces are permeable and erosion and the current erosion issues would be improved with the installation of a dog park.

Public Health and Safety

- In the opinion of Inspector Daniels, Dr. DelVento and Dr. Bowman, dog parks present no increased public health or safety concern and that dog parks can help solve problems with dogs being off-leash by containing them in a specific and controlled area.
- DPR reiterated the continued problem we face with dogs running off-leash in our parks and owners that leave behind dog waste on athletic fields used by the public.
- Inspector Daniels stated that he has not seen a correlation between dog parks and dog bites, and that the dog parks he visits are typically clean and free of dog waste.
- Dr. Bowman stated that in her experience, dog park bites and issues are not related to dog parks, but from dogs running off-leash and irresponsible owners.
- Dr. Bowman also stated that in her experience, dog park patrons are typically very responsible and pick up their pet's waste.

Proposed Location due west of Takoma Aquatic Center

- Dr. DeVento noted that the final design should include no acute angles to prevent dogs from feeling cornered and be comprised of a large and small dog area separated by a fence (with a gate that can be opened as needed between the areas.)
- Dr. DeVento also stated that the dog park should be located as close to the existing tree line as possible to get more shade.
- Mr. Turner stated the community's concern that traffic and parking will be increased with a new dog park. Dr. DeVento stated that in his experience, people typically walk with their pet to dog parks rather than drive and that parking is not typically a concern.
- Additionally, Mr. Cohen stated that a new dog park has opened in Takoma Park, MD on April 2, 2017, which should help alleviate the concern of additional dog park visitors coming from MD to Takoma. The dog park is located at 198 Darwin Avenue and is located 1.6 miles from Takoma Aquatic Center.

Other Discussion

- Mr. Cohen stated that the sponsoring dog park group has submitted an application for \$25,000 "Bark for the Park" grant to supplement potential dog park funding.
- There was a question regarding when Coolidge is being modernized? *According to the DCPS website page, construction is slated to begin Summer of 2017 and be completed August of 2019. The footprint of the facility is not scheduled to change.*
- Mr. Turner reiterated the need from DPR for better outreach and communication regarding the dog park process and meeting notifications.
- Mr. Turner inquired as to the dog park hours of operation. *Current dog park rules state dog parks can be open from 7:00 AM to Dusk.*
- Mr. Turner inquired as to which agency picks up the trash? *The Department of Public Works (DPW) picks up the trash twice per week.*
- Mr. Turner inquired as to what type of agreement the sponsoring dog park group and DPR enters into? *The sponsoring dog park group enters into a legally binding agreement outlining the roles and responsibilities (monthly cleaning, disinfecting, opening/closing, etc) between DPR and the group.*
- Mr. Turner inquired as to where complaints go about the dog park not being clean, staying open too late, etc.? *Complaints about existing dog parks can be directed to Brent Sisco at (202) 615-9824 or by calling DPR's Operator at (202) 673-7647.*
- Mr. Turner inquired as to what items are supplied by DPR to the dog park group for operation of the dog park?
 - a. DPR standard lockable storage container;
 - b. DPR standard litter receptacles, qty TBD;
 - c. DPR standard message board;
 - d. DPR standard dog park signage;
 - e. Two (2) Gilmour professional grade hoses, 5/8" x 100' 6 ply;
 - f. Two (2) Gilmour select metal spray nozzles;
 - g. One (1) Wysiwash sanitizer / 9 pack of disinfecting tablets starter pack;
 - h. One (1) Wysiwash 9-pack of disinfecting tablets;
 - i. Forty (4) boxes of dog waste bags (200 count each);

- j. *DPR Standard Pet Fountain, qty TBD;*
- k. *DPR standard dog-waste bag dispensers, qty TBD.*

Recommendation to DPR Director

- ❖ The following DPARC members recommended approval of the proposed location due west of the Takoma Aquatic Center with the following conditions: dog park should be surrounded by shrubs, new trees and contain no lights:
 - 1. Diane Davis, DOEE
 - 2. Dr. Sarah Bowman, Veterinarian CityPaws
 - 3. Dr. Vito DelVento, DOH Animal Services
 - 4. Inspector Daniels, Washington Humane Society
 - 5. Michael Cohen, Community Member

- ❖ The following DPARC members recommended that the proposed location due west of the Takoma Aquatic Center not be approved:
 - 1. Luke Turner

Note: Mr. Michael Cohen and Mr. Luke Turner were excused from the meeting after the Takoma discussion.

EDGEWOOD DOG PARK APPLICATION DISCUSSION

Environmental Discussion

- DPR stated that the proposed area being considered has a slope less than 20% and conforms with the maximum slope requirements per the dog park guidelines.
- Diane Davis from DOEE spoke about the environmental aspects of the site. After initial assessment, the proposed location is a viable site and raises no environmental concerns.

Public Health and Safety

- Discussion identical to the previous discussion as referenced in the Takoma section.

Proposed Location at 4th & Lincoln Rd, NE

- Dr. DelVento wondered if it would be possible to expand the footprint of the application to increase a larger area and include some of the existing trees within the dog park for shade. The trees would need to be “boxed out” to prevent damage from dogs and construction activity.
- Inspector Daniels commented that this is a good location as there are no nearby dog park locations.
- Dr. DelVento also mentioned that this is a good location as it’s not adjacent to residential properties. The property also has existing walkways and is already being used for recreation.

- Similar to the Takoma application, Diane stated that if possible, the dog park should be surrounded by shrubs to create a barrier for erosion and sediment and for increased habitat.
- Dr. DelVento again stated his preference for dog parks to contain both a large and small section with a gate between the two sections.
- **Other Discussion**
No further discussion was needed as there was no community opposition to the application.

Recommendation to DPR Director

- ❖ The following DPARC members recommended approval of the proposed location at 4th & Lincoln Rd, NE with the following conditions: dog park should be surrounded by shrubs, new trees and contain no lights:
 1. Diane Davis, DOEE
 2. Dr. Sarah Bowman, Veterinarian CityPaws
 3. Dr. Vito DelVento, DOH Animal Services
 4. Inspector Daniels, Washington Humane Society

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