

CITY OF NEWTON

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

REVISED

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2009

7:45PM – Room 222

ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION:

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#336-09 JACK WITTENBERG, 146 Allerton Road, Newton Highlands, appointed as a member of the NEWTON URBAN TREE COMMISSION for a term to expire on October 1, 2012. (60 days 12/18/09) [10/02/09 @ 2:44 PM]

Re-Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#276-09 TERENCE SACK, 64 Dorcar Rd., Newton Centre, re-appointed as a Member of the NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION for a term to expire on September 15, 2012. (60 days: 11/20/09) [09/03/09 @ 2:33 PM]

REFERRED TO PROG & SERV, PUB FACIL. & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#359-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend one million, nine hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$1,930,000) from Free Cash for the purpose of supplementing the snow and ice budgets in the Department of Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department to be broken down as follows:

Public Works: \$300,000 for salaries, \$525,000 equipment rental and \$650,000 for sand and salt.

Park and Recreation: \$30,000 for salaries and \$425,000 for equipment rental. [10/13/09 @ 5:24 PM]

#242-03(4) ALD ALBRIGHT, JOHNSON AND FISCHMAN requesting an extension of the expiration date in the Off-Leash Dog Pilot Program (Section 3-30(e) as established by ordinance Z-11) from December 3, 2009 to December 31, 2011, to allow the creation of additional designated areas or times in existing Newton parks, and to provide the opportunity for a full evaluation of this ordinance. [06/15/09 @ 10:13 AM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#360-09 ALD. SANGIOLO AND JOHNSON requesting establishment of revolving account to accept and expend up to \$50,000 in donations for the purpose of fencing or other improvements to off leash dog areas.

- #124-09(2) ALD. JOHNSON AND SANGIOLO proposing to limit the number of terms held by Chairmen of the Committees of the Board of Aldermen. [06/15/09 @ 10:17 AM]

ITEMS NOT YET SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION:

- #363-09 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting a discussion to increase the tobacco seller license fee. [09/13/19 @ 1:07 PM]
- #362-09 ALD. JOHNSON on behalf of the Green Decade Coalition requesting the designation of March 2010 as Alternative to Pesticides Month. [10/08/09 @ 11:51 AM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #358-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend fifty five thousand dollars (\$55,000) from tax revenue from the local option meals tax to restore funding to the Senior Transportation Program. [10/09/09 @ 5:25 PM]
- #298-09 ALD. MANSFIELD proposing Home Rule Legislation to amend **Article 2, Section 2-1(c) Composition; Eligibility; Election and Term** of the Newton Charter to establish four-year terms for Aldermen-at-Large with the provision for one Aldermen-at-Large to be elected from each ward at each biennial municipal election. [09-29-09 @ 6:45 PM]
- #258-09 CLERK OF THE BOARD requesting that Article II, Section 2A(1)B(1), **Procedures regarding Board action on traffic and parking petitions** and Article V, Section 3, **Procedures for referral and reporting of traffic and parking petitions**, of the Rules of the Board, be amended to reflect the procedures as outlined in Ordinance Z-12, passed on December 7, 2007. [08/06/09 @ 3:12 PM]
- #232-09(2) ALD. HESS-MAHAN requesting to update City of Newton Ordinances Chapter 20, Article 1. **Smoking, Tobacco Products and Alcoholic Beverages** to reflect changes in Massachusetts state law. [09/13/09 @ 1:07 PM]
- #232-09 ALD. HESS-MAHAN, DANBERG AND FREEDMAN requesting an amendment to the City of Newton Ordinances to ban the sale of tobacco products at pharmacies in Newton. [07/16/09 @ 9:42 AM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #130-09 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to appropriate and expend from Cable Receipts the sum of twenty-four thousand nine hundred eighteen dollars (\$24,918) for the purpose of purchasing

equipment to provide for archived web casting of the Board of Aldermen and School Committee meetings. [4/28/09 @ 6:02 PM]

- #129-08 ALD. JOHNSON, SANGIOLO AND BRANDEL requesting establishment of a new Rule of Board of Aldermen stating that any new item submitted but not yet approved or accepted by the Full Board of Aldermen is prohibited from any formal or informal discussion by any formal, informal or special committee of the Board. [03/24/08 @ 9:11 AM]
- #125-09 THE POST AUDIT & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE requesting creation of a public tree protection ordinance and amendment of the current tree ordinance as recommended in the Tree Preservation Ordinance Report. [04/17/09 @ 9:14 PM]
- #95-09 TOM SHEFF requesting the Board of Aldermen appoint an advisory committee made of up persons who are not elected officials to review the daily processes of the Board of Aldermen and report recommended efficiency improvements to the Board of Aldermen. [03/26/09 @8:34 pm]
- #8-09 ALD. HESS-MAHAN, LINSKY, ALBRIGHT, FREEDMAN, MANSFIELD, JOHNSON, HARNEY & VANCE proposing an ordinance requiring that the installation of synthetic in-filled turf athletic fields on city-owned property shall use sustainable, recyclable, lead-free, non-toxic products to the maximum extent feasible. [12/30/08 @ 9:55 AM]

REFERRED TO LAND USE AND PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEES

- #474-08(2) ALD. HESS-MAHAN & VANCE proposing that Article X of the Rules & Orders of the Board of Aldermen be amended to conform with a proposed amendment to Chapter 30 re transfer of the special permit granting authority to the Zoning Board of Appeals and/or the Planning & Development Board for projects that are not classified as Major Projects pursuant to Article X.

REFERRED TO PS&T AND PROGRAMS & SERVICES COMMITTEES

- #391-08 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting Board of Aldermen approval to
(#122-92(3)) petition the General Court for an amendment to the legislation that governs the appointment of a Police Chief in the City of Newton in order to add two members to the committee: an additional representative of the Newton Superior Officers Association and an additional citizen member. [11/4/08 @12:31 PM]
- #306-08 ALD. BAKER, DANBERG, MANSFIELD & PARKER requesting discussion of how swimming at Crystal Lake might be lawfully and safely extended beyond mid-August. [08/26/08 @ 5:03 PM]

- #292-08(2) PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE requesting that His Honor the Mayor develop a written policy of standards and processes that could be uniformly followed by community groups for the use of the branch library buildings. [11/07/08 @ 11:11 AM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #274-08 ALD. JOHNSON AND SANGIOLO proposing a RESOLUTION to His Honor the Mayor requesting that he create a plan to move the Child Care Commission to a self-sustaining model for FY2010. [07/17/08 @ 9:53 AM]

**REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV., ZONING & PLANNING, PUB. FACIL.,
PUB. SAFETY AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

- #273-08 ALD. JOHNSON proposing a RESOLUTION to His Honor the Mayor requesting that the Executive and Human Resources Departments develop a comprehensive human capital strategy for the city to include: performance management, talent development, succession planning, and compensation. [07/17/08 @ 9:53 AM]

REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV. AND PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEES

- #271-08 ALD. JOHNSON proposing a RESOLUTION to His Honor the Mayor requesting that he work with the Board of Aldermen, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Department of Public Works in order to determine the most effective and efficient way to organize the work of managing our public resources. [07/17/08 @ 9:53 AM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #270-08 ALD. JOHNSON proposing a RESOLUTION to His Honor the Mayor requesting that he work with the Board of Aldermen, School Department, and School Committee in order to determine the most effective and efficient way to organize the Information Technology Departments. [07/17/08 @ 9:53 AM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #261-08 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting discussion with the Executive Department regarding moving the Director of Arts in the Parks' salary to the Arts in the Parks revolving account. [07/08/08 @ 1:29 PM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #259-08 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting discussion with the Executive Department regarding moving the salaries of the Parks & Recreation Commissioner and the Recreation Programs Director to the revolving accounts for various programs. [07/08/08 @ 1:28 PM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #258-08 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting discussion with the Executive Department regarding reorganization of senior transportation services and establishment of intra-village transportation systems. [07/08/08 @ 1:29 PM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #207-08 ALD. BRANDEL AND SANGIOLO proposing that the following question be put before the Newton voters:
“Shall the City of Newton be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition 2 ½ the amounts required to pay for the bond issuance in order to fund Newton North High School?” [05/21/08 @ 12:58 PM]

REFERRED TO PROG. & SERV., PUB.FAC. AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #89-08 ALD. PARKER requesting the following:
- A) review of the maintenance practices for buildings, parks and other properties owned by the City (including School Department facilities and grounds)
 - B) development of a comprehensive maintenance plan that includes regular schedules for preventive maintenance for each specific site or facility
 - C) a RESOLUTION requesting that implementation of said maintenance plan be funded using operating budget funds.
- [02/13/08 @ 12:07 PM]
- #287-07(2) ALD. PARKER requesting a discussion with Parks and Recreation Department in regards to an appropriate marker or plaque to honor and recognize Olympic figure skater and Newton resident Tenley Albright and her skating exhibition at the Crystal Lake upon her return from the 1956 Olympic Games where she won a gold medal. [09/20/07 @ 1:22 PM]
- #262-07 ALD. VANCE AND HESS-MAHAN seeking approval by the Board of Aldermen of a home rule petition to the General Court that would authorize an amendment to the charter of the City of Newton that would change the length of terms of the members of the Board of Aldermen to three years and would provide for electing one-third of the aldermen, one from each ward, every year. [08/22/07 @ 3:53 PM]

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

- #83-07 ALD. YATES requesting that the City of Newton take all possible steps to persuade the General Court to adopt the proportion of Governors Municipal Partnership that would allow the City to reduce employee health insurance costs by joining the Group Insurance Commission. [02/27/07 @ 10:21 PM]
- #82-07 ALD. YATES requesting that the City of Newton take all possible steps to persuade the General Court to allow the cities and towns to tax all

telecommunications facilities in the City (which would yield at least \$1.6 million per year for Newton). [02/27/07 @ 10:21 PM]

#52-07 ALD. PARKER, SANGIOLO, MANSFIELD, HARNEY, DANBERG, VANCE, LINSKY, HESS-MAHAN, BURG, ALBRIGHT & JOHNSON requesting an ordinance amendment to create a health care advisory committee whose function would be to recommend measures to control the rate of increase of health insurance costs, as recommended by the Newton Finance & Management Working Group in 2005 and the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Municipal Budget in 2007. [02/09/07 @ 12:36 PM]

#422-06(2) ALD. HESS-MAHAN requesting that a task force be established to meet and prepare a report and recommendations regarding the regulation of noise, air pollution and best practices with respect to the operation of power equipment used in landscaping, property and yard maintenance, including, without limitation, leaf blowers. [01/27/09 @ 3:47 PM]

#370-06 ALD. SANGIOLO, PARKER, MANSFIELD requesting home rule legislation to allow advisory questions to be asked in a Newton special election.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#267-06(3) ALD. PARKER, BURG, LINSKY, FISCHMAN, HESS-MAHAN, VANCE, HARNEY, JOHNSON, & DANBERG proposing Home Rule Legislation authorizing the City of Newton to apply the ordinance proposed in item #267-06(2) to assets held by the City's retirement system.

REFERRED TO FINANCE AND PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEES

#245-06 ALD. JOHNSON AND HESS-MAHAN requesting an amendment to the City Charter to require the Mayor annually to prepare and submit to the Board of Aldermen a long-term financial forecast of anticipated revenue, expenditures and the general financial condition of the City, including, but not limited to identification of any factors which will affect the financial condition of the City; projected revenue and expenditure trends; potential sources of new or expanded revenues; anticipated municipal needs likely to require major expenditures; and a strategic plan for meeting anticipated municipal needs, to include, but not be limited to, any long or short-term actions that may be taken to enhance the financial condition of the City.

#329-05(3) ALD. YATES requesting a discussion relative to amending the noise control ordinance to (A) prohibit the cumulative noise level from multiple pieces of equipment operating simultaneously on the same site to exceed the maximum noise levels allowed when measured at the nearest lot line and (B) to eliminate various exemptions in residential districts.

REFERRED TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#264-03(3) ALD. JOHNSON AND BAKER requesting update on the work of the Taxation Aid Committee established by the Board of Aldermen in March 2004 in administering aid to the elderly taxation fund.

#346-99 ALD. SANGIOLO requesting creation of an ordinance that would prohibit dogs (leashed or unleashed) from all elementary school playgrounds.

**REFERRED TO PROGRAMS & SERVICES, PUBLIC FACILITIES
AND FINANCE COMMITTEES**

#309-01 ALD. PARKER requesting increase in the income eligibility level of the 30% water/sewer discount for low-income senior citizens.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Johnson, Chairman

PF/F

#359-09



City of Newton, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

Telephone
(617) 796-1100

Telefax
(617) 796-1113

TDD
(617) 796-1089

E-mail
dcohen@newtonma.gov

David B. Cohen
Mayor

October 13, 2009

Honorable Board of Aldermen
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I write to request that your Honorable Board docket for consideration a request to appropriate one million, nine hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$1,930,000) from Free Cash for the purpose supplementing the snow and ice budgets in the Department of Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department to be broken down as follows:

09 OCT 13 PM 5:24
CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02159

Public Works	
Salaries	300,000
Equipment Rental	525,000
Sand and Salt	650,000
Park and Recreation	
Salaries	30,000
Equipment Rental	425,000
TOTAL	\$1,930,000

This sum brings the total snow and ice appropriation to approximately the median expenditure level of the past five years.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,

David B Cohen
David B. Cohen
Mayor

DBC: srb

1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

www.ci.newton.ma.us



DEDICATED TO COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE

Karyn Dean

Date sent: Thu, 24 Sep 2009 22:02:20 -0400
To: cmerrill@newtonma.gov,
mjohnson@newtonma.gov,
salbright@newtonma.gov,
thessmahan@newtonma.gov,
gtanswiston@newtonma.gov,
asangiolo@newtonma.gov,
wbrandel@newtonma.gov,
gmansfield@newtonma.gov,
kparker@newtonma.gov,
vdanberg@newtonma.gov,
lbaker@newtonma.gov,
mfischman@newtonma.gov,
jfreedman@newtonma.gov
From: Lee McIntyre <leemcintyre@rcn.com>
Subject: Comment on restrictions at Cold Spring Park
Copies to: ruth@ruthformayor.com,
settiwarren@yahoo.com,
FJRICE65@comcast.net,
rmclaughlin@newtonma.gov,
akoel@rcn.com,
kdean@newtonma.gov

09 SEP 25 AM 10:38
CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02159

Dear Members of the Programs and Services Committee:

Thank you for considering the extension of the dogs off-leash ordinance at last night's meeting. Even though Cold Spring Park wasn't officially on the agenda, it was much discussed and I would like to take this opportunity to weigh in with a few thoughts.

Last night it was said that Cold Spring Park needs to be "fixed." But, as we heard in the testimony from Animal Control Officer John O'Connell, the off-leash area is not broken. The dog owners who use the field have been very compliant with the rules and there have been no serious complaints or infractions since the off-leash area opened in March 2009.

By contrast, the trails that encircle Cold Spring Park have been a major source of abutter complaints.

As you heard last night, Officer O'Connell said that leash compliance *even on the trails* has improved dramatically since the off-leash area opened, so clearly we are having some good effect even on areas that are not under our purview. Nonetheless the abutters have continued to complain that things are worse than ever at Cold Spring Park.

In addition to the testimony of Officer O'Connell, there are several reasons to doubt the assertion that things at Cold Spring Park are worse now than they were before the off-leash area opened. And, in fact, there are several reasons to think that things are better.

First, there is extensive testimony that is on the public record from the Parks and Recreation meetings held on September 15th, October 20th, and November 17th, 2008, that documents numerous abutter complaints about dogs using the park for many years before the legal off-leash area opened. As everyone knows, there have been off-leash dogs on the old ball field (and on the trails) at Cold Spring Park for 25 years. The abutters' claim that it was peaceful before the off-leash area opened is quite simply fiction, easily belied by their own testimony.

Second, the complaints that the abutters have raised about the off-leash area since the legal off-leash area opened have all been addressed in the last few months. As we learned from Officer O'Connell's report:

—there is no longer a major problem with people opening their car doors on the intersection of Beverly

and Duncklee and letting their dogs run free into the park.

–the problem of people walking their dogs off-leash up the access road to the off-leash area has been radically diminished.

–the off-leash area and the access road are extraordinarily clean and free of dog waste.

–complaints about parking congestion in the neighborhood have been largely solved by a city parking restriction that the proponents of the off-leash area supported.

What are the remaining neighborhood complaints about the off-leash area? Largely that it exists. The neighbors of Cold Spring Park have said that they are not against off-leash parks in principle, yet the sole remedy that they have recommended to “fix” Cold Spring Park is that the off-leash area be closed. In a widely circulated email today, one of the abutters has said that he feels entitled to be “enraged” that people from outside his neighborhood have proposed and are using a city park. He also said that he feels betrayed by the process. Please note that neither of these complaints have anything to do with violations by dog owners.

There are also continued complaints about off-leash dogs on the trails but, as clearly stated in Officer O’Connell’s report, these have virtually nothing to do with the off-leash area. There are two distinct subcultures of dog owners at Cold Spring Park: the field users and the trail users. It is a mistake to think that the applicants for the legal off-leash area on the field have control over the trail users. In fact, it is important to note that some trail users are actively hoping that the off-leash experiment at Cold Spring Park fails, so that they can return to using the trails with less scrutiny.

Given these facts, it is highly doubtful that the problems at Cold Spring Park can be “fixed” by additional restrictions on the legal off-leash area.

Last night, two possible restrictions were discussed, and I would like to discuss each of them in turn.

First, limited hours. It is true that limited hours may work well at some parks in Newton, but there is good reason to believe that this would not solve the problems at Cold Spring Park. In fact, there is good reason to believe that it may make the problems there worse. For one thing, there is the very real issue of non-compliance. As previously noted, there have been off-leash dogs at Cold Spring Park for 25 years. It is therefore doubtful that when the law-abiding (and self-policing) dog owners disappear, there would be full compliance with the restrictions for limited hours. What would this lead to? The neighbors would remain unhappy, they would continue to call the police on a regular basis when the restricted hours were violated, and the Animal Control Officers would thus inherit a problem of enforcement that is even more difficult than the one that they now face.

An even bigger problem, however, is that limited hours on the field would do *absolutely nothing* to curb the behavior of people who currently walk their dogs illegally on the trails. If these dog owners don’t currently obey the leash law, who would expect that they would obey limited hours?

The end result of any attempt to limit hours at Cold Spring Park (beyond the current park-wide restriction of dawn to dusk) would be to create an unenforceable mess, where the abutters remained upset, the police were demanded to do more, and the law-abiding dog owners on the field would be punished with restrictions that seem arbitrary and ineffective.

A second proposed restriction mentioned last night had to do with a fence around the off-leash area. It is important to note that very few of the neighborhood complaints have been concerned with off-leash dogs escaping from the field. The off-leash field is large, isolated, and bounded on three sides by a ring of trees along the hills. A runaway dog would have to escape and run a good 100 yards up the access road before it made it into someone’s backyard. I am not saying that this has never happened in the history of the dog park, but it is exceedingly rare.

The more pressing argument against a fence, however, is that it would (again) do nothing to solve the problem of off-leash dogs on the trails. The owners of these dogs intentionally go to the trails. They are not heading to the off-leash area. So how could a fence possibly contain them?

I believe that there are, however, two possible restrictions/amendments that might improve the situation at Cold Spring Park, and therefore might be welcome to the abutters.

(1) It was suggested last night that users of the off-leash area might be encouraged to park on Plymouth Road, rather than in the Beverly/Duncklee area. This is an excellent suggestion. I myself have been parking on Plymouth for the past two weeks and have noted that it is just as close to the off-leash area as the Beverly/Duncklee neighborhood. As noted, a signal virtue of parking on Plymouth is that there are no abutter houses for a very long stretch, such that we could park up to twenty cars along the road without disturbing anyone.

(2) One might consider building a fence along the backyard of the abutters' houses. I've noted that some of them do not have a back fence, which surely exacerbates the problem of unleashed dogs from the trails wandering into their yards. If they do not like fences, perhaps shrubbery would be a suitable substitute. I would be happy to coordinate fund raising for this purpose, if it would lead to an improved situation.

As you can see, all reasonable evidence shows that the off-leash area at Cold Spring Park is working well and does not need to be "fixed." The problems that remain with dogs loose in the park can be addressed through measures that do not punish or encumber the dog owners who have shown good cooperation and behavior over the last nine months of the off-leash experiment.

Thank you.

Lee McIntyre
Friends of Cold Spring Off-Leash Area

Lee McIntyre
Research Fellow
Center for Philosophy and History of Science
Boston University
(617) 969-8668
leemcintyre@rcn.com

www.leemcintyrebooks.com

<http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?ttype=2&tid=10966>

Karyn Dean

Date sent: **Fri, 25 Sep 2009 10:17:26 -0400**
To: **kdean@newtonma.gov**
From: **Lee McIntyre <leemcintyre@rcn.com>**
Subject: **follow up to Programs and Services**

09 SEP 25 AM 10:38
CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02159

Hi Karyn,

Thanks for your patience. I was hoping to be able to get you actual copies of the relevant public testimony at the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings for September 15th, October 20th, and November 17th 2008, but I failed to do so. In any case, these are the dates of the relevant meetings, when the abutters to Cold Spring Park made public testimony about how awful their lives were due to dogs in Cold Spring Park *before* the legal off-leash area opened. I hope that you might be able to obtain these records yourself, as I think they would be very interesting for Alderman Johnson to have as she is assessing Bob Stock's claim the other night that everything was "peaceful" in the neighborhood before the off-leash area was designated.

Thank you so much.

Best,

Lee McIntyre

Lee McIntyre
Research Fellow
Center for Philosophy and History of Science
Boston University
(617) 969-8668
leemcintyre@rcn.com

www.leemcintyrebooks.com

<http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp?ttype=2&tid=10966>

Karyn Dean

Forwarded by: "David A. Olson" <dolson@newtonma.gov>
Forwarded to: kdean@newtonma.gov
Date forwarded: Fri, 25 Sep 2009 11:33:43 -0400
From: "Ann Dorfman" <dorfmanann@comcast.net>
To: <dolson@newtonma.gov>
Subject: Cold Spring Park usage study
Date sent: Fri, 25 Sep 2009 11:18:26 -0400

09 SEP 25 PM 12 35
CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02 15 9

David,

I have sent the email and attached documents to all members of the Board of Aldermen. I thought I should send a copy to you as well for your records.

Ann Dorfman

<<...>> <<...>> <<...>>

Dear Aldermen and Park and Recreation Commissioners,

As many of you know I have been lobbying for the city to provide dog owning residents legal access to public space for off-leash recreation for the past 12 years. I did not serve on the original Off-Leash Task Force, and because I was not comfortable with the ordinance requiring applicants to come forward with proposals for off-leash areas I chose not to serve on the Dogs Off-Leash Advisory Committee (DOLAC). However, I have followed the progress of this initiative closely and with great interest and have been saddened by the problems experienced at Cold Spring Park and disappointed that Newton's entry into meeting the needs of what is a very large constituency has been so rough. During the time Newton has implement one pilot program, off-leash areas have be successfully implemented in neighboring cities with far less open space to share, Somerville has created two off-leash areas and has two more in the works, and Cambridge has created five. Brookline has continued with its 13, and of course across the country hundreds, if not thousands have been created in communities large and small. It is my hope that we can get Newton back on track to providing Newton dog owners with safe and legal access to public space to enjoy with their dogs off-leash.

I have been following the controversy over Cold Spring Park, and, I don't know about you, but I found it very difficult to figure out what was going on. We've all received many stories and anecdotes but I didn't have the information to figure out the big picture and how the information I was receiving fit in. For this reason I organized a few volunteers over the past month to document usage at Cold Spring Park. Over a period of six days we spent 34 hours sitting inside the park on a chair at the intersection of the fitness trail and the access road to the pilot off-leash area and documented everybody that went through the intersection. With the information we collected I now feel I have a much better understanding of how the park is being used--how many people use the park, what percent of users have dogs, what percent are runners, how many people enter the park with dogs off-leash, how many people are using the off-leash area, how many dog owners continue to use the trails with dogs on-leash and off-leash, etc.

I have attached three brief documents for you with the results of the study; a one page explanation of the study with highlights (which I suggest you read first), an analysis of the data, and a one page compilation of the raw data collected.

I hope you will find this information useful in trying to understand what is happening at Cold Spring Park and the demand for additional off-leash areas within the city.

I'd also like to mention that a number of years ago we created a website with information for residents interested in establishing off-leash areas in Newton at www.newtondogs.org. This site has not been updated in a few years, but it continues to have information you might find useful, including the texts of leash laws in neighboring communities that have areas where dogs are permitted off-leash <http://www.newtondogs.org/leashlaws.htm> , and a partial list with a very few of the many communities throughout the country that have off-leash programs <http://www.newtondogs.org/links.htm> . . .

Please feel free to contact me if you'd like any further information.

Ann Dorfman

9 Henshaw Street
Newton, MA 02465
617-244-9321
dorfmanann@comcast.net

Cold Spring Park Usage Study - TOTALS - 34 hour count - August-September 2009

09 SEP 25 PM 12: 35

A "visiting unit" is a group of 1 or more people together, e.g. 1 person walking alone counts as 1 visiting unit, 3 people walking together also counts as 1 visiting unit. OLRA stands for Off-Leash Recreational Area.

CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02159

The total number of people passing through the intersection is recorded in the "From...To..." columns. The total number of visiting units is recorded in the "visiting unit" columns.

While the data collected provides an accurate record of the number of people passing through this intersection, totaling all observations does not provide a record of the number of park users, since many people are recorded more than once—as they came into the park or off-leash area and as they left the park or off-leash area. In order to calculate a total number of people/visiting units that visited the park and the off-leash area from this location, a second row, labeled "B" does not include what are most likely return trips from the off-leash area to the trail, from the off-leash area to the street, and from the trail to the street (marked with an X), since these people were likely to have been recorded on their way to the trail or off-leash area. Because there was no way to know how many times users of the trail might pass through the intersection the assumption was made that they were observed only once, however, since some people made more than one trip around the trail the total number of trail users is probably high.

	From OLRA to street		From OLRA to trail		From street to OLRA		From street to trail		From trail to OLRA		From trail to street		From trail to trail		TOTAL	
	People	Visiting Units	People	Visiting units	People	Visiting units	People	Visiting units	People	Visiting units	People	Visiting units	People	Visiting units	People	Visiting units
A: On-leash	161	125	55	36	175	128	53	45	65	44	50	40	115	84	674	502
B:	x	x	x	x	175	128	53	45	65	44	x	x	115	84	408	301
A: Off-leash	4	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	1	41	30	57	41
B:	x	x	x	x	3	2	3	2	1	1	x	x	41	30	48	35
No dog																
walk	8	6	27	16	22	14	58	42	19	10	78	52	237	151	449	291
run	2	2	0	0	0	0	28	25	1	1	22	19	176	151	205	198
bike	1	1	0	0	4	3	6	4	4	3	5	2	29	18	49	31
A: No dog-total	11	9	27	16	26	17	92	71	24	14	105	73	442	320	727	520
B:	x	x	x	x	26	17	92	71	24	14	x	x	442	320	584	422

Total of all observations

A: # observations	176	137	85	54	204	147	148	118	90	59	157	114	598	434	1458	1063
B: # visiting units visiting the park	x	x	x	x	204	147	148	118	90	59	x	x	598	434	1040	758

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 NEWTON, MA. 02159

Cold Spring Park Usage Report -- August-September 2009

Unless otherwise noted the calculations below use "visiting units" (groups of one or more people together) not individual people.

	Sat, Aug 8 11 - 6 7 hrs sunny/warm	Sun, Sept 13 11 - 6 7 hrs sunny/warm	Tues, Sept 15 7-12 & 3-6 8 hrs sunny/warm	Wed, Sept 16 10 - 1 3 hrs cloudy/cool	Fri, Sept 18 12-4 4 hrs sunny/nice	Sat, Sept 19 7-12 5 hrs sunny/cool	TOTAL	PERCENT
							34 hrs	

Observations of visiting units entering from Beverley/Duncklee with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
dogs off-leash:	0	2	1	0	0	1	4	2%
dogs on-leash:	34	46	43	7	12	31	173	65%
no dog:	15	24	24	5	10	11	89	33%

Observations of visiting units exiting onto Beverley/Duncklee with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
dogs off-leash:	3	1	0	0	0	0	4	2%
dogs on-leash:	32	49	39	7	10	28	165	66%
no dog:	18	22	25	2	6	9	82	33%

Observations of visiting units entering the off-leash area with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
dogs off-leash:	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	1%
dogs on-leash:	31	49	35	6	17	34	172	83%
no dog:	12	10	2	1	2	4	31	15%

Observations of visiting units exiting the off-leash area with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
dogs off-leash:	4	0	0	1	0	0	5	3%
dogs on-leash:	38	48	30	9	12	24	161	84%
no dog:	9	10	0	1	4	1	25	13%

Observations of visiting units walking the trail with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
dogs off-leash:	4	6	11	5	1	7	34	7%
dogs on-leash:	37	43	42	10	15	23	170	37%
no dog:	64	63	46	11	21	54	259	56%

Observations of visiting units running on the trail with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
no dog:	32	67	30	5	1	30	165	

Observations of visiting units biking on the trail with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
no dog:	7	11	1	0	2	1	22	

The numbers below reflect the number of visiting units that visited the park, not the number of observations. Since many visiting units were observed more than once (e.g. arriving at the park and leaving the park) these number count each visiting unit only once and reflect usage not observations.

Number of visiting units visiting the park with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
dogs off-leash:	4	7	11	4	1	8	35	5%
dogs on-leash:	56	85	71	12	22	55	301	40%
no dog:	91	145	79	12	38	57	422	56%

Average number of visiting units that visited the park per hour with

	Sat, Aug 8	Sun, Sept 13	Tues, Sept 15	Wed, Sept 16	Fri, Sept 18	Sat, Sept 19	TOTAL	PERCENT
dogs off-leash:	0.6	1.0	1.4	1.3	0.3	1.6	1.0	
dogs on-leash:	8.0	12.1	8.9	4.0	5.5	11	8.9	
no dog:	13.0	20.7	9.9	4.0	9.5	84.4	12.4	

Number and percentage of visiting units visiting the park

	Visiting units	Percentage
walking on the trail with no dog	217	29%
going to off-leash area with dog	177	23%
walking on the trail with dog on-leash	175	23%
running on the trail with no dog	129	17%
walking on the trail with dog off-leash	32	4%
riding a bike on the trail with no dog	28	4%

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Cold Spring Park Usage Report - Page 2

	Sat, Aug 8 11 - 6 7 hrs Sunny/warm	Sun, Sept 13 11 - 6 7 hrs Sunny/warm	Tues, Sept 15 7-12 & 3-6 8 hrs Sunny/warm	Wed, Sept 16 10 - 1 3 hrs cool/cloudy	Fri, Sept 18 12-4 4 hrs sunny/nice	Sat, Sept 19 7-12 5 hrs Sunny/cool	TOTAL 34 hrs
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Number of people and dogs in the off-leash area recorded once every hour on the hour

d = dog p = people

							Average dogs/hr	people/hr
7:00			0d 0p			0d 0p	0.0	0.0
8:00			5d 3p			3d 3p	4.0	3.0
9:00			6d 6p			7d 8p	6.5	7.0
10:00			8d 6p	4d 3p		9d 9p	7.0	6.0
11:00	N/R	6d 6p	7d 3p	4d 4p		9d 9p	6.5	5.5
12:00	N/R	5d 5p	5d 3p	2d 3p	0d 0p	2d 2p	2.8	2.6
1:00	N/R	5d 5p		0d 0p	5d 7p		3.3	4.0
2:00	N/R	8d 8p			2d 2p		5.0	5.0
3:00	N/R	17 d 13p	1d 1p		5d 6p		7.7	6.7
4:00	N/R	N/R	12d 11p		9d 14p		10.5	12.5
5:00	N/R	N/R	10d 10p				10.0	10.0
6:00	N/R	3d 3p	4d 3p				3.5	3.0
Total average # of people and dogs in the off-leash area per hour							5.6	5.4

* N/R = information was not collected.

How visitors arrived at CSP (visitors with dogs were periodically asked how they arrived)

							TOTAL
Walked	7	N/A	24	N/A	2	29	62
Drove	17	N/A	17	N/A	7	23	64
Drove but often walk		N/A	4	N/A	2	2	6
Percentage of visiting units who were asked that reported that they walked to the park							47%

Maximum number of dogs per visiting unit observed each day

	3	3	3	3	2	3
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

Barking episodes:

Barking episodes were usually 1-3 barks and usually lasted between 5-10 seconds.

							TOTAL
Barking -- OLRA*	4	N/R	5	3	4	4	20
Barking -- trail	0	N/R	2	0	0	2	4
Barking -- street**	0	N/R	3	0	0	1	4

* Barking heard from the off-leash area and the street was very faint, so more barking episodes might have occurred but not have been audible from the entrance where the observer was situated.

** Barking from street may have belonged to dog that lives in neighborhood

N/R = information was not collected.

Observations of visiting units on the trail when unaware of the observer

Because the observers were in full view of users after they entered the park it was possible that people with dogs might wait until they were out of view of the observer to remove their leashes. To test this an observe spent some time further down the trail between Duncklee and Plymouth out of view of users of the path. The following was observed from this vantage point.

	Observations	Percentage
dogs off-leash:	3	8%
dogs on-leash:	10	25%
no dog:	27	68%

Cold Spring Park Usage Report - August-September 2009

There has been much discussion about the use of the old ball field in Cold Spring Park as the city's first pilot off-leash area. To help better understand what is going on at the Duncklee/Beverly Street entrance to the off-leash area we undertook a 34 hour study over six days in August - September 2009 that documented the number of people with and without dogs, on and off-leash, on the trails and in the off-leash area. It is hoped that these data will help provide a better understanding of the pilot off-leash program.

The data collected for this report was gathered by observers sitting at the intersection where the life fitness trail intersects the access road from Duncklee/Beverly Street to the off-leash area. From this location the observer could see Duncklee/Beverly Street to the southeast, the path that leads only to the off-leash area to the northwest, and the trail that goes around Cold Spring Park to the northeast and southwest. There is also a small spur trail to the northeast that was also recorded as trail.

The observer recorded every individual and group that passed through the intersection during the hours indicated, noting where they were coming from and where they were going, whether or not they had a dog and if the dog was on a leash. People also enter the park and off-leash area from other entrances. These users would not have been recorded in this study unless they passed through the intersection where the observer was sitting. Their presence, however, could be recorded in the hourly count of people/dogs at the off-leash area. It should be noted that the number of people going to and returning from a location are not always the same since the park has multiple entrances and trails and people that enter at one point may exit from a different point.

Because sometimes one person walks with multiple dogs and sometimes a group of people walks with just one dog it was felt that calculations based on the number of people or the number of dogs would not accurately reflect usage. The calculations that follow are derived from "visiting units." A "visiting unit" refers to a group of one or more people visiting the park with or without one or more dogs, i.e. one person walking alone is one "visiting unit," three people walking together with a dog is also one "visiting unit." The data recorded both individual and "visiting unit" usage, the following calculations are based on "visiting unit" data.

Highlights

PARK USAGE: During the 34 hour period of the study there were an estimated 422 visiting units without a dog, 301 visiting units with dogs on-leash, and 35 visiting units with dogs off-leash (see paragraph above for definition of visiting unit).

ENTRY INTO PARK: 173 visiting units entered from Duncklee/Beverly with dogs on-leash. 4 entered the park from Duncklee/Beverly with dogs off-leash. This comes to an average of 5.2 visitors with dogs per hour.

OFF-LEASH AREA USAGE: 172 visiting units with dogs entered the off-leash area. The number of people and dogs in the off-leash area ranged from a low of zero to a high of 17 dogs/13 people. The average was 5.5 for both dogs and people.

TRAIL USAGE: 170 visiting units walked on the trails with dogs on-leash, 34 walked with dogs off-leash.

DOGS PER PERSON: Most visiting units were accompanied by 1 or 2 dogs. None was accompanied by more than three dogs.

NOISE: A total of 20 episodes of barking were recorded coming from the off-leash area. There were 4 episodes of barking on the trail. Barking episodes were usually 1-3 barks and lasted between 2-10 seconds. Barking heard from the off-leash area and the street was often faint so more barking episodes might have occurred, but would not have been audible from the location where the observer was situated.

This report was prepared by Ann Dorfman, 9 Henshaw Street, West Newton, MA 02465 617-244-9321 dorfmanann@comcast.net. Assistance was provided by, Omri Dotan, Nancy Gould, Carole Osman, and Jon Waldron. September 2009.

Karyn Dean

From: "Jennings, Taha" <tjennings@cambridgema.gov>
To: 'Karyn Dean' <kdean@newtonma.gov>
Date sent: Wed, 7 Oct 2009 15:28:49 -0400
Subject: RE: off leash dog areas

Hello

We started our off leash program this past August. The program involved opening or reopening 2 dedicated off leash areas, continuing to allow dogs off leash at two other locations, and a pilot program for shared use hours where dogs are allowed off leash during morning hours only at two specific parks (6 off leash locations in total). Most of the reactions that I am aware of so far have been from dog owners themselves and generally positive. Right now City staff are mostly observing the type of off leash activity that is happening at the parks and in particular at the two pilot program locations during the off leash hours. We are planning to evaluate the program after a year. Some of the things we will be reviewing are clean up of dog waste in the parks by owners, field conditions, overuse, how other park users have reacted, etc. We are hoping that the program is successful and that by providing legal places for dogs to be off leash there will be more self regulation in terms of times and places where dogs shouldn't be off leash. There aren't any plans at this point to add additional off leash areas. Hope this helps. Please feel free to contact me if you have any other questions.

-Taha

-----Original Message-----

From: Karyn Dean [<mailto:kdean@newtonma.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2009 9:58 AM
To: Jennings, Taha
Subject: off leash dog areas

Good Morning

The City of Newton is currently undertaking a pilot program for off leash dog areas. We currently have one off leash area on line and are looking at applications for several more, however, the pilot program is about to end in December. There is some disagreement about whether or not the pilot program has been a success and the extension of the program is under debate right now. So, the Aldermen were hoping to get some information from communities that were also undertaking this endeavor.

I've checked out the information on your website and hoped I could find out from you what the general reaction has been, how the pilot program has been going so far for Cambridge, and if more areas were being proposed and when they might become active.

If you could provide any insight, it would be most appreciated. Thank you in advance for you time and help!

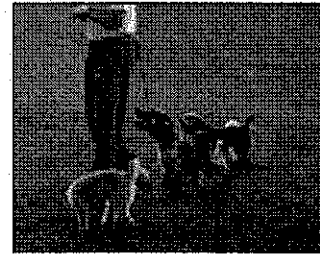
Karyn

.Karyn Dean
kdean@newtonma.gov
Board Of Aldermen



Off Leash Dog Areas

- What's Happening Now
- Background
- Dedicated Off Leash Areas
- Shared Use Off Leash Areas
- Also of Interest
- For More Information



What's Happening Now

A shared use off leash hours pilot program will begin at Corcoran Field (Raymond Street Park) in Neighborhood 9, and Gold Star Mother's (Gore Street) Park in East Cambridge beginning August 1st 2009. Dogs will be allowed off leash in the open grassy areas at these locations between 6 A. M. and 9 A. M. only. For specific rules regarding the program please refer to signs posted at parks.

This is a pilot program scheduled to last approximately one year and will be evaluated during that time to determine next steps.

Help make the pilot program successful! The City is looking for residents to volunteer as liaisons between dog owners and city departments for each pilot program location. Please contact Mark McCabe, Director of the Cambridge Animal Commission at 617/349-4376 for more information.

For more information please read the brochure **Off Leash Dog Guide and Shared Use Pilot Program Information**. This file is in PDF format and requires use of the free Adobe Acrobat viewer.

Background

There has been increased interest expressed by the public in providing legal opportunities for dogs to be off leash in certain City parks and public open spaces, and the City has been working with residents to explore additional opportunities for dogs with their owners to be off leash.

Staff from the Community Development Department, Department of Public Works, City Manager's Office, Historical Commission, Department of Human Services Programs, and the Animal Commission, have been working with City Council members, and a group of residents to come up with strategies to for creating new off leash opportunities for dogs. There are two approaches currently being taken: Dedicated off-leash areas and shared use off leash areas.

Dedicated Off Leash Areas (Commonly Referred to as Dog Runs)

Dedicated off leash spaces are specific areas where the primary use is to allow dog owners to have their dogs off leash. These areas are generally fenced in to avoid potential conflicts with other users or passerby, and facilitate the containment of the dog. In Cambridge, dedicated off leash areas may be a park or part of a park or other public open space.

There is a dedicated off leash area at the Pacific Street Park in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. There is another dedicated off leash area planned for a portion of Danehy Park closest to the

New Street parking lot. The process of establishing both of these off leash areas included public meetings with neighbors and park users. Construction of the Danehy Park off leash area is anticipated to begin during spring 2009, and last several weeks.

Shared Use Off Leash Areas

Shared use off leash areas are places where dogs are allowed off leash that are not necessarily separated from other uses and activities. Fresh Pond Reservation (West Cambridge) and Fort Washington Park (Cambridgeport) are two examples of shared use areas in Cambridge.

The City will create a pilot program establishing additional shared use locations available for off leash dogs during certain times only. Similar shared use programs have been undertaken in other cities where open space is very limited as a reasonable way to accommodate dog owners who desire regular periods of time for legal off leash activity. The initial areas considered for additional shared off leash uses were public open spaces that are not a part of school grounds, children's playgrounds, or heavily used athletic facilities, and by virtue of their layout, would not necessarily require additional fencing or significant physical changes to park grounds. There was also an effort to distribute the potential spaces geographically throughout the City.

In spring 2008, the City began a series of meetings regarding establishing a Shared Use Pilot Program at five parks throughout the City. These meetings have focused on getting information and feedback from nearby residents, park users and dog owners on the general idea, and also the appropriate times, seasons, locations, and other considerations to take into account for such a program. There have been meetings regarding Gold Star Mother's (Gore Street) Park in East Cambridge, Corcoran Field (Raymond Street) Park in Neighborhood 9, Clement Morgan (Columbia Street) Park in Area 4, Rafferty Park in the Cambridge Highlands, and Riverside Press Park in the Riverside neighborhood. In spring 2009, there were additional meetings regarding the initial locations for the shared use pilot program: Corcoran Field (Raymond Street Park) and Gold Star Mother's (Gore Street) Park. Please check back on this web site for updates and additional information.

▶ **Map of Off Leash Areas for Cambridge Licensed Dogs.**

Also of Interest

- [Animal Commission Home Page](#)

For More Information

If you would like to be notified of future meetings or would like more information please contact Taha Jennings at 617/349-4603 or email at tjennings@cambridgema.gov. The Community Development Department TTY line is 617/349-4621.

- ▶ **Return to Parks and Playgrounds**
- ▶ **Return to Community Planning Division Home**
- ▶ **Return to Community Development Department Home**

Background Information Regarding Off Leash Shared Use Hours Pilot Program

In spring 2008, the City began a series of meetings regarding establishing a shared use pilot program at five parks throughout the City. These meetings have focused on getting information and feedback from nearby residents, park users and dog owners on the general idea, and also the appropriate times, seasons, locations, and other considerations to take into account for such a program. In June 2009, additional community meetings were held concerning the two initial locations for the pilot program (Gold Star Mothers Park and Corcoran Park).



Help Make the Pilot Program Successful!

The City is looking for residents to volunteer as liaisons between dog owners and city departments for each pilot program location. Please contact Mark McCabe, Director of the Cambridge Animal Commission at 617-349-4376 for more information.



OTHER OFF LEASH OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAMBRIDGE DOG OWNERS

There are 2 DEDICATED OFF LEASH areas in Cambridge. These areas are fenced in and are intended exclusively for use by off leash dogs and their owners:

- **Pacific Street Park** — in between Pacific Street and Tudor Street in Cambridgeport (new surfacing will be installed summer 2009)
- **Danehy Park** (anticipated opening summer 2009) — At the New Street entrance to Danehy Park in North Cambridge

There are 2 SHARED USE OFF LEASH areas in Cambridge. These are areas where dogs are allowed off leash but that are not fully fenced or separated from other uses and activities:

- **Fresh Pond Reservation** — Fresh Pond Parkway in West Cambridge (excludes mowed grassy areas)
- **Fort Washington Park** — Waverly Street in Cambridgeport (currently closed for restoration; scheduled to reopen, without temporary fencing, in late summer 2009)

CONTACT INFORMATION

To report an issue regarding dogs in Cambridge parks - please contact the City of Cambridge Animal Commission at 617-349-4376

For additional information regarding City of Cambridge off leash opportunities and shared use pilot program - please contact the Community Development Department at 617-349-4603 or visit the web at: www.cambridgema.gov/offleash

For additional information or concerns regarding off leash dogs specifically at: **Fresh Pond Reservation** - please call Fresh Pond Reservation Management at: 617-349-4762

Danehy Park - please call the Danehy Park maintenance office at: 617-349-4895 or Paul Ryder, Director of Recreation at 617-349-6200

Pacific Street Park, Fort Washington Park, Corcoran Field and Gold Star Mothers Park - please call the Department of Public Works at: 617-349-4880

Additional information is also available through the Cambridge Dog Owners Group (CDOG) at: www.cambridgedog.com (this is a private group not affiliated with the City of Cambridge)

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Off Leash Dog Guide and Shared Use Pilot Program Information



www.cambridgema.gov/offleash

For the past several years city staff from the Community Development Department, Department of Public Works, City Manager's Office, Historical Commission, Department of Human Service Programs and the Animal Commission collaborated with City Council members and a group of residents to come up with strategies for creating new off leash opportunities for Cambridge licensed dogs.

**SHARED USE HOURS
(PILOT PROGRAM)**

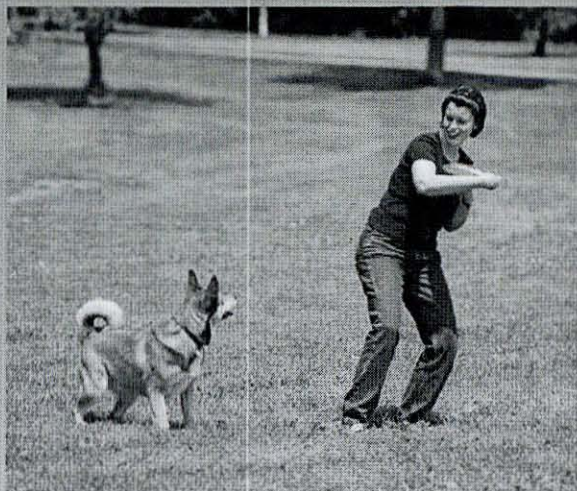
Beginning August 1st, 2009, the City of Cambridge will begin a pilot program to provide shared use locations that will be available for off leash dogs during specified hours. Shared use locations are areas where dogs are allowed off leash but that are not fully fenced or separated from other uses and activities.

Shared Use Hours Pilot Program Locations:

- **Gold Star Mothers Park** – Gore Street in East Cambridge
- **Corcoran Park** – Raymond Street in Neighborhood Nine

Off leash hours are from 6am to 9am, beginning on August 1, 2009. Off leash use is prohibited if the field is saturated due to rain or snow or if the park is scheduled for another use.

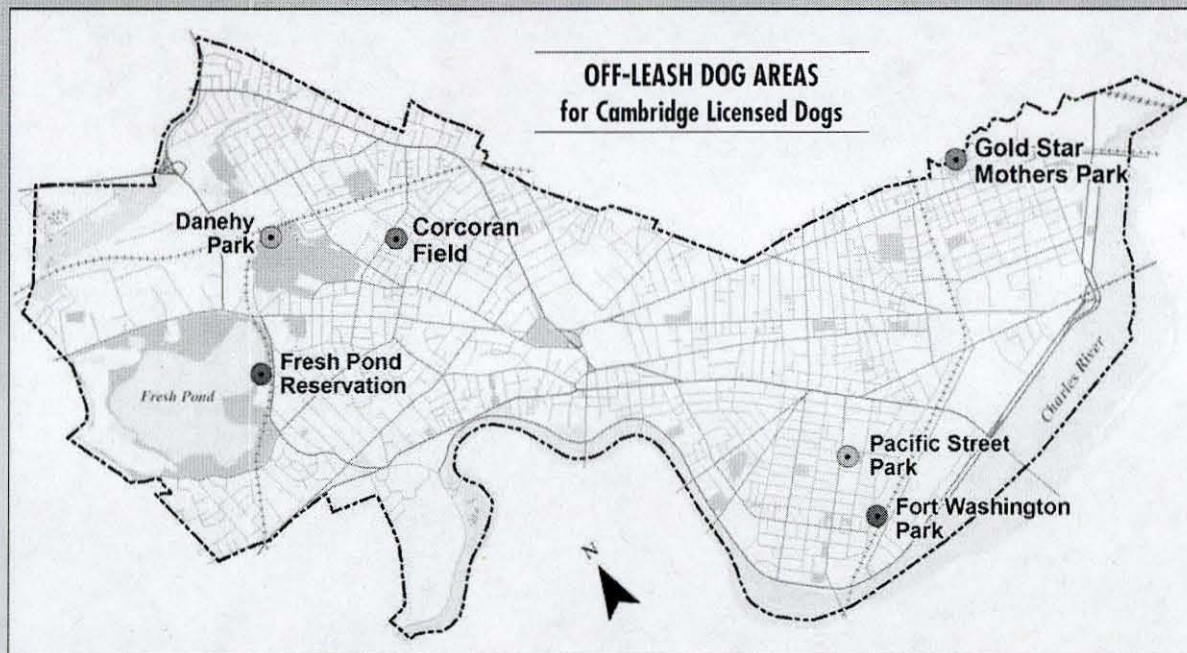
The pilot program will last for approximately one year. At the end of that period, physical conditions, feedback from users and the general public, and staff comments will be reviewed as part of the evaluation process. Recommendations will then be made regarding the continuation of the program.



Important Things to Keep in Mind (for a complete list of rules please see signs posted at parks/off leash areas)

- Off leash hours are suspended when there are permitted or school based special activities in the park.
- There are no off leash hours when parks or fields are saturated with rain.
- Dogs must be leashed when Parks Division crews are working in the park.
- The owner/keeper of any dog(s) must appropriately remove and properly dispose of any and all feces left by the dogs.
- Dogs are not allowed in playground areas, sandboxes, tennis or basketball courts.

LOCATIONS OF DEDICATED AND SHARED OFF LEASH AREAS AND LOCATIONS OF SHARED USE HOURS PILOT PROGRAM AREAS



● SHARED USE HOURS PILOT PROGRAM 6AM-9AM	● DEDICATED OFF-LEASH DOG AREAS	● SHARED USE OFF-LEASH AREAS
Gold Star Mothers Park/Gore Street Park Corcoran Field/Raymond Park	Danehy Park at New Street Pacific Street Park	Fort Washington Park Fresh Pond Reservation

User login
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<p>Password:</p> <input type="password"/>
<p><input type="button" value="Log in"/></p> <p>Create new account Request new password</p>

Navigation
<p>recent posts</p>

Legal Off-Leash Areas in Cambridge
<p>1. Fresh Pond, 250 Fresh Pond Parkway: legal off-leash for Cambridge residents' dogs under voice control. Legal dog swimming at Little Fresh Pond and Black's Nook. Mutt mitts dispensers and refuse containers well situated throughout the reservation. No dogs romping on mowed grassy areas regulation is enforced, as is dog licensing requirement and parking regulation (Cambridge resident sticker required).</p> <p>2. Fort Washington, Temporarily closed for maintenance, Summer 2008. Please visit nearby Pacific Street Park (see #4, below) during this time. 101 Waverly Street, between Reardon Street and Talbot Street. Fully fenced, legal off-leash dog park with a mutt mitts dispenser (often empty, so bring backup bags) and trash barrels outside the park. On-street parking. 3 dog maximum per handler (as in all Cambridge off-leash areas).</p> <p>3. Danehy Park Dog Run: Danehy Park is a 55-acre facility located at 99 Sherman Street in North Cambridge (adjacent to Garden and New Streets). The dog run is unfenced and can be muddy, with no mutt mitts dispenser. Trash barrels are elsewhere in the park. This dog run is scheduled to be improved by the city.</p> <p>4. Pacific Street Park: Corner of Pacific and Sidney Streets, entrance on Tudor Street. Fenced, legal, off-leash dog park with vestibule gates</p>

Site Mission
<p>CambridgeDOG.org is home of the Cambridge Dog Owners' Group (CDOG), which represents responsible dog owners in Cambridge, Massachusetts by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting responsible, humane behaviors on the part of dog owners • fostering community and neighborhood development by working with the city to create and maintain safe and legal off-leash recreational areas • serving as an informational and educational resource for dog owners and the community at large.

Upcoming Events

Recent News
<p>Fort Washington Closed for Renovations</p> <p>Shared Space Proposal Covered in Cambridge Chronicle</p> <p>Upcoming Neighborhood Meetings to Discuss Shared Use: Off-Leash Hours at Local Parks</p> <p>Coyotes in Cambridge: How to Peacefully Coexist</p> <p>What are Boston's 10 Most Popular Dog Breeds?</p> <p>Dogs May Be Banned from Boston's New Rose Kennedy Greenway</p> <p>The Healing Power of Dogs: Article in the NY Times</p> <p>Dog Parks Create Community: Letter from CDOG Member in Cambridge Chronicle</p> <p>Help Us Save the Mutt Mitts Dispensers!</p> <p>Feature Your Pet On the MSPCA Holiday Tree</p>

Active Forum Topics
<p>Arlington: A-DOG advocacy group</p> <p>May09- Arlington Town Meeting v Dog Proposal</p> <p>Dog-friendly beaches / swimming Cambridge?</p> <p>Volunteer</p> <p>2 Female Bernese Mountain Dogs Together</p> <p>"Walking the Dog" -- a poem by I</p> <p>Mortgage Crisis Takes a Toll on F. in The Globe</p> <p>Raise A Puppy for a Year for Guid Blind</p> <p>The Latest on the Dog Racing Bal GREY2K Newsletter, Special Offer</p>

for safe entry and exit. Plenty of on-street parking, mutt mitts dispenser and trash can.

**Donate to the Helen K. Holland
Animal Care Trust Fund**

In 1997, a fund was established by the Cambridge Animal Commission to provide emergency veterinary care for stray animals in Cambridge. Many lives have been saved because monies were available for necessary medical care which otherwise could not have been provided due to budgetary constraints. This trust bears the name of Helen K. Holland, a lifelong resident and long-time employee of the city of Cambridge whose interest in humane issues was a lifelong commitment. *All monies donated to the trust are directly used for animal care.*

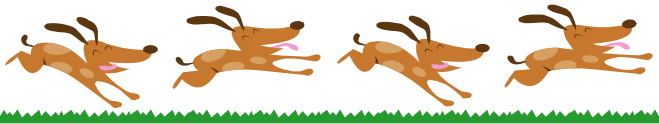
Please send contributions to:

Cambridge Animal Commission
344 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139

Checks should be made payable to the Helen K. Holland Animal Care Trust Fund.

Please call the Animal Commission at 617-349-4376 for more information.

CambridgeDOG.org is the home of the Cambridge Dog Owners' Group.
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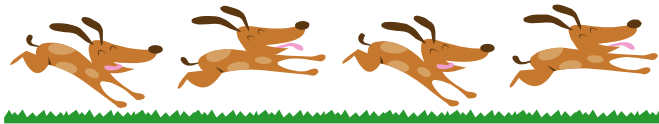
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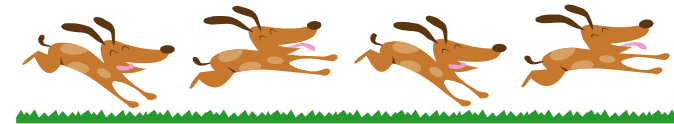
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Animal Control Office
1 Franey Road
Officer April Terrio

Phone: 311 (outside the city 617-666-3311)
Email: ATerrio@somervillema.gov

RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP IN SOMERVILLE

*Open for details on Off Leash
Recreational Areas and
Dog-Friendly Parks*



Joseph A. Curtatone
Mayor

#242-03(4)

October 4, 2009

From: michelebisco@somervilledog.com

Dear Karyn Dean,

Thank you so much for contacting the Somerville Dog Owners Group (som|dog), and please accept my apologies in not being able to reply sooner.

I'm happy to share with you and the Newton BOA the process by which Somerville established safe and legal areas for off-leash recreation. I also encourage you to contact Carlene Campbell in the City of Somerville's Office of Communications. Carlene is the City's liaison to the Dog Owners Task Force and has been working with residents on on this project as long as I have, since fall 2004.

You may also be interested in the City's brochure about responsible dog ownership:

http://www.somervillema.gov/CoS_Content/documents/DogBrochure2008.pdf

There are two ways that off-leash recreational areas (OLRAs) get proposed in Somerville:

1) OLRAs may be proposed by the City through a collaborative process involving the Dog Owners Task Force, the Mayor, the local Alderman, and the local community. The Nunziato OLRA was proposed in this way.

In 2004 the Somerville Board of Aldermen requested and the Mayor established a Dog Owners Task Force (DOTF), which meets monthly on the second Thursday. Meetings are open to the public and are chaired by Carlene Campbell.

The first meeting of the DOTF was in September 2004. Carlene Campbell and the residents who participate on the Task Force made a preliminary list of prospective sites for off-leash recreational areas, took the Mayor on a tour of the sites, and narrowed the list down to three sites. The DOTF also came up with a preliminary list of fourteen rules for OLRAs. The prospective sites as well as the preliminary rules were presented to overwhelming support at a community meeting in March 2005.

<http://www.somdog.org/calendar/summaries/445.php>.

In the following months, the DOTF worked with the City's Law Office and the Mayor's Office to propose amendments to the Municipal Ordinances to allow for off-leash recreation in designated areas (<http://www.somdog.org/news/505.php>; <http://www.somdog.org/news/565.php>).

A community meeting was held in in the neighborhood of Nunziato Field in November 2005 to propose an OLRA in the park; the OLRA opened in April 2006.

2) OLRAs may be proposed by the community in the course of the community process for a park construction or renovation project. The OLRA at the Ed Leathers Community Park was proposed in this way.

Please let me know if I may be of further assistance. I would be pleased to speak briefly before your Board of Alderman and answer questions directly. You are also welcome to call me on my cell phone 617-290-9107.

Sincerely yours,

Michele Biscoe

Chairperson

Somerville Dog Owners Group (som|dog)

www.somdog.org

The Somerville Dog Owners Group promotes responsible dog ownership, safe and legal options for off-leash recreation, and the equitable distribution of open space in Somerville, MA

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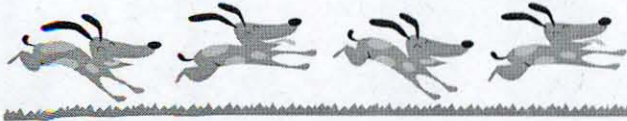
On Sep 24, 2009, at 3:51 PM, Karyn Dean wrote:

Good Afternoon,
The City of Newton is in the process of a pilot program for off leash dog parks. We currently have just one open and there is considerable debate over whether or not it has been "successful"! The Board of Aldermen would like to gather information from other communities that have had success with off leash parks and Somerville's name came up often.

I was hoping you could share the process by which parks are selected, put into operation, supervised, enforced, the guidelines and restrictions, etc. I would very much appreciate any help you might be able to offer. Or perhaps you can direct me to the correct resource if you are not it!

Thanks so much
Karyn

Karyn Dean
Committee Clerk
Board of Aldermen
kdean@newtonma.gov
617-796-1219



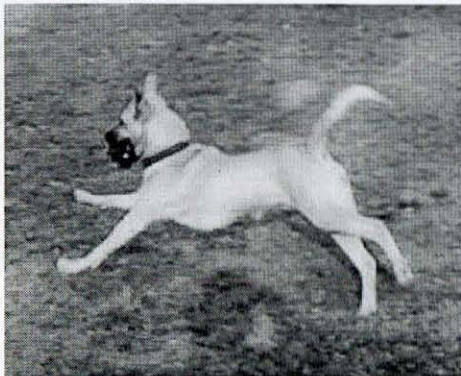
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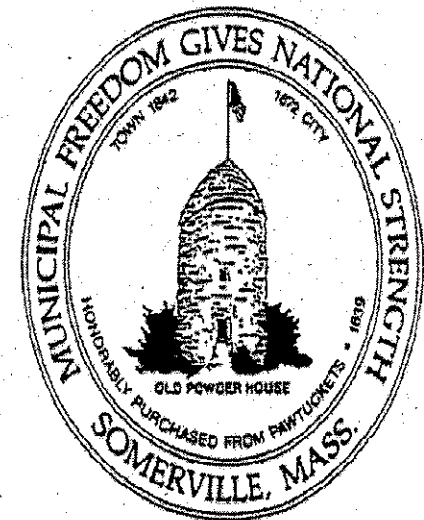


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RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP IN SOMERVILLE

*Open for details on Off Leash
Recreational Areas and
Dog-Friendly Parks*



Joseph A. Curtatone
Mayor

welcome » information

Information

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Board of Directors: Michele Biscoe, Steven Roix and Jessica Wong
contact [som|dog](#)

The Somerville Dog Owners Group is incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and certified by the Office of Attorney General as a public charity.

Thanks to Steven Glines and the staff of Sillari and Glines for help filing our Articles of Incorporation and to the Law Office of Jennifer E. Shell for looking over our bylaws for certification as a public charity.

- **Information for Somerville Residents** [useful links for Somerville residents](#)
[contact information for city officials](#)
- **Laws and Regulations**
- **Resources for Dog Owners**
 - [Bibliography](#)
Suggested Reading about off-leash recreation
 - [Dog Meets Dog](#)
Notes on observing and understanding canine intra-species social behavior based on Jean Donaldson's book, *Fight! A Practical Guide to the Treatment of Dog-Dog Aggression* (San Francisco SPCA, 2004).
 - [Dog Owner Groups](#)
Listed by state
 - [Responsible Dog Ownership](#)
Doing right by your dog in the community

Early in 2004, a Somerville resident found herself in a situation in which she could adopt a dog. She started researching dog adoption, dog training and responsible dog ownership. She visited the open spaces in her neighborhood and found that they were all posted "No Dogs Allowed."

[Continue reading "the origin of the Somerville Dog Owners Group"](#)

som

somerville dog

[somdog at somerville](#)

[email address](#)

Park Neighborhoods:

[Cobble Hill](#)

[Community Path](#)

[Foss Park](#)

[Nunziato Field](#)

Volunteer Opportun

SAVE THE NET

[news](#)[information](#)[calendar](#)[join us](#)[parks & maps](#)[forum](#)[welcome](#) » [calendar](#) » [summaries](#)**som****Event Calendar**Show by date
October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Use the calendar to navigate events by date, **OR** use the list below to show all events for a category, ordered by date.

[som|dog](#)[city meetings & events](#)[community group events](#)[dog owner interest](#)[somerville dt](#)[somedog at somervillec](#)[email address](#)[Park Neighborhoods](#)[Cobble Hill](#)[Community Path](#)[Foss Park](#)[Nunziato Field](#)[Volunteer Opportun](#)[SAVE THE NET](#)

March 30, 2005

Summary of Community Meeting - March 2005

Community Meeting re: off-leash recreation

Over seventy people attended the first-ever public discussion about options for off-leash recreation in Somerville, Wednesday evening, March 30, 2005, at the Lincoln Park Community School. Support for safe and legal off-leash areas was overwhelming.

The following elected officials attended the meeting:

- [Representative Timothy Toomey](#) (Twenty-sixth Middlesex, including ward one [all precincts] and ward two [precincts one and two] of the city of Somerville)
- [Alderman at Large William White](#)
- [Ward One Alderman William Roche](#)
- [Ward Three Alderman Thomas Taylor](#)
- [Ward Seven Alderman Robert Trane](#)

[Alderman at Large Dennis Sullivan](#) arranged for a very supportive letter to be read *in absentia*.

[Alderman Taylor](#) spoke first and addressed the need for additional resources to enforce city ordinances relating to dogs. He reminded everyone present that dog owners have a responsibility to clean up after their dogs. Taylor reassured the community that "we do not want dog owners to take over;" rather the proposal for designated off-leash recreational areas is a way for the City to help dog owners to be responsible.

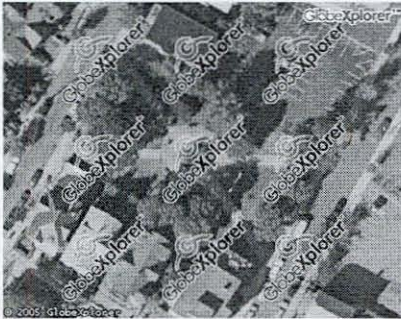
[Alderman White](#) related his own concerns as a dog owner in a City where there is no place where dogs are allowed off-leash. Five years ago, White said, he called out to Somerville dog owners to help out, both by practicing responsible dog ownership and by volunteering to help the City come up with solutions that address dog owners' needs. He recalled what happened several years ago, when Tufts allowed neighbors to enjoy the University's fields with their dogs. Because dog owners did not use the fields responsibly, Tufts revoked off-leash privileges.

[Carlene Campbell](#), Community Relations Manager in the Mayor's Office for Strategic Planning and Community Development, and the City's liaison to the Dog Owners Task Force, thanked the Mayor and Aldermen [William Roche](#), [Dennis Sullivan](#) and [Thomas Taylor](#) for convening the Dog Owners Task Force (DOTF).

[Campbell](#) led the community discussion by means of a Power Point presentation that summarized the Task Force's proposal and introduced some of the benefits of and concerns about off-leash recreation in general.

The Proposal

In addition to the off-leash recreational area (OLRA) that neighbors have requested be included in the design for the renovation at Perry Park in Ward Two, the Task force is proposing that the City establish fenced-in OLRAs in Bailey Park, Nunziato Field and Prospect Hill Park.



In Bailey Park, which is bordered on the west by Lowell Street and on the east by Belmont Street, the Task Force is proposing fencing-in for off-leash recreation two of the triangular grassy areas on the opposite side of the park from the residential abutters, i.e. the northern-most and eastern-most triangles. Residents observed that Bailey Park will really benefit from a community of regular users-- i.e. dog owners--regularly cleaning up in the park. Another benefit is that, if the park saw more active use, perhaps the Department of Public Works would prioritize snow removal and sanding on the paths in the park, which are used by the community as a short-cut between Lowell and Belmont streets.

In Nunziato Field, on Summer Street between Putnam Street and Vinal Avenue, the Task Force proposes fencing in a small area parallel to Putnam Street and including the tree well along Summer Street. A four to five-foot high fence matching the existing fencing would be installed from the Putnam street end of the tree well to the back of the park, and the other end of the tree well would also be fenced-off. In the OLRA the existing mulch will be replaced with a surface treatment such as crushed stone, which will stay in place better and offer better drainage.



A Vinal Avenue resident who does not own a dog voiced his preference for designated OLRAs over having to compete with dog owners for mixed-use space. He requested that the OLRAs have separate access from the street to prevent people from having to walk with their dogs through the other areas of the parks.

A mother of an eighteen-month-old infant, spoke in support of a designated off-leash area at Nunziato. She has found the local dog-owning community to be made up mostly of considerate and respectful neighbors, but she also recounted an unpleasant experience when people refused to leash their dogs and she was unable to bring her baby into the park to enjoy the snow. She agrees that a designated area for off-leash recreation will reduce competition in Nunziato between dog owners and other park users.

Local dog owners emphasized the importance for public safety of two separate entrances to the OLRA . At the same time, neighbors requested that the existing gates at the field be repaired, in particular, the large equipment gates, between which there is a two foot gap, and the Vinal Avenue gate, which does not close securely. Lighting problems at the field were also discussed: in the dark winter months the lights do not come on early enough.

The proposed OLRA for Prospect Hill Park is the grassy area to the far northwest of the monument, an area which is currently frequented by responsible neighborhood dog owners. Because Prospect Hill is an historic site, the Historic Commission will have to be consulted on the design. Fencing will have to be historically accurate: The historical design--a split-rail fence consisting of vertical supports and diagonal cross beams--may be modified as necessary for the needs of off-leash recreation.



Proposed rules for OLRAs in Somerville:

1. Like the parks themselves, the OLRAs will be open from 8:00 am to 10:00 p.m.
2. Aggressive dogs are not allowed.
3. Excessive barking is not allowed.
4. Owners/handlers must have a leash in hand at all times
5. Owners/handlers must be present with their dogs at all times; no unattended dogs.
6. Dogs must be under voice control at all times.
7. Dog owners are responsible for any and all injury or damage caused by their pets (M.G.L. c. 140 s. 136A)
8. Owners/handlers are responsible for cleaning up after their dogs.
9. Upon entry and exit, dogs must be on leash.

10. Maximum of three dogs per person at one time in the park.
11. Dogs in heat are not permitted in the park.
12. Dogs must be at least four months old to be allowed in the park.
13. Dogs must wear a collar with identifying tags, current license and rabies tag at all times.
14. Violators are subject to fine and to removal from the park.

The Task Force estimates that each area will cost \$7,000 to \$10,000 and proposes to approach the City's Chief Financial Officer about setting up a revolving fund for donations targeted specifically for off-leash recreational areas. This will require an order from the Board of Aldermen.

Alderman Taylor volunteered that, given the demonstration of community support, some funding for OLRAs might be available through the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development.

Alderman Roche was also impressed by the turn out. He noted that the community meetings like this one are an integral part of the decision-making process with regard to the allotment of public funds to the improvement of open spaces. On behalf of the Task Force Campbell expressed appreciation for the Aldermen's commitment to the participation of the City in partnership with residents and local businesses for funding for the proposal.

Alderman Trane spoke as dog owner who recognized many people in the room not as constituents but as fellow dog owners who he meets at dog-friendly places like Sheepfold in the Middlesex Fells. He assured the community that we can get this done.

Prior to the construction of the OLRAs, the Task Force proposes that the "No Dogs Allowed" signs be taken down so that dog owners may at least enjoy the parks with our dogs on leash. Waste management systems (bag dispensers and trash cans) will be installed as soon as possible. Temporary fencing is available making possible the establishment of a pilot off-leash program in Bailey Park and Nunziato Field as early as Summer 2005.

Discussion: Benefits and Concerns

One Somerville dog owner described her experiences at OLRAs in Portland, ME (e.g. Valley Street Park) and Portsmouth, NH: Ninety percent of dog owners, she said, are responsible and clean up after their dogs, and the parks are quite clean and free of dog waste. Ten percent of dog owners are "jerks" and do not clean up after their dogs, but about forty percent of dog owners clean up after the jerks.

It was observed that a community of dog owners among park users is one of the best things that can happen to a park and to the surrounding neighborhood. Neighborhoods that offer options for off-leash recreation enjoy less barking from dogs fenced-in in neighbors' yards as well as parks that are, in general, cleaner than other parks. Also the presence of dogs along with their owners in parks helps to deter crime.

Residents with experience with OLRAs in other communities described the benefits of double gates. Dogs pass from the street through the first gate, where they are unleashed before entering the park through the second gate. An additional benefit of the "air lock" is that, if a dog escapes the park through an open gate, for example when someone else is entering or leaving, the dog is contained in the "air lock" cannot escape out into the street.

Another resident described the benefit of having a "penalty box" within a fenced-in OLRA: if a dog gets too excited, its owner can segregate it from other dogs without leaving the park altogether. Also there can be separate large dog and small dog areas.

A resident suggested that access to OLRAs be controlled by requiring dog owners to purchase and wear a special tag.

Frequenters of parks in Portland and Portsmouth offered additional rules which are in effect at these parks:

- a. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult
- b. No Food Allowed

With regard to children, a resident observed that determining an appropriate age at which children should be allowed in OLRAs is almost impossible: Some ten-year-olds are much better with dogs than some fourteen-year-olds.

A dog owner observed that the safety benefits for children of OLRAs can only be realized if unattended children are not permitted in OLRAs.

A Marion Street resident described an event he witnessed last week in Lincoln Park in which a fight broke out between an unleashed dog and a dog that was being walked on leash by a young girl. Even though her parents had given her the responsibility of walking the family dog, the child was unable to handle the situation. Furthermore, the offending dog was not wearing any identifying tags so the owner could not be contacted. The incident occurred on a Sunday afternoon, and, because the Animal Control Officer is not on duty at that time, the witness called the police. The police told the witness that he had to report the incident to Animal Control. It took a second call to the police before an officer was dispatched to the scene. The resident emphasized that he is a dog lover and is willing to make a donation toward OLRAs in Somerville.

With regard to food in OLRAs, it was observed that if there are picnic tables in the park (as in Nunziato) people should be allowed to eat in the park. Rather than prohibiting food in OLRAs, owners of food-aggressive dogs should consider themselves subject to the "No Agressive Dogs Allowed" rule. As an alternative to excessive prohibitions, it was suggested that the posted rules advise people to "be sensible" and enjoy off-leash recreation responsibly.

The question of enforcement was raised, and the benefits of the legitimation of off-leash recreation and posted rules were discussed. Legitimation will empower responsible dog owners to police our own? while freeing Animal Control to direct its limited resources to real emergencies.

There was general agreement about the problem of irresponsible dog owners and acknowledgement that OLRAs will not increase these problems; rather, OLRAs will help to reduce the problem of irresponsible dog owners.

Further suggestions for a more "dog friendly" Somerville

A dog owner spoke of what it feels like to be viewed as a ?pariah? in her own community. She is allowed to bring her dog to her workplace in Davis Square, but she is not allowed to walk with her dog on the Rail Trail (Community Path), which is the safest and most convenient route. Several residents spoke up in favor of taking down the "No Dogs Allowed" signs and allowing dogs on leash on the Community Path.

Residents of Ward one inquired about options for off-leash recreation at the Kemp Nut site behind City Hall.

Posted by Michèle on March 30, 2005 8:50 PM