

Off-Leash Area Working Group

Friday, May 02, 2014

City Hall, Room 202

Meeting Minutes

Attending: Commissioner DeRubeis, Alderman Albright, Bud Grantham, Carol Schein, Lee McIntyre, Ted Kuklinski, Ralph Torres

1. John MacGillivray- Veterans and their dogs

- Mr. MacGillivray commented the Department of Veteran Services has a program called “vets with pets”. The program allows the vets and their pets congregate and socialize. Mr. MacGillivray is requesting the use of a fenced off-leash area bi-weekly on a Saturday or Sunday morning. The area used would not be closed to other users. The Department of Veterans Services has a veterinarian attend these gatherings. Commissioner DeRubeis stated this is a great idea for the veterans and the off-leash program. The off-leash specialist, Jason Roberts would also be present at the gatherings. Mr. McIntyre suggested waiving the medallion fee for the veterans. Mr. Kuklinski suggested using different sites. Mr. MacGillivray will be come back to the May 30th OLAWG meeting with a representative from the Department of Veterans Services with more details.

2. NSHS Area – Update

- Michael Cronin, Newton Public Schools Chief of Operations attended the meeting to voice concerns regarding the proposed site at NSHS on Brandeis Rd. The concerns are:
 - Students smearing dog feces on teachers cars
 - Students hanging out at off-leash area
 - Not the best proximity
- Alderman Albright stated there are off-leash dogs all over the campus and the principal thought the off-leash area would be a good place to direct this crowd to remove them from the athletic fields, etc.
- Officer Torres stated he has never had an incident of feces being smeared on a vehicle in 27 years.
- Mr. Cronin requested more information regarding hours, etc. Alderman Albright commented there would be no hours during the school day. There would be a trial period for the off-leash area. Mr. Cronin stated this would be a non-starter if the area is open during the school year. Mr. Cronin suggested taking a proposal to the school committee. Commissioner DeRubeis suggested a site visit at the proposed area on May 16th.

3. Thompsonville Playground – Update

- The PTO will be attending the P & R Commission meeting on May 19 to present the half basketball court.

4. Other Business

- Mr. McIntyre suggested putting Spears park off-leash proposal back on the table. Commissioner DeRubeis suggested the property across from Oakley Spa and Norumbega Park. Alderman Albright requested Alderman Lennon be contacted to set up a meeting with the Spears park neighbors.

Next meeting: 9:30 a.m. May 16, 2014, At NSHS – Brandeis Rd for a site visit