

AMHERST DOG PARK TASK FORCE

Meeting #11

6:00 PM, Wednesday, August 1, 2018.

Community Room, Police Station.

Present:

Jim Pistrang

Ellen Keiter

Mike Chesworth

Ted Diamond

Gina Fusco

Kaye Sherwood

Jim Wald

Dave Ziomek

Agenda

**Move to approve minutes from last meeting. Seconded.
Approved unanimously.**

Status of grant proposals

JP: We got the Stanton Foundation design grant! (Huzzahs all around)

- Along with a very positive response to our grant; they were very impressed with our process. This bodes well for our construction grant.

- Check to come from Stanton Foundation within a week - ten days

- DZ will begin proposal for Heritage to firm up

acceptable size of the park

- Design to be done by Fall, then sent to Stanton Foundation, and get bids out for construction.
- We should approve a designer for the park this meeting

A temporary sign at the site to show proposed plan can be put up according to DZ.

Update on Pet Safe Grant:

EK: It was a tricky grant to write online but we met the deadline for a 25K grant.

- Should have an answer by September.
- But It is a national competition with only eight grants awarded per year.

EK: Contacted the Amherst Rotary Club, but it was bad timing. A new committee is just now being formed. Will continue to follow up on that.

Timeline of activities for the next six months

- Design

DZ: Town recommends Berkshire Design as designer. Because we are doing a horizontal construction it does not need to be bid out.

We should:

- Contract with BD.
- Meet with Peter Wells to refine concept.
- Expect plans to be done by 01 Jan 2019.
- Construction bid should go out then (early in the

season) for best pricing.

Unclear if oversight of construction is included design cost. DZ will check on that.

- Permitting.

Reviews will be necessary from: Design board, Conservation Comm, Planning Board, and Select Board approval.

Also DEP for reuse study.

Natural Heritage permitting must be in place before solar panel project begins.

More to come on all this.

- Construction

We must submit the grant proposal. Stanton will advise as to procedure.

Status of Design

DZ: Budget has been updated. (Copies passed around)

TD: There is no perfect surface for dogs. Grass, if seeded, will take a year of growing before it can be used.

Suggests we have three different surfaces divided by walkways: Artificial turf, pea stone, real grass

Reasons:

- Two thirds of the park can be opened initially.
- If grass gets trashed, it can be fenced off to recover.
- Allows us to test which surface will work best.

- Is good to have separate areas for dogs.
- Breaking the park up with walkways will allow closer attention to dogs.
- It may cost less to have three surfaces due to less turf (very expensive).
- If natural grass, suggests a sprinkler system of some sort. Possibly on the fencing?

DZ: P. Wells would like us to discuss these things and advise him to finalize design

Public comment:

PUBLIC: Observed a dog park with wood chips, shrubs and trees. Thinks it works great.

DZ: Trees and shrubs are iffy because of the landfill cap. Walkways must be ADA approved (no wood chips).

Next meeting we should share our design input with P. Wells.

KS: Likes the three surface concept.

PUBLIC: What about sand as a surface?

TD: P. Wells recommended it. Good for digging. But must be edged somehow. Perhaps surrounded by rocks.

PUBLIC: Will there be water for dogs?

JP: Yes. It is a Stanton Fnd. requirement. There will be a fill bowl from a fountain, near entrance.

DZ: The town will probably charge for/meter the water. Keep this under consideration.

JP: Add to agenda for next meeting: drafting a memo of understanding with town/friends/etc.

DZ: We and PW will meet in September to formalize our design wishes.

RE: Walkways: See newly extended walkways between Applewood and Arbor, ADA approved.

PUBLIC: Concerned Amethyst Brook will disallow dogs after Dog Park opens.

JP: We are hopeful this park will not affect other dog venues. But we have no control over this.

PUBLIC: Will there be water in both sides of the park?

JP: Not in current design, it's in the vestibule. This should be fixed.

NOTE: Revise design to have separate watering station for both sides.

PUBLIC: Why separate areas for big and little dogs?

TD: This decision is based on advice from our dog officer. Safety concerns.

Thank you.

Movements

Move to accept multi-surface design divided by walkways. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

Move to approve the advisory from town manager to use Berkshire Design for design. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

Other items not anticipated by the chair

JP: FYI “I am running for Town Council in November. Should I be elected I will be quitting the ADPTF.” Boos all around in response.

DZ: We should continue to work with both the Kestrel Trust and the Dakin about being under their umbrellas.
- Suggests separate meetings with both.

KS: Will work on a meeting with Kestrel Trust.

Set next meeting date meeting

Thursday, 06 September, 6pm (first choice)
Wednesday, 05 September, 6pm (second choice)

Move to Adjourn. Seconded. Approved unanimously.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:

Advise P. Wells as to the design changes approved here.

- Two water stations (why three in current design?)
- Three/four separate surfaces
- Walkways cutting through park, separating the surfaces, rather than a “track” around perimeter.

JP: Agenda next meeting: drafting a memo of understanding with town/friends/etc.

KS: Will work on a meeting with Kestrel Trust regarding being under their umbrella.

DZ:

Will follow up with Dakin regarding their umbrella.

Check if oversight of construction is included design cost.

Begin proposal for Heritage to firm up acceptable size of the park

EK: Follow up on Rotary Club