

AMHERST DOG PARK TASK FORCE
Meeting #2

7:00 PM, Tuesday, August 15, 2017. Town Room at Town Hall.

Present:

Nina Allen
Mike Chesworth
Ana Devlin Gauthier
Ted Diamond
Kaye Dougan
Gina Fusco
Carol Hepburn * (Animal Welfare Officer)
Jack Jemsek
Jim Pistrang
David Ziomek * (Director of Conservation and Development)

Peter Wells, Berkshire Design Group (arrived at 7:30pm)

Handouts:

Agenda for this meeting
Minutes from previous meetings
Stanton Foundation Grant Process

Introductions and Announcements

Review and Approve Minutes of Prior Meetings

Approved:

Meeting #1
Subcommittee Site Location #1
Subcommittee Design #1
Subcommittee Funding #1

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

Discussion of Sites

DZ: Preliminary work on site location is being done. Discussing possible sites (private, public, institutional) is best left for later and potentially in executive session if it comes to that. P. Bockelman will be consulted.

- Amherst cannot buy land outside of town except for watershed purposes

Design and Funding Options

CPA Funding: Funding for dog parks have precedent in the state. Mid-Dec is deadline for 2019 FY. Late winter/early spring make propose to CPA comm. Then Town Meeting April/May votes. Money would be available July 2018.

JP:

- He plans to give a presentation to the Amherst Rotary Club in November. Possible \$25K grant.

TD:

- Re: Stanton Found Grant process. Must have location first. Design Grant up to \$25K. Construction Grant up to \$225K.
- P-Town park has vinyl signs with local ads.
- Buy-a-brick terrace to raise money could be a way to raise money.

Peter Wells (recommendations):

- Best to design for the max total budget Stanton will fund as they will only allow 10% of money to be used for design.
- Best to have designer review site possibles to help determine best approach.
- A simple quality park can easily coast 250k
- Arrange for donated materials
- Biggest expenses: Parking, Water, fencing, structure.
- 1 acre for large dogs, 1/2 acre for small dogs
- Agility structures are not recommended (expensive, most dogs don't use them)
- Natural grass is problematic: overuse wears out turf
- Lighting not necessary nor often deployed. Expense. Many parks are closed in winter.
- Possible senior dog area?
- Paved parking spaces (at least two) and paved paths best for handicapped accessibility.
- TRG pathways (to avoid mud)

DZ: Part of park may need to be ADA compliant. And should be anyway.

PW: Showed an example of high-tension agricultural fencing with cedar posts: economical, attractive. Preferred over chain-link.

Waste disposal issues were brought up and discussed.

DZ: re: maintenance: best if DPW is less involved to avoid cost to town.

Possibly raise the dog licensing fee in Amherst to raise funds for park.

PW: brought visuals of previous parks his group has designed for other towns.

Discussion of group dog park visits by committee members:

ADG: re: one dog park in Orange, MA:

- Original citizen interest waned. More people involved in our park may help avoid this(?)
- Bacterial infections started happening

TD: describing a dog park in Provincetown, MA

- All sand, p-stone, rice stone: but the stone is moving
- Water features, bowls, drinking
- Donation boxes all around
- Re: parasites, fecal contamination, etc. Cleanliness. Natural drainage is important

JP: re: dog park in Agawam, MA:

- Trees were great. Shade. No structure needed.
- Size was very welcome. Not too big (1.5 acre).

CH: Agrees with the Agawam rule that dog treats are NOT allowed in the park.

PW:

- Water for people? Mostly just for dogs: less requirements for the well. If local water system can be tapped, great.
- Noise is not actually an issue at dog parks. Not like a kennel.
- Offers us his services as to approaching Stanton Foundation, planning, preliminary design, bidding, etc.
- Site is most important

DZ:

- As to public work, we as a town try not to impose on an unwilling neighborhood.
- By Stanton Foundation grant rules the town MUST own the land .

Schedule Future Meetings

JP:

- Proposes full ADPTF meeting October 3 with no subcommittees meetings prior.
- We may go into executive session if need be
- Reminder: Information can be transmitted among members outside meetings—but NO DELIBERATIONS.

Other Business Not Anticipated

None

Public Comment

None present.

Adjournment

Moved, seconded, agreed.
