



CITY OF KIRKLAND

Department of Parks & Community Services

505 Market Street, Suite A, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3300

www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: City Council
From: Park Board
Date: March 3, 2009
Subject: Off-leash areas within the City of Kirkland park system

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Council direct the Park Board to conduct a study to identify opportunities or alternatives for off-leash area(s) within the Kirkland park system and for the Park Board to chair a community stakeholder committee.

Background

In response to citizen complaints regarding leash law violations and dog owners requesting that an off-leash area be developed in Kirkland, Kirkland City Council authorized the Park Board in 2003 to study the issue and recommend sites to consider pilot off-leash areas in existing city parks. The committee was comprised of Park Board members, Parks staff, and representatives from Lake Washington School District, East Lake Washington Audobon Society, Juanita Bay Park Rangers, Kirkland American Little League, as well as neighborhood representatives. As a result, in 2004 the Park Board completed their study and recommended to City Council a process to follow when a citizen stewardship group voiced interest and commitment to support an off-leash area within a Kirkland park.

On November 16, 2004 the City Council passed Resolution-4478 approving the Park Board's recommendation regarding dogs and parks, as amended:

- Include off-leash dog areas as a program element for public consideration as part of all future park master planning projects.
- When a stewardship group steps forward to champion an off-leash area, the following criteria should be followed:
 - Conduct a Public Hearing
 - Involve Neighborhood Associations in the public process
 - Funding for start-up costs and ongoing maintenance should be offset by user fees, donations, and volunteer stewardship.

As a result of the resolution, staff has included consideration of an off-leash area in the master planning processes of Juanita Beach Park, McAuliffe Park, Carillon Woods and Rose Hill Meadows. However, this element was not supported by the community nor was there a stewardship group in support of an off-leash area; therefore an off-leash area was not included in these master plans.

Status

In 2008, a citizen group called Kirkland Dog Off-leash Group (KDOG) has organized, filed for 501(c)3 status, developed a website and to-date has over 500 signatures in support of an off-leash area in Kirkland. Attached is a copy of a presentation KDOG gave to the Park Board on October 8, 2008, that summarizes their organization and readiness to participate with the city in a long-term stewardship agreement.

The Park Board has been reviewing the work of the off-leash study of 2004 and in December 2008 toured two parks with off-leash areas: Beaver Lake Park, Sammamish; and Robinswood Park, Bellevue. At the Park Board's January meeting, Crestwoods Park was discussed as a site that was recommended in 2004 as a potential off-leash area and viewed by the Park Board as a viable site to consider for a pilot off-leash area.

On February 4th the Norkirk Neighborhood Association invited the Park Board Chair and the Director to attend their meeting to hear the community's concerns and to seek clarification as to the process of siting an off-leash area in the park system. Park Board Chair, Colleen Cullen, and board members Chuck Bartlett, Jennifer Davies and Sue Keller listened to concerns and responded to questions. The meeting was well attended and there was a mix of Norkirk residents both for and against an off-leash area at Crestwoods Park.

At the Park Board's February 10th meeting, the Park Board, after a full discussion on whether it was time to reconvene a committee to study viable alternatives to provide off-leash areas within Kirkland's park system, passed a motion to recommend to the City Council that they authorize an off-leash area study committee.

Attachments:

November 16, 2004 Resolution-4478

KDOG PowerPoint presentation October 8, 2008

RESOLUTION R- 4478

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND APPROVING THE PARK BOARD RECOMMENDATION REGARDING DOGS AND PARKS.

WHEREAS, in response to several requests that the City of Kirkland provide pet owners with an off-leash recreational area, the City Council held a joint study session with the Park Board, in April 2003, to discuss dogs and parks; and

WHEREAS, the Council directed the Park Board to form a Dogs and Parks Committee, which committee was formed in May 2003, and included representatives from the Park Board, K-Dog, Lake Washington School District, Audubon Society, Juanita Bay Ranger Program, Kirkland American Little League, and citizens at-large; and

WHEREAS, the Committee was charged with developing recommendations concerning: leash law enforcement priorities; park use policy relating to pets; and off-leash recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Committee looked at existing off-leash areas in Seattle and throughout King County to learn about size criteria, maintenance needs, infrastructure elements, enforcement, and other concerns; and

WHEREAS, because the Committee determined that City designation of a single park for off-leash use would effectively create a destination dog park, the Committee recommended off-leash areas be provided in multiple park sites; and

WHEREAS, the Committee presented a list of selection criteria to the City Council in February 2004 and has continued to work to refine those criteria over the last six months; and

WHEREAS, the City Council reviewed the Park Board Recommendation at its meeting on October 19, 2004;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Kirkland as follows:

Section 1. The Kirkland City Council hereby approves the Kirkland Park Board Recommendations Regarding Dogs and Parks, as amended and set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto and by this reference incorporated herein.

Passed by majority vote of the Kirkland City Council in open meeting this 16th day of November, 2004.

Signed in authentication thereof this 16th day of November, 2004.


MAYOR

Attest:

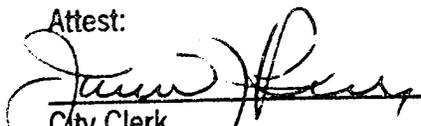

City Clerk
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EXHIBIT A

Park Board Recommendation

1. Include off-leash dog areas as a program element for public consideration as part of all future park master planning projects.
2. When a stewardship group steps forward to champion an off-leash area, the following criteria should be followed:
 - Conduct a Public Hearing.
 - Involve Neighborhood Associations in the public process
 - Funding for start-up costs and ongoing maintenance should be offset by user fees, donations, and volunteer stewardship.
3. Amend Kirkland Municipal Code Chapter 11.80, "Park Rules" to prohibit pets from entering, McAuliffe Park, Peter Kirk Pool, Tot Lot Park, Ohde Pea Patch and that pets are allowed in the cemetery provided they are on a leash, stay on roads and pathways and under close control.

K-DOG Proposal

Kirkland Parks and Recreation

Background

- Kirkland is a great dog-friendly place to live:
Over 10,000 dogs live in Kirkland
 - Dog parks are being created in cities and rural areas:
 - New parks in Sammamish, Monroe, Everett, Kent, Shoreline, Snohomish County
 - Park Board members have already begun to identify locations for a dog park, established dogs as park users
 - Dog parks are not a novelty, first dog park in Seattle in 1996.
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Overview

K-Dog was established in February 2008

- Registered as a non-profit corporation in WA state, elected board and officers
 - Filed for 501c3 status
 - Created an online petition with over 365 signatures to date (10/1/2008)
 - 120+ members
 - Partnering with WOOFD2 event next year
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Agenda

Kirkland Parks Dept. has asked for support from K-Dog in the following areas:

- Stewardship Agreement drafted
 - Financial support pending signed agreement
 - Education component part of event scheduled for next summer
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Financial Support

K-Dog is committed to provide financial support:

- From Local businesses and individuals:
 - ❑ Sell sponsorships for parks at tiered pricing on an annual basis (used successfully in Anacortes)
 - ❑ Seek donations in kind from Home Depot, Lowes and Dunn Lumber.
 - ❑ Seek donations from parks grant program at Starbucks
 - ❑ Seek donations from members
 - Events Scheduled 2008:
 - ❑ Halloween Event
 - ❑ Membership Drive
 - ❑ Website and Signage Promotion for Businesses
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Education

K-Dog is committed to educate dog park users in expectations, rules, dog socialization

- Members are law abiding citizens who want to follow the rules
 - Excellent signage at existing parks (examples Seattle, Sammamish, Anacortes, Everett)
 - K-Dog Website to provide articles from local trainers on socialization skills for puppies and older dogs.
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Environmental Protection

K-Dog is committed to protecting the safety and beauty of our parks.

- K-Dog members engaged as stewards of park to build, maintain and improve dog park.
 - K-Dog will help to Provide waste bags for parks
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Community Identification

K-Dog members are active tax-paying Kirkland residents.

- Not a “destination dog park”, a community resource
 - Keeps revenue from dog park users in Kirkland
 - Kirkland needs to maintain it’s reputation for progressive parks activities. We the few communities in King County that does NOT have a dog park? – Bellevue, Mercer Island, Bothell, Bellevue, Redmond, Sammamish, Edmonds, Kent
 - Realtors in our group tell us Dog Parks are selling points giving higher desirability in a community
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Conclusion

K-Dog and Kirkland residents are ready for an off-leash dog park

- Stewardship Agreement
 - Financial support
 - Educational support
 - Environmental protection
 - Community Identification
 - What do we need to do next?
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