

Concord Dog Park Feasibility Study Committee Meeting
March 28, 2018
Assessor's Office

Attendees:

Susanne Jarnryd
Tom McKean
Deborah Richardson
Bob Schulman
Don Shobry
Kate Stout (via FaceTime)
Anne Umphrey
Jeff Young

The meeting started at 5:35. The minutes of February 13, 2018 were unanimously approved. The Committee acknowledged and briefly discussed the cost estimates developed by Jeff, which were \$234,000 for a one acre dog park with annual maintenance costs of \$10,000. These are consistent with estimates or costs from other towns in this area. Jeff's spreadsheet included websites on dog parks in other towns that would be of interest to the Committee.

Susanne gave her report on a review of Town parcels for possible use as a dog park. She looked at lands owned by the town, including all of the town departments, which were 5 acres or more in size or smaller parcels that could be combined. She researched these parcels on the Town GPS and with site visits.

Her initial screening criteria were taken from the initial survey of other dog parks done by Don. These were her primary considerations.

- 1-2 acres usable land minimum
- Parking potential
- Lights and water
- Residential buffers
- Drainage
- Shade
- Windbreaks

Many of the parcels were too wet, oddly shaped, inaccessible, could not contain a 1 to 2 acre dog park, were on conservation land with high value or restrictions, were occupied with other municipal uses (school, sports field, DPW, etc.), contained wells, or were active farmland. Farmland tends to be big open lots that have no shade and are exposed to the elements.

Susanne identified 5 potential sites, but all had serious concerns.

- The landfill is heavily sloped or covered with solar panels.

- The bus depot is wet, sloped, and has solar arrays, and the gate is locked after working hours.
- Southfield Meadow is surrounded by wetlands with no parking and much of it is soccer fields. It was offered to the neighborhood as a free playground but was refused. Neighbors might have concerns.
- Willow Guzzle is adjacent to wetlands and a brook runs along the property. A portion is currently farmed, and it is across from Verrill Farm property. It is open and windy, and would need a parking area. A fence may be needed along Sudbury Road for safety reasons, and people may not feel secure going to a parcel so removed from residential areas. It is also well south of the main concentration of dogs in Concord, which raises the question of whether the park would be large enough to get dog owners to travel to it.
- The CMLP parcel next to the gas station on the Route 2 rotary would have to be fenced in its entirety, and would have noise and access issues. Also, the disposition of the parcel is uncertain given the plans to improve the rotary.

The Committee felt there were serious concerns with all of these parcels, which led to a discussion of sites that may be available in the future.

The most significant interest in a dog park seems to be from owners of small dogs. Possible parcels that might be available in the future include 2229 Main Street, the landfill area next to the high school, the back of the Sanborn Middle School area, and the property the Town is trying to purchase on Warner Pond for recreation purposes.

The Committee acknowledged the Dog Park Products brochure forwarded to us from Ryan Kane. We also noted that we could use the Public Meeting on May 22 as an opportunity to get attendees to fill out a survey, so we can get information in a structured form as well as their unstructured comments. We also agreed to invite representatives of the NRC and the land trusts to future meetings.

Our next meeting will be April 18 at 5:30, when we hope to meet with Ryan Kane. The clerk was asked to notify the Town that some past meetings were canceled due to weather so we will not be posting minutes for those dates.

No members of the public were present at this meeting. We adjourned at 6:45.