

APPROVED

MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
GLENCOE PARK DISTRICT
999 GREEN BAY ROAD, GLENCOE, ILLINOIS 60022

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm and roll was called.

Committee Members present:

Lisa Brooks, President
Stefanie Boron, Vice President
Dudley Onderdonk, Treasurer
Josh Lutton, Commissioner
Bob Kimble, Commissioner

Staff present:

Lisa Sheppard, Executive Director/Secretary
Carol Mensinger, Director of Finance/HR
Chris Leiner, Director of Parks/Maintenance
Bobby Collins, Director of Recreation/Facilities
Erin Classen, Supt. of Marketing/Communications

Members of the Public in attendance who signed in or spoke: Christine Adams, Tom Bittman, Emily Borovsky, Jim Borovsky, Cholena Dabroy, Richard Espe, Kooki Finkelman, Laurie Gross, Susan Isaacson, John Kastl, Liz Katz, Costa Kutulas, Idelle Malamed, Alicia Resnicoff, Gary Ruben, Lisa Salzman, Steve Salzman, Kathy Sussman, Lee Sussman, Bob Young

Discussion on Potential Community Dog Park: The committee reviewed the process so far and determined that there was community support for a dog park based on comments at the community meeting and email correspondence. They also determined that a dog park falls into the Mission and Vision of the Glencoe Park District.

The Committee then began discussion on a possible site for a dog park. The committee were given several articles by National Park and Recreation Association and the Trust for Public Land. Based on information gathered, the Board eliminated sites that one, have established uses or District sponsored activities and two, have sensitive environmental habitats.

The Committee then discussed and set other site selection criteria that included:

- A dog park should not directly abut a residence but should have some sort of buffer that could be physical or landscaping.
- Assure that there is availability of close parking
- Avoid locations that have the entrance to the dog park near a children's play area
- Choose spots where there are minimal impacts on the visual character of a park
- Look at the activity of the park to avoid areas that are too congested
- If there is an existing amenity on the property could we move it to another parcel should this be the best location for a dog park

The following sites were eliminated from consideration:

Takiff Park, Friends Park, Berlin Park, Woodlawn Park, Old Elm Park, West Park, Watts Athletic Fields, Glencoe Beach – In season, Kalk Park, Veterans Memorial Park, Vernon Playground and Everly Wildflower Sanctuary. The committee also spoke to the fact that

Turnbull Woods is owned and operated by the Cook County Forest Preserve and at this time they are not interested in partnering with the Park District to do a dog park at that location.

After viewing all possible sites owned by the Glencoe Park District, the Committee narrowed down the choices to six possible sites to explore further. Those sites are:

- Park 7n and 8n at the intersection of Old Green Bay Road and Maple Hill Road
- Park 3 N "Sunken Park" on Old Green Bay Road
- Watts Park (not including the Athletic Fields)
- Shelton Park (south west portion of the park – closer to the train tracks)
- 21s2 and 22s ("Linden House")
- Green Bay Road and South Avenue

The Board then directed staff to form a community task force made of residents that are for and against a dog park to further evaluate the sites. This task force will begin in June with the goal of lasting no more than three months. The task force should be limited to ten members to facilitate discussion. The Board will accept applications until May 31 and will then choose the members.

Matters from the Public: Jim Borovsky thanked the Board for their service to the community. He asked how many dogs are registered with the Village and commented that there are quite a lot. He cares much more about this issue than any other issue. He asked to Board to take into consideration how many people are involved. There is a lot of land under control of the Park District and a lot of demand for a dog park. The mandate is not why we shouldn't have a dog park here, there, or wherever, but mainly figuring out where we can put this because we need to have it. He is at a loss as to any potential concern of a resident about noise, when there is train track noise all day/night. Anyone who bought property in earshot of the train, has no argument about noise as well as those who live next to soccer/baseball fields.

Lee Sussman thanked Lisa, staff, and the Board for hosting the meeting specific to a dog park. He quoted a post from the Winnetka/Glencoe Patch on December 18, 2014 titled *Consultants hired by this Park District recommend adding dog park in Glencoe. A dog park would highlight the list of improvements coming to the Glencoe Park District. Although the design and construction of park may be a few years away, Glencoe News reported the master planning consultants listed the addition as one of a couple items at the top of the to do list in enhancing Park District offerings.* So trusting Lisa, staff, and the Board will maintain continuity across this project, and please do consider adding it to the capital budget, with some consideration for a fee structure as well to mitigate cost. Sussman asked to confirm the next steps of issuing applications, make a decision on the ten in the committee at the end of June, then engage a three month projects and report to the Board at the end of September, a meeting of the staff and Board in October to vote on the preferred site. Chair Brooks clarified that August is a tough month for the community to meet. That is a goal, however it will be decided when the task force gets together to set their meetings.

Laurie Gross is in favor of the dog park. She recognized that there are people opposed to the dog park. She asked the task force and Board to clarify, in anticipation of those against the dog park, what are the barricades, what do they look like? Although not being able to commit to what will be built yet, it might help pacify the concerns of some residents to be able to picture it. She also mentioned the dog park in Highland Park on Clavey, which has no trees. It is miserable and encouraged to include trees for shade.

Bob Young asked the Board if any live next to or close by any of the proposed sites. He commented on where it could be located without inconveniencing a resident. That is his tipping point. He doesn't see any excuse when there are dog parks on Clavey or the other two Highland Park dog parks for \$150 or Winnetka that are excellent, than risk inconveniencing a neighbor. When no one on the Board lives near a proposed site, he thinks, well not in my backyard. That is key. The Village of Glencoe is our backyard and one does not inconvenience neighbors.

Alicia Resnicoff thanked them for adding this amenity to our community. A fact that some dog owners may not have seen a super significant need in the recent past for a dog park because essentially the leash law was not enforced at Glencoe Beach in the off-season. You could let your dogs go down to the beach off-leash in September through May and could swim. An officer stopped her recently at the beach and informed her that they are enforcing leash laws at Glencoe Beach, so now there is truly no place in Glencoe where you can have your dog off-leash. To drive elsewhere is committing an hour and a half commitment to exercise your dog. She suggested it could be located near established noisy infrastructure like the railroad track or near Watts.

Steve Salzman believes there are folks who think it will be a net positive and folks who will have angst. It is up to us to address it, but change brings difference. Every time there is change some people will be disappointed, but if we do it right the majority of people will enjoy moving forward. Repeating what Jim said, the mandate of this discussion will be how do we do it, how do we make it work, not how do we look for issues that will create problems. In relationship to that physically, the sites will all have water problems from hard-packed clay and no percolation that will be part of the construction of the park. He noted his interest in the Village owning the property next to the garden. Dave Mau said that the Village would be amendable to a conversation and combining a portion of Shelton Park with the land located next to the train is very interesting. Watts Park between the hill and tennis court, changing the route of the trail and including berms. Arborvitae berms may be used if the dog park was objectionable; however, he has been in a million dog parks that are not that loud. They are a lot quieter than kids. It really depends on what Lisa said, how we approach this and what is the budget we are willing to throw at this. Again, how do we make this work, not how do we look for problems.

An unidentified member of the public wanted to follow up on what Mr. Young said. She lives on one of the proposed sites and feels like noise is going to be a big issue. She is all for a dog park. If a place can be found where there is not an impact on peace and comfort that someone builds in their own home. They would like to retire here, but are not early risers. If there is a dog park open at seven in the morning and there is even

the potential for dogs to be barking, that is really going to impact what a lot of neighbors feel like it may impact the peace and comfort of their own home. Thinking about our neighbors, do more investigation about a site that is not abutting people's homes. Living in Glencoe, we have to make trade-offs. If a trade-off is made to trade a playground so you don't impact neighbors at a dog park, maybe that can be looked at again. Chair Brooks interjected that all our playgrounds abut homes.

An unidentified member of the public voiced concern about the location of park. Considering the amount of noise that so many people are concerned about, we can't put a dog park and a playground next to each other and say the dog park is going to drown out the playground. Everyone who thinks it is so terrible because there's going to be so much noise, go to Wilmette dog beach, you can't tell outside the fence that there is activity in there. It is really not a noise item. Someone who says you can't put it there, because we are going to offend someone who is fifty feet away; they ain't gonna hear squat. So when considering locations, don't worry about it because there won't be that many people there at one given time. Relax on the criteria.

Idelle Malamed was super encouraged by the sites possible, not thinking there would be that many. Investigating five or six in a very encouraging step in this process.

Cholena Dabroy lives by Watts Center and knows what it is like with all the children, baseball, noise to live there. I do not have the luxury to go to other parks and wish I could take her to other parks. I do not have a car along with many of my neighbors/customers. From Watts to the beach are the people I know want the park. The disturbing problem is not having a dog park yet. Having a dog for six years and even ten years ago when I didn't have a dog, I was astonished why this community does not have a park which is concerning. A neighbor made a petition to have a dog park, which hundreds of people signed and they brushed it off and said no even though more than 80% of the community wanted a dog park. We should have one, because if some people cannot access one's in other communities to have one. Why should I go to another town when I can have one in my town with people I know, people I trust, my neighbors, my friends, my family, and my community. I use the tennis court because I have no choice. The tennis court is a controlled area for my boxer mix that looks like something else for her safety and mine. I refuse to have my dog to be approached in a negative way because of that. Not only for myself and my dog, but my community to have somewhere nice, healthy, safe to share. My neighbors have complained that there is a virus at the Wilmette dog beach and dogs are getting terribly sick every summer. I have to deal with the dogs getting that sickness that spreads to other dogs. We deserve this, this is past 20 years in the making, asking, begging, pleading, talking about this. If we work all together, I believe we can do this. As long we put our hearts into it, I think it would be awesome!

Susan Isaacson stated that Mr. Sussman mentioned in 2014 there had been a comprehensive plan. The need for a dog park was identified probably ten years ago, there was a comprehensive plan way before this comprehensive plan. The dog park came up as a very high need. Using other communities versus our community, I have used other dog parks and love the one in Lake Forest and that is a commitment. I want

a place where I can walk to and see neighbors and their dog, communicate with my neighbors. I shouldn't have to drive to Winnetka and I don't think I can access Winnetka. I am a taxpayer here and I can't understand why this initiative was in two comprehensive plans going back at least ten years since I've had my dog and we don't know when it will be in the capital budget.

Emily Borovsky echoed all the positives and asked if we have considered putting a dog park in Turnbull Woods . Executive Director Sheppard responded to her question and indicated that it was Forest Preserve property and that Cook County Forest Preserve was contacted multiple times and they have no interest in partnering on a dog park at this time. There is nothing preventing a resident of Cook County from contacting them.

An unidentified member of the public asked the Board if they know of any other municipality on the North Shore that doesn't have a dog park. Staff and commissioners answered that Winnetka has a dog beach not a park and the beach is disappearing as well as Northfield, Kenilworth, and Deerfield has a very small one.

An unidentified member of the public mentioned a temporary dog park on the golf course. Staff indicated that there is no room and on the golf course property, a temporary dog park in the winter would cause wear and tear to the grass.

Other Business: Sheppard thanked Chris and Bobby for doing a phenomenal job working with Glencoe Youth Baseball despite the wet spring and gave updates on beach and pier repairs, flooding parks, tennis court cleaning, Lakefront tennis court, Milton Park playground, Woodlawn Park grading/flooding issues to be rectified by the contractor with future evaluation on bike/stroller parking,

Adjourn: Commissioner Kimble moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55pm. Commissioner Boron seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Sheppard
Secretary