

From: [Bill Hough](#)
To: [Public Comment](#); [City Council](#)
Cc: [Andrea Chelemengos](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT Item #3, October 26, 2021
Date: Monday, October 25, 2021 1:48:19 PM

I oppose this project, since it will needlessly remove mature trees and destroy land that should be converted into a small public park into just another unattractive parking lot.

The currently vacant space on the west side of 2nd Street could be improved at minimal expense into two attractive parks, something seriously lacking in downtown. Is it really necessary for the Packard Foundation to add an additional 28 parking spaces? In this time of COVID, it has become obvious that most white collar work can be performed from home, which should reduce the demand for parking downtown. Lets encourage more working from home going forward.

Vote "no" on this proposal.

Bill Hough
Los Altos

October 25, 2021

City Council Meeting October 26th - Item 3 Public Comments

Dear City Council and staff:

PARC and council have both failed dog owners once again. Tuesday, is another chance to undo the damage and do what is fair and needed for better use of our open park shared spaces.

What owners want and deserve is to have off-leash hours at most if not all neighborhood parks in order to make friends and have healthy pets. Is asking for a few hours a day to share open space too much?

I sent a much shorter version of this letter to the Town Crier about "The Failure of PARC" but not sure if it will get published because the power structure that runs Los Altos also controls this newspaper.

I hope you carefully review what I have to say and take action to fix the mess now on your watch. Here are the sad facts:

1. After more than 13 years, parks and recreation commissioners [PARC] mainly discovered that dogs bark and a few will dig holes and voted 4-2 to start over. Can you imagine that?
2. A group of South Los Altos dog owners were very active in support of PARC and willing to accept anything – so we wound up with the Hillview Little League site because it was better than nothing but did nothing for us. Equally important, past actions over the years by staff and other councils led PARC to making this poor choice.
3. While PARC dithered for yet another year the South Los Altos dog owners lost interest either because the site is too far away, dogs passed, or owners moved. Meanwhile, Cupertino finished their pilot program and made this location an off-leash hour dog park! I expect Cupertino will add more in the future like Mountain View already has.
4. PARC ignored a new group of over 300 North Los Altos dog owners that wanted to work with the Little League and nearby Hillview venues to solve the identified problems [after choosing the worst place for a pilot program and too far away from most residents to use].
5. PARC ignored repeated public requests to add perimeter fences at most of our parks for the safety of kids and dogs. Commissioners also ignored pleas for fencing around playgrounds to keep dogs away from kids or passing waste like other towns do.
6. PARC ignored their most effective commissioner when he asked for pilot program enforcement, 100% oversight, and immediate response if issues occurred.
7. PARC learned that PARC neighbors will strongly oppose off-leash hours at "their park" no matter where the location may be. This is not unique to Los Altos. For example, Los Gatos has but one park with tennis courts. When they easily added colored lines to create 4 pickle ball courts at

one tennis court residents flocked to this park to play pickle ball. The neighbors complained about more parked cars so they did not add more pickle ball courts despite the need to do so.

8. Pilot programs are useful to find out what works and what does not. But, we now have all the facts and there is no need for another pilot program or more data because we should now know how to implement off-leash hours in most of our parks. We are not going to learn anything more by collecting more data or starting another pilot program.
9. The majority on this council “essentially fired a highly effective PARC commissioner this year whom was about to become the 2021 chair person. Their votes were based slander told by one of them that afterward the accuser admitted was a lie. But, now their hand-picked replacement cast the deciding vote to end the pilot program and start over. How fair is that!

So here is the ongoing situation you can decide to change or not:

- Dog owners will continue to illegally let pet’s off-leash mainly for exercise in the morning but are more afraid to do it when they socialize with “dog friends” during the 4-6 pm window. In the afternoon some drive to other towns like me to socialize instead. “Ain’t that a shame”?
- Residents will continue to call police when dogs are off-leash [even when no other people are present] but no amount of enforcement will ever stop off-leash activity. Not to mention whether or not fines from \$80-\$500 make sense. For the worst example, one past Grant Park homeowner called the police about 90 times in one year. And, last year someone called the police with a false police report that my dog was off-leash when she was not because I spoke in favor of off-leash hours at a PARC meeting. So, when residents can harass neighbors with needless complaints instead of being good neighbors the result is not good for our community.
- The division between dog owners and non-dog owners will continue. My calculation shows 55% favor keeping dogs on leash. This fact is no different than any other nearby community.
- The major impediment is that non-dog owners do not want to share one minute of time or any space with dogs off-leash or cannot seem to understand that they can choose to use or not use the park during these few daily hours if concerned or afraid of dogs. That is why Mountain View chose to just do it instead of dithering for over 13 years like Los Altos.

Many dog owners I know are fed up and want council to immediately implement off-leash hours at most parks so we can walk to them like other progressive towns have done. While non-dog owners will continue to intimidate council to do nothing – dog owners deserve better.

Frank Martin