

I'm Dave Backs, I live in Los Altos, about 2 blocks from So. Lincoln Park. I'm here to oppose a fenced-in dog park at this location. I like the way this greenbelt looks now, but if it's converted to a **fenced-in dog park, it's going to change**, and it won't be for the better, the grass will be gone. And it's not a matter of upping the maintenance, fertilizing more often, and more frequent watering.

A web site called "Cooperative Extension" offers advice from staff at a number of Land-Grant institutions across the U.S., and they have this to say about grass at dog parks: *"I'm afraid there is nothing that grows that can withstand a constant input of dog urine. Copious amounts of water (will only) mitigate the problem..."*,

Some years ago the city of Seattle decided to set aside an area for a fenced-in dog park at Volunteer Park, a gorgeous, 48-acre park on Capital Hill in Seattle. **That dog park is gone today.** After a few seasons the grass there was transformed into dirt and mud. In spite of their best efforts to improve the situation, the city of Seattle eventually gave up, tore down the fences, and returned the area to it's previous condition. At present, Volunteer Park only allows dogs on leash.

So what do experts recommend for fenced-in dog park surfaces? Artificial turf (very expensive, at least \$250,000 for the So. Lincoln area), decomposed granite (which, according to a number of sources, is becoming the "surface of choice"), or woodchips (an example of which you can see if you visit the fenced-in dog park at Rengstorff Park in Mt. View. But I think you need to ask yourselves, **Is this the look we want for a highly visible area of Los Altos seen by thousands of people every day while traveling along Foothill Expressway?**

Dave Backs

