

Casey Richardson

From: roger heyder [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2020 8:07 AM
To: Casey Richardson; Donna Legge
Subject: Dog Park Off Leash Proposal Question

Hello,

I noted the \$ 7.9K cost estimate for signage and poop bags, but what about maintenance of the area after each 'event'? I assume that the city will return the park areas used for off leash to full service. That would include identifying and removing any poop that dog owners neglected to pick up. Since the city is effectively 'hosting the party', they are also responsible for cleaning up afterwards.

Please let me know how the cleanup will be accomplished, and what the estimated cost per month will be to clean up these 'events'. You should clearly add this cost estimate to your recommendation, so that the full city costs, including maintenance, will be reflected. If the city is NOT going to clean up afterward, you should also indicate that in your proposal.

I assume that you have determined this clean up cost, prior to making your recommendation to initiate the off leash program.

Perhaps this information is in one of the many documents contained in your email. You might consider an executive summary next time, with only the salient details, and the bulk reports later if residents want further information.

regards - Roger Heyder

Casey Richardson

From: Heather Larkin [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2020 9:40 AM
To: Donna Legge
Cc: Casey Richardson
Subject: Unfenced off -leash dog areas May 20

Dear Ms Legge and Park and Recreation Commissioners,

While I understand that the subcommittee invested a great deal of time and effort into gathering input regarding off leash dog areas, and that the committee members are anxious to share findings and make recommendations- this is not the time to move forward.

The workshops were held when there was no Covid 19. With so much unknown about the virus transmission, as well as the serious restrictions currently in place at neighborhood parks, it is impossible to consider the workshop findings still valid.

In addition, remote meetings are not conducive to accurate community input. Many residents will not/cannot participate via telecommunication.

Even without Covid 19, the feasibility of off leash dog areas at Hillview and Heritage Oaks is questionable. Now is not the time to present a proposal that would have a huge impact on these neighborhood parks.

Sincerely,

Heather Larkin
Oakhurst Avenue

Casey Richardson

From: Wendy Reynolds [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2020 2:53 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Fenced in dog park

Please do not authorize the fenced in dog park at Lincoln Park, especially now that we are in the middle of the pandemic and so many people are out of work and out of money. Los Altos does not need to spend our tax money on this unnecessary Project. We can spend our money in better ways.

Wendy Reynolds
Sent from my iPad

Casey Richardson

From: Zahra Ardehali [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, May 16, 2020 2:24 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Cc: Manuel Hernandez; Lynette Lee Eng
Subject: Dog Park and PARC

Importance: High

Hello,

I would like to share my opinion regarding the upcoming 5/20 PARC meeting and discussions about the dog park. I am a resident of Los Altos and I think during COVID-19 situation, there is an effort by PARC to push an agenda that could be different from the majority opinion of the residents of Los Altos. I have read the reports that were included for the upcoming meeting on 5/20 and I noticed that there is an indication that Grant Park has been mentioned as a possible preference for off-leash hours, even though it was not on the list of considered parks. This comes as a surprise since Grant Park was excluded from the list of parks to be considered since it did not meet the criteria set by the PARC guidelines.

For a while, one of PARC's commissioners (Jonathan Weinberg) has been advocating off-leash hours at Grant Park since he lives within walking distance of it and he has shared publicly that he would like to walk his dog and let him run off-leash at Grant Park. It is not a democracy when decisions in government are made to serve the personal preference of one of the commissioners!

Why suddenly Grant Park has been added to the list and mentioned in the reports? This implies that perhaps there is an effort to serve the personal preference of one of PARC's commissioners. I hope that some members of PARC are not taking advantage of the SIP and implement their personal wishes and preferences, while residents may not be as involved.

With SIP and the current health situation that the residents are going through, we need our peace in the parks and this is not the time to turn our parks chaotic and dirty by turning them into off-leash dog parks. We have limited park space and it is wrong at this time to turn any parks into dog parks or off-leash hours. We need parks and green spaces for people and children for the health of the residents' minds and bodies.

Thanks,

Zahra Ardehali

Casey Richardson

From: [REDACTED] David Poll [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 17, 2020 3:36 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Heritage Oaks Park off-leash dog hours

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission:

We are recent transplants to Los Altos from Mountain View, having moved here in April of last year. We live just down the street from Heritage Oaks Park. When we decided to move to the neighborhood, this park was one of the key draws for us, providing a safe, clean neighborhood recreational space where the children in our growing family would be able to play. We're very worried that official off-leash dog hours for the park will be a huge detriment to the experience of living in this community for a variety of reasons:

- It will attract dog owners from all over the area, bringing more cars (where parking is already limited) and making the park a far busier and less safe environment for our children.
- More dogs and fewer leashes will mean more opportunities for conflicts between dogs and with humans, especially as this space is not fenced between the play area for young kids and the area where the dogs can roam free.
- There's lots of strong evidence in current dog-owner behavior that regulations will not be followed, which poses hazards for residents, but also will increase the burden on the neighborhood.
- In light of the current situation with COVID, it feels appropriate to at least postpone any trials here until after the danger has passed so that we don't attract more people to this already small and sometimes very busy park.

We ask that the council does NOT approve the recommendation for off-leash hours at Heritage Oaks Park.

Thank you for your consideration,
David and Amy Poll
[REDACTED] McKenzie Ave., Los Altos

Casey Richardson

From: Eran Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 17, 2020 5:09 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Off leash dog program at Heritage Oaks park

Dear Ms. Richardson,

I am writing about the proposed changes to the dog policy at Heritage Oaks park.

I live with my two children -- age 4 and 6 -- on McKenzie Ave, across the street from the park. We bike through to school in the mornings, and play in the young children section of the park regularly (at least we did, before the current pandemic situation).

The proposed unleashed dog policy does not include a fenced-in area, and coincides with our regular use hours. This concerns me because of how close everything is in the park, and also right next to the road. When biking through or playing, we will certainly come across the unleashed dogs. A fenced area, or different hours, would be more reasonable. But as proposed, this seems like a large and unacceptable hindrance on our regular park use.

Please take this into consideration when making the decision.

Sincerely,
Eran Agmon

Casey Richardson

From: Sarah Cercone Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 17, 2020 5:35 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Comments for Special Mtg 5/20 - 3c (Dog Park at Heritage Oaks)

Ms. Richardson,

I'd like to provide the following input for the Special Meeting Wed 5/20 regarding the proposed off-leash dog park pilot program:

I am a resident of McKenzie Ave, a public school educator, and a mother of two young children ages six and four. I fully respect that our city-funded parks must be accessible to people for a variety of uses, including dog-play. However, I have several concerns with the proposed pilot program for an off-leash dog park in Heritage Oaks park.

First, I find the off-leash proposal dangerous to children playing in the park. This off-leash dog park would be directly adjacent to two unfenced playgrounds (designated for age 2-5 and 5-12). Most dogs are lovely, but on occasion even the best-trained dog can become scared or aggressive. Without a barrier between the dog park and these playgrounds, this is an invitation for a future attack on a young child. Also, an off-leash park so near to a walking/playing area is not prudent or normal in cities. I have lived in several major metro areas where fenced-in dog parks are common and popular. This does not pose the same threat to young children walking (or being pushed in a stroller) nearby.

Additionally, I take issue with the city's proposed hours for dog-park use, particularly 7:00-10:00am. Elementary school starts at 8:30am, therefore many young children including my own six-year-old daughter, bike or walk directly past the proposed dog park area around that time. I believe this puts children at risk if dogs are roaming off-leash at that time. A window of 6:00-8:00am, or after 9:00am, is more reasonable to accommodate young children commuting to school.

I appreciate you considering my input. Thank you for your service to our community.

Sarah Agmon

Casey Richardson

From: Yoav Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 8:33 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Voicing my objection to designate Heritage Oak park as an off-leash dogs playground

Ms. Richardson,

I would like to voice my strong objections to the proposed off-leash dog park designation at our little neighborhood Heritage Oak park.

As a long time resident of McKenzie Ave, facing the park, where our 3 children grew up, and now our 2 grand kids reside, I strongly oppose any changes to the usage of Heritage park, especially as far as allocating time for unleashed dogs. I already seen my grand kids react in fear when a large unleashed dog (friendly) run towards them when we were playing at the park, I was there to calm them down and have them pat the dog. But that's a big risk, what if the dog wasn't friendly and I was not right there?

The small Heritage Oak park is a main venue for neighborhood and city organized events such as birthday parties, block parties, graduations, soccer games, and many other activities drawing large groups as well as small, of all ages from all corners of the City and beyond, carving out time for unleash dogs would definitely put undue hardship and eliminate some of these established usages.

Occasionally, mostly on weekends the park is packed with visitors from morning to night, which overflow the available parking and forces numerous visitors to park on both sides of the street, just imagine if to this already packed situation you add numerous unleashed dogs.

In recent years, a new younger generation moved into our neighborhood, this brought about more children who use the park and its facilities than ever before.

The early morning hours sees many children on the way to school on their bikes or walking as well as people jogging and exercising. Upon return from school in the afternoon, the park with its two dedicated playgrounds becomes a great adventure place for small children and their guardians, many time we see them venture there unattended. If you add unleashed dogs to this mix you are asking for accidents to occur, just imagine what happens if some dog attacks one of these young kids. Keeping strict hours, and/or calling the police every time we see some violations by dog owners is impractical.

With all do respects to dog owners and their needs, our little Heritage Oak park serves the neighborhood and the city so well with its current designation, why would we want want to screw this up? why now ?

Thank you in advance for addressing my objection,

Yoav Agmon

Casey Richardson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 10:48 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Off-leash hours in Heritage Park

Donna,

We are the owners of the property at 1335 McKenzie Ave near Heritage park. It was brought to our attention by a neighbor that the city of Los Altos is considering an off-leash hours program in this small community park. Back in 2007, the city of Los Altos decided against a plan to establish a dog park in Heritage park due to noise, parking space, safety and other concerns which are still valid today. The park is busy enough as is with small children activities. An off-leash program at Heritage park will make life in this neighborhood miserable.

Unlike 2007, we did not receive this time any notification letter about the plan. I checked with two other neighbors and they were not notified either. It appears the city of Los Altos is in a hurry to do this without consulting the community or giving the community an opportunity to object and in spite of the Covid 19 situation you are going ahead with the hearing this week. Given the lack of notification, you should delay this week's hearing. In addition, please provide a study of why the city of Los Altos believes an off-leash program in Heritage park is now appropriate.

Menashe & Chaya Shahaar
[REDACTED]

Casey Richardson

From: Tracy Pirnack [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 2:01 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Concerns re: Heritage Oaks Park off-leash proposal

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission,

I'm writing to express concerns about having official off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park.

My husband and I have had multiple dogs over multiple years, and are dog-friendly neighbors. However, we have had multiple bad experiences walking our dogs in or near Heritage Oaks Park, where dogs off-leash have attacked our on-leash dogs (minor injuries). Also, there have been cases where the dogs clearly want to engage with people as we walk by without a dog, running full-speed towards us, with us not knowing whether their dog is friendly or not. In nearly all cases, the owners apologized. But, in all cases, it was clear to us that the owners had no control over their dogs, and just were allowing them off-leash anyway. ("We're trying to stop him from doing that" rings hollow.) The proposed rule that "Dogs must be under voice control" is great in theory, but I cannot imagine that the owners who are creating problems today will STOP using the park if off-leash hours are established.

Having official 'hours' for off-leash will only make this worse, with more dogs, more opportunities for injury, and more excuses as to why the owner's behavior is okay/justified since off-leash will be officially allowed. Asking the owners to 'self-police' and report all incidents seems unlikely to be effective. (Were past incidents reported? Are they MORE likely to be reported with official off-leash hours allowed?)

In the absence of a fenced area, I am strongly opposed to having official off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park. I would, however, support off-leash dogs in a dedicated, fenced area.

Thank you for your time, and for the opportunity to voice my concerns.

Best regards,
Tracy Pirnack

[REDACTED] Holly Ave (1 block from the park)

(Additional note: The idea that off-leash dog hours were now being proposed at Heritage Oaks was news to me until yesterday. It seems that notification to Heritage Oaks Park neighbors to gather their input was lacking for this proposed pilot, after it was determined that the earlier sites were unsuitable.)

Casey Richardson

From: John Squire [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 3:37 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: PARC Special Meeting on 5-20-2020 : RE: PROPOSED OFF-LEASH DOG HOURS PILOT
Attachments: PROPOSED OFF LEASH DOG HOURS PILOT May 2020.pdf

Please find the attached document with our written statement and objections to piloting or establishing "off-leash hours" for dogs in Heritage Oaks park.

Thanks you for your consideration

John and Millie Squire
[REDACTED] McKenzie Ave,
Los Altos CA.

[REDACTED]

TO: LOS ALTOS CITY COUNCIL & PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

RE: PROPOSED OFF-LEASH DOG HOURS PILOT

May 18, 2020

Dear City Council and Parks and Recreation Commission:

We have been residents of Los Altos and living on McKenzie Ave. across the street from Heritage Oaks Park for 22 years. Over this period we've enjoyed living across the street from the park and we've seen park usage increase significantly over the years. This park is a valuable asset to the community and we have seen the usage expand beyond picnicking and family gatherings to include organized youth soccer as well. Unfortunately, we have also witnessed numerous instances of irresponsible dog owners in the park. It is important to include that we have had a dog until a couple of years ago, so we understand the responsibilities and joys of owning a dog and the unpredictability of dog behavior.

- The proposal is stated to be a "limited pilot", but there is no mention of success criterion, or how the program success or failure will be evaluated. So, is this simply a way to ease into a permanent change?
- Control for off-leash dogs is through yelling or whistling that is loud enough to disturb residents, especially in early morning summer hours when windows are open.

Current dog owner behavior suggests off-leash **regulations will not be followed**. There is already clear signage in Heritage Oaks Park that dogs must be kept on leash. Many dog owners allow their dogs to run off-leash now at every hour of the day. So current enforcement is ineffective, and it's unrealistic to expect that owners will actually comply with specific hours for off-leash use. Rather it's more likely that off-leash use will increase as the park as designated as an Off Leash Park and owners will ignore posted regulations, creating more of a nuisance for other park users and adjacent residences.

Expecting dog owners to self-monitor, police behavior, and report issues is unrealistic. Putting the burden and nuisance of reporting issues onto residents living adjacent to the parks is an unfair expectation. It is our understanding from the workshop we attended that the enforcement from Animal Control has been very low.

- The Park Commission only estimated the signage costs for off-leash programs. There is no accounting for the cost of increased patrol staff that will be needed to effectively enforce proposed regulations. So the cost estimate of \$7100 per park is unrealistic if the needed enforcement is included.
- Survey and polling data shows 63% of 284 responses in favor of off leash programs, but this tally does not consider the impact to property owners and residents that live adjacent to the park. With only 5 homes directly across from the proposed Heritage Oaks Park setting, it is impossible to weigh residents' opposition fairly with a broad based survey.

- The current Covid situation in your agenda notes is an important one. Considering the health risks to humans and dogs at this time, would it be safer to postpone this pilot program until the pandemic is no longer a threat?

Considering all the above, we ask that the council does NOT approve the current recommendation for off leash hours at Heritage Oaks Park. Ideally we would like to see current regulations better enforced and that all dogs are kept on leash in Los Altos. If this is NOT possible and the council decides it must go through with the pilot, we ask that they consider further restricting morning hours, so off leash activity can only start AFTER 8:00AM.

Respectfully,

Millie and John Squire

██████ McKenzie Ave

Casey Richardson

From: Don Andersen [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 4:02 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Dog Park

[REDACTED] McKenzie Avenue, Los Altos
May 18, 2020

Los Altos Parks Commission:

Recently I was made aware that it has been proposed that Heritage Oaks Park would be used as an off Leach dog park on a limited basis.

Having been a resident on McKenzie Avenue for over 45 years, I am against the proposal for the following reasons:

- Currently dog owners ignore the leach regulation's as posted
- There never has been an discernible police presence at Heritage Oaks to discourage offences by the dog owners

Therefore there can be no expectation of dog owners complying with any new regulations.

When I have visited my family in Montclair, New Jersey. at a local park I observed that there were **large two fenced in areas** set aside one for small dogs & one for large dogs . It became obvious that the city felt it had to protect both the public and dogs either small or large away from each other . Even with these provisions, I saw two large dogs attack each other within their own dedicated area and with the owners present.

The current proposal has no provision for separating the off leach area from the two children's play areas. I personally witnessed seeing a large dog appear to be in an attack mode while barking at a small child in the little- tot- area of Heritage Oaks. In the future if a small child were to become mauled by an off leash pit bull at Heritage Oaks Park the City could be faced with a large lawsuit for negligence.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Provide only individual fenced areas where dogs are off leash regardless of any time limitations.
- 2) Locate any off leash dog park in a large open space like Lincoln Park or around Hillview (not at a mini park).
- 3) Request staff consult with departments of other cities which have already establish off leash dog parks to benefit from their lessons learned.

Sincerely,

Donald Andersen
[REDACTED] McKenzie Avenue, Los Altos

Casey Richardson

From: Miriam Umeoka [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 6:13 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Off leash dog park at Heritage Oaks

Hi,

My name is Miriam Umeoka and I live across from Heritage Oaks Park. To my surprise I found out about the meeting regarding the off leash hours which I wasn't aware of. This is the first time I've heard of it since 2017 if I'm not mistaken.

I would like to share with you my concerns about it. It would increase traffic and parking in our street as well as having lots of dogs of all sizes would bring safety concerns not only to the kids but to everyone using the park. My dog was almost attacked by a dog few years back. So for these reasons, I'm against it.

I would appreciate the city to take all these concerns seriously.

Thank you.

Miriam Umeoka

Casey Richardson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 5:07 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Letter Regarding PARC Agenda Item 3c
Attachments: Letter to PARC.pdf

Attached please find a letter regarding the proposed off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park. Please distribute this letter to all members of the Parks and Recreation Commission as soon as possible, so they may read it prior to the meeting at 7:00 on Wed, May 20.

Thank you!

Jane Clayton
[REDACTED] McKenzie Ave
Los Altos

Jane Clayton
██████████ McKenzie Avenue
Los Altos, CA 94024

May 18, 2020

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission:

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Off-Leash Dog Hours Program at Heritage Oaks Park. My husband and I have lived across the street from Heritage Oaks Park for 22 years, and we have observed park activity throughout that time.

Inadequate Public Notice of This Issue on the PARC Agenda

Before addressing the issues related to Off-Leash Dog Hours, however, I would like to state that the presence of this proposal as an action item on your agenda is troubling. Taking up this proposal during the coronavirus lockdown seems very inappropriate. There has not been adequate public notice of the meeting; I have spoken with several neighbors (wearing a mask and gloves and staying 10 feet away!) and NONE of them knew anything about the May 20 PARC meeting! There has been NO opportunity for a public discussion of this proposal to date. There was no opportunity for a Q&A session or for any public comments at the workshops in February, except through the survey.

Current Situation and the Obliviousness of Park Users to Adjacent Residences

There are currently dog owners bringing their dogs to Heritage Oaks Park to run off-leash all day, every day. There is essentially NO enforcement of the existing rules that are posted. City staff seem to believe that by posting rules for Off-Leash Hours that all dog owners will suddenly and magically become respectful and mindful of park rules. That will not happen. After observing dog owners in the park for over 20 years, I can guarantee that no one will follow the rules any more in the future than they do today.

Some dog owners now walk their dogs to the park and some drive to the park. I see people pulling into a parking space and letting their dog out to run throughout the day. The City's idea that all current dog owners walk to the park and that new users would also walk to the park is simply incorrect. It is fair to assume that many of the "new users" of the park who would come to run their dogs would drive, since they will likely come from further away. This raises traffic and parking concerns.

Most park guests tend to be completely oblivious to the fact that there are private residences directly across the street from the park. It is common for parents to park in our driveway, block our mailbox, and leave litter on the ground when they drop off and pick up their children for soccer or other activities. People slam car doors, shout to others they know on the opposite side of the field, blow whistles, and generally make as much noise as they want to, since they're at a public park. They are focused on their own activity, and the fact that they may be disturbing nearby residents doesn't even seem to cross their mind. (I have overheard many conversations in the early morning among park users who are oblivious to the fact they are only a few feet from my bedroom window. I can hear them clearly, even when they're not shouting.) When I have asked park visitors to please not park so that I'm unable to get out of my own driveway, they act as if they are ones being inconvenienced.

Heritage Oaks Park Fails to Meet the City's Own Criteria

At the public workshops in February, the materials presented on poster boards included a list of criteria for potential locations for off-leash dog hours. Heritage Oaks Park fails to meet at least FOUR of those criteria (I didn't copy them all down, unfortunately). The criteria that it clearly does not meet are:

- Sufficient buffer between the trial area (area used by off-leash dogs) and playground areas;
- Trial area (area used by off-leash dogs) should not be used as a sports field;
- Sufficient parking;
- Sufficient buffer between the park and residences to mitigate impact.

It would make more sense for the City to simply admit that there is no park that fully meets the criteria for off-leash dog hours. And, therefore, it is unable to recommend off-leash dog hours.

Potential for MANY More Dog Owners to Use Heritage Oaks Park

I am OK with the number of dog owners who currently bring their dogs to the park (prior to the pandemic closure) in the afternoon. One of the major problems with the City's approach of proposing only two locations for off-leash hours is that once it becomes known that off-leash dogs are allowed at Heritage Oaks Park, the park will become a magnet for dog owners from a large area. It is reasonable to expect that MANY more Los Altos residents, as well as Mountain View and Sunnyvale residents, will bring their dogs to Heritage Oaks Park. Greatly increased park usage has many associated issues, including:

- **Parking:** There isn't enough parking to accommodate a large influx of new users. On days when there are soccer programs in the morning or afternoon, all parking spaces are typically occupied, plus many cars are parked in front of residences. That's not currently a problem – but the proposed schedule would generate parking demand from both dog owners and soccer programs as one starts and the other ends, which will greatly increase parking demand. Plus, if 50 or 100 new dog owners start using the park on a regular basis, where the City think they will park?
- **Traffic Congestion:** McKenzie Avenue is a local street that is not designed for lots of vehicles arriving and departing at the same time. This can be a problem when large events such big picnics, birthday parties, school events, etc. take place at the park. Once the word gets out that anybody can bring their dog to run off-leash at Heritage Oaks Park, it is quite likely that the amount of traffic on our street, especially people trying to turn around when they arrive or depart, will increase significantly. Potential for traffic congestion issues is even greater if a dog runs out into the street while they are off-leash. And, make no mistake, dogs DO run out into the street when they are off-leash! I have observed it many times.
- **Character of Heritage Oaks Park:** Over the past 22 years, we have observed park usage increase substantially --- especially due to the soccer programs that now take place. However, most people know that if they come to the park to play catch with a football or Frisbee, if they want to picnic among friends, if their young children want to use the playground equipment, if they want to set up a volleyball net and play on Sunday afternoons, or any other of the multitude of reasons why people visit the park, THEY WILL HAVE THE SPACE AND FREEDOM TO DO SO. Allowing dog owners to "take over" the park for many hours a day, every day of the week, will completely change the character of the park. Partly because there are likely to be many more people, but mainly because off-leash dogs will interfere with ALL the existing park uses.

Conflicts with Other Park Users and with Neighbors

Heritage Oaks Park does not include any buffer between the area where dogs run and TWO playground areas. There is no buffer between the “dog area” and the picnic tables, either. There is no buffer between the park and McKenzie Avenue or Portland Avenue. Further, putting fencing around those areas would seriously damage the aesthetics and recreation value of the park. Why should the children be fenced into playgrounds, but not the dogs? I have witnessed many times when a young child is completely intimidated by a large off-leash dog who has entered the playground and approached them. I have witnessed off-leash dogs annoying picnickers at the picnic tables who are simply trying to eat in peace. I have witnessed off-leash dogs chase after bicyclists who are going by, which is especially scary for children on bicycles. I have witnessed off-leash dogs charging other dogs who are ON A LEASH and being walked by the park by their owners.

There are good reasons why most cities have established fenced-in dog parks, rather than unfenced off-leash areas. In general, if an area is designated as open to off-leash dogs, it should be quite large and it should be nowhere near picnic tables, playgrounds, or areas that are used regularly for sports. The Subcommittee’s recommendation is that owners keep their dogs 25 feet away from the picnic tables – but that is wishful thinking. Many of the dogs who are off-leash now at the park cannot resist the smell of good food. If a dog is bothering a picnic table, the picnickers can now ask the owner to put their dog back on a leash and keep them away. In the future, if a dog bothers a picnic table, or a parent-child game of catch, or a kid in the playground during the times when dogs are officially allowed to be off-leash, who would have the right to ask the dog owner to stop bothering them? The dog owner could say that they are legally allowed to let their dogs run off-leash and other park users can’t stop them.

There is also an issue of people who are allergic to dogs. Fenced-in dog parks allow those who are allergic to simply avoid the dog park. During off-leash hours there is no way to ensure that a dog wouldn’t run up to and interact with someone who has allergies. Off-leash hours essentially prevents anyone with dog allergies from using the park at all during off-leash hours.

Permanente Creek

The Subcommittee also recommends a rule stating that dogs should not enter the creek bed of Permanente Creek, which runs along the edge of the park. That is also wishful thinking. While dog owners may want their dogs to stay out of the creek, dogs are unpredictable and will happily go explore that area when their owners are off chatting with other dog owners. I’ve seen it happen many times.

There is also an issue of greatly increased usage of the park by off-leash dogs and contamination of the water shed, even if dogs “magically” do not ever run into the creek bed. More dogs at the park means more dog urine and dog poop at the park. Even though most owners may be conscientious about picking up after their dogs, they do not pick up every little bit of poop – trace amounts are always left behind. But, trace amounts from LOTS of dogs EVERY day add up to a large amount. Plus, as more dog owners congregate at the park to chat, there is an increasing probability that they will not be paying attention and notice when their dog poops. I’ve seen it happen many times – the owner is not intentionally leaving dog waste at the park, but it happens anyway! Because of the proximity of the creek and the area where dogs run, it would not take long for the bacteria and parasites in the dog waste to wash into the creek bed.

This has implications for the water quality of the water in Permanente Creek and the Bay. **Has the City discussed the proposal for off-leash hours in which dogs would have easy access to the creek with the Santa Clara Valley Water District? Has the City discussed the proposal with the agency responsible for water quality in the Bay?** There are major environmental issues here and it is not clear that the City has considered them at all. (One advantage of fenced-in dog parks is that dog waste can be cleaned up and disposed of properly at regular intervals. Almost impossible to do in a grassy area that is used by other park visitors!)

Dog Waste and Park Users, including Soccer Programs

I cannot imagine letting very young children play in a grassy area that is visited every day by lots of dogs who have peed and pooped in that exact same area! There are many studies showing that pet waste contains bacteria and parasites that are harmful to health.

Clearly, this conflict between dog waste and soccer use already exists, since there are off-leash dogs using the soccer area every day now. But, it is fair to assume that when word gets out about a location where dogs are allowed to run off-leash, many more dog owners will show up with their dogs. This will increase the contamination of the grassy area now used by young children who play and roll in the grass all the time. The grassy area is also used by children from birthday parties (a frequent use of the park), by youth organizations who hold large picnics there, and by countless families.

Before I lived in Los Altos, I lived in San Francisco near a park where many dog owners exercised their dogs off-leash every morning. So, I have experienced this first-hand already and I know what happens. I doubt any of those dog owners intentionally left dog poop behind, but there was ALWAYS dog poop in the grass of that park. It's just what happens. The subcommittee's recommendation is tantamount to saying that it doesn't care if park users step in dog waste on a regular basis, or that children are playing in grass that has been contaminated by dog waste from many dogs every day.

Conflicts Between Dogs

When fenced-in dog parks are created, there are often separate areas for large and small dogs. Such a separation is clearly not possible in an unfenced off-leash program. Conflicts between dogs happen even now, with the current number of dogs that are being exercised off-leash in the park today. The greater the number of dogs and dog owners, the harder it is for owners to maintain voice control of their dogs. And, the more instances of dogs fighting each other, as the area becomes more crowded. Again, it is fair to assume that the park will become a magnet for many more dog owners if it becomes an official off-leash site, and far more instances of dogs attacking other dogs will occur. This would make the park far less enjoyable and safe for ALL other park users.

Noise

A dog's bark can be extremely loud and carry a long distance. I've heard dogs barking in yards that are fairly far away. Dog owners' voices are also loud, as they try to maintain voice control over their dogs running in the park. Whistles are even louder. Especially during warmer months, when windows are open, the sounds from the park for those of us directly adjacent to it are already a nuisance at times.

The City of Los Altos has a noise ordinance, Chapter 6.16 of the municipal code. Section 6.16.050 on Exterior Noise Limits provides noise standards for various categories of land use. In R1 zoning districts,

the maximum noise level allowed is 55 decibels between 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM. A single dog barking can be that loud. The ordinance specifies the amount of time that a noise source may exceed the standard. For example, noise exceeding 55 decibels is not allowed for a cumulative period of more than 30 minutes in any hour in R1 districts.

The Subcommittee's recommended schedule would allow off-leash dogs in the park directly across the street from the residences on McKenzie Avenue for many hours in both the morning and the afternoon/evening. Every day. All year round. It is likely that the City's own noise ordinance would be exceeded during every single one of those hours under the current proposal.

I find the proposed start time of 7:00 AM every day including Saturdays and Sundays to be particularly problematic. The potential for violation of exterior noise limits at 7:00 AM every single weekend would be intolerable to most Los Altos residents. The imposition of noise from the off-leash program for so many hours is unfair to all residents and property owners adjacent to the park.

Enforcement

The report from the Dog Park Subcommittee says that the Off-Leash Dog Program could be implemented for only \$7,100. That cost estimate clearly does not include any money for enforcement! At present, there is virtually no enforcement of off-leash activity in Heritage Oaks Park. For the hours posted when dogs may or may not be off-leash to be enforced, there will need to be frequent visits by the Los Altos Police and/or Animal Control officers. Actually, officers should enforce all the rules suggested by the subcommittee, not just hours. Enforcement will cost money and it will need to be frequent and ongoing. Any accurate estimate of the cost of the program to the City should include the cost of enforcement. (Or, should we assume the City has no intention of enforcing the posted hours and rules for the program?)

Expecting dog owners to police themselves is unrealistic, given that the current rule that dogs must be on a leash at all times is flaunted on a daily basis.

Lost Fee Revenue

An accurate assessment of the cost of the program should also include any fee revenue that is likely to be lost due to decreased registration for the soccer programs at Heritage Oaks Park, after parents realize that the soccer area is also used twice daily by far more dogs than before. I have no idea if the City currently collects any fees from large groups who use the park, but I suspect those will disappear if they overlap with the times that dogs are allowed off-leash.

"Pilot" Program: How and When Evaluated?

The City indicates that this would be a pilot program for off-leash hours, but there are no criteria for what would constitute a success or a failure of the pilot. How long would the pilot run before it is evaluated? If the City's Parks and Recreation staff were busy with other projects that were deemed higher priority, would the Off-Leash hours be extended indefinitely?

Prior to the pandemic, it was common to see 10 dogs in the park at one time during the afternoon, and sometimes there can be as many as 20 dogs at one time. If there are 40 dogs at one time during the pilot, will the City regard that as a success or as a problem? If all the parking spaces are full most of the time during off-leash hours, and dog owners must park throughout the neighborhood, will the City

regard that as a success or a problem? Will the City consider the total number of dogs in the park throughout the day and the week in order to better estimate the impact of dog waste on its own park space?

In Conclusion

Given the lack of adequate public notice of the May 20 PARC meeting, I believe no action should be taken at this time on the Off-Leash Dog Hours proposal. Full opportunity should be given for residents to voice their concerns in a public forum before making a decision that would so greatly change the character and safety of a public space.

When action is eventually taken on the proposal for off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park, I believe it should NOT be approved, for all the reasons listed above.

If the City feels compelled to throw dog owners a bone in light of its decision not to pursue fenced-in dog parks, I believe it should only allow off-leash hours during more limited times of the day than proposed by the Subcommittee, and that there should be some days when off-leash dogs are not permitted at all so that others may enjoy the park in peace. Allowing dogs off-leash in the morning hours interferes with children biking to school. Although I believe there are strong public health and safety reasons NOT to allow off-leash dog hours AT ALL, if the City approves the proposal, a few hours in the afternoon or evening, well after the soccer programs have concluded, would be adequate.

I also think that the City should consider allowing off-leash dog hours at MORE parks, if it permits off-leash hours at all. Many of the potential problems cited above are related to the likelihood of greatly increased numbers of off-leash dogs in a fairly limited space. These issues would be mitigated by providing dog owners with more locations where they may run their dogs, rather than concentrating them in only one or two locations. Why not allow off-leash hours at Grant Park? Lincoln Park? McKenzie Park? Marymeade Park? Concentrating all the off-leash dogs in only one or two locations would exacerbate all of the issues discussed above.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Clayton

Casey Richardson

From: Stephen Lazarus [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:55 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Support for dog off leash hours

Voicing support for the recommendations being discuss at the May 20 Parks and Rec commission. Dog off leash hours should be permitte at Hillview and Heritage parks.

Steve Lazarus
[REDACTED] Cynthia Way
94024

Casey Richardson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 11:03 AM
To: Donna Legge
Cc: Casey Richardson
Subject: RE: Off-leash hours in Heritage Park

Donna,

I went through the report and did not find any study of the impact of the off leash hours at Heritage Oak park on the community and on McKenzie Ave residents in particular. Here are my comments to this report:

1. According to the report, there was an extensive public outreach to get inputs from the community but it appears, these efforts were not sufficient to get the necessary inputs from the residents of McKenzie Ave which will be negatively effected by this. Both me and my wife had no idea this is going on. I checked with some of my neighbors and they did not know either.
2. The report ignores the decision of the city of Los Altos back in 2007 against the establishment of a dog park in the Heritage Oak park and the reasons this decision was made.
3. The report does not address the impact on the residents at McKenzie Ave including noise level, parking space, safety and littering. While the noise level concern is mentioned in the report, the proposed "solution" of "limiting" operation hours between 7 am to 10 am and 5:30 pm to sunset sounds like a joke if it was not serious. This will deny us of a peaceful morning, especially over the weekend and the ability to use the park and play with our grandchildren when we are back from work. Back in 2007, the expected noise level was measured at other dog parks at a similar distance as the distance between our homes and the park. It was determined the expected noise level unlawful. The other concerns are not even addressed in the report. These include:
 - a. Unleashed dogs running in the park will not only deny park usage when we are back from work and over the weekend but also make our street unsafe and dangerous.
 - b. Parking space in McKenzie Ave is very limited. Even with the current spots activity in the park, traffic is already congested and cars parking along the street sometimes block the entrance into our garage. The additional dog owner traffic will make this much worse.
 - c. Littering is a huge problem. People are often dropping garbage on the street. This will now become much worse.
4. The city of Los Altos should study and address seriously the above concern rather than ignore them and start a pilot program.
5. Questa park is nearby. It is a large Park that also includes a fenced dog park. It is in Mountain View but Los Altos dog owners are allowed to use it. They don't need the tiny Heritage Oak Park.

Menashe Shahr
[REDACTED]

From: Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 2:15 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: FW: Off-leash hours in Heritage Park

Menashe & Chaya, thank you for your email.

To clarify, the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) are not the final authority on what action will be taken regarding dog parks (pilot off-leash hours) in Los Altos. The PARC is advisory to the City Council. The PARC will be discussing a recommendation at this week's meeting (attached). It is recommended that the Commission recommendations not be scheduled for review by City Council until an in-person meeting can be scheduled in the future (TBD).

Access to the full report can be found on the City website at this link:

<https://www.losaltosca.gov/parksrecommission/page/special-parks-and-recreation-commission-remote-access-ringcentral-0>

I will forward your email to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Please let me know if you have further questions.

Sincerely, Donna
Parks and Recreation Commission Liaison

Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director
City of Los Altos | 1 N. San Antonio Road | Los Altos, CA 94022
Office: 650.947.2790 | Direct: 650.947.2889 | dlegge@losaltosca.gov



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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 10:48 AM
To: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Off-leash hours in Heritage Park

Donna,

We are the owners of the property at 1335 McKenzie Ave near Heritage park. It was brought to our attention by a neighbor that the city of Los Altos is considering an off-leash hours program in this small community park. Back in 2007, the city of Los Altos decided against a plan to establish a dog park in Heritage park due to noise, parking space, safety and other concerns which are still valid today. The park is busy enough as is with small children activities. An off-leash program at Heritage park will make life in this neighborhood miserable.

Unlike 2007, we did not receive this time any notification letter about the plan. I checked with two other neighbors and they were not notified either. It appears the city of Los Altos is in a hurry to do this without consulting the community or giving the community an opportunity to object and in spite of the Covid 19 situation you are going ahead with the hearing this week. Given the lack of notification, you should delay this week's hearing. In addition, please provide a study of why the city of Los Altos believes an off-leash program in Heritage park is now appropriate.

Menashe & Chaya Shahar



Although our offices are closed, we are continuing to serve the public remotely. Feel free to call or email the City for questions as many services have been modified. We thank the community for their cooperation and understanding. We can slow the spread of COVID-19 when we work together.

For more information on COVID-19, call 211 or text 'coronavirus' to 211211. Looking to donate or volunteer? Please visit <https://www.csacares.org>.

Casey Richardson

From: Nathan Parker [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 12:54 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: No dog park/off-leash at Heritage Oaks park please

Hello --

We are residents a few blocks from Heritage Oaks Park, and we have a dog. We do not think Heritage Oaks Park should have either a fenced dog park or off-leash hours. The park is in the middle of the residential neighborhood, across the street from houses, so noise from extra visitors would be disruptive. The park is used by small children (e.g. on the playground and on the fields), so a lot of unfenced off-leash dogs would be dangerous. We regularly walk with our dog through the park, but we would have to stop doing that if the park attracted a lot of dogs (our dog is shy of other dogs). We think the city should try to better enforce the "no off-leash dogs" rules at the park. Thank you.

-- Nathan & Michele Parker
[REDACTED] Payne Dr, Los Altos, CA

Casey Richardson

From: Smadar Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 2:15 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Objection to the off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park

Dear Ms. Richardson,

Heritage Oaks is one of the smallest parks in Los Altos and the least secluded one. It is very narrow and dogs off leash would be right by the street on one side and by the play structures on the other side. This issue was raised a few years ago and was rejected after the neighbors voiced their concerns and objections and the park was found unfit for off-leash dogs. Nothing changed since then. It is a good, sometimes packed, neighborhood park that is not fit for off-leash dogs.

Biking to school is promoted in Los Altos and designated/recommended bike routes are published. This park is located at an intersection of three streets. All those streets are in the designated bike routes to the local schools. Many kids ride their bikes by the park to school and from school and as it is so small, the off-leash dogs will be right by the passing bikes, not a safe situation for the kids. Blach intermediate school starts at 8:12 am, Mountain View High starts at 7:54 am, and Oak elementary school at 8:30 am. Bike traffic as well as foot traffic to the schools starts before 8:00 am. The current off leash proposed hours include the time kids bike to school.

As it is so small, the two playgrounds in the park are right by where the dogs will run free. We had multiple incidents of dogs running towards our kids. This situation should not happen, not all dogs are friendly to little kids and kids can be easily scared by an unfamiliar dog running towards them.

On the weekends, many people come to celebrate their birthdays or other group gatherings, and the rec department conducts soccer practices for young kids. Many people choose to jog, walk, or push a stroller in the park as the alternative is to do so on the neighborhood streets that don't even have sidewalks.

If this park will be declared as the designated off-leash dog park, many dogs will come. This will most likely mean that parents will not want their kids there during those hours and some adults may also not use it during those hours which will impact the local neighbors negatively.

The question I have is by what criteria was this park chosen to be the designated off-leash park. What is the reasoning behind this decision and how will the safety of our kids be assured.

I hope this proposal is rejected as I find it unfit for this location.

Regards,

Smadar Agmon
[REDACTED] McKenzie Ave. Los Altos

Casey Richardson

From: Smadar Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 6:41 PM
To: Donna Legge
Cc: Casey Richardson
Subject: Re: FW: Objection to the off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park

Hi Donna,

We had no idea this was going on. Nobody asked us or informed us about this process. None of my neighbors was informed about the survey and there was no outreach whatsoever. It is outrageous that the people who will be affected by it the most were not included or even informed about this meeting. We are all at home, sheltering in place. It would have been very easy to reach out to us but nobody did.

All the neighbors are against this decision and we are determined to make sure this won't pass.

Best,
Smadar Agmon,
McKenzie Ave.

On Tue, May 19, 2020 at 5:45 PM Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov> wrote:

Smadar, thank you for your email.

The decision to consider Heritage Oaks park was based on a survey conducted in 2018 and recent outreach input conducted in February 2020. I will forward your email to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Sincerely, Donna

Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director

City of Los Altos | 1 N. San Antonio Road | Los Altos, CA 94022

Office: 650.947.2790 | Direct: 650.947.2889 | dlegge@losaltosca.gov



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Begin forwarded message:

From: Smadar Agmon [REDACTED]
Date: May 19, 2020 at 2:15:38 PM PDT
To: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Objection to the off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park

Dear Ms. Richardson,

Heritage Oaks is one of the smallest parks in Los Altos and the least secluded one. It is very narrow and dogs off leash would be right by the street on one side and by the play structures on the other side. This issue was raised a few years ago and was rejected after the neighbors voiced their concerns and objections and the park was found unfit for off-leash dogs. Nothing changed since then. It is a good, sometimes packed, neighborhood park that is not fit for off-leash dogs.

Biking to school is promoted in Los Altos and designated/recommended bike routes are published. This park is located at an intersection of three streets. All those streets are in the designated bike routes to the local schools. Many kids ride their bikes by the park to school and from school and as it is so small, the off-leash dogs will be right by the passing bikes, not a safe situation for the kids. Blach intermediate school starts at 8:12 am, Mountain View High starts at 7:54 am, and Oak elementary school at 8:30 am. Bike traffic as well as foot traffic to the schools starts before 8:00 am. The current off leash proposed hours include the time kids bike to school.

As it is so small, the two playgrounds in the park are right by where the dogs will run free. We had multiple incidents of dogs running towards our kids. This situation should not happen, not all dogs are friendly to little kids and kids can be easily scared by an unfamiliar dog running towards them.

On the weekends, many people come to celebrate their birthdays or other group gatherings, and the rec department conducts soccer practices for young kids. Many people choose to jog, walk, or push a stroller in the park as the alternative is to do so on the neighborhood streets that don't even have sidewalks.

If this park will be declared as the designated off-leash dog park, many dogs will come. This will most likely mean that parents will not want their kids there during those hours and some adults may also not use it during those hours which will impact the local neighbors negatively.

The question I have is by what criteria was this park chosen to be the designated off-leash park. What is the reasoning behind this decision and how will the safety of our kids be assured.

I hope this proposal is rejected as I find it unfit for this location.

Regards,

Smadar Agmon

██████████ McKenzie Ave. Los Altos

Casey Richardson

From: Yoav Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 7:16 PM
To: Donna Legge; Casey Richardson
Subject: Re: FW: Voicing my objection to designate Heritage Oak park as an off-leash dogs playground

Hi, thanks for your reply, However I have just heard from other people on our street that this proposal comes about as a result of some survey or out-reach program.

We have not received any notification of such survey or been reached to provide a feedback, more specific in the past when this issue came up several years ago, we voiced our objection.

So, this shouldn't even be considered, as the no feedback from us (except now that somehow we found out about it) makes it invalid.

And it shouldn't be a surprise that if for some reason this proposal moves forward, we, the residents of McKenzie ave facing the park and the people from close by streets will take any action necessary to stop it.

I'm really surprised and disappointed that this is happening, I always appreciated and enjoyed being part of the LA community as the city always acted in a democratic and a resident friendly manner.

sincerely,

Yoav

On Mon, May 18, 2020 at 1:53 PM Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov> wrote:

Yoav, thank you for your email.

I will forward it to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Sincerely, Donna

Parks and Recreation Commission Liaison

Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director

City of Los Altos | 1 N. San Antonio Road | Los Altos, CA 94022

Office: 650.947.2790 | Direct: 650.947.2889 | dlegge@losaltosca.gov



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For more information on COVID-19, call 211 or text 'coronavirus' to 211211. Looking to donate or volunteer? Please visit <https://www.csacares.org>

From: Yoav Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 8:33 AM
To: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Voicing my objection to designate Heritage Oak park as an off-leash dogs playground

Ms. Richardson,

I would like to voice my strong objections to the proposed off-leash dog park designation at our little neighborhood Heritage Oak park.

As a long time resident of McKenzie Ave, facing the park, where our 3 children grew up, and now our 2 grand kids reside, I strongly oppose any changes to the usage of Heritage park, especially as far as allocating time for unleashed dogs.

I already seen my grand kids react in fear when a large unleashed dog (friendly) run towards them when we were playing at the park, I was there to calm them down and have them pat the dog. But that's a big risk, what if the dog wasn't friendly and I was not right there?

The small Heritage Oak park is a main venue for neighborhood and city organized events such as birthday parties, block parties, graduations, soccer games, and many other activities drawing large groups as well as small, of all ages from all corners of the City and beyond, carving out time for unleash dogs would definitely put undue hardship and eliminate some of these established usages.

Occasionally, mostly on weekends the park is packed with visitors from morning to night, which overflow the available parking and forces numerous visitors to park on both sides of the street, just imagine if to this already packed situation you add numerous unleashed dogs.

In recent years, a new younger generation moved into our neighborhood, this brought about more children who use the park and its facilities than ever before.

The early morning hours sees many children on the way to school on their bikes or walking as well as people jogging and exercising. Upon return from school in the afternoon, the park with its two dedicated playgrounds becomes a great adventure place for small children and their guardians, many time we see them venture there unattended. If you add unleashed dogs to this mix you are asking for accidents to occur, just imagine what happens if some dog attacks one of these young kids. Keeping strict hours, and/or calling the police every time we see some violations by dog owners is impractical.

With all do respects to dog owners and their needs, our little Heritage Oak park serves the neighborhood and the city so well with its current designation, why would we want want to screw this up? why now ?

Thank you in advance for addressing my objection,

Yoav Agmon

Casey Richardson

From: Tomer Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 7:51 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Cc: Smadar Agmon
Subject: Heritage Oaks Dog Park Objection

Dear Ms. Richardson,

This is in regard to the proposal to designate Heritage Oaks Park, or part of it, as an Off Leash Dog Park. Thank you for your consideration.

I understand the need for designated public areas and the desire to group unclassified locations with catchy sounding titles (such as "Off Leash Dog Park" as opposed to "Heritage Oaks small wooded area where people occasionally walk dogs among other things"). But, if the location itself doesn't actually fit the criteria of the designation you have in mind, then you run the risk of not only alienating the residents dependent on that location, but actually decreasing the quality of the neighborhood itself. This, I believe, is the case with the proposal to designate an Off Leash Dog Park at Heritage Oaks.

As a long time resident, born and raised in this house right across the street from Heritage Oaks Park, I have seen this park at all its uses. From children walking and biking through it in the morning to get to school, and back in the afternoon, to families hosting weekend park cookouts, elementary school soccer teams training on the grass, young mothers and fathers pushing strollers, toddlers learning to ride their first tricycles, to yes indeed, people walking and playing with their dogs. First and foremost is the familial aspect. This park has long been a safe haven for all the families in this and the surrounding neighborhoods. It has been a go-through detour for anyone in the area taking a walk and a comforting place of rest for anyone driving by who had had a long stressful day and simply needed to park and nap a little (Including the local postmen, delivery drivers, and utility workers who need a short break before returning to the grind of the day).

As such, a designated unleashed dog park in this area would amount to destroying the utility of a multipurpose park area and shrinking it down to a single use. No longer would the park be a safe haven for children, families, walkers, and hard working essential workers, but instead it would become a single purpose use area with an inflated focus on on single advantage of the park: it is dog friendly. And yes it is, in fact dog friendly. It is also children friendly and cat friendly (my family has 3 cats who often explore the park). When families come by with their dogs, under control and in limited numbers, this park remains relatively safe for all involved. With a dog-park designation, unleashed no less, this would no longer be the case. There could be no stray kids, no wandering cats, no young families with babies in strollers. I love dogs, we all do, but there is no disputing the fact that if left unchecked, there are some wild ones at heart. This is not their fault, they never asked to be domesticated for their hunting ability and later criticized for this very same aspect. But it is undeniable, dogs can be dangerous. And in an area such as this, so very dependent on the safety of small children and a haven for the families in the multiple nearby neighborhoods, an unleash dog park would be unacceptable. Simply put, it is a bad idea at this particular location.

Thank you for listening to my reasoning,
-Tomer Agmon

Casey Richardson

From: Shikha Malaviya [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:13 PM
To: Donna Legge
Cc: Casey Richardson
Subject: Extending our support for off-leash hours in Los Altos parks

To: Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director and Liaison to Parks and Recreation Commission

Dear Donna,

Our family of five (including our 2 year old mix terrier Chikoo) would like to express our sincere appreciation for the work that has already been done to get off-leash hours at our area parks. We whole heartedly support the proposal for a pilot program for off-leash hours at both the Hillview Little League Field and Heritage Oaks Park. We hope the pilot program is successful and consequently the off-leash program would be expanded to other neighborhood parks as well.

Sincerely,
Shikha Malaviya
Grant Park Neighborhood
Los Altos

Casey Richardson

From: Abigail Stucker [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:13 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Off leash dog park @ Heritage Oaks

Good evening,

My name is Abby Stucker. I live at 1370 McKenzie Avenue. My house is the first house beyond the open space next to Heritage Oaks park on the same side of the street as the park. We have lived here for 15 years. I am sending this email to you to voice my opposition to having Heritage Oaks park as the designated dog park of Los Altos for many reasons. Many people young and old use this beautiful park and even though they are proposing designated hours for the dogs, they will be running around and messing up the grass, they will poop and pee everywhere, and make the space most uninviting to many people during the hours they are there but also what they leave behind will make the park uninviting during all hours of the day. I see children running around in bare feet and families on picnic blankets daily and the idea of all of the neglected (and you and I both know that countless dog owners will neglect to pick up after their dogs) feces underneath those bare feet and blankets is incredibly disturbing. There is not sufficient parking on our street to support the influx of people who will be bringing their animals to the park. The noise of dogs barking, owners shouting and whistling to their dogs and socializing at 7am will be disturbing to the houses directly facing the park. For the neighborhood walkers, bikers, runners who aren't comfortable with dogs (and there are many people who are not comfortable with dogs) it will be a terrible nuisance just dealing with the people going in and out of the park. I believe it said in the report that in February of this year, PARC through multiple avenues publicized this proposal to affected residents and I am here to say that we NEVER received any such notice let alone an opportunity to voice our opinion until just this past Sunday a neighbor knocked on my door to share the situation with me. The timing of all of this during the Coronavirus is poor not to mention unfair. I am a teacher at Mountain View High School and my husband is a Doctor at PAMF. We are both working and we are homeschooling our three young children. To expect us to have figured out between February and now that this decision was being made about the park DIRECTLY next to our house without any email, snail mail, or notification of any sort seems like a mistake.

Please don't change our beautiful park into a dog park.

Sincerely,

Abby Stucker

Casey Richardson

From: Ken Mburu [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 11:03 PM
To: Jaime Chew; Candace Avina; Casey Richardson; Bridget Matheson
Subject: Fwd: Off Leash Dog Park Heritage Oaks
Attachments: Off-Leash Dogs at Park -Flyer for Neighbors.pdf

Hi guys,

Are you aware of this? This is a bad idea on many levels. It conflicts with our coaching hours.

1. We can't have dogs off-leash hours at the same time we have kids playing soccer. They've specifically chosen the times we are there.
2. The dogs will leave waste. We've had this problem before.
3. The dogs will dig holes. We've had this problem before.

The best solution is for Los Altos to built a dog park, like other neighboring cities. Or they could turn McKenzie Park into a dog park, since it's better suited for that in my opinion and the drainage there makes it a hard park to use for sports activities.

Heritage Oaks is the best park for city sports activities for Rec Programs like ours.

What is your opinion on this?

Thank you,

Ken

Hi Coach Ken

I live across the street from Heritage Oaks Park and thought you may want to give your input to the PARC committee. They are proposing multiple hours of off leash time for dogs some overlapping potential soccer times. Please see PDF enclosed that was sent out by a couple of the neighbors.

Neighborhood Alert!
Off-Leash Dog Hours Program at Heritage Oaks Park

Los Altos Special Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
(Remote Access via RingCentral)
Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Background: In 2019, the Los Altos City Council requested the Parks and Recreation Commission gather public input regarding Fenced-In Dog Parks and Off-Leash Dog Hours. Public workshop meetings were held in February 2020 on **Off-Leash Dog Hours at Heritage Oaks Park** and Hillview Park and Fenced-In Dog Parks at McKenzie Park and Lincoln Park.

Proposal: The Dog Park Subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Commission is now recommending that a Pilot Program for Off-Leash Dog Hours be established at Heritage Oaks Park and Hillview Park. Unlike dog parks, the proposal for Off-Leash Dog Hours would not include fencing between the area used by dogs and the rest of the park or the street. The Subcommittee is recommending against dedicated fenced-in dog parks at both McKenzie Park (on Fremont Ave) and Lincoln Park.

Neighborhood Concerns: As neighbors of Heritage Oaks Park know, many people already come to the park to exercise their dogs without a leash. The City's proposal, which is to create official times when dog owners may bring their dogs to run off-leash, is likely to attract MANY MORE people and dogs from throughout the city to the park. This would generate more noise, more traffic, more parking issues, more conflicts among dogs, and more conflicts with other park users. There would likely be MANY MORE large and small dogs in the park. Although the City recommends specific hours for the off-leash program (7:00 AM until 9:00 or 10:00 AM and 4:00 or 5:30 PM until Sunset every day), enforcement of those hours is likely to be an issue. Keeping the park clean of dog waste is likely to become an issue, due to increased usage.

To listen to or participate in the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting on Wed, 5/20:

Members of the Public may call (623) 404-9000 to participate in the conference call (Meeting ID: 148 621 7011, Password: 552857). Members of the Public may only comment during times allotted for public comments. Public input will be taken at the direction of the Chair. Those wishing to comment on an agenda item are asked to text their name and which item they wish to speak on to 650-947-2726 to better organize the public comment period. An opportunity will be provided to those who do not text to speak on each item.

Members of the public are also encouraged to submit written testimony prior to the meeting to crichardson@losaltosca.gov Emails received prior to the beginning of the meeting will be included in the public record.

Meeting Information

To Access the info below see: <https://www.losaltosca.gov/parksrecommission/page/special-parks-and-recreation-commission-remote-access-ringcentral-0>

Agenda:

 [2020 05-20 PARC Special Meeting Agenda](#) (111 KB)

Supporting Documents

 [Item 1 - DRAFT 2020 04-22 Special Meeting Minutes](#) (292 KB)

 [Item 3a - Attachment A - Dog Park Workshop Results PowerPoint](#) (1 MB)

 [Item 3a - Dog Park Workshop Results Report](#) (151 KB)

 [Item 3b - Attachment A - Summary of 2018 Dog Park Survey](#) (872 KB)

 [Item 3b - Community Driven Dog Park Input Report](#) (141 KB)

 **Most Important** [Item 3c - Dog Park Subcommittee Recommendations](#) (195 KB)

Item 3c, the Dog Park Subcommittee Recommendations, includes the schedule recommended for off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park and other information.

The Subcommittee report notes that Heritage Oaks Park is “directly adjacent to a row of houses.” However, based on maps of survey responses in Item 3a PowerPoint, there weren’t very many McKenzie Avenue residents at the public workshops to express their opinion about the proposal. There was strong neighborhood opposition to the dog park proposals at McKenzie Park and Lincoln Park (maps in Item 3a PowerPoint and Item 3b Community-Driven Dog Park Input Report), which played a role in the recommendation against establishing dog parks at those locations.

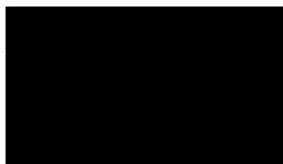
If you share our concerns about establishing Off-Leash Dog Hours at the park, which could increase park usage enormously, please email the City (cricardson@losaltosca.gov) and/or speak at the meeting on Wednesday, May 20.

Concerned Neighbors

Millie and John Squire

██████████ McKenzie Ave.

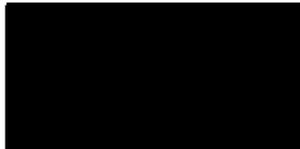
Los Altos CA 94024



Jane Clayton and John Petro

██████████ McKenzie Ave.

Los Altos CA 94024



Casey Richardson

From: Betty Christopher [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 12:17 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Off-Leash Dog Hours at Heritage Oaks Park--NO

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission:

I just learned that the city is considering establishing off-leash dog hours at Heritage Oaks Park. Please do not do this!

I have lived near Heritage Oaks Park since 1994. During the past 26 years, I've played with my toddlers in the park, coached my kids' soccer teams, walked with my dog (always on leash) in the park, gathered for neighborhood picnics, and now that I'm a senior I walk through the park almost daily. I would not be able to safely enjoy these activities if there were lots of dogs running around the park without a leash!

This proposal is likely to attract MANY MORE people and dogs from throughout the city to the park. This would generate more noise, more traffic, more parking issues, more conflicts among dogs, and more conflicts with other park users. My neighborhood park would be too dangerous and noisy and poopy to enjoy.

Please don't take my neighborhood park away from me! Do not designate Heritage Oaks Park as an off-leash dog park!!!

Thank you for understanding.

Betty Christopher
[REDACTED] Holly Ave

Casey Richardson

From: Carol Stanek [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 9:05 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Dog Park Agenda Item comments

Dear Parks and Rec Commissioners,

Congratulations on a very thorough and well managed process for collecting community input on your dog park and off-leash hours proposals. I commend you for the clear distillation of the community input and thoughtful proposals based on the input.

Based on my own experience in Cupertino on this same subject, I wanted to highlight a couple of thoughts regarding the proposals for the off-leash hours:

1) Both Heritage and Hillview parks indicate afternoon hours in November - January. Based on previous discussions, those parks are closed for maintenance during all or most of these months. Even if the parks were to be opened, sunset occurs either before the afternoon hours commence or allow <1 hour of use. Therefore, in effect, there are no hours available during those months. It seems disingenuous to post hours that begin after Sunset when there is no practical way to take advantage of the time.

If the parks will continue to be closed during those months, or if the hours can not be managed to begin at least 2 hours before sunset, then hours should not be suggested for those months. The hours schedule should reflect this lack of availability and hopefully, other viable alternatives could be found during those months.

2) The Hillview rules require dog owners to keep their dogs off the infield, which will be advised by signage. In my experience in Cupertino, signage is not adequate to enforce such a boundary. Dogs can't read signs. This seems like a rule that is designed to fail. Rather than a requirement, this might be better managed as a request to keep dogs away from the infield as much as possible. (e.g. Don't throw balls to the infield, etc) The reality is that is as much as can be expected anyway. Designating an impossible rule with a boundary that dogs can not see sets up enforcement issues and potential conflicts with rule sticklers who would love nothing better than to doom the trial for infractions of this rule.

I have no doubt there will be those who will continue to raise concerns about potential issues. There are always "potential" issues. It should be kept in mind that this will be a trial. Real issues, to the extent they arise, can be dealt with through modifications to the program along the way. Or if that is not possible, the trial may not be converted or extended at the end. But those concerns should not stop Los Altos from providing these facilities to your residents who have been requesting these types of facilities for a long time and are available in neighboring cities.

Again, I am impressed with how far you have brought the issue forward. I look forward to seeing you bring this forward to your Council and hopefully beginning a trial for the off-leash hours that allow this option for responsible sharing of park resources.

Sincerely,
Carol Stanek
Cupertino Resident

Casey Richardson

From: Donna Legge
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 2:52 PM
To: Los Altos Parks & Recreation Commission
Subject: FW: May 22 Parks and Recreation Meeting Comments
Attachments: Parks and Recreation Commissioners.docx

Chair Lindermeier and Commissioners,

Please see email below in support of the pilot off-leash hours program.

Sincerely, Donna

From: Frank Martin <apfrank42@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 12:36 PM
To: Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov>; Frank Martin [REDACTED]; CAROL STANEK
[REDACTED]
Subject: May 22 Parks and Recreation Meeting Comments

Donna,

Thanks for bringing off-leash hours and/or fenced in dog park considerations to the point of a discussion and vote. After 11 years, we cannot let this opportunity be delayed because this loss of momentum will kill the idea itself. I for one would have no interest in continuing to fight for off-leash hours.

As it stands, I am very happy to have a shorter off-leash pilot program at the two sites and will be a patron of Heritage Oaks Park. Equally important, I look forward to having a successful pilot program that leads to expansion to other parks such as my neighborhood park - Grant Park.

Please pass this information to our commissioners.

Donna, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Frank Martin

Parks and Recreation Commissioners,

As a member of The Grant Park off-leash hour leadership team I wish to commend you for your perseverance and dedication to fully consider possible dedicated fenced in dog park locations and off-leash hour shared park locations for Los Altos. I think you have gone beyond the call of duty to listen to community input and come to a decision. Thanks again!

I totally support the sub-committee recommendations in all respects and really look forward to extending off-leash hours to other parks after the pilot program is successful. My personal goal is to eventually add Grant Park so I can walk Molly instead of having to drive to Heritage Oaks Park.

Please be aware that the Heritage Oaks Park afternoon pilot program hours will not work in the winter because it gets dark at 5:30 pm and these important hours are used for socialization with friends and pets. These same hours will also not work if the park is closed for field maintenance. You may want to change the hours to start at 4 pm to sunset for the daylight savings period posted instead. We will do our best to keep our dogs off the Little League field but I would be careful not to make this a violation because when dogs are chasing something they could run onto the field. It has not been a problem at San Antonio Park without having to make another violation.

Our Grant Park team collected over 100 unofficial voting ballots that were submitted at the workshops with the thought that they would be counted as official ballots that fully support the off-leash pilot program – but equally important demonstrate the strong need to extend off-leash hours to as many neighborhood parks as possible after the pilot is proven successful. I am very happy that you will pass along these recommendations to city council.

I concur that there is inadequate need or support for having any dedicated fenced in Dog Park in Los Altos. That is the reason that our team left this option out of our unofficial voting ballot.

Moving forward I am willing to do the work to help monitor the pilot program at Heritage Oaks Park because it is closest to my home. You may want to look at how this working in Cupertino because using volunteers off-loads the work from staff.

I fully expect last minute opposition both when the commission discusses and votes on this proposal and again at city council. But, in this case I think 11 years is enough time to spend on off-leash hours so I am willing to gather more support for this proposal once you pass it along to city council. I hope you will not let this opportunity slip away by any further delay.

Let me know your thoughts or questions.

Regards,

Frank Martin

Casey Richardson

From: Fang Lu [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 2:49 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Concerns of Making Heritage Oaks Park an Off Leash Dog Park

Hi,

My name is Fang and I am a resident living on Springer Road. My 6 year old son practices soccer in Heritage Oaks Park every weekend and this is a very important activity for him. A lot of other kids in Los Altos are also in the soccer practice and this is part of the reason we love the community.

Today we were informed by our soccer coach that the heritage oaks park will be turned into an off leash dog park soon and we were very disappointed about this decision. We would like to request the city to reconsider this decision.

Kids will not be able to play soccer in the park if dogs are running around. Even if they do it at different hours, dog waste and the holes digged by dogs will be potential safety hazards for kids.

Thanks a lot.

Fang

Casey Richardson

From: Donna Legge
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 2:47 PM
To: Los Altos Parks & Recreation Commission
Subject: FW: Extending our support for off-leash hours in Los Altos parks

Chair Lindermeier and Commissioners,

See email below, supporting the off-leash hours program.

Sincerely, Donna

-----Original Message-----

From: Shikha Malaviya <shikha@malaviya.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:13 PM
To: Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Extending our support for off-leash hours in Los Altos parks

To: Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director and Liaison to Parks and Recreation Commission

Dear Donna,

Our family of five (including our 2 year old mix terrier Chikoo) would like to express our sincere appreciation for the work that has already been done to get off-leash hours at our area parks. We whole heartedly support the proposal for a pilot program for off-leash hours at both the Hillview Little League Field and Heritage Oaks Park. We hope the pilot program is successful and consequently the off-leash program would be expanded to other neighborhood parks as well.

Sincerely,
Shikha Malaviya
Grant Park Neighborhood
Los Altos

Casey Richardson

From: Donna Legge
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 3:38 PM
To: Los Altos Parks & Recreation Commission
Subject: FW: Save Heritage Oaks Park
Attachments: Item 3 - Attachment A - Heritage Schedule.pdf

Chair Lindermeier and Commissioners,

Please see email below regarding opposition to off-leash hours in Heritage Oaks Park. Please note that I have forwarded the attached schedule to the coach and parent below, letting them know there is no interest overlapping uses.

Thanks, Donna

-----Original Message-----

From: Anita Wu [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 3:19 PM
To: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Save Heritage Oaks Park

Hi,

I am writing to ask you to save Heritage Oaks Park for recreation and for the wonderful Coach Ken soccer program for the Los Altos youth that utilizes this park.

The park has a lot of shade and a flat grass which is key for a soccer program particularly in the sunny CA days and summer. This park with its flat grass has more shade than the other parks in Los Altos. Little kids running around need to have the shade so that they do not overheat from heat stroke and can play and have fun.

I have two daughters who love to play soccer at Heritage Oaks Park and having a dog park at Heritage Oaks would take this park away from us and the families nearby.

Coach Ken program at Heritage Oaks Park has been an invaluable resource to many families in Los Altos.

Please do not allow it to be converted into a dog park.

Please save Heritage Oak Park!

Anita Wu
Los Altos Resident
(Former Los Altos Public Arts Commissioner)

Sent from my iPhone

Heritage Oaks - Fall/Winter/Spring (September to Mid-Nov, Feb to June)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6am							
6:30am							
7am							
7:30am							
8am							
8:30am							
9am							Coach Ken Soccer 4-5yrs
9:30am							9a-10a
10am						Coach Ken Soccer 4-5yrs	Coach Ken Soccer 6-10yrs
10:30am						10a-11a	10a-11a
11am							
11:30am							
12pm							
12:30pm			Coach Ken Soccer 4-5yrs				
1pm			12:30p-1:30p				
1:30pm							
2pm							
2:30pm							
3pm							
3:30pm							
4pm		Coach Ken Soccer 4-5yrs		Coach Ken Soccer 4-5yrs & 6-10yrs	MVLA Soccer 5-7yrs	Coach Ken Soccer 4-5yrs & 6-10yrs	
4:30pm		4:15p-5:15p		4:15p-5:15p	4p-5p	4:15p-5:15p	
5pm							
5:30pm							
6pm							
6:30pm							
7pm							
7:30pm							
8pm							
8:30pm							
9pm							

*** Park Closed for Annual Maintenance from end of Mid-November to January**

Heritage Oaks - Summer (June - August)

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6am							
6:30am							
7am							
7:30am							
8am							
8:30am							
9am							
9:30am							
10am							
10:30am		Coach Ken Soccer 4-12yrs					
11am		9a-1p	9a-1p	9a-1p	9a-1p	9a-1p	
11:30am							
12pm							
12:30pm							
1pm							
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3pm							
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5pm							
5:30pm							
6pm							
6:30pm							
7pm							
7:30pm							
8pm							
8:30pm							
9pm							

*** Park Closed for Annual Maintenance from Mid-November to January**

Casey Richardson

From: Fang Lu [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 3:49 PM
To: Donna Legge
Cc: Casey Richardson; Jaime Chew
Subject: Re: Concerns of Making Heritage Oaks Park an Off Leash Dog Park

Thanks for the prompt respond, Donna.

I think it will be a better idea to use another park as an off leash dog park. As I said in my previous email, even if they are at different times, dog wastes and holes will still be a problem for those kids who practice soccers there. Also, it might be a challenge to actually enforce this policy, maybe not all dog owners will be fully aware of the timing constraint.

Thanks

Fang

> On May 20, 2020, at 3:11 PM, Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov> wrote:

>

> Good afternoon Fang. Thank you for your email. Be rest assured that we will not be allowing dogs to be off-leash during the scheduled soccer program (attached), ran by the City.

>

> I will forward your concerns to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

>

> Sincerely, Donna

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Fang Lu [REDACTED]

> Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 2:49 PM

> To: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>

> Subject: Concerns of Making Heritage Oaks Park an Off Leash Dog Park

>

> Hi,

>

> My name is Fang and I am a resident living on Springer Road. My 6 year old son practices soccer in Heritage Oaks Park every weekend and this is a very important activity for him. A lot of other kids in Los Altos are also in the soccer practice and this is part of the reason we love the community.

>

> Today we were informed by our soccer coach that the heritage oaks park will be turned into an off leash dog park soon and we were very disappointed about this decision. We would like to request the city to reconsider this decision.

>

> Kids will not be able to play soccer in the park if dogs are running around. Even if they do it at different hours, dog waste and the holes digged by dogs will be potential safety hazards for kids.

>

> Thanks a lot.

>

> Fang

>

> [Although our offices are closed, we are continuing to serve the public remotely. Feel free to call or email the City for questions as many services have been modified. We thank the community for their cooperation and understanding. We can slow the spread of COVID-19 when we work together. For more information on COVID-19, call 211 or text 'coronavirus' to 211211. Looking to donate or volunteer? Please visit <https://www.csacares.org>]

> <Item 3 - Attachment A - Heritage Schedule.pdf>

Casey Richardson

From: Drew Brown [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 3:58 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Special Parks and Recreation Commission (Remote Access via RingCentral) 5-20-20

To: Parks and recreation Commission
Re: Agenda item 3.3C Off-Leash Dog Hours at Heritage Oaks Park

We live down the block from Heritage Oaks Park and want to note a few concerns regarding the proposal to establish a pilot program for off-leash dog hours. We aren't dog owners but we love dogs and are happy to see dogs at Heritage Oaks. Our corner and McKenzie street in general, get a lot of foot traffic with many dog owners, and we haven't seen any negative impacts from dogs in the neighborhood. The only negative from being close to the park is when it gets busy and parking overflows down our street – not a problem since it's a rare occasion. However, we think that selecting one particular (small) park location to trial a leash-free program could change things significantly for the following reasons:

1. One location with legal off-leash may cause unnecessary concentration of use – it effectively creates a dog park without the budget or oversight. Has there been an analysis of how the change will impact the park? Why not pilot several locations at a time to spread the demand from dog owners? Why is it necessary to designate a legal off-leash location at all?
 - a. Despite posted signs, people already use Heritage oaks and other fields to have their dogs off leash – with little to no enforcement and no significant issues that I can tell. Is it necessary to change what works?
 - b. Making this small park and parking lot a destination for LA/MV resident dog owners could overwhelm its size and change its character. It will attract more use, with little or no change in enforcement or maintenance.
2. Shared use is difficult. If the park does concentrate use for off-leash, it effectively becomes a dog park with other amenities in it. Every morning and afternoon until sunset are posted hours. Who will enforce the hours and how?
 - a. The field area and picnic tables are used regularly by kids and families. It's not reasonable to expect dogs to stay out of picnic areas with food and kids.
 - b. The field is used regularly by youth soccer teams and other informal sports play. It's not reasonable to assume dog owners can keep up with the waste produced by a de-facto dog park. There is a reason that dedicated, fenced dog parks have significant maintenance programs and budgets.

Again, we've had no issue with the way the park gets used by dog owners up to now, and we have no issue with the park being piloted if it was one of many local off-leash areas. Why not do this in every park and field? We see a major potential problem if this small park is designated the only place to bring your off-leash dog in the City. That decision would seem to require more analysis of the potential increase in demand for its space, and a study showing why one location is better than many. Any solution should be realistic about enforcement, maintenance, and noise and traffic for immediate neighbors. With the recommendation against building fenced dog parks due to neighbor concerns and cost, designating one park the only place to have dogs off-leash is short sighted.

Thank you for your time. Sincerely,

Drew Brown
CA Registered Landscape Architect #6116
[REDACTED] McKenzie Ave, Los Altos

Casey Richardson

From: Mary Anne Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 5:25 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Off-leash Dog Hours Program at Heritage Oaks Park

To Whom it May Concern,

I live at 1311 McKenzie Ave, Los Altos, CA 94024, directly across the street from Heritage Oaks Park. I am friendly with many dogs and dog-owners. However, I write to urge the Parks and Recreation Commission to reconsider the proposed program of Heritage Oaks Park becoming an off-leash park. My husband and I have four children, and living across the street from the park and playground was part of what drew us to this area.

Even with the current requirements of keeping dogs on a leash, we find that many dog owners come to the park at all hours and let their dogs off the leash. Several times, my children have been frightened when the dogs bounded close to them. Always, the owners reassure me that the dogs are "friendly," but unfortunately I have known circumstances where friendly dogs have bitten. The off-leash dogs bounding up to my children happens often enough that my daughter has developed a fear of dogs. In addition, one of our sons has a severe dog allergy--he begins hiving when a dog even licks him.

I feel that dog owners in the Mountain View-Los Altos area actually have lots of space available to them where they can walk their dogs and let them play. Creating only one park where dogs can run off-leash is a recipe for lawsuits. If a child gets attacked or has an allergic reaction, or even if another dog gets attacked it seems the program would create liability for Parks and Recreation. If there were off-leash hours in many different parks across the cities, this would make this program less of an issue, as it would likely be how it already is--with a few dogs off leash at each park. The idea of concentrating all of these dogs in an off-leash program in only one park will cause disturbance for the residences across the street, as everyone will start bringing their dogs here, and all kinds of these negative incidents will go up with the large amount of dogs. (Not to mention a larger amount of dog poop for us to deal with!)

I hope that for health and safety reasons, especially during this current health crisis when we are all so stressed, that the commission will reconsider the proposal of making Heritage Oaks Park the pilot off-leash dark park.

Sincerely,
Mary Anne Williams

Casey Richardson

From: Shellece [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 5:35 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Heritage Oaks Free range dogs

I just received an email on this issue and only wish I would have seen it sooner so I could have had time to send it to everyone I know in Los Altos.

Please consider not turning HO park into a place where dogs have access to pee and poop wherever they would like. Regardless if the owner cleans it up there is still residual excrement on the grass. We love HO park. My children run and roll in the grass there. I frankly am shocked that it is even being proposed that dogs be allowed to roam free while children are there. While dog owners think their dogs temperament would never rise to hurt anyone there is never a guarantee that they won't turn aggressive and feel threatened and turn on a stranger near by. I am not comfortable with my children being at the park at the same time as dog hours. I love animals but I love my children more than a strangers dog and their dogs bacteria all over my shoes.

Many Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

Casey Richardson

From: L Roth [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 6:07 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: In support of Dog Parks and the pilot program "yes" 5/20 Meeting

Hello
Just a short note to voice my support of a dedicated dog park (which I understand is not happening) but also of the pilot program for an off-leash dog park. I may not have a chance to be heard tonight so I wanted to send my "yes vote - support" in advance of the meeting. I am a resident of Los Altos and also attended one of the workshops.

Of the two locations I prefer Hillview, but support either one.

Thank you,
Leah Roth

Casey Richardson

From: JOHN PETRO <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 6:13 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: dog park proposal at Heritage Oaks Park

To the City of Los Altos,

I strongly oppose establishing Heritage Oaks Park as a location for off leash dog hours. I live across the street from the park and even without off leash hours I have been accosted by a dog from the park while I was putting out my recycling containers. To my amazement the owner stood in the park and just kept calling the dog rather than running after it and getting it on a leash.

This park is regularly used by the city's and other children's soccer programs and the kids are often on the ground and sitting under the trees where the dogs would urinate and the increased dog usage would make this a serious problem. Clearly with our current emphasis on health this is not a wise situation. If you allow this proposal to continue I will make sure all the kids parents know what their children are being exposed to.

Regards,

John Petro

Casey Richardson

From: Zahra Ardehali [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 6:42 PM
To: Donna Legge
Cc: Casey Richardson
Subject: RE: Dog Park and PARC

Hi Donna,

Thanks for your reply and confirmation that Grant Park is not on the list and should not be added to the consideration. My point, exactly! I was surprised to see that Grant Park was mentioned/added to the content of the reports attached for the meeting. Please make sure the commission follows their own guidelines that they had set up earlier and individuals on the commission do not change during the time of Shelter-In-Place.

I appreciate your help in forwarding my email to the commission.

Thanks again,

Zahra

From: Donna Legge <dlegge@losaltosca.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 12:44 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: FW: Dog Park and PARC

Good afternoon Zahra. Thank you for your email.

Grant Park is not an option being looked at this time. Per the Dog Park Subcommittee recommendations (attached), from page 4:

Proposal for Off-Leash sites at two locations as a pilot program

Staff recommended two sites for off-leash hours that would be shared with other resident uses. PARC chose to support staff recommendations. The Subcommittee supports the concept of shared space, given that there is limited park space in our city. These two sites are: The Hillview Baseball Field and Heritage Oaks Park.

This would be a pilot program for a specific timeframe. The Subcommittee recommends 6-9 months in duration after the program begins. The 6-9-month period is exclusive of any closure due to any field maintenance. At the end of that timeframe, an updated report is recommended to City Council by current PARC subcommittee members and staff to determine if the pilot program should be extended or implemented permanently.

I will forward your email to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Please let me know if you have further questions.

Sincerely, Donna

Donna Legge, Recreation & Community Services Director



We Create Community through People, Parks and Programs

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**

Begin forwarded message:

From: Zahra Ardehali [REDACTED]
Date: May 16, 2020 at 2:24:11 AM PDT
To: Casey Richardson <crichardson@losaltosca.gov>
Cc: Manuel Hernandez <mhernandez@losaltosca.gov>, Lynette Lee Eng <lleeeng@losaltosca.gov>
Subject: Dog Park and PARC

Hello,

I would like to share my opinion regarding the upcoming 5/20 PARC meeting and discussions about the dog park. I am a resident of Los Altos and I think during COVID-19 situation, there is an effort by PARC to push an agenda that could be different from the majority opinion of the residents of Los Altos. I have read the reports that were included for the upcoming meeting on 5/20 and I noticed that there is an indication that Grant Park has been mentioned as a possible preference for off-leash hours, even though it was not on the list of considered parks. This comes as a surprise since Grant Park was excluded from the list of parks to be considered since it did not meet the criteria set by the PARC guidelines.

For a while, one of PARC's commissioners (Jonathan Weinberg) has been advocating off-leash hours at Grant Park since he lives within walking distance of it and he has shared publicly that he would like to walk his dog and let him run off-leash at Grant Park. It is not a democracy when decisions in government are made to serve the personal preference of one of the commissioners!

Why suddenly Grant Park has been added to the list and mentioned in the reports? This implies that perhaps there is an effort to serve the personal preference of one of PARC's commissioners. I hope that some members of PARC are not taking advantage of the SIP and implement their personal wishes and preferences, while residents may not be as involved.

With SIP and the current health situation that the residents are going through, we need our peace in the parks and this is not the time to turn our parks chaotic and dirty by turning them into off-leash dog parks. We have limited park space and it is wrong at this time to turn any parks into dog parks or off-leash hours. We need parks and green spaces for people and children for the health of the residents' minds and bodies.

Thanks,

Zahra Ardehali

Casey Richardson

From: Jessica Norris [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 6:58 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Support of Dog Park Subcommittee Report and Recommendations

Hello,

I am a resident of Los Altos and live near Heritage Oaks Park and express my support of the Dog Park Subcommittee plan regarding off leash hours at Heritage Oaks Parks.

Thank you to the Subcommittee for their research and efforts.

Best regards,

Jessica Norris

Casey Richardson

From: MARIE DORCICH [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 7:55 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Off Leash Hours

Hello,

It was brought to my attention this evening of the proposal to have an Off Leash Dog Hours at Heritage Oaks. As a resident of Los Altos, and mother of 4, we strongly oppose this proposal. Our children have and do play soccer at Heritage Oaks Park, as well as, on the playground and rope area. This would absolutely impact us. Off leash parks always increase waste being left behind and make it not possible for the park to be used by children if dogs are off leash and running around. A better option would be to create a dog specific park like on San Antonio Road. A great spot, which I am still confused by has not been utilized as a skate park and/or dog park, is the area above downtown off of Foothill Expressway. It is a long open space area that would be great for both of these options!! Please don't ruin a park!! People are MORE important than animals and our CHILDREN/FUTURE should be allowed to play on parks designed for them. I grew up playing at that same park and my father built several homes on McKenzie Avenue. It is a beautiful park, great for young children and families.

Thanks in advance for your time,
Marie Dorcich

Casey Richardson

From: Russell Nord [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 11:45 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Opposed to Off Leash Dog Hours at Heritage Oaks Park

Hello Ms. Richardson,

My family and I live near Heritage Oaks park and I strongly oppose off-leash hours for that park.

This will create increased noise and make the park less accessible for young children and families during the off-leash hours. It will only be a matter of time before a child is hurt due to the dogs. This could be intentional by the dog, unintentional or due simply to a scared child falling off of a play structure that a dog decided to run up.

I don't think many residents in the area know this is under consideration and I would urge the City to send mailers out to all residents for whom Heritage Oaks Park is the closest park, so that they can comment in time for your next meeting on this matter.

To be honest, the opinions of different neighborhoods in town will be pretty similar because neighborhoods are demographically similar. If one neighborhood didn't want off-leash hours for their local park, we can safely assume that no neighborhood in Los Altos would want off-leash hours at their local park, so perhaps other options should be explored. How much negative feedback the City gets about the proposal for a given park is likely just a matter of whether residents near that park know of the proposal or not.

Also, I should note, that I am a dog lover and my family plans to get a dog in the near future - this just isn't how Heritage Oaks Park should be used.

Respectfully,
Russ Nord

--

Russell M. Nord, MD
Assistant Chair, Department of Surgery
Washington Hospital
Medical Director
Washington Sports Medicine Program

Casey Richardson

From: Yoav Agmon [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2020 8:37 AM
To: Donna Legge; Casey Richardson
Cc: j [REDACTED]; Lynette Lee Eng
Subject: Alarming results of last nights votes regarding Heritage Oak Park

Hi Donna,Casey,

When one of the commissioner asked " how would you feel if a dog bite a kid's face? and the answer was I would be devastated" I thought we drove the argument home.

That based on the evidence presented as well as the objective guidelines for an unleash dogs park designation, Heritage Oak Park just doesn't meet the required criteria.

Regardless of the other NIMBY concerns, mixing the current usage, proximity to playgrounds, and high children and adults traffic in and around the park to schools and beyond can't permit this designation.

We were so disappointed and outraged that 4 out of the 7 commissioners were willing to take a risk with our kids.

You also got a small flavor of what the outreach program would have unearth if the majority of our neighborhood residents been aware and provided their feedback.

I am certain that most of them once becoming aware of this issue would feel as I do now, and will not hesitate to take any means necessary to stop Heritage Oak park from becoming a danger zone.

Again, I believe that you and the subcommittee did your job in good faith to the best of your ability under the current circumstances,

Thanks for allowing our voices and concerns to be heard, this is definitely not the end of it.

Please forward my response to the rest of the commission.

sincerely,

Yoav

p.s. now you have the emails for over 20 of our neighborhood residents, so you can keep us informed.

Casey Richardson

From: Barbara Goodrich [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 4:41 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Written Submission for 5/20 PARC Meeting

I've reviewed the supporting materials for the May 20, 2020 PARC meeting and have comments related to the fenced dog-park recommendation. While I appreciate the extensive work done by the subcommittee, I think the conclusion to recommend against a fenced dog park anywhere in Los Altos is not well supported by the data.

1. Considering only data tabulated from the February 2020 information sessions, interest for and against a fenced dog park is almost even (136 votes for, 152 votes against). Note that the formal noticing procedure of 1000' from the proposed sites biased attendance in favor of immediate neighbors, a group known to be aggressively opposed. It's actually surprising that the votes for and against are so close given that those opposed were highly organized.
2. This was not an election. It wasn't a statistically valid sample. It's a case of 16* citizen preferences determining policy for a city of 30,000+. *(The difference between 152 and 136.)
3. The 2020 results are markedly different from the 2018 City Dog Park Survey, where 78% of respondents favored a fenced dog park and 57% supported off-leash hours. The 2018 survey was a much larger sample and indicated clear majorities for both options. Why is the more recent survey a better representative sample of the community?
4. The supporting materials indicate that 256 comment cards were received from the February 2020 workshops, but only 71 comments, clustered around seven concerns – all negative – are provided in this material to PARC. Since 136 cards were in favor of fenced-in parks, it's impossible that nobody had a positive relevant comment for Commission consideration. Yet no positive comments were provided, so there is nothing in the material addressing the positive aspects of a dog park: Community engagement, healthy dogs, good dog socialization, reduced traffic, less burden on neighborhoods, potential downtown retail flow, etc.

In concluding that Los Altos has inadequate support for a fenced in dog park, the subcommittee is discounting --

- * the 2018 survey, indicating substantial majority support
- * the community petition in support of a South Lincoln fenced dog park, dismissed because the signers didn't also come to the workshops or write additional letters
- * the fact that the vote was almost evenly split, even in view of a 1000' noticing bias against a fenced-in park.

The Lincoln Park proposed fenced-in dog park, at 7000 square feet, is less than one half of one percent of Los Altos park acreage. Parking is ample. Neighborhood infringement is minimal. The park is minimally used. Money has been allocated. A better site doesn't exist in the city limits. These are almost ideal conditions under which to move forward.

A final comment about the idea that a dog park be negotiated with developers as part of the conditions for project approval: Developers already struggle with high land and construction prices, lengthy approval processes, obligation to create public benefits, commitments to BMR units, and more. Now we want to add dog parks to their list of requirements? Offloading a known community need to some unknown future private parties is abdication, not a plan.

Sincerely,
Barbara Goodrich
[REDACTED] Hill Way, LAH

Casey Richardson

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Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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Sincerely,
Barbara Goodrich
[REDACTED] Hill Way, LAH

Casey Richardson

From: Peter Tran [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 9:18 AM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Heritage Oak Park - No Unleashed Dogs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi Casey,

I live on Holly Ave. near Heritage Oaks Park. I just want to weigh in with my support of my neighbors in expressing our opposition of allowing the park to have unleashed dogs. I won't reiterate all the arguments already mentioned, but it is a small park and would adversely effect safety of the park if this were allowed.

-PT

[REDACTED] Holly Ave.

Casey Richardson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 10:04 AM
To: Donna Legge; Casey Richardson
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: URGENT re: Off-leash hours in Heritage Park
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Donna and Casey,

Please allow me to be respectful yet direct as possible with my comments below...

My name is Martin Saso and I am the owner for the past 30 years of [REDACTED] McKenzie Ave...

- One of the homes directly across from Heritage Oak Park and one of the homes that would be DIRECTLY impacted by this, what I would label to be an unsafe idea to allow dogs to be (at any time) off a leash / un-leased in this day and age of litigious activity and where the safety of all is paramount...
- I just today was advised of this meeting to take place tonight...that in itself is most unfortunate for the gap in being notified by the City...but I will rearrange my schedule to participate in tonight's meeting and will register to make my comments known to all.
- One of my comments will include how I, at age 4, was attacked by an un-leased dog and have the scars to show it on my right hand...in this day and age, one can only imagine the liability issues that would result from such an event taking place and all parties directly and indirectly involved.

Additional initial thoughts include:

- I could not find any data within the "study" of the impact of the un-leash hours at Heritage Oak Park would have on the Community and on McKenzie Ave residents in particular.
- No data of record that I can locate that asked for any thoughts / concerns from the homes and people involved that live on McKenzie Ave...this comment is not meant to be offensive, but there was a book written a long time ago by the name

of "How to Lie With Statistics"...I am referring to some apparent data collected where "63% of 284 responses were in favor of off leash programs"...meaningless data for those actually impacted.

- **At present, dogs are frequently unleashed throughout the day and the owner's of same disregard the signage that the City has in place- based on this data, it is illogical and impractical to think the City would be able to "limit" the hours where such activity would be authorized...**
 - **As a reference point, over in Santa Cruz County they now have "GUARDS in PLACE" at the various entrances to the beach areas to ensure that the beaches are indeed NOT occupied between the hours of 11am until 5pm due to Covid-19...without actual GUARDS in place at Heritage Oaks Park it is naive to think your "proposed rules for the times where this activity is authorized" would be honored...you will have opened up "Pardora's Box"...which is indeed unsafe for many reasons.**
- Unleashed dogs running in the park will not only deny park usage when we are back from work and over the weekend but also make our street unsafe and dangerous.
- I also recall that back around 2007, an idea for a dog park in the Heritage Oak Park was presented and logic prevailed and the idea was fortunately scrapped.

Alternative Solution:

- **Questa Park is nearby. It is a larger park that also includes a legacy fenced dog park.**
 - **Heritage Oak Park is NOT the answer...pursue Questa Park as it has the above mentioned "fenced dog park area" and overall is much larger in size.**
- **Respectfully, the city of Los Altos should study and address seriously the above concerns rather than ignore them and start this ill advised pilot program.**

Looking forward to sharing these thoughts to all later tonight...

Martin Saso

██████████ McKenzie Ave, Los Altos, CA

████████████████████

Casey Richardson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 10:44 AM
To: Donna Legge; Casey Richardson
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
martin.saso@gmail.com
Subject: Re: URGENT re: Off-leash hours in Heritage Park
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Casey,

Update...

I just sent the text to phone number 650-947-2726 registering my request to comment on Agenda item 3C which I show to be ..."Fenced-in Dog Park and Pilot Off-Leash Hours Program Recommendations Receive report from Dog Park Subcommittee and forward two separate recommendations to City Council for each dog park type"

If we, the Home Owners, are to speak in another section other than 3C regarding this matter below, please clarify as I plan to share my thoughts when I am called on.

Thank you,
Martin Saso
[REDACTED] McKenzie Ave, Los Altos, CA
[REDACTED]

----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
To: dlegge@losaltosca.gov, crichardson@losaltosca.gov
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: URGENT re: Off-leash hours in Heritage Park
Date: Wed, 20 May 2020 17:03:49 GMT

Donna and Casey,

Please allow me to be respectful yet direct as possible with my comments below...

My name is Martin Saso and I am the owner for the past 30 years of [REDACTED] McKenzie Ave...

- One of the homes directly across from Heritage Oak Park and one of the homes that would be DIRECTLY impacted by this, what I would label to be an unsafe idea to allow dogs to be (at any time) off a leash / un-leashed in this day and age of litigious activity and where the safety of all is paramount...
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- I also recall that back around 2007, an idea for a dog park in the Heritage Oak Park was presented and logic prevailed and the idea was fortunately scrapped.

Casey Richardson

From: Caroline Gupta [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 12:33 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Heritage Oaks Park - Dedicated Park for Unleashed Dogs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello,

I am emailing you regarding the dog park discussion tonight.

I am a Heritage Oak Park resident. My house is right across the street and I am a dog owner.

Before all the drama around the park started it was heaven. Every day I met with dog owners and their dogs at the park and we just had a great time. All the people who came lived within .5 mile of the park. People were respectful, picked up after their dogs and respected other people enjoying the park. We also went only in the morning and late afternoon before or after community activities.

Only on Sundays when some man came and played volleyball (coming from all other cities and neighborhood) did I experience "the look" or mean comments because my dog was unleashed. By the way, my dog is 6lbs and loves being around other dogs and human beings. These people were not friend at all but otherwise everybody else was friendly and I also have lots of little kids who wanted to pet my dog thinking she was a puppy. I gladly obliged and always did it under the parent supervision and approval. It did bring a lot of joy to lot of joy to people.

Since signs were posted at Heritage Oaks (and all other LA parks) not to leave or dogs unleashed things have changed. The neighborhood "dog community" does not exist anymore and most people go to Mountain View.

I am all for to try out designated hours for the park but I think it will now attract people from everywhere, NOT JUST OUR NEIGHBORHOOD and I think this would make the front of the park too crowded.

Another solution, has someone else mentioned it, would be to use the "dirt" area behind the bathroom as a permanent or offered at specific hours dog park. I understand that the cost would be higher because of work that needs to be done but it could be the best solution for this park. It would not disrupt after school activities (which are a nice revenue for the city) or people enjoying the park. The back space of Heritage Oak is not used at all and I think it would be an excellent solution..

Thank you for taking the time to read my email and I'll be on the call tonight.

Best,
Caroilne Gupta
Heritage Oaks Park Neighborhood

Casey Richardson

From: arvind jaini [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 3:37 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Dog park

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To whom it may concern

I live at 1367 McKenzie Ave near the heritage oak park

I strongly oppose the proposed dog park— fenced or Unfenced.

Already many people come to the dog park and let their dogs run without leashes. When my wife and I go walking by the park with our small dog who is always on a leash, multiple times we've had unleashed dogs charge our small dog - even running out onto McKenzie Ave - and necessitating us quickly picking up our dog to prevent his being attacked. The owners are either indifferent or at least one time belligerent towards us.

The afternoon dog park hours is particularly disturbing as many parents bring their children to play on the play structures after school or to practice soccer on the field - and dogs off leash put these kids at risk

And with regards to dog excrement - despite bag dispensers - there is often dog poo littering the field.

Finally at a time when we are facing a coronavirus pandemic and are uncertain what the rules for socializing and group activities will be - should we be loosening restrictions on dog activities and the socializing that accompanies it?

Regards,

Arvind Jaini

[REDACTED]

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Casey Richardson

From: Rani Roley [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 4:12 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Cc: rani roley
Subject: Off Leash Dog Hours Program at Heritage Park

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dar Sir/Madam,

I don't support the approval of the off leash hours at Heritage Park for the reasons stated below.

1. Heritage Park has a sign that says dogs have to be on leash at all times and so many dog owners have blatantly ignored the rule and no one has monitored to ensure that this be followed. What makes any one think that just by having off leash dog hours that this rule is going to be adhered and monitored when it's not even happening now?
2. We live at the tail end of the park right opposite the creek where the trail into the park begins. There have been so many occasions when dog owners take the leashes off and the dogs have run down the creek only to run back up and charge me and my leashed dog in our driveway. We have also been charged at on numerous occasions by dogs off leash at Heritage Park and have had to pick my small dog up immediately for fear. It's astounding when owners have just stood calmly or been belligerent when I have reacted in fright. We now tend to walk in the opposite direction for our walks just to avoid loose dogs in the park.
3. I go for walks to Cuesta park and have noticed on many occasions owners socializing and not paying attention to their dog's whereabouts..Dogs run to other areas of the entire park outside of the unfenced dog bowl and also potty on the grassy areas in the park with no one picking after them. *Unlike* Cuesta Park, Heritage park is small and *like* Cuesta Park, there are many families who come here with their little kids who picnic, play soccer etc. This is definitely not going to be sanitary.
4. On one of my recent walks at Cuesta, I had to walk diagonally across a green area off the walk way to avoid a family with the COVID situation. In doing so, I did not realize I had stepped on dog poo which had not been picked up. Also, being a dog owner myself, I know that the grass blades still have residual poo even after pick up.
5. I park at the Cuesta parking lot before my walk and have noticed on numerous occasions big dogs loose waiting to be leashed by their owners as they get out from their cars.. I have often sat in my car waiting for them to move before getting out of my car.
I can't imagine what the situation would look like if this were to happen at Heritage Park, with the barking and the increase in parked vehicles and overall general safety.

Respectfully,
Rani Roley
[REDACTED] McKenzie Ave, Los Altos 94024
[REDACTED]

Casey Richardson

From: Joyce van Reis [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2020 4:31 PM
To: Casey Richardson
Subject: Dog park comment for May 20

Dear representative,

I attended to public comment meeting month's ago at Grant Park and would like to express my continuing need for an official off-leash dog park at Heritage Oaks Park. I have a young 30 lb. dog that is too big for a small dog fenced in space and too small for a large dog contained area. She is best served in an open space park where she can run and play. I am good with the time restrictions and Misty meets the licensing and behavior specifications.

We are looking forward to having an approved place to play within Los Altos.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Joyce van Reis
Crist Drive, Los Altos