The Committee of the Whole meeting on February 3,2020 heard delegations related to off leash dog parks in Guelph. After discussion, the vote clearly showed what needed to be done. But then on February 4th, it seems to us, that some of you, not happy with the previous night's vote , are doing an about turn. A strange change in thinking on this topic to say the least!
To close or not to close? That is the question you must again consider on February 24th.

Do the right thing as you again hear what residents in the Misersky Park and Bristol St Park areas have to say. Plain and simple, off leash dog parks should not be located in residential areas. Uphold the vote
from February 3rd.

It is now time to move on with better laid out plans as to where off leash dog parks should be located.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara and David Curzon

***

Hello,

I live in Ward 6, and would like to make a suggestion for fenced dog parks. I had tried that new dog park near Hadati Dr, (can't remember the name) and my first thought was too close to homes and no parking. There were not enough garbage containers nor water for dogs. Regardless, the neighbourhood would be upset with all that noise etc, and it was upset.

I have noticed in other municipalities they tend to put fenced dog parks in industrial areas. More parking, garbage containers full of dog waste not a bother there, and dogs barking.

I do not know what land the city has available so I can't recommend a specific property.

I have taken my dogs to Hanlon and kortright area but I have been bothered on Mother's Day by your bylaw officers because the park has a very small area for off leash (The City might want to expand that area). The park was full of families and their dogs.

Anyway, please consider this

Thank you
Susanne Saunders

***

Hello,

I am a dog owner that uses the Peter Misersky Fenced in Dog Park. I have stayed quiet since it opened but have listened to home owners complain as well as dog owners. I have to say that I was very surprised to read that the City of Guelph is thinking about closing down the dog park. Don't get me wrong, I feel for the home owners but what about the all the dogs and dog owners that now use the park? And what about all the money the City has already spent on the park.

When I heard they were building this dog park, I assumed it would have been at the old baseball diamond and was very surprised to learn it would be right beside a children's playground and next to the townhomes. I have heard that they could not build on the ball diamond because the city needs access to pick up the garbage bin. If that is the case, why can't a pathway, that is locked, be built by the baseball diamond to allow the city trucks in to get to the garbage can? If the dog park was built there originally, it would be in people's backyards and would have caused less irritation to the home owners.

But the fact is that the City has spend a good amount of our tax payers money on the current dog park. I have heard the issues the home owners have is the noise, the amount of traffic and the garbage. To try to help with these problems I have a few comments and suggestions.

1) The noise from the dogs: If you have spent anytime at the dog park, you would notice that when you enter the fenced in area, most of the humans stay near the entrance. You would also notice that the dogs like to stay around their humans and therefore, most of the running and playing of dogs is near the entrance. If the City moved the entrance from its current location to the far end, that would most likely have the humans and the dogs staying at the far end. If there is a dog that seems to be extra vocal on a day, if they are at the other end of the park, I am sure it would be quieter for the home owners,

2) Amount of Traffic: Correct me if I am wrong but is the public parking area also not available for those that choose to use the playground? So if this became a hot spot for families and their young children, would we allow these home owners to express the same concerns about families parking in there to go to the playground? If parking is a concern, why don't you take away the public parking. This would force dog owners to park on Hadati Rd and walk up the hill. I myself live close enough that I walk to the park instead of driving but what I have heard from those that drive to the park, they would continue to use the dog park even if they had to walk up the hill to get to the entrance (which would/could be at the opposite end now).

3) Garbage seems to be an issue: I personally have never seen garbage laying around the dog park. The dog owners that use the park are sure to clean up their messes as they would have concerns if their dogs or other dogs picked up garbage and trash. I have seen on many occasions dog owners pick up garbage if they do

see it. This is a public space so saying any garbage in and around the park is from dog owners is silly. It is possible that with blowing winds, garbage is moved around and gets caught on the fence making it look like the dog owners leave garbage laying around. Also, there is only one tiny garbage bin that is place near the dog park so if you go to put stuff in there and it is full, perhaps some put it on the ground. Maybe a bigger trash can could help with this or more then one?

I am not normally the type of person to write an email like this but I could not sit back and let the City remove this park and waste more of my tax dollars without giving a few suggestions.

I am happy to have a discussion with anyone if they would like to hear more from me. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I wish you the best of luck when you try to determine how to make this dog park still work well understanding the home owners frustrations as well.

Tara Lazzari

***
I don't live in the Misersky nor Bristol street areas affected by current and proposed dog parks, however i have great sympathy for the concerns of residents in these areas. They have valid concerns with noise, traffic, and parking. I strongly encourage council to vote for staff to look for new sites, at a distance from residential properties, that are suitable for dog parks. I support dog parks, but not across the street from residential homes. Please make this situation right.

Thank you kindly,
Judy MacEachern

***
Hi,

My name is Dayna and I'm writing to plead the case for keeping the fenced in dog park at Peter Misersky Park (PMDP) in place.

I have a 2 year old husky who is the sweetest boy in the world (although I'm sure all dog owners say this), and like most huskies, he has a high level of curiosity and very poor recall. I cannot take him to un-fenced areas to run and play as this would create a very serious safety concern for him. Frequent walks are not always enough for him and he is way too friendly and social to just hang out with his humans all the time. Currently, we use the PMDP a few times a month, but we would use a fenced in dog park several times a week if it weren't on the other side of the city from us - we were REALLY looking forward to the dog park on Bristol. Before PMDP was in place we left Guelph as frequently as we could to go to one of the MANY fenced in dog parks in Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge.

I think it's tragic and shameful that a city like Guelph, that places so much emphasis on the health and well-being of it's residents, didn't have a fenced in dog

park until recently. I also find it absolutely disgusting that the city would consider WASTING so much money putting one up and then taking it down less than a year later.

To be clear, I understand that the necessary impact assessment may not have been done for the current dog park location and that residents in the area have complained about the annoyance they feel with the park being so close to their homes (although honestly the noise is minimal - dogs don't tend to bark while they play, they're too busy wrestling and running). While I understand the City is regretful about this situation, and is trying to rectify it for the handful of people this has negatively impacted, I don't think it's fair to penalize the thousands of dog owners that currently use the facilities unless there were another fenced in dog park in place.

I strongly urge you to either keep the current park in place (PMDP) or at the very least, have another park in place before taking this one down.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any follow up questions or concerns regarding the above.

Thank you,
Dayna Chaarani

***

Good morning,

As we get closer to 'the big decision', I have to again voice my concerns about closing the Peter Misersky dog park and the other two proposed dog parks.

I have attached two screenshots from James Gordon's Twitter.

In the first, he tells Mayor Cam that the concerns from the neighbours are not overblown and in the second he says "most dog owners are respectful." Is he not contradicting himself by saying this?

As I read and watch the news surrounding this controversial park, I see that there are the same voices echoing.

We have the prominent voice of the anti-dog park movement and he's present in all of the news releases with his folded arms and angry stare. It is because of him that I have stopped going to the dog park. I fear that he will hurt my dog or myself. I worry if my dog barks (even once) I'll have to deal with his snarling face.

In Gordon's tweets, he says there are dogs barking late/early and car doors slamming and that's grounds enough to abandon this investment? And... if most dog owners are respectful, shouldn't we allow them a dog park? Somewhere? Anywhere? And soon... because we all wanted this! And we've all been waiting!

I don’t understand how a few barks and car doors opening and closing are somewhat grounds for removing an entire park and stopping construction on the others. If so, could you remove my neighbor who shovels loudly after 10pm? Or the kids across the street and a few doors down that feel compelled to yell and be kids while I’m reading in my hammock? (Just kidding)

Could we not PADLOCK the park at dusk and unlock it at 7 AM? Or whenever this individual wakes up?

Thank you for reading.
L Stewart

***

Hi

I'm writing to express my desire to help keep the Peter Misersky fenced in area of the dog park open. This is a wonderful area that Guelph should be proud of, especially considering we're home to the OVC. I've found it to be busy and the people who frequent it to be respectful and pleasant.

Is there a way to work with the concerned local citizens to address their concerns, versus just closing this portion of the park (which seems like a colossal waste of money)?

Scott Macewen

***

I am writing to support the present, and future, fenced dog parks in Guelph.
My concern is about due process. As a fairly new "Guelphite" I assume there was a long term process in place to plan, fund, and build the first 3 parks. Suddenly it's an item on CTV news and Council decides to close the existing one, and cancel the other two, midway through the project? That doesn't seem appropriate. How can a vocal minority can wield so much power when the concept of fenced dog parks came from a large section of the Guelph community. The decision to provide these must have been proactive.

But Council took a sudden reactive approach by jumping in and suggesting taking away an option that is actually working. My daughter and I have frequented Peter Misersky on many occasions and have never encountered an unacceptable amount of noise, people, dogs, or vehicles. I've heard far more noise from the high school students hanging out on the playground equipment.

Are there challenges? Absolutely. Not all dog owners are following the rules. That's on us as a group of users. It does sit in close proximity to a few homes across the road and I understand how this new park use has impacted them.

I want the fenced area at Peter Misersky to stay open and the Bristol Street Park be completed. Having more available will take the pressure off the first. Dog owners and the city will have to work together at enforcing reasonable hours and following rules. Those parks are accessible for dog owners who don't drive. We value mixed use parks, neighbourhoods that have high walk scores. Think of the smaller carbon footprint of having neighbourhood fenced dog parks. The city can also be looking for property further away that would have less impact on a neighbourhood; but bearing in mind that the city then would have to maintain access road, parking lot, and garbage at a greater cost.

We're all neighbours in this city, with different needs and wants at different life stages. Developing tolerance and acceptance, and a sense of a shared community is important.

Corrie O'Driscoll

***

Please keep the fenced in dog park at Peter Misersky park, also the plan to build more, we need more than just one!

Thanks,
Kim Dunn

***

Hello,

I am writing this email to voice to city council how important it is for the leash-free park in Peter Misersky park to stay open. Originally being from Hamilton, I was surprised that the residential location of the dog park has become such an issue for some residents; this is commonplace in Hamilton and no one complains about it. However, if the plans to build additional dog parks around Guelph were allowed to continue, this would address the issue of the one location being "too loud" or populated.

As someone who rents an apartment in Guelph that does not have a fenced back yard, having access to the dog park has been great for socializing, exercising, and off-leash training my young dog. To lose this space would be so disappointing to all of the dog owners of Guelph who have been yearning for a safe space for our dogs to play. I do sincerely hope that the Guelph city council decides not to close the Peter Misersky dog park, and continues the planning of future dog parks.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Aydana Rimmer

***

Please accept this email as my formal request to keep the dog park open at Peter Misersky Park. While I haven't used the park much during the winter months, we regularly visited it in the fall and hope to continue visiting it as the weather warms up.

Most patrons are respectful of the space. John Farley grossly misrepresents the noise levels at the park. Perhaps City Staff could spend consecutive hours at the park at different times of the day to witness the usual happenings. I recognize that some dog owners are irresponsible and leave dog bags laying around however this is no different than in any park in our city. I walked through Riverside Park today and saw a dozen bags and piles of dog poop that owners left behind. That issue is not unique to the fenced in dog park.

Because it is the only fenced in dog park in the city, it's likely busier than what it will be when others are built.

I personally witnessed John Farley bullying patrons to leave the park AND vandalizing the park by removing the temporary gates. He is hardly a credible citizen for he demonstrated that he believed he was above the law and had greater rights than others.

Lastly, I take great exception to the cost the city would incur by closing this park. I pay over $9,000 annually in property taxes and I have zero tolerance for staff wasting taxpayers dollars! That is exactly what the result will be if this park is closed.

Sincerely,
Rosanna Sartori

***
To whom it may concern,

Please keep the fenced in dog park open. Owning a dog has been proven to increase the quality and length of a person's life. It encourages owners to be active and social, two of the biggest contributors to a happy and long life. In addition, it strengthens the community.

It also increases community safety - My neighbour was out walking his dog when he noticed a stranger looking into windows of another neighbours house. He called police and took photos of the guy and his car with liscense plates. The cops arrived and arrested the man who was on probation with a long history of break and enters. Because my neighbour was walking his dog, he kept our community safer.

In addition, my children are safer. When my husband travels for work, my seemingly lethargic Golden Retriever becomes quite the guard dog. One night at 11pm, my dog woke up and ran to the front door and started viciously barking. I peaked through the glass to see someone running away from my front door and jumped into a running car. I have two children under the age of two.

So to keep my dog happy and healthy, I take her to dog parks where she can socialize as she desires. To keep a healthy state of mind, dogs (much like people) need to be social. We used to go to the leash free park on Kortright and the Hanlon. I befriended a woman there who also had a small child. Her dog and my dog were born on the same day and our soon to be second children would be born on the same day. We would meet every day to walk and let our dogs play. After not seeing her for a month, I began to ask the other regulars her whereabouts. It turned out that her dog left the leash free area when she was trying to load her child in the car. She was so close to her due date that she was exhausted and the summer heat was slowing her down. Quickly she realized that her dog was gone. He made is way onto the Hanlon and was struck and killed.

Dogs keep people happy and healthy, which reduces costs on the medical system. And to keep dogs happy and healthy, they need to have access to a fenced in leash free area. I don't care where you put it. Just give us one. Anywhere. Just one.

I don't think it is a lot to ask financially or physically to have a fenced-in dog park.

I have counted the houses on my street for an informal survey and 60% of the homes have at least one dog. If 60% of tax payers could benefit from a one time low cost item like a dog park, I don't know why this isnt being done.

If you give us the land, we will even fundraise on our own and build the fences ourselves. Please.

Christine Plateo

***

To whom it may concern,

I am writing you to oppose the cities decision to close the dog park and offer an alternative area that I believe will work for everyone.

We as dog owners need spaces like Peter Misersky to socialize, train and exercise our dogs in a safe place. These dog parks are especial great for older people who physically can't exercise the companion.

There’s an area in Lyon's park that I believe would be a perfect fit for a new fenced in dog park. There’s an old baseball diamond located between Guelph water works and hooper street that has everything needed, this area has a large open space, near by parking, street access and is in walking distance for a lot of homeowners. I would urge the city to add in some agility equipment inside the park along with lighting and a water bottle filling station somewhere in the area.

I hope the city can find a way to keep the park and add a few more

Thank you
Matt Prigione

***

I’d like to point out the simple bottom line, in what the mayor has managed to make into a dispute between those in favour of a fenced, lease free dog park, and those wanting to retain well used local parks, in quiet, with emphasis on retaining the quiet, residential areas, unable to sustain high traffic and high density parking. There is no reason not to have a fenced, off lease dog park. No one is objecting. Committee of the Whole has approved an amendment to the lease free implementation plan for vote tonight that states ”that staff be directed to explore the feasibility of a fenced dog park located in a non-residential area for consideration in the 2021 budget”. That is the foundation and beginnings of a good leash free facility. It would require the patience to wait for one year to be in use. The amendment also includes “remove the proposed fenced leash free facility at Lee Street Park and Bristol Street Park”. This will allow the continued use of these parks as playgrounds and sports fields, a much used dog walking area and walking

area and place for people to exercise, socialize, and commune with nature. These purposes will be lost if development of a fenced facility proceeds. In fact, the plan notes to have Bristol Street Park "an all exclusive leash free facility".

Implementation of the un-amended plan will mean these parks and there current usage are lost forever. These parks were put in place by earlier planners and councils, who used foresight in strategizing to secure parks lands for future generations in an ever more populated city centre.

I would be amiss not to mention Peter Misersky Park – in the same amendment it is recommended it be closed, and the infrastructure removed. Please do this. The people of this neighbourhood have suffered long enough.

The widely circulated online petition does reaffirm the desire to have a fenced off lease facility. Unfortunately, it lacks facts and clarity, focusing on emotion. You, council, must use the good information available, and lessons learned from Misersky Park, to direct the funds wisely, and bring about a facility that matches everyones needs.

Sometimes progress does take a little time, and a little bit of compromise.
Please pass this amendment. To do otherwise would be a waste of taxpayer dollars. This amendment will, with a short wait for implementation, allow for happy dogs, owners and residents.

Anne Valliant

***

Six years ago my husband and I chose to live in a condo on Bristol street because it was a quiet residential area, centrally located in the city. My husband had been diagnosed with Parkinsons and having a park in our neighbourhood was important and convenient for us. We were thankful we could go for short walks, sit on a park bench and enjoy the fresh air and scenery. We noticed other seniors using walkers and canes walking on Bristol Street. They reside in two big apartments at the end of the street. They too enjoyed the peaceful atmosphere of the neighbourhood.
It was very upsetting to learn that our tax dollars were being used to take away this beautiful, grassy sportsfield and give it to the dogs. This park is important to the young families and senior residents that live here. It has been enjoyed for many years. Teams of children from across the city have participated in healthy, outdoor activity in this park. This space was set aside for recreation for people. Now it will be trashed.
Please, do not allow this green space, in a peaceful neighbourhood to be destroyed.

Respectively
Lily Briant

***

Good morning Cam,

I am reading about the dog off lease area and the problems associated. The solution is simple, here are three out of the way areas that would be more suitable.

1) Norm Jary Park at the rear, good view of Speedvale Road,
2) Royal City Jaycees Park off York Road, bonus would keep the geese at bay,
3) Eastview Community Park, there is a good area beside the parking lot, bonus will keep the drug dealers out of the area

All three have parking lots, are easily accessable, and away from residential.

Dale Gauley

***

Hello

I am in agreement with the residents that have to live by these dog parks, the dog park should be removed.

Years ago we were forced to move due to one of these dog parks.

The city should have done a better job at speaking with residents in the area where these dog parks are located, any such type of park should clearly be nowhere in any area residents live.

I do not feel the city should be made responsible for having to create these dog parks. The owners wish these pets and it should be their responsibility for these pets to provide for them including any type of exercise.

TA Heart

***

I would like to have the comments contained herein added to the agenda for the meeting on February 24, 2020.

I would like to start by thanking everyone involved who worked tirelessly to get this park for the constituents of the City of Guelph. In its very short life it has become an integral part of our weekly lives.

I am sure you have heard about the needs of the dogs, but I am here to write of the needs of the people. This park has helped foster friendships within our community. It has given much needed social time to seniors and at risk/secluded individuals who on any given day may not actually have an opportunity to even speak to another human being. This has become a community hub which will be devastating if removed prematurely. It will cause some people to become secluded

after finally finding a city venue where they feel they can talk about a mutual interest while getting out of the house with their pets in a safe environment. This park also allows people who may have obtained injuries to get their pet exercise while they may not be as mobile for any given period of time.

I don’t believe the plaintiffs of this situation are being exposed to noise/dirt/dangers more than anyone else who live across or near land that they do not own. I believe granting their wishes is a slippery slope. In regards to noise – this property is so close to the local school that you can hear children on their breaks, every single bell, even announcements made on the external speakers. This is by no means the unmitigated utopia of silence that they are portraying it as. I believe there was a learning curve for people when the park first opened – but through signage and word of mouth those issues have dissolved. There are dog parks built near residential areas – in fact in the City of Kitchener one is surrounded on three sides by medium/ high density housing. It's time to put a stop to this 'not in my back yard' mentality. In the summer months most people using the park go there on foot. When and if more parks are added the traffic at Peter Misersky will significantly reduce.

I am formally asking the city and the Councilors to vote to keep Peter Misersky Park, and to continue with the development of Bristol Street and Lee Street. I believe that having these parks accessible and in our communities are very important. Should the Councilors find that they disagree with these wishes please keep Peter Misersky park open until such time as a suitable replacement is designed, developed and open to the public.

Kyle Webb

***
Hello,

I am emailing you over my concerns about the possible cancellation of the Bristol St. Dog Park. We are a dog family and we also feel a strong connection to our community. We were over-joyed when these dog parks were announced as we were tired of driving to surrounding cities to use their leash free fenced parks. Frankly, it was embarrassing that Guelph did not have this amenity by 2019.

We have been to the Misersky Fenced Dog Park a number of times and were even more excited when the Bristol St. Park began moving forward. We went to meetings about the proposal for Bristol St. and it was quite appalling that people opposed to the Misersky Park were actively commandeering a meeting that was about an entirely different Dog park site. I feel as though the negative impacts of the Misersky Park have poisoned the Bristol Park. I want to be able to walk to the dog park in my community to exercise my dog. I want to be able to interact with my neighbours at this park. I don't want to face driving to the edge of town to exercise my dog. I read that noise cancelling green cover would be added to the Bristol Park. I feel as though accommodations are being considered for Bristol St.

that would make it an improvement over some of the oversights of the Misersky Park.

In spite of the differences of the parks locations within the city and new accommodations we seem to be wasting more money and while losing the battle to keep the advancing dog parks for all of Guelph's residents who have dogs. I fully support the Bristol St. Fenced Off-Leash Dog Park.

Thank you for your time,
Britney Rodgers

***

Councillor Downer

We wanted to write to provide you input regarding the Committee discussion on dog parks.

We were very disappointed and shocked to see the rather sudden decision to reverse the direction on dog parks, and that after such a small number of months. We urge you to reverse this Committee recommendation at Council itself, and instead take a longer term (actually just not an extremely short term) perspective.

The dog park put in place has been there for only a small number of months. It is also only one of a number of dog parks Council decided and approved to put into place. Obviously, the first few months will have some growing pains, and the nature of the usage in the first months with this one dog park will be quite different from the usage when there are multiple dog parks, as per the plan. Please stay and the course and revisit, as would be appropriate when more dog parks are in place.

We also find the sudden decision to reverse the investment already made in dog parks to represent a wasteful and disrespectful use of taxpayer resources.

We have had experience with dog parks in the Ottawa area, before moving here 2 years ago. We found them to be an amazing resource for developing community and knitting together a diverse groups of individuals, of all ages and stages in life. They really do form some of the essential strands of what makes an urban area and a group of people a true community.

We voted for you in the past election, being impressed with what appeared, in the all candidates' meeting at the Village by the Arboretum, as a practical, sensitive and pragmatic individual for the role of councilor. I trust you will consider the above input carefully

Thanks
Jim Alexander

***
I would first like to say that I do not own a dog but I like them and I walk in leash free areas with no problem. However I would not like a dog park behind my house.

I do have a friend who has dogs. They had a tendency to bark when let into her back garden. When ever they did so, though not that frequently, a neighbour complained and she soon had a by-law officer at her door saying that she would be fined if it was repeated.

From that it seems incomprehensible to me that the city would build a dog park close to peoples home. This is a park which would certainly result in excessive noise for the local people apart from all the other nuisances and after hour problems.

I would also note that my friends dogs are active and require exercise. She takes them out twice a day to various locations some of which are leash free despite many problems with her knee.

The Tribune now reports that in excess of 4000 dog owners are pleading the council to reverse their decision to close the park. Quite obviously most of those dog owners have never been near Peter Misersky park to understand the level of misery placed on the homeowners nearby. At least one council members did go to the park to understand the problem.

Thus what id the value of those numbers.

It seems to that Ashleigh Tennis is totally dependant on that park because she knows of no other place to go so until it opened she was unable to exercise her dog. Seems she is not as familiar with Guelph as she should be.

I do approve of the councils decision to close this dog park and place it where it doe not intrude on other peoples lives, like they did with the skate park. After all the noise does not comply with the bylaws.

I would finally mention that, closing the park or keeping open has no effect on my life as I live nowhere near it. I do however object to decisions with make peoples lives uncomfortable. It would be nice if you god 4000 more signatures in favour of its removal but then they should not be needed.

Alan Green

***

Hi there

I would like to make a couple of comments regarding this issue. I live in the area and walk through this park on a daily basis. I do not use the dog park area, since I like to walk but I have made a few observations.

I see a bunch of people standing chatting in a fenced in area while their dogs run around. Occasionally I hear a dog barking, but you hear that anyways with residences that border the park. When I have my grandchildren with me they stop to watch the "puppies".
Before the dog park was installed, there was a large group of people who would let their dogs offleash. These dogs would run at my dogs and it would be a struggle, this has not happened once since the park was installed. There is always someone in the park so it heightens a feeling of safety if I am walking in the dark. Also this was the park where playground equipment was burned down, this would not have happened if people had been in the dog park.
I understand there has been an increase in activity for residents but the only constant in living in an urban area, is change. My house borders St Johns and St James school. When I moved in I had a small elementary school playground in the back. In the time that I have lived there they added an addition to the high school and a football field.When they play football, my house shakes! At no time have I ever thought they need to tear down the school and bulldoze the football field.
I hope these residents can embrace these changes but if they cant Guelph has many lovely homes that dont border a park.

Thank you
Heather Macneil

***

I was told recently by a coworker that the city plans to close the fenced dog park that was recently built and opened - what an incredible waste of time and resources. This would be an irresponsible decision by the city.

This park is obviously an excellent resource for dog owners who want safety for their dogs AND children. Why would the city seek to close this?

I am told based on comments on reddit and elsewhere that it is based on one vocal man living in the area. He needs to be told that his opinion is not the only one that matters and the entire city needs resources for their families and happiness like this one.

Keep this park open.
Alexandra Stoneham

***

I sat through the meeting on February 3rd with particular attention to the Off-leash Dog Park agenda item.

It was an extensive, interesting discussion amongst the Councillors and the Mayor when he chose to be in the Chamber. I was surprised when the Mayor left the room for about 20 minutes when our 281 Bristol St, delegates were making their presentations against the Off-Leash Parks. When he returned, he immediately

started expressing his concerns for the dog owners. Dog owners didn't have any delegates present but there he was speaking on their behalf. That was just wrong. If they have points to make, show up at the meeting.

I was pleased that, at the end of the day, Council voted 8 - 4 to cancel the project as presented.

Then, the next day via social media, the mayor is appealing to the dog owners to get a petition going to present at the February 24th meeting. That is not only wrong it's unethical! It's disgraceful. I'm extremely disappointed in Mr. Guthrie. That's no way to get what appears to be a pet project of his implemented Let the established, legal and ethical processes decide the issue.

How dare he!

Regards,
Paul Paterson
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To Whom It May Concern,

I am sure you are getting alot of emails regarding the dog park issue in Guelph. I am a new dog mom. We adopted our pup 8 months ago. We were told about the park in the fall. Since then I use the park everyday. I think it is a Wonderful place. We come together from all walks of life but have a common bond in our dogs. Since coming I have met some really lovely people. I look forward to seeing them and miss them if not there that day. Most importantly my dog Leo gets to run in a safe friendly environment. We are close to home and use this park in all kinds of weather. I am hoping and praying that you can reconsider keeping this park open. But move forward to open Bristol street park. Then it would distribute people more evenly. These parks are a HUGE need in our city. For people of our community and our dogs. It gets people out talking to others. Huge plus for mental health. Plus our dogs bring us joy and its fun to see them socializing together. I have talked to many people on this issue, some special needs children look forward to coming and it takes their anxiety away when they visit the park. Plus seniors with no license can walk and let their dog safely run while they sit and watch. I encourage you to come walk around and see for yourself this positive vital part of our community. Please please reconsider this as a positive place in Guelph so many do!!! PLEASE dont waste our tax dollars by closing this special place. We thank you and Leo would be happy to thank you as well.

Sincerely ,
Jody Hanna

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I am concerned about the strengthening dog park petition and would like to give you a few thoughts.

To be clear I am for dog parks and yes I prefer cats.

However I experienced 1 ,ONE barking dog opposite my home for over a year and I can tell you the quality of my environment/life was reduced. I could not sleep, read , have my windows open to enjoy fresh air or enjoy sitting outside. I tried talking and was told where to go. I considered moving and finally used the cities' noise bylaw to help.

I can't imagine what the people living beside, near the dog park are going through!!! They have barking dogs from morning to night. Happy barking is still noisy. Several socializing dogs barking is still noisy. Owners calling/ yelling at their dogs is still noisy.

Dog parks do not belong in a residential area!!

Clearly people are driving distances now to go to a fenced in dog park so that is not an issue.
People chose their home location carefully ,if they didn't care about noise they would live on a major street.

You can't assume that people are away at work and won't hear it. What about shift workers ,babies who need to sleep during the day.
Is a fenced in area about socializing or is it they don't have control over their dog? How many times have I heard owners say their dog is well behaved but end up giving commands over and over?

We have plenty of places to walk dogs in our city.

I have dog walked several dogs around the city over the years and always had socializing opportunities. My friends have dog walking groups and all have developed lasting friendships.

I could but will not discuss the owners who do not clean up or feel everyone should love dogs.

Please pass on my comments to council.

Respectfully submitted
Liz Muller

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Dear City Clerks

I had an unexpected experience today. I met a former co-worker named Mike I hadn't seen for 22 years. We worked at the W. C. Wood Co. together for many years. We reminisced about the people we knew there.

Mike and I would not likely have met anywhere else but at the Peter Misersky Dog Park. Our dogs played happily together and we hope that this will continue.

The Dog Park provides for social time for owners and dogs alike. I was a candidate in the federal election and received 498 votes, so I have some awareness of politics.

It would be a political disaster if the Peter Misersky Dog Park were closed before another facility could be built. I have two observations. Since the dog park opened, I have never seen anyone from City Hall or Bylaw Enforcement, nor has there been any need.

I have read of inflated charges of owners yelling, car doors and gates slamming, and dirt around the park. I take my dog there five days a week and have never seen any of this. It seems that the dog park was opened and never monitored or adjusted in any way. If there are justified complaints, they should be addressed.

I look forward to learn how City Council will proceed with the needs of dogs and their owners. I have no problem with keeping the present park until a more suitable location can be found. Prematurely closing a major City of Guelph attraction and dismissing the interests of hundreds of dog owners would not seem to be fair, just or respectful. The vast majority of owners take good care of their dogs and the park. This outlet should be encouraged.

Yours truly
Gordon Truscott

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Hi there,

I've been very disappointed with how the fenced-in dog park situation has been dealt with at Peter Misersky Park. I've been following the story closely through the news, particularly the Guelph Mercury Tribune. I'm disgusted at the waste of city money...it seems this was not planned out very well at all. Sounds like the neighbourhood residents were not consulted at all, which seems ridiculous. Why would a dog park be located in a residential neighbourhood so closely to houses? We need a fenced-in leash-free park in this city and I can't believe it's taken this long for Guelph to create one, and then this is what happens??? It's ridiculous. Find a place, not so close to houses, with parking and ample space for the dogs to run around. If dog owners can't let their dogs off the leash in city parks then create a place where they can.

Also, what is going to happen with all the metal from the fence when/if it's taken down? What a waste. A waste of resources and labour and city money...OUR tax money!

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns.

Carolyn Ellis

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Received from Joy Walker

Fenced Dog Park Recommendations

1. The City of Guelph needs large, fully-fenced dog parks with double-gated entrances. Fencing should be 5 feet high. For comparators, I recommend using the dog parks in Bechtel Park & Kiwanis Park in Waterloo. Both of these parks provide enough acreage (5 acres?) to ensure dogs have space to run, play, and move away from other dogs if desired. They also provide trees for shade in the hot summer months, as well as a varied topography that dogs find interesting.

2. These parks should have trails to keep dogs & owners moving to prevent dogs becoming territorial. Large signs to encourage movement and a sign outside to educate users why this is so important. Because movement of users is essential, no picnic tables or benches should be inside the fenced area. If people want to socialize, they should walk the trail together. Trails laid with large mulch keep mud down & lots of wild space with tall grass & trees would be ideal. Some maintenance required.

3. Evening hours in at least one park. I was at a wonderful dog park in Truro, Nova Scotia this past fall that installed solar-powered lights on tall poles throughout their trail system just before the switch to daylight saving hours in October.

4. Additional rules to ensure success:
   - the current rules cover many items that will help reduce potential conflict between dogs but you missed a couple of important issues; rawhide & food are prohibited, which is great, but dog parks should also exclude all toys, including balls because they often create guarding & conflict between dogs & some dogs eat them which creates a whole different problem for dog owners; dogs can get exercise without toys if the owners move through a trail system;
   - intact dog's shouldn't be allowed; while not inherently aggressive, they release scents that threaten other dogs, often resulting in altercations.

5. I appreciate the decision to look at suitable locations in the future. In the meantime, I ask that Misersky be kept open & the Bristol St. park be completed. While not ideal, they offer something which is better than nothing, which is what we have had for so long. If Misersky is closed, I will have to return to driving to Waterloo 2-3 times/week to the excellent facilities there.

Leash Free Amendment Kathy Kolppanen

I am recommending amendments to the Leash Free Policy – Specifically **Fenced Leash Free**

1. **Fenced** dog parks should not be in close proximity to residential homes so that fenced dog parks do not create an undue burden in residential areas.
2. Locate fenced dog parks **outside of residential areas.** There are currently leash free dog parks without fences in community that allow additional ease of access for the community.
3. Ideal opportunity to locate fenced dog parks utilizing **2.25 acres at Eastview and 5.5 aces with a linking trail system with parking adjacent to Eastview and parking at Grange which is a 5 minute walk.**
4. Other land outside residential should be considered for purchase/use.
5. Walking trails around perimeter would encourage dog owners to interact with and monitor their dogs more closely as well as provide additional ease of access to the entire site.
6. Hours of operation should be extended to 10 p.m. , to allow the community to utilize the fenced dog parks during the winter months and encourage owners to be active in the winter months.
7. Mininum size of 2 acres is ideal; however, the larger the better.
8. Non toxic Shade trees and/or small shade structures are highly recommended for both human and canine.
9. Resource guarding can be an issue with food, treats, rawhide, toys, frisebees, balls, etc., Therefore, none of these items should be allowed in the park.
10. Sufficient dog waste stations
11. Age restriction without a parent should be reduced to 16
12. No baby carriages, bikes, wagons, etc., should be allowed in the park.
13. No human food
14. Existing fenced dog parks at Peter Miskersky and future fenced dog parks near residential should be removed/rescinded and infrastructure such as fencing and gates removed immediately. The infrastructure that was also budgeted for Bristol, Lee can put put towards non residential locations I have recommended on a permanent or trial basis.
15. Fences 4-6 feet min. With 8 foot double gates.
16. Warning tickets/fines should be levied to reduce the number of repeat offenders that break rules.
17. Consider an annual fenced dog park permit fee from $35 to $40 with FAB, encourages people to follow the rules, increases revenue and provides a more equitable system for all users. Potential to consider this through Docupet given it also encourages licencing.

James Sullivan, M.Div., M.A.

[redacted]

14 February 2020

Mayor Cam Guthrie
Councillor Dan Gibson, Ward 1
Councillor Bob Bell, Ward 1

Re: City of Guelph Dog Parks

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to encourage you and your council colleagues to support the development of fenced, off-leash dog parks across Guelph and to retain the dog park at Peter Misersky Park. While changes to the current configuration of the Peter Misersky dog park may be needed, it ought not be closed down.

Increasing density and managing growth are two challenges that our city faces. The city's official plan notes that Guelph's urban growth will be managed through:

- A compact urban form;
- Intensification within the built-up area and identified intensification corridors; and
- Minimum density requirements in green field areas.

The plan also does not envision an expansion of the settlement areas until 2031.

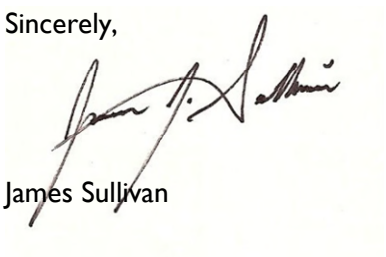
Increasing density will be a hallmark of all growth in the City for the next decade. It is likely that any expansion of the settlement area will not relieve the pressure from markets and Provincial regulation for even further increases in density across the entire city.

More dogs will accompany this density growth. Increasing density will not mean that fewer people have dogs. People living in our higher density city will seek out places for their dogs to play, exercise and socialize. This will occur whether or not the city takes the lead in developing dog parks.

Increasing conflict over park use will result if the city abdicates its responsibilities and does not plan parks that can accommodate the full spectrum of uses.

The challenge presented by Guelph's one and only fenced in off leash dog park is best addressed by a renewed commitment by the city to develop a network of fenced, off leash dog parks across the city that are accessible in all neighbourhoods.

Sincerely,



James Sullivan

cc: Members of Guelph City Council

From: Toni Gilchrist

Re: Written comments to City Council or committee

Hello,

We are residents of 35 Mountford Drive. We have lived here since January 2019. One of the reasons we chose this area was due to the green space directly across from our condo. We thought this was a perfect location to bring up our baby daughter as there would never be any noisy construction or new builds going up in that area. Until July of 2019. Without any notice or prior consultation, workers started constructing what we soon come to find out was the leash free dog park. Everyday for weeks, we listened to workers cutting rocks. We could not open our windows due to the dust generated by the cutting of the rocks. The workers worked well into the evening hours everyday. At no point did we receive any notice or update on the leash free dog park. The prior owners of our condo have also stated that they never received any correspondence regarding the dog park.

And then, the park opened. This would prove much worse than the construction. Our once quiet street and park became a muddy, noise ridden nightmare. Our windows remained closed for the summer due to the constant barking, owners yelling at their dogs, clanging of gates, car exhaust and the smell of dog feces. Dog feces bags were and still are left on fences, on the ground and around the disposal. Tens and tens of bags at a time were left for city workers to pick up. Imagine the smell in the dead of summer – watching people walk out of the park and throwing their dog's bagged poop on the ground. Picture attached for reference.

The barking is by far the worst of the many issues at hand. Imagine having dogs barking almost constantly from 5:30 am (summer) 6:30 am (winter) until well after 10:00 pm, every single day and worse on weekends. Even though the rules of the park are from dawn to dusk, dog owners have taken to entering the park after hours with their dogs wearing glow collars (see pic attached). We have called bylaw several times. However, by the time bylaw shows up (sometimes HOURS after the call) the dog owners have left the park. I am home every single day on MAT leave and I cannot remember the last time I saw bylaw at the park. I have seen CTV there more than I have seen any bylaw vehicle.

We understand that thousands of people have signed a petition to keep the dog park open, and while we understand the need and the want for dog owners to have a leash free dog park, we do not agree that having such park is suitable 30 feet outside a residential area, directly across the street from where people live. Also, the majority, if not all of the people who signed this petition are NOT directly affected by this dog park. The noise is daily, from dawn to dusk and after. I can hear the dogs barking with all my windows closed as we are directly across from the park. It is anxiety inducing to hear this everyday. The traffic is constant, constant slamming of car doors, people yelling, dogs barking, poop being left on fences and on the ground, bylaw taking hours to attend to the park – every single day!

We truly hope this location will be permanently closed and the City can find an alternate area for a leash free dog park away from all residential areas so that a fair solution can be found for all parties. It is not fair that just because dog owners need a leash free area for their dogs to exercise etc that residents living next to and around the dog park should have to endure this kind of incessant noise on a daily basis 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Thank you for your consideration.


DOG WASTE
ONLY
SUTERA