

DOG PARK REQUESTS – BOARD OF SELECTMEN ACTION

Selectmen's minutes - March 14, 2003

DOG PARK - REQUEST FOR AN §8-24 REFERRAL TO TPZ FOR A PORTION OF THE ALEGI PROPERTY

The Board has received reports from the Commission on the Use of Publicly Owned Properties and Recreation Commission, but still needs to seek approval from the Land Trust due to the conservation easement on the property. Mrs. Marrella has also requested a review by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission as part of the Town Plan of Conservation and Development. Action on the §8-24 referral will be postponed until the April meeting.

Selectmen's minutes – April 9, 2003

DOG PARK PROPOSAL

Deena Myers requested that the Board consider allowing the Dog Park to be situated on the Fitzgerald Property just to the southwest of the west loop of the walking trail. She said that her committee had determined that the proposed Alegi property site was not appropriate.

Mr. Lawrence Kline spoke against any such facility on the Fitzgerald Property.

Mr. Bortner and Mrs. Schwartz questioned the liability and maintenance problems with a dog park,

Mrs. Marrella said that she did not believe the Fitzgerald Property was the best place for the Park and recommended a new site between the tennis courts and the Public Works Department.

Ms. Myers said that the committee would accept the area if it was large enough and if the Town would assist in clearing the property.

Selectmen's action May 14, 2003

Ms. Deena Myers said that the Committee has taped off the area between the Tennis courts and the Public Works Dept. that is proposed for the Dog Park. She said that the site would require extensive clearing of dead trees, brush and some boulders. Mr. Hellauer said that the Public Works Department would assist in the preparation of the site.

Ms. Myers said that the group is a 503 non-profit organization and would be responsible for the construction and maintenance of the fencing, gates, and property. She requested that the Town be responsible for mowing twice in the months of June and July, once in August, September, and October. Use of the park would be by a tag system and for Woodbridge residents only.

Mrs. Schwartz and Mr. Calistro expressed concerns about liability, maintenance, and the proposed use of the area.

*The Board **VOTED** to refer the proposal to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for an 8-24 review.*

*VOTE: Aye – Marrella, Sheehy, Sorensen
Nay – Calistro, Schwartz*

As a majority of those present and voting approved the motion – the motion passed.

It was the consensus of the Board that the Town Committee on the Plan of Conservation and Development review how the proposed Dog Park fits into the overall plan of Conservation and Development.

Selectmen's Action September 10, 2003

TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION – REPLY REGARDING 8-24 REFERRALS.

Proposed Site for a Dog Park – The Town Plan & Zoning Commission reported favorably, though not unanimously, on the 8-24 referral for a dog park to be situated behind the Public Works Dept. near the path leading to Center Field II parking and bleachers.

Board Action – Mr. Calistro said that since the Town Attorney said that the Town would be liable for the activity at the Dog Park and that insurance companies are reassessing coverage for such installations, he **MOVED** that the Board **DECLINE** the request to allow the construction of a Dog Park on the proposed Town property. Mrs. Schwartz **SECONDED THE MOTION**.

Discussion – Mr. Sorensen questioned that if the Dog Park was allowed on Town property, what would happen if the Town's insurance carrier denied coverage. It was also noted that the proponents of the Dog Park have not offered to create any kind of insurance of their own association, and it is questionable if a personal homeowner's policy would cover any incident.

Mrs. Marrella said that she as an owner of two dogs, she has struggled with this request because she is aware of at least three instances where individuals have been injured by playing dogs running into them. Which leads to the belief that while everyone wants to believe that dogs are wonderful loving animals it is not always true and there is some risk aside from a dog being actually aggressive toward people or other dogs.

VOTE: The Board **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** to decline the dog park on the proposed site.