**JP Dog Park Site Selection Considerations**

Memo from the Southwest Corridor Park Management Advisory Council (PMAC) to DCR

October 2018

The Southwest Corridor Park Management Advisory Council (PMAC) is in support of the idea of creating a dog park within the Southwest Corridor Park (SWCP) in Jamaica Plain. For the past two years we have been in communication with dog park advocates and DCR to help map out potential sites within the SWCP and to join in conversations analyzing pros and cons of each site. Now that DCR has presented three potential sites (Sites A, B and C) we hope to continue to support the site selection process and continue to be a community forum for additional design decisions, as the process moves from site selection to next steps. During this process we expect that there will be decisions about design, fencing, adding or moving trees and shrubs, signage, park rules and hours, and other factors, and we hope and expect to support this ongoing design and decision-making process.

In support of the site selection process, we have developed the following list of recommended site selection criteria, to help in weighing the pros and cons of Sites A, B and C. Here are some of the key thoughts from this list:

* **Desire for more than one JP Dog Park:** Our overall guiding criteria is that we hope that the site to be chosen will be the first of more than one dog park for JP, and that it be a site that can be developed quickly, and that after this site is underway there remains enough energy, time, fundraising capacity and good will to continue to add another dog park site elsewhere in JP.
* **Desire for consensus-building**: We hope that there can be a consensus-building process, respecting the concerns that neighbors and park users have raised and equally respecting the desire of dog owners to have the best possible site. We feel that all concerns should be thoughtfully considered, and all site options (A, B, C and possibly other options) be fully analyzed before moving to next steps.
* **Openness to small, medium or larger dog park spaces:** We bring the positive experience of our work with Carleton Court Dog Park, in the SWCP in the Back Bay/South End neighborhood, affiliated with PMAC since it opened over ten years ago. Carleton Court has 4,000 square feet, in a rectangular space. While it is small area, residents find that it is big enough to be enjoyed by dogs of all sizes. It is a well-managed park, with an all-volunteer friends group responsible for rules, maintenance and fundraising. We are interested in a closer look at the various JP site options with an open-mind about what size would be an optimum size.

Here are some site selection criteria to help guide the conversation. Thank you to PMAC members and Friends of JP Dog Parks for their input into this list.

| **Dog Park Site Selection Criteria**  | **A** | **B** | **C** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dog Park Experience | **Park Size & Layout** [a.] enough room for running, catch/fetch, etc. [b.] manageable size and design for maintenance [c.] sight lines & layout – easy to watch & manage dogs [d.] potentially separate areas for large and small dogs? Or other options for managing small/large dog use. |  |  |  |
| **Design Options / Amenities** [a.] Can the site be surfaced with a comfortable, low-odor, easy-to-maintain surface or with a natural surface that will be durable given usage levels [b.] Can the design include fences/gates that maximize safety (i.e., double gates)[c.] Is there adequate lighting after dark (and what will the dog park hours be?) [d.] optional: Is there available drinking water and water to hose off surface if necessary [e.] optional: Could the site design include agility features (things to climb over, under, through) or other dog park amenities[f.] Space near entrances for signage, plastic bag dispenser, etc.  |  |  |  |
| **Travel Time and Parking** [a.] Walking distance for many users? [b.] Parking available? [c.] Is public transportation an option?  |  |  |  |
| **Timeline for completing this and other sites** [a.] Considering all aspects of developing this site, could this site be ready quickly? [b.] Can it be part of a plan to develop more than one dog park?  |  |  |  |
| Impact | **Land Use Considerations** [a.] Land that is currently unused or underutilized [b.] Location that will not have a negative impact on abutters or others (i.e., residences, businesses, nonprofit organizations, commuters, or users of other park features)[c.] Location that could have a positive impact for abutters or park users (i.e., businesses desiring more foot traffic; park sections that would benefit from more usage) [d.] Existing park uses in the chosen site are not lost. [e.] Site selection takes into account park design and landscape features. |  |  |  |
| Cost & Management  | **Cost & timeline** [a.] Consensus for site selection – is there positive public feedback for the site? [b.] Management plan – will volunteers be available to manage the site once completed?[c.] Fundraising – is there support for fundraising for the site? [d.] Construction costs – based on size, surface and any special design challenges or desired features [e.] Long-term maintenance costs  |  |  |  |
| **Other Aspects** [a.] Are there any specific management, maintenance or safety considerations, based on site location, layout, lighting, drainage, water sources, DCR and MBTA access & easements, etc.  |  |  |  |