



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor



Robert J. DeRubeis  
Commissioner

## Off-Leash Area Working Group

August 13, 2010, 9:00 am  
Room 222- City Hall  
Meeting Minutes

**Attending:** Bob DeRubeis, *P & R Commissioner*, Candace Havens, *Interim Planning Director*, Carol Schein, *P & R Open Space Coordinator*, Ralph Torres, *Animal Control Officer*, Lee McIntyre, *Citizen Representative*, Ted Kuklinski. *Citizen Representative*

**Absent:** Susan Albright, *Alderman*, Wally Bernheimer, *P & R Commission*, Amy Koel, *DOLAC Chairman*

**Also Attending:** Judy Haberl, *Claflin Playground Resident*, Harry Sanders, *Resident*

### 1. Ordinance Update

- August 9, 2010 the Board of Alderman passed the ordinance, 17-6-1
- Commissioner DeRubeis commended the group for their work.
- Commissioner DeRubeis stated the big issue with the Board of Alderman was fencing. And had explained mixed model/shared usage of the parks to the Alderman.
- Mr. McIntyre stated other surrounding cities and towns have had success with mixed model off leash areas.
- An amendment added to the ordinance is regarding non city owned property. The amendment authorizes the Commissioner & Director to approach the governing bodies of non city owned property for consideration as an off leash recreation area.

### 2. Norumbega proposal Update

- Interim Planning Director Candace Havens will be presenting the Norumbega Park off leash area proposal to the Conservation Commission on September 23, 2010.
- Mr. McIntyre commented he has spoken with members of the unofficial off leash representatives of Norumbega Park. Mr. McIntyre asked Interim Director Havens if she would like the contact information for this group. Interim Director Havens stated the information would be helpful.
- Mr. Kuklinski inquired if Patrice Joyce, the author of the Norumbega off leash proposal is included in this group. Mr. McIntyre stated no she is not included in this group. Mr. Kuklinski stated Ms. Joyce has been collecting data/information this summer at Norumbega Park. Mr. McIntyre stated he will coordinate with Ms. Joyce to collect her information and put her in contact with Interim Director Havens.

### 3. August 23, 2010 Presentation

- Interim Director Havens inquired if fees have been discussed for use of OLA's to help in funding the areas. Commissioner DeRubeis stated fees were discussed by the group at the last meeting. The City Clerk is agreeable to including the fee in the dog licensing process but there would be an administrative fee to the City Clerk office.
- Mr. Sanders inquired if the fee structure would have to go before the Board of Alderman. Commissioner DeRubeis said yes.
- Commissioner DeRubeis reviewed the presentation
  - Ordinance update
  - McGrath Park
    - Open Dawn to Dusk
    - Parking in Recreation parking spaces only
    - Snow fence added to open end by Washington St.
  - Claflin Playground
    - Closed December 15-March 15 for sledding
    - Hours of Operation Mon-Fri 9am-3pm- this will avoid the Cabot School Bus stop pick up and drop off.

- Saturday- 1pm to dusk-to allow for NNHS athletic practice on Saturday morning
- Sunday dawn to dusk
- Commissioner DeRubeis wanted to be clear that the park is not closed to others during off leash hours. The park will have shared usage.
- Ms. Haberl commented she appreciates the group's thoughtfulness in listening to and addressing the neighborhoods concerns. Ms. Haberl recommended opening the off leash area between 9am-1pm because families with toddlers use the area in the afternoon. Ms. Haberl inquired who would be overseeing the area, dog feces is currently an issue at Claflin Playground and commented signage would preclude any arguments.
- Mr. McIntyre commented once the area is legal the users tend to educate and self police each other. With self policing and education there will be increased compliance. The off leash area at Old Cold Spring Park is cleaner now because the users are policing the area and each other.
- Commissioner DeRubeis stated the city has one animal control officer who will be patrolling the area but the plan is to have a consistent user of the off leash area become the contact person to notify him of any issues in the area. Commissioner DeRubeis wants this to work but he will be tough on compliance in the off leash areas.

**4. Next Meeting: August 13, 2010 – Room 222 – 9:00am**

Agenda Items

- Final review August 23, 2010 presentation

Respectfully submitted,

*Robin McLaughlin, Secretary*