

Background Information Regarding

Off Leash Shared Use Hours Pilot Program

In spring 2009, the City began a series of meetings regarding establishing shared use pilot program at five parks throughout the City. These meetings have focused on getting information and feedback from nearby residents, park users and dog owners on the general idea and also the appropriate times, seasons, locations, and other considerations to take into account for such a program. In June 2009, additional community meetings were held concerning the two initial locations for the pilot program (Gold Star Mothers Park and Corcoran Park).



Help Make the Pilot Program Successful!

The City is looking for residents to volunteer as liaisons between dog owners and city departments for each pilot program location. Please contact Mark McCabe, Director of the Cambridge Animal Commission at 617-349-4376 for more information.



OTHER OFF LEASH OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAMBRIDGE DOG OWNERS

There are 7 DEDICATED OFF LEASH AREAS in Cambridge. These areas are fenced in and are intended exclusively for use by off-leash dogs and their owners.

- **Pacific Street Park** - in between Pacific Street and Union Street in Cambridgeport - new surfacing will be installed summer 2009

- **Danehy Park** - anticipated opening summer 2009 - At the New Street entrance to Danehy Park in North Cambridge

There are 2 SHARED USE OFF LEASH AREAS in Cambridge. These are areas where dogs are allowed to off-leash but that are not fully fenced or separated from other uses and activities.

- **Fresh Pond Reservation** - Fresh Pond Parkway in West Cambridge (excludes mowed grassy areas)

- **Fort Washington Park** - Waverly Street in Cambridgeport (currently closed for restoration, scheduled to reopen without temporary fencing, in late summer 2009)

CONTACT INFORMATION

To report an issue regarding dogs in Cambridge parks - please contact the City of Cambridge Animal Commission at 617-349-4376

For additional information regarding City of Cambridge off-leash opportunities and shared use pilot program - please contact the Community Development Department at 617-349-4603 or visit the web at: www.cambridgema.gov/offleash

For additional information or concerns regarding off-leash dogs specifically at: **Fresh Pond Reservation** - please call Fresh Pond Reservation Management at: 617-349-4762

Danehy Park - please call the Danehy Park maintenance office at: 617-349-4895 or Paul Ryder, Director of Recreation at 617-349-6200

Pacific Street Park, Fort Washington Park, Corcoran Field and Gold Star Mothers Park - please call the Department of Public Works at: 617-349-4880

Additional information is also available through the Cambridge Dog Owners Group (CDOG) at: www.cambridgedog.com (this is a private group not affiliated with the City of Cambridge)

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Off Leash Dog Guide and Shared Use Pilot Program Information



www.cambridgema.gov/offleash

For the past several years city staff from the Community Development Department, Department of Public Works, City Manager's Office, Historical Commission, Department of Human Service Programs and the Animal Commission collaborated with City Council members and a group of residents to come up with strategies for creating new off-leash opportunities for Cambridge-licensed dogs.

SHARED USE HOURS (PILOT PROGRAM)

Beginning August 1st, 2009, the City of Cambridge will begin a pilot program to provide shared use locations that will be available for off-leash dogs during specified hours. Shared use locations are areas where dogs are allowed off-leash but that are not fully fenced or separated from other uses and activities.

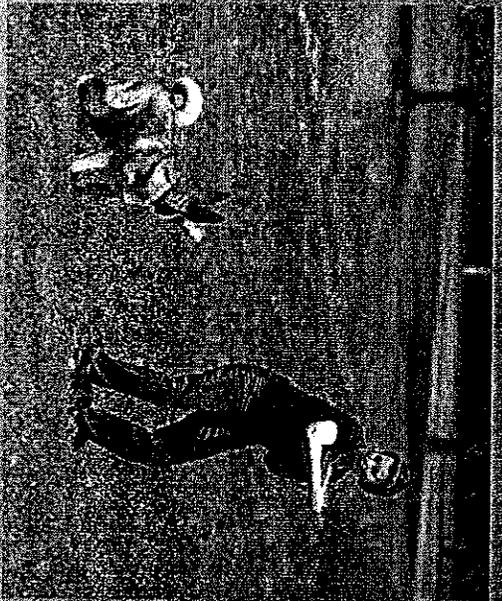
Shared Use Hours Pilot Program Locations:

- Gold Star Mothers Park — Gore Street in East Cambridge
- Corcoran Park — Raymond Street in Neighborhood Nine

Off-leash hours are from 6am to 9am, beginning on August 1, 2009. Off-leash use is prohibited if the field is saturated due to rain or snow or if the park is scheduled for another use.

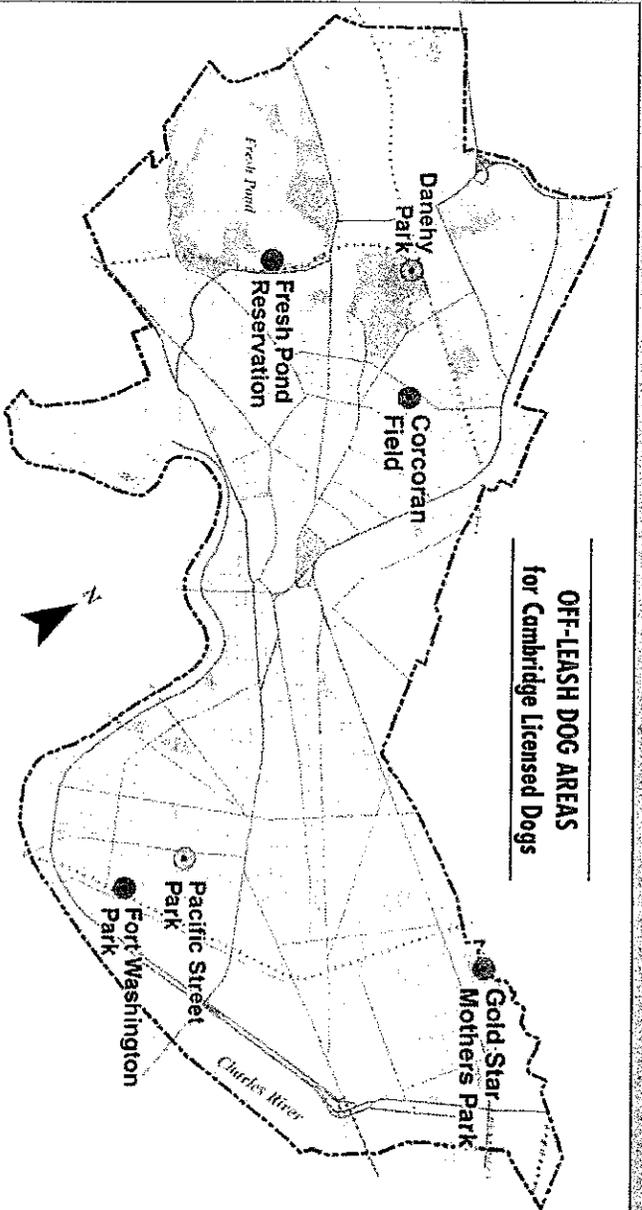
The pilot program will last for

approximately one year. At the end of that period, physical conditions, feedback from users and the general public, and staff comments will be reviewed as part of the evaluation process. Recommendations will then be made regarding the continuation of the program.



- Important Things to Keep in Mind** (for a complete list of rules please see signs posted at parks/off-leash areas)
- Off-leash hours are suspended when there are permitted or school based special activities in the park.
 - There are no off-leash hours when parks or fields are saturated with rain.
 - Dogs must be leashed when Parks Division crews are working in the park.
 - The owner/keeper of any dog(s) must appropriately remove and properly dispose of any and all feces left by the dogs.
 - Dogs are not allowed in playground areas, sandboxes, tennis or basketball courts.

LOCATIONS OF DEDICATED AND SHARED OFF-LEASH AREAS AND LOCATIONS OF SHARED USE HOURS PILOT PROGRAM AREAS



- SHARED USE HOURS PILOT PROGRAM 6AM-9AM
 - Gold Star Mothers Park/Gore Street Park
 - Corcoran Field/Raymond Park
- ⊙ DEDICATED OFF-LEASH DOG AREAS
 - Danerhy Park at New Street
 - Pacific Street Park
- SHARED USE OFF-LEASH AREAS
 - Fort Washington Park
 - Fresh Pond Reservation

85 Inman Street
Cambridge MA 02139
617-576-3750
arehding@fas.harvard.edu

Re: Paine Park

October 16, 2012

2012 OCT 25 PM 4 01

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
Dear City of Cambridge, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

I write, as a Cambridge citizen and father of one-year-old twins, about the state of the Paine Park in St Mary's Road. Since it is a stone throw away from our house we use this great facility on a daily basis. As you know, it is also used by local dog owners and, unfortunately, not all owners pick up after their dogs. In the last few weeks the amount of dog poop I have picked up has gone up dramatically. On three mornings this week alone I have picked up turds right in front of the swings, where our babies play. In addition, on two occasions I found after returning home that I had stepped in dog poop. This is clearly not a tenable state: it is a health hazard for our children.

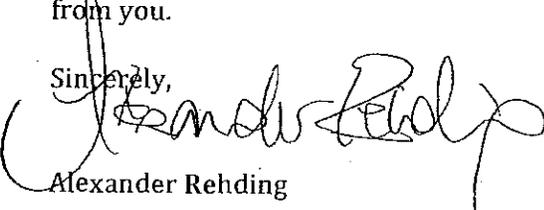
I have spoken to the dog owners that use the park, and they assure me that they always clean up after their dogs. I have no reason to disbelieve them. However, like the rest of us, dog owners are sometimes distracted. It is possible that the owner was chatting or on the cell phone while their dog pooped, or that the owner could not see where their dog pooped after dark. The possibilities are endless. One additional complication, as you probably know, is that the sign requiring dogs to be kept on a leash is widely ignored.

I want to draw your attention to the state of the park because this situation is no longer tenable for my children. I can imagine a number of possible solutions, none of them ideal:

- Dogs could be banned from using the park.
- The City of Brookline, for instance, has introduced a "Green Dog" system with rangers patrolling and cleaning the parks. The user fees are \$70 for Brookline residents, and \$120 for non-residents.
- A small section of the park could be separated off completely for the exclusive use of dogs, so that they no longer share ground and can poop in the dog park without affecting any children.
- NPR recently reported on more high-tech solution to this problem: several communities have introduced DNA testing for dogs, which can be identified and matched with any poop not cleaned up. The owner will then be fined on the basis of the DNA test. In many cases, the mere announcement that such a system would be introduced has led to drastic reduction of dog poop in some communities.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


Alexander Rehding

cc. Dept of Public Works (147 Hampshire St)
City Council (795 Mass Av)

From: Jane Myers [janemyers01@comcast.net]
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2012 3:02 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Dogs in Cambridge

To whom it may concern:

First, I wonder why meetings are scheduled at 4:00 on a weekday. It would seem that you do not want people who have full time jobs to attend. It would be lovely to work in Central Square but I don't. I have a job in Boston and I cannot get to City Hall for these 4:00 meetings.

I care very much about the subject of dogs and dog parks. Cambridge is essentially an unfriendly, unenlightened city on the subject of dogs and dog parks. It is interesting that Brookline and Somerville are way ahead of Cambridge in these matters.

I have lived in Cambridge since 1976 and owned property since 1980. Most of those years I have had dogs. I have picked up after my dogs absolutely every time and I sometimes pick up after other people's dogs too. I am deeply offended by other dog owner's who do not pick up but I do not want to be punished for them.

I have paid real estate taxes that pay for the schools. I do not have children. I do not mind paying for the education of other people's children but I do resent that parents think that every inch of open space should be for their children and that there should be no dog parks. At about \$20,000 a year per child if I had two children being educated for 12 years, it would cost Cambridge \$480,000. Well, I have dogs not children and I deeply resent that Cambridge does not expend anything or very little for dog parks. I live in East Cambridge so there are no "dog parks" near me; and I put that in quotes because I do not respect Cambridge's feeble efforts on dog parks.

I feel strongly that some of the park space given by developers in East Cambridge must be turned into a dog park. I am appalled that people in other parts of the city will get to decide how open space in East Cambridge will be developed. We have endured all of the construction and increases in traffic and decisions on these parks should be made in East Cambridge. As a friend said, "it is analogous to having people in Worcester vote about Cambridge Rent Control."

Dogs and dog parks are advantageous to individuals who live with dogs and to the communities that form around gatherings of dogs. Anyone who has a dog meets their neighbors who have dogs. Friendships form as the dogs play together. I know that mothers who meet in the playgrounds with their children make friends and support each other. It works the same with people with dogs. Do you really believe that the places for children and mothers to meet should be at the expense of their being NO place for people and their dogs?

I hope that Cambridge will look around and see that it doesn't have the quality of life of some of the surrounding towns have. I honestly wish I had seen how limited the vision in Cambridge would be and have bought property in one of these other more balanced towns.

I got several tickets for having my dog off leash in the Kennedy School field a few years back. I thought it was so misguided to have a dog officer out giving tickets to those who were supervising and picking up after their dogs. Time and manpower would have been much better spend to cruise the neighborhood and look for those not picking up after their dogs and giving them tickets!

I have no faith that the City of Cambridge will address the issue of dog parks in any significant or meaningful way. Talk, cheap talk is all that I have gotten in 32 years of trying to get this issue taken seriously.

I wish each person with power would stop and ask themselves why they cannot take this seriously and just do something appropriate for those who choose to live with dogs..

Jane Myers
165 Charles Street
Cambridge, MA 02141

Thursday, December 13, 2012 2:31:17 PM ET

Subject: Dog Matters (and Dog Matter)

Date: Monday, November 5, 2012 2:06:25 PM ET

From: Bestor, Victoria Lyon

To: Council@Cambridgema.gov

CC: Gordon Moore, Charlotte Moore, ubrand@hotmail.com, Fenton Hollander, Nir, Pamela, Dave Thompson, Ron Frank, Suzanne Hunt, Laurel Howe, Joan Friebely, Joan Epstein, Tabitha, Bruce Posner, Fiona, Mary Steedly, Phyllis Kerr, Michelle@goldshlag.com, Carol Bundy, ceager@gmail.com, waring@rnc.com, Raffael, Ann Brainerd, Ted Bestor, Bestor, Victoria Lyon, Murray, Andrea, McSherry, Dana, Kent Greenfield, Illiana Celia Quimbaya, Janelle Nanos, Sari Edelstein, Jim Newman, deepak, Pete Reid, Belinda Rathbone, Daniel Penrice

Dear Cambridge City Council Members:

Council Member Craig Kelley brought to our attention the October 16, 2012 letter of Mr. Alexander Rehding of Inman Street regarding dog poop in Paine Park. I completely sympathize with his concerns. This is also an issue of great concern among dog owners, in my case those who come to Raymond Park daily in the morning off-leash dog hours.

I have never been to Paine Park, so I can only speak about Raymond Park and to impart the usual customs there. It is true that sometimes dog owners are distracted by conversations, by now we all know each other quite well, the dogs are friends as well as the people. And we humans are often engaged in deep conversation, but with an eye out for our dogs. At Raymond other owners are always vigilant in watching and unhesitant about alerting owners to their dog's droppings. It is not unusually for someone to walk the owner over to make sure they find the dropping, or if it is that of a small dog, for several to join in the hunt of finding it. We also frequently pick up droppings we find from other dogs that may have resulted from someone letting their dog out at night.

Cambridge is a city with a vibrant population and many of us are dog-owners. Those of us who make use of the early morning off-leash hours are enormously grateful to the City of Cambridge for extending park use to us. Raymond is a park that is used heavily throughout the day, and the 6 am to 9 am hours used to be the least active. That is no longer true, and we are extremely grateful and want to work with other citizens to ensure that dogs continue to be welcome during established and appropriate play-times.

Mr. Rehding suggests several strategies that would help make shared use more successful:

- Having a user fee like Brookline does, with a resident's fee and a higher non-resident's fee, would be well worth exploring.
- The NPC idea of DNA testing for feces ownership is a brilliant idea, but it might be expensive. I agree with him, however, that such a system with stiff fines for infractions might lead to a significant reduction in such infractions.
- At Raymond there is a separate section for children and we try to keep dogs out of there. Sometimes they chase each other across the small hill into that area and mindful owners usually call them out quickly.

In addition:

- We at Raymond endorse (and would be willing to raise funds to pay for) swinging gates that could be easily closed during the sanctioned off-leash hours to protect our dogs. There are four entrances to Raymond Park, potentially dangerous to pedestrians and quadrupeds alike. Such gates would be useful during dog hours and could be used by parents when children are playing near the gates. A basic chain link gate with retractable pole closing would be ideal. We have noticed that our neighbors in Somerville have gated fences around most, if not all of their parks, whether they are areas in which dogs are allowed or not.
- We also suggest that when possible the water fountain at Raymond be modified to have a lower tap (and possibly even a built in bowl like there is at Fresh Pond). For three years now I have each year brought a

stainless steel bowl to the fountain when the water comes on and I take it home when the water is turned off for the winter. We all use the bowl, but it is difficult to fill with the existing taps.

We want to work together with the City Council and our neighbors to make Cambridge parks the best possible places for everyone to use. We at Raymond want to work with you and to cooperate fully. I have copied our email list, Raymond Doglovers on this mail. Also please visit us on Facebook at Dog Park at Raymond <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Dog-Park-at-Raymond/146620705451681>

Thank you, Vickey Bestor (149 Upland Road, Cambridge, MA 02140, 617-833-0755) vbester@fas.harvard.edu

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT E

From: Emily P [sailgirl@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2012 7:28 AM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: dogs in Cambridge parks

Hi,

I unfortunately can't make the meeting on Dec 13th. I have some thoughts regarding dogs in our parks. While I love dogs and support them having areas where they can be off leash, I do not think this should be allowed in children's parks. Since children's parks tend to be gated, this is often where we see off leash dogs.

I would like to raise the issue of enforcing the leash law more strictly. If dog owners want more opportunities for dogs, they need to follow the rules. The children's park behind my condo (the corner of Haskell and Pemberton) is routinely used by dog owners as their personal dog park. Not only are the off leash dogs leaving poops in the children's area, but they bark incessantly at early morning hours.

I tried calling CPD animal control and their response to me was "we are very busy" and also "we are not on duty until 8:30 am." That doesn't really help for the 6 am to 8 am offenders, which are the majority of the dogs that visit that park. Can we get normal CPD officers to start writing off-leash tickets during these hours? This park is really becoming a problem, on any given morning there are upwards of 5 dogs in the park at a time, barking their heads off and making so much noise. The dog owners all stand in a circle and talk to each other and ignore the dogs (thus leaving any poops uncleaned) and barks undisciplined. I have seen people driving to this park with their dogs to use it (instead of Danehey!). There are also several dog walkers in the neighborhood who make this park their destination and have the dogs they walk off leash while there are kids in the park.

The leash law needs to be strictly enforced in this park at all hours. Not only is the early morning crew a problem, but unleashed dogs and little kids do not mix in my mind as a safety issue.

It is unclear to me why dogs owners feel a sense of entitlement with regard to parks. Just because they made the decision to own a dog in a city where they don't have a yard, doesn't mean the rest of us should have to suffer. We need a solution that serves both parties.

Thanks,

Emily

From: Raffael Cavallaro [raffaelcavallaro@icloud.com]
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2012 10:39 AM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: vanBeuzekom, Minka; Cheung, Leland; Reeves, Ken; Kelley, Craig (home); McCabe, Mark; Davis, Henrietta; Decker, Marjorie; Simmons, Denise; Victoria Lyon Bestor; Fenton Hollander; Toomey, Tim (home); Maher, David; Jennings, Taha; Montgomery, Megan
Subject: Yesterday's dog meeting of the Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee

Dear Council members, city staff, and residents, First let me thank all of you who took the time to attend yesterday's meeting. Rather than cause it to run any longer by simply seconding what had already been said by others I thought it would be useful to reinforce some points in an email.

First, and most importantly, there is a developing consensus, shared I believe by Mark McCabe and many residents, that those parks where off leash dog use is permitted are the freest of dog waste. This is a result of dog owners who are invested in the success of the off leash programs keeping the parks as clean as possible by ensuring that other dog owners clean up after their pets, and by picking up any overlooked dog waste. This suggests that expanding off leash locations, somewhat counterintuitively, may be our most effective tool in reducing dog waste.

Second, and more specifically, I want to reiterate Vickey Bestor's suggestion that a waste receptacle be located, as it formerly was, near the Walden Street entrance to Raymond Park/Corcoran Field. Doing so would prevent dog owners from entering the children's playground - the location of the only nearby waste receptacle - merely to discard dog waste. This would make park use more pleasant for children and parents/caregivers, and more convenient for dog owners.

The first is an issue that the proposed Dog Working Group should probably take up. The second is an idea that DPW could act on immediately.

Again, thanks for your time!

warmest regards,

Ralph Cavallaro and Hemmie Chang

raffaelcavallaro@me.com

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT G

From: Bestor, Victoria Lyon [vbestor@fas.harvard.edu]
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2012 11:55 AM
To: Raffael Cavallaro; Lopez, Donna
Cc: vanBeuzekom, Minka; Cheung, Leland; Reeves, Ken; Kelley, Craig (home); McCabe, Mark; Davis, Henrietta; Decker, Marjorie; Simmons, Denise; Fenton Hollander; Toomey, Tim (home); Maher, David; Jennings, Taha; Montgomery, Megan; Peterson, Lisa; Gordon Moore; Charlotte Moore; ubrand@hotmail.com; Fenton Hollander; Nir; Pamela; Dave Thompson; Ron Frank; Suzanne Hunt; Laurel Howe; Joan Friebely; Joan Epstein; Tabitha; Bruce Posner; Fiona; Mary Steedly; Phyllis Kerr; Michelle@goldshlag.com; Carol Bundy; ceager@gmail.com; waring@mc.com; Raffael; Ann Brainerd; Ted Bestor; Bestor, Victoria Lyon; Murray, Andrea; McSherry, Dana; Kent Greenfield; Illiana Celia Quimbaya; Janelle Nanos; Sari Edelstein; Jim Newman; deepak; Pete Reid; Belinda Rathbone; Daniel Penrice
Subject: Re: Yesterday's dog meeting of the Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee

Dear All:

Please let me second Ralph's thanks to you all for the meeting yesterday and echo his comments. Creating more off leash options is absolutely a good and needed thing. Also in Raymond's case, I do not believe any renovations or modifications to the park were made, simply the hours were posted, and our community of dog owners grew around the open hours. We greatly appreciate the privilege that has been afforded us and we work hard to preserve that privilege.

A waste bin at the Walden entrance would also help the kiddy park and citizens in general. And if DPW's budget permits, we and our dogs would greatly appreciate a new fountain with a built in bowl at dog-height.

Please do not hesitate to call on the Raymond dog group if we can help.
Thank you again, Vickey

Victoria Lyon Bestor, member
Raymond Park Dog Group
Find us on Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Dog-Park-at-Raymond/146620705451681>
149 Upland Road, Cambridge, MA 02140
Email: vbestor@fas.harvard.edu
617-833-0755

On 12/14/12 10:38 AM, "Raffael Cavallaro" <raffaelcavallaro@icloud.com> wrote:

>Dear Council members, city staff, and residents, First let me thank all
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>Ralph Cavallaro and Hemmie Chang

>
>raffaelcavallaro@me.com

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