

**BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING: EAGLEDALE PARK DOG AREA EXPANSION - AUGUST 2, 2012
STRAWBERRY HILL MINI-GYM**

CALL TO ORDER A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair DeWitt.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Lee Cross, Ken DeWitt, Jay Kinney, Kirk Robinson, and Tom Swolgaard.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED EXPANSION:

Park Services Manager Dan Hamlin, said staff was asked to come up with options for expanding the current off leash dog area at Eagledale Park. He presented three options, saying none of them require that the labyrinth be removed: A) Fence/gate at bottom of hill, making entire upper area a dog park. B) Fence/gate at bottom of hill with additional fencing to surround and protect labyrinth at top of hill. C) Move fence of current dog area uphill to just outside the labyrinth. Fencing would be chain link and 4' high. Drainage issues in the current dog area would be addressed to make the current area more usable. Issues related to an expanded dog area include disruptions to both the labyrinth and view corridor to Mount Rainier.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Charmelle Pool, island resident who initiated and raised funds for the labyrinth project years ago, showed the Board what it originally looked like before the pavers were lowered by staff to make it easier to mow. The grass has since grown over much of it. She had initially suggested Battle Point Park for its location, but staff recommended Eagledale Park instead with its view of Mount Rainier. She does not want the labyrinth to be a source of conflict, saying the metaphor for a labyrinth is conflict resolution. If the labyrinth must be sacrificed for the greater good, so be it.

Chair DeWitt asked if she'd prefer to move it to another location either with or without an expanded dog park. She said she'd work with the District, but it would be a lot of hard work to move and it's hard to feel enthusiastic without the support of the Board. If the labyrinth is placed elsewhere, the maintenance issue will still exist. If the stones are raised as they were originally intended to be, this creates a maintenance issue. If lowered to the same level as the earth, they get covered up as things grow over them. Commissioners Cross and DeWitt would like to see the labyrinth preserved; possibly at a new site where there would be no lawn to mow.

Don Ruffini, park neighbor, said Options A&B take up 68% of the park which seems inappropriate. This same discussion was held years ago when the top of the hill was being considered for the current dog park. The issues remain the same. The top of the hill is widely used for egg hunts, picnics on the grass, equinox ceremonies, and neighborhood events. The loop road around it is used by walkers, children on bikes, people pushing strollers, and visitors. Many come to see the view of Mount Rainier. These uses would be affected if the area is fenced off for dogs. Option C is the best of the three options, but it bisects the loop road. He suggested adjusting the fence down so that the road would stay intact.

Bill Glasser, island resident, said he likes Option B best, saying it accommodates both the labyrinth and off leash area. He supports other off leash areas as well and suggested the new Hilltop property as a possibility. He would like off leash hours in all parks except ballfields.

Mary Lou Teske, island resident, favors Option B because it provides a site for those people with dogs who need a fenced area, and accommodates other uses as well.

Susan Lindsay, next door park neighbor, doesn't support the expansion since dogs that come to use the fenced area are off leash in the park from the moment they jump out of the car. This causes fear for many of the children who come to use the new play equipment. Expanding the dog area would exacerbate an already stressful situation. She has three boys that she doesn't take to Battle Point Park because of the number of off leash dogs. The top of the hill at

Eagledale Park is used for picnics, small children riding bikes, and children's play dates. It is used by families and people from out of town who love the labyrinth. The labyrinth is in such a beautiful peaceful area, she can't imagine it not being there. Her observation of dog owners is that they prefer walking with their dogs in a park as opposed to a closed-in area.

Amy Hanson, next door park neighbor for 10 years, has two large dogs and knows the park well. She questions whether an expanded dog area would attract more dog owners, saying it is rarely used now. The top of the park is used for people and neighborhood events. It is the place where children ride their bikes since neighboring roads have no shoulders. She'd like to see efforts dedicated to another parcel designated for dogs. She understands the need for dogs to run but Eagledale Park is not a place where dog owners want to go.

Michael Diehl, island resident, said they use Eagledale often because it's the only lawful place on the island to take dogs. For 9 months out of the year, it is too muddy to use, so they take their dogs to a dog park in Poulsbo. He supports having more dog areas on the island and because dogs have different needs, encouraged multiple use options in fenced areas, such as meadows for running, woods for trails, separate areas for large and small dogs, and a place to separate out an aggressive dog. He would like an area in Winslow because of the many people who live there with small dogs.

Deborah Baker, island resident who uses the dog area at Eagledale Park, said she rarely sees people in the park. She supports an expanded dog area at Eagledale Park, provided it is one part of a larger solution.

Commissioner Kinney asked the public if there is a way the dog park can be expanded that will have minimal impact on the neighborhood. Don Ruffini said it could go up the hill further, provided the loop road on top is left intact.


Joan Ruffini, park neighbor, supports finding a way that will accommodate both dogs and people and suggested increasing the dog area up into the top area in a way that won't affect the view corridor.


Bev Glasser, island resident, has taken her dog to Eagledale Park but the mud makes it unusable. She visited the park recently and said it does feel like a neighborhood park. She would not like to see the calm around the labyrinth disturbed with fences. She supports hours on trails or a larger dog park at another location.

Chair DeWitt thanked everyone for coming.

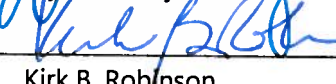
MEETING ADJOURNED at 6:50 pm.

Elizabeth R. Shepherd
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN
PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT

BY: 
Kenneth R. DeWitt

BY: 
John Thomas Swolgaard

BY: 
Jay C. Kinney

BY: 
Kirk B. Robinson

ATTEST:


Lee Cross