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# Dog Park Task Force

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## Memorandum

To: Town Manager Jodi Ross

CC: Board of Selectmen

From: Dog Park Task Force

Date: September 12, 2017

### PROPOSED MOTIONS:

1. I move that the Board of Selectmen approve use of approximately a 2 acre portion of its parcels on Farmer Way for the construction of a dog park.
2. I move that the Board of Selectmen instruct the Town Manager to apply for a design grant from the Stanton Foundation contingent on approval of CPC funds at the October Special Town Meeting.

Please find attached a document that spells out in some detail our plans for a Westford Dog Park. The Water Commissioners had requested that we put our plan in writing which was the impetus for the attached document.

Since the Dog Park Task Force's last appearance before the Board of Selectmen, we have met with the Water Commissioners; School Committee; Recreation Commission; Community Preservation Commission; Chief of the Fire Department; Chief of Police; Superintendent of the Water Department; Director of Recreation; Town Engineer; and the Town Manager's staff. We have considered each entity's input and have adjusted the parameters of the proposed dog park in order to find common ground. For instance, the Dog Park Task Force voted to recommend that the dog park be open only to those dogs licensed in Westford due to the concerns expressed about traffic and unfamiliar park users.

As abutters, the School Committee failed to support our interest in the Farmer Way parcel without having definitive dog park rules and a decision regarding membership vs. an open dog park. The Dog Park Task Force has since voted to

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recommend limiting the park to Westford residents only and is considering how it can limit the hours of the park so as to not conflict with school drop-off and pick-up times.

The Recreation Commission voted to approve our application for CPC funds with the stipulation that we assist in solving issues with the access road and parking should we pursue the Graniteville site. The Community Preservation Committee voted to support the DPTF's quest to secure \$25,000 at Special Town Meeting. As you know, in order to apply for the non-competitive \$250,000 Stanton Foundation dog park grant, the town must assure that it has 10% of the hard construction costs already allocated. Should Town Meeting approve of the \$25,000, that money would not be used until the "hard construction" of the park begins. We are excited at the prospect of bringing 10x the amount our initial investment back into the town.

During our Department Head Meeting on September 8th, the Farmer Way land option was heavily preferred. Regarding the Graniteville parcel, the Water Commissioners are concerned about potentially signing the 99-year lease that is required by the Stanton Foundation. They do not want to tie their hands should the town need to explore the development of a well near the Graniteville site. Further, it was agreed upon that the Graniteville site would be more expensive to develop. The Police Department has recently increased its patrols on Farmer Way, and indicated that it would be easy for them to patrol the dog park if it were there. The Fire Department's main concern is that any parking lot should be large enough to permit emergency vehicle access. The Town Engineer indicated that a Technical Review of the design must be completed prior to construction.

The dedicated volunteers and supporters of the Dog Park Task Force have carefully considered the practical and logistical questions and concerns encountered over the past 14 months. We have worked hard and now it is up to the Board to take the next steps so a dog park can become a reality in Westford.