



TOWN OF HUDSON
PARK COMMISSION
Division of Recreation
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HUDSON DOG PARK – PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

Updated: 11/29/2023

Why a Dog Park and what is it?

Think of a dog park as a safe and secure park that will serve residents and their dogs with the opportunity to play, learn and explore while off-leash. Dog parks provide benefits of both physical exercise and behavior training. They provide a chance for dogs to socialize with other dogs and humans; and help them become comfortable around other dogs and people in a way that is different than on-leash situations. Dog parks equally benefit the owners, as they become hubs for social interaction, provide opportunities to learn from others on how to train your dog, and provide a sense of neighborhood community.

When it began?

Residents have requested the town build a dog park for close to 10 years...

2018 - Town hires consultant to perform Community Outreach Survey and Public Input Sessions/Forums geared at assessing the community's wants/needs specific to Recreation. Final report identifies that developing an off-leash Dog Park in Hudson is a top priority for residents.

2019 – Recreation Town-Wide Master Plan is performed. One of the planning goals directly tied to this effort was to establish viable locations for a dog park.

February 2020 – Park Commission commit to prioritizing the dog park project based on planning efforts performed in both 2018 and 2019.

March 2020 – Covid strikes. All projects put on hold with the exception of the Centennial Beach Renovation Project.

Spring 2022 – Recreation Department connects with leaders from other municipalities who have designed and constructed dog parks while at the Massachusetts Recreation and Park Association Annual conference. This opens the door for Hudson Recreation to connect directly with the Stanton Foundation, who offers grant programs for municipalities in MA who seek to design and build dog parks.

September 2022 – Hudson Recreation meet with 3 community members, linked to Hud Dog (“a citizen group in Hudson, MA formed to build, support, and maintain a dog park in town”). Hudson Recreation informs group that they are ready to move the project forward and asks for their support in researching what other communities have developed for rules/policies that govern dog parks.

October 2022 – Hud Dog shares, with Hudson Recreation, a Dog Park Proposal document that had been created in the spring of 2016. [CLICK HERE TO: VIEW Hud Dog - Dog Park Proposal](#)

Progress Made to Date:

November 2, 2022

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

F. Update on Dog Park planning

Recreation staff held an introductory meeting with three residents who had previously expressed a high level of interest in assisting. The residents stated they would be willing to assist with the project and they were confident others would be interested in helping out as well.

Mr. Santos stated that he had already been in communication with the Stanton Foundation regarding grant funding, where grants are available for 100% design costs, up to \$25,000.0 and 90% hard construction costs, up to \$250,000.00. Mr. Santos stated that he felt confident in the Town's ability to secure both types of grants to support this project. Mr. Santos stated that while the Master Plan called out the Dog Park being built at Sauta Fields, there may be other locations that should be explored such as Farina Field or Apsley Park. Mr. Santos concluded by stating that in order to proceed with a grant application, a final location must be identified by the Town and asked the Commission how they wish to proceed in identifying that location.

Mr. Bowen stated that the Sauta site may be an easier build, as parking infrastructure and access to water is already in place at this location.

Mr. Chaves stated that access in and out of Farina may have its own set of challenges and also that he preferred not to take any action until Mr. Roan was present and could weigh in.

Mr. Bowen suggested that Mr. Santos start exploring firms who have recently designed Dog Parks for future consideration.

November 30, 2022

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

B. Dog Park Planning Update

Mr. Santos shared with the Commission that process the Town of Northborough had recently undertaken to develop an off-leash dog park. Mr. Santos referenced the contract and scope of work that had been provided from the Town of Northborough, stating that initial design costs for their project was \$35,500 and an additional \$31,000 was slated to be allocated to complete the final designs and cover some construction administration project costs.

Mr. Chaves stated that he was not surprised by the design fees paid by Northborough to date as they seemed appropriate for the scope of work performed.

Mr. Santos asked the Commission for guidance on further engaging with the residents in the community, asking specifically if the Commission wanted to handle the public engagement and outreach phase of the overall design process in-house or if they'd prefer an outside design firm handle this phase of the project. Both Mr. Chaves and Mr. Bowen stated that the design firm is selected to work with the Town to design the dog park should also be responsible for the public engagement and outreach phase or the project.

Mr. Santos stated that he supported this approach and would begin survey other communities together base-line information on their projects as well as compile a list of design firms that have been involved in design and construction of dog parks using Stanton Foundation funding.

December 3, 2023:

Downtown Holiday Stroll

Director of Recreation runs into and has conversation with individuals involved with Hud Dog at the Downtown Holiday Stroll. Director of Recreation informs them that the Park Commission voted to hire a design firm to assist with public engagement and input process, in addition to typical design related services; and that Recreation Department would be organizing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to be sent out after the holidays soliciting such services.

December 21, 2022

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

A. Update on Dog Park Planning Progress

Mr. Santos informed the Park Commission that he felt strongly there was no need to have an outside firm assist the Town in identifying possible locations for a dog park. Mr. Santos referred to the Community Innovation Sessions held many years back, that clearly identified the desire to have a dog park in Hudson. This subsequently led into the completion of the Recreation Master Plan where one of the primary goals and objectives of the stud was to identify up to three locations for a dog park. Continuing on Mr. Santos stated that while the Recreation Master Plan only resulted in identifying one location for a dog park, he felt that Farina field should also be explored as it was an underutilized property and many residents had expressed interest in having a dog park built at this location. In closing Mr. Santos stated that he did not envision a dog park being built at any other locations, given the current and near future programming needs. Discussion followed. All commissioners expressed their support to move forward with exploring both Sauta Fields and Farina field as possible locations for a dog park.

Mr. Chaves motioned to move forward with securing an outside firm to evaluate both Sauta and Farina fields for a dog park to built upon. Seconded by Mr. Bowen and carried...

Vote: 3 – 0, in favor

February 1, 2023

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

B. Update on Dog Park Planning

Mr. Santos stated that the RFP to secure a designer/consultant would soon be sent out to prospective firms.

February 14, 2023

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) SOLICITATION

The Town of Hudson, Park Commission – Division of Recreation is seeking a qualified consultant to assist with Initial Planning, Site Selection, Design Development and Preparation of bid-ready Construction Documents for a Dog park located in Hudson, MA. The Town intends to seek both Design and Construction Grant Funds through the Stanton Foundation Canine Welfare Grant Programs. Solicitation/RFP sent out via email to 24 individual firms.

[CLICK HERE TO: VIEW HUDSON DOG PARK RFP](#)

March 6, 2023

Request for Proposal (RFP) - Submission Deadline

Hudson Recreation received proposals from four (4) Design Firms. Hudson Recreation reviews proposals and conducts firm interviews as needed.

March 22, 2023

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

A. Progress Update on Dog Park Project and Designer Firm Selection Process

Mr. Santos provided an update on the RFP process, the proposals they had received and associated pricing. Mr. Santos requested that the Park Commission consider recommending Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture Inc (KZLA) to the Select Board, as the Designer Firm/Consultant to execute this project.

Mr. Bowen stated that everything looked to be in order and that he supported this recommendation. Mr. Roan stated that he had no issues.

Mr. Chaves stated the proposal from KZLA looked good and that he supported the recommendation.

Mr. Bowen motioned to recommend recommending Kyle Zick Landscape Architecture Inc (KZLA) to the Select Board, as the Designer Firm/Consultant for the Hudson Dog Park project.

April 26, 2023

KZLA met with Recreation Department Staff to perform initial site visits of both Farina Field and Sauta

Field Complex. Information gathered was utilized to develop the framework for the Public Input Session.

May 16, 2023 – PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

Meeting was held in person at the Quinn Middle School. Meeting notifications (custom post cards) were mailed to 2,246 individuals with registered dogs located in Hudson. Additionally, notification of the meeting was sent to 125 abutters, located within 100 feet of both Farina Field and the Sauta Field Complex.

[CLICK HERE TO: VIEW Public Input Session Notification](#)

[CLICK HERE TO: VIEW Public Input Session Presentation](#)

[CLICK HERE TO: VIEW Public Input Session Comment Boards](#)

[CLICK HERE TO: VIEW Questions & Comments from Public Input Session](#)

May 24, 2023

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

A. Update on Dog Park project and review of Community Input Session held on May 16, 2023

Mr. Santos informed the Commission that 29 residents attended the meeting and further that the meeting served as a great informational session, as well as gave those in attendance an opportunity to express their concerns and/or support for the project and the locations being considered. Mr. Santos continued on saying that he and Mr. Hannon had been recently seeking out any other possible locations, to ensure that all potential properties had been considered for the dog park, but have not had much success in finding any other viable locations.

Mr. Bowen stated that both sites have their challenges, that he wants to see KZLA move forward with their scope of work to provide insight and preliminary cost estimates on both locations, so that the Commission could then choose one site and move this project forward.

Mr. Hannon stated that he agreed with Mr. Bowen.

Mr. Chaves asked if CPC funds could be used on any town property. Discussion followed.

Mr. Santos stated that he would be following up with KZLA soon and that they would soon be releasing a survey to gather additional community input.

May – June 2023 – ONLINE SURVEY

Online Dog park Survey completed. 129 respondents.

[CLICK HERE TO: VIEW Hudson Dog Park Online Survey Summary](#)

June – August 2023: EXPLORATION OF ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS

Location: Forestvale Road (small abandoned parking lot and wooded area behind Stop & Shop, directly adjacent to Forestvale Cemetery, at intersection of Forestvale and Technology)

Determination: not suitable. Privately owned.

Location: 911 Municipal Drive (wooded area directly in front of Police Station, along Cox Street)

Determination: not suitable. KZLA reported that wetland/protected environmental resource areas were located in a large portion of this suggested area.

Location: Assabet River Rail Trail, Main Street (the sloped open grass area adjacent to the ARRT parking lot, directly across from the Main Street Cemetery)

Determination: not suitable. KZLA reported, “the narrowness of this site is really limiting...for good dog use and for the social aspect of the dog park for people.”

Location: 90 Technology Drive (2 separate areas of woodland and open field, adjacent to Intel Field), property under the jurisdiction of the Cemetery Commission.

Determination: either may be suitable, however one area was found to be more favorable than the other. Use of the property for a dog park, land ownership and subsequent impact on potential grant

funding to be explored further. See the [CLICK HERE TO: VIEW 90 Technology Drive Summary Report](#) Additionally, various other locations were suggested to the Recreation Department as potential sites for a dog park by residents. Some were privately owned and therefore not eligible for the grant funds, the project is seeking and others would involve displacing an existing program/facility user group in order to accommodate the project. Due to these circumstances, the other suggested sites were not explored further.

August 23, 2023

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

B. Park Commission to receive update on Dog Park project and discuss next steps

Mr. Santos stated that he had not progressed as far as he had hoped on the dog park project. However, since the last Park Commission meeting KZLA had met with recreation staff at the Intel Field property, off of Technology Drive, in July to assess two separate locations surrounding the field that could potentially serve as sites of the new dog park; and that Mr. Santos had met with resident to explore a potential location just off the rail trail as well. As a result, KZLA had responded with input on all three locations stating that the rail trail location was not conducive to constructing a dog park and that only one of the locations visited at the Intel Field was suitable for a dog park, while the other would be too far away from any parking spaces.

Mr. Santos informed the Park Commission that he had reached out the Cemetery Commission requesting to discuss the potential use of Intel field property for a dog park, as the property was under their jurisdiction and was still awaiting a response.

September 27, 2023

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

B. Park Commission to receive update on Dog Park project, specific to potential use of property currently under the jurisdiction of the Cemetery Commission

Mr. Santos stated that he had met with the cemetery commission on September 15, 2023 to discuss use of a portion of cemetery land for the development of a dog park, adjacent to the existing Intel Field. As a result, and while no formal vote was taken by the cemetery commission, each member stated that they would be open to exploring the possible use, however each commissioner specifically stated that they would most likely not support the transfer of land ownership to the Park Commission for such purposes.

Mr. Santos continued on saying that if the cemetery commission was not willing to transfer land to the Park Commission, then use of CPC funds to cover project costs at this location would not be possible.

Mr. Bowen stated that he understood the position of the cemetery commission members and that selecting the final location should be driven by the ability to maximize grants funds, while keeping costs as low as possible for residents.

Mr. Chaves stated that he too understands feedback provided by the cemetery commissioners. He continued on saying that, access to and approval for use of CPC funds for this specific project may be challenged less at Town Meeting in comparison to requesting funding via a stand-alone capital plan item at Town Meeting. Mr. Chaves requested that Mr. Santos and Mr. Hannon share their opinions on the matter.

Mr. Hannon stated that a small dog park at Sauta Fields may be the best solution based on the information currently available.

Mr. Santos stated that he is unsure of how much public support this project has currently. Additionally, that he did not see the use of cemetery land as viable option based on his meeting with the cemetery commission; and felt the costs to develop a dog park at Farina and its proximity to the homes of abutters would pose far greater challenges in comparison to developing a small dog park at Sauta Fields. No Further discussion was had.

Mr. Santos and Mr. Hannon will follow up with KZLA to inform them of what was discussed, the

outcome of the meeting with the cemetery commission and to determine the next steps in site selection and planning.

October 18, 2023

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

B. Dog Park Planning Progress Update

Mr. Santos informed the commission that he and Assistant Director Dan Hannon had met with KZLA to relay the feedback received from the cemetery commission, as well as share the details of what had recently been discussed with the park commissioners. Mr. Santos stated that he requested KZLA prepare basic design schematics and corresponding cost estimates for a future dog park at both Farina Field and the Sauta Field complex; to be presented to the Park Commission at their meeting to be held on November 8, 2023. Mr. Santos concluded by stating that the deadline for the Stanton Foundation Dog Park Design Grant was December 31, 2023 and therefore it was imperative that the Park Commission select a location on the evening of November 8, 2023 in order to allow enough time to prepare a successful grant application.

October 18, 2023

PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES

A. Park Commission to meet with KZLA to review proposed concept/schematic plans and corresponding cost estimates for a dog park at either Farina Field and Sauta Field Complex.

Mr. Roan announced to all in attendance that Kyle Zick Landscape Architects (KZLA) would be presenting to the Park Commission and that after the presentation he would open the meeting for public comments.

KZLA representatives (Kyle Zick and Rob Barella) presented the Park Commission with the feedback from the Community input Session and online Survey that had been completed during the late spring and early summer months. They continued on saying that throughout the summer they worked with the Recreation Staff to explore locations other than Farina and Sauta Fields but those alternate locations were not conducive to building a dog park. As a result, and as stated in their presentation, KZLA developed some initial concept plans for a dog park at both Farina Field and Sauta Fields. KZLA spoke to the pros and cons of each site, then reviewed the construction cost estimates based on the initial concept plans they had developed (Farina - \$413,915 / Sauta - \$282,571).

Mr. Roan opened the meeting for public comment:

David Ropes, 8 Palmeri Drive – Concerns with narrow access road off Cox Street and challenges with entering and exiting the site at that location. Concerns that pea stone surfacing may get too hot for dogs. Asked if maintenance costs had been determined yet at either site? Stated that he had polled the neighbors directly around Farina Field and many did not want the dog park built in that location. Concluded by stating that many residents are in very close proximity to Farina Field and then submitted a packet of supporting documentation that included a petition from some residents who did not support the use of Farina Field for a dog park.

Dawn Blunt, 44 Brook Street – Concerns that Farina is not being considered as the priority location since people are currently using the space with their dogs. Stated that Sauta already has too much activity going on.

Christine Connor, 61 Brook Street – Stated that people park all over the place at Sauta, including along Main Street. Concerns with the concession area being too close to the Dog Park site. Stated that site is already noisy and loud, this would create additional noise. Asked if the dog park would have lights?

Patrick Kiley, 63 Brook Street – Stated that having lights would be an issue.

Mr. Santos stated that the grant funds do not require lights within the dog park but rather they are a nice to have amenity.

Jackie Jackson – 31 Brook Street – Asked what the process was to move this forward, the next steps? Mr. Santos replied stating that there was much yet to be done but once the Park Commission

determined a location, the Town could then pursue a design grant via the Stanton Foundation, where additional public meetings would be held in order to develop final plans and create construction ready documents.

Mr. Chaves stated that the Park Commission has to determine a location for the dog park in order to move the project forward; “a project that has been in the works for a very long time”.

Sam Kiley, 63 Brook Street – Concerned for the safety of children who frequent the Sauta Fields, especially on weekends.

Mr. Roan asked if there were any other comments. There were none. Mr. Roan announced that he would close the public comment session.

B. Park Commission to determine location for Hudson Dog Park.

Mr. Chaves stated that he has concerns with Farina Field both the layout and the access road as proposed, stating further that EMS services may share similar concerns with the ability to access the site and maneuver large vehicles once on the property. Continuing on Mr. Chaves stated that he understands and carefully listened to the concerns, specific to the Sauta field property, of the residents in attendance and felt that vehicle parking and how people move through the parking lot at Sauta Fields need to be carefully examined during the next phase of design in order to keep everyone safe.

Mr. Bowen stated that he loved the idea of building the dog park in an area where the natural landscape and trees would be incorporated in to the design; and also, that he felt a dog park as proposed at either site may only require 6-8 parking spots.

No further discussion.

Mr. Bowen motioned to select Sauta Fields as the final location to finalize designs and ultimately construct a dog park. Seconded by Mr. Chaves and carried...

Vote: 3 – 0, in favor

Next Steps....

Park Commission/Division of Recreation to seek authorization from the Select Board to apply for a grant from the Stanton Foundation that would fund the costs associated with the project’s Phase Two: Design Services. This phase once completed will provide the town with 100% Design Plans, Cost Estimates and Bid-Ready Construction Documents. This request is expected to go before the Select Board on December 4, 2023.

For additional questions/comments or concerns, please contact Hudson Recreation directly.