

From: Jenifer Holmes <jenifer.holmes@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 4:41 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Hawthorne Park

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I've thought a lot about what to respond with as comments and even waiting until the last minute to submit I'm not sure I can adequately articulate what I want to say. I know that there are a lot of people, myself included, who will not like the direction and precedent set by making this park dog free. Most places do not allow dogs, this is one of the few where dogs are allowed and I've bragged about how awesome that is to lots of people, not everyone is lucky enough to have a park so close and what a shame it would be to lose that. I see more dogs use the open space of the park than people and honestly would love to see a little dog park go in there and I know I am not alone in that. I've certainly heard the rumors that the reason this is even being considered is because of one household complaining, and I hate the idea of the squeaky wheel getting the grease when I know there are a lot of people who do not agree. If you travel around the country and frankly even this state you'd notice that many other places are actually dog friendly, Madison is not really and I guess this is just part of that sentiment. Which is strange because there are SO MANY dogs in this neighborhood, and trying to block off an open park when it should be able to be used by all is almost silly. I really hope this doesn't get caught in the regulation cog and I would absolutely love to see this park be made more dog friendly, not less.

Thank you.

From: Sandy Blakeney <blakeney@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 6:10 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dog Park Designation Status Item 74470

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Re Item 74470
BPC Meeting 11/9/22

To the Board of Park Commissioners:

I am strongly in favor of retaining the "dog-friendly" designation for Hawthorne Park.

I have lived behind Hawthorne Park for 37 years. I don't have a dog now, but when I did, Hawthorne Park banned dogs. Years ago, it was widely understood that the city had staff patrolling parks and citing anyone who let their dog even step one paw on the park grounds. While it may not have been true, it was a common understanding among dog owners, and it was respected, even if it was resented! It was a very good change for the neighborhood when the city realized the benefits of allowing leashed dogs in Hawthorne and most other parks.

I believe this issue raises two questions for the Commission to consider:

1. First, a concern at the last Commission meeting was that the threshold for considering a change to a dog park designation was too low and presented a burden to staff and the Commission, and set unrealistic expectations for the public. I hope the Commission will resolve this and increase that threshold.

2. Second, as other commenters have mentioned, setting any designation with no hope of enforcing that designation is just a waste of everyone's time. If dogs should be leashed in dog-friendly parks, then there should be some consequence for disregarding that rule. If a park is designated as dog-free, there needs to be enforcement.

Please keep Hawthorne Park dog-friendly!

Respectfully,
Sandy Blakeney
2138 Linden Ave

From: yendor602 <yendor602@charter.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 5, 2022 1:53 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Hawthorne Park, Dogs permitted or not.

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I have lived at 230 division Street, next to the Park, for over 20 years. I was glad when the Park was opened up for dogs during the pandemic, and want to express my strong desire for the Park to remain friendly to dogs, and other family animal members as well.

I have witnessed the benefits of dogs in the park, and have not seen or experienced any animal conflicts. It is a good time of socializing for many and is very short lived. A variety of different dogs socialize regularly at our Park weekdays only from 7 am to 9 am. And generally not on weekends and generally not outside of these times. Also if and when kids are there which at these times is rare, dog owners respect the kids time there and take steps to leave or be sure there is no conflict. We realize that kids can be afraid of dogs generally so we take action to prevent accidental interactions before they occur. Dog owners at our Park also take seriously the need to be sure there is no animal waste in our Park. They clean up items left by others and they make sure no animal waste is found no matter who left it!

Please continue to permit dogs to be allowed in Hawthorn Park.

Rod Campbell
230 division street
608-249-6328 land line
608-332-9417 cell

From: 6087709132@mms.att.net <6087709132@mms.att.net>
Sent: Sunday, November 6, 2022 5:16 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject:
Re: Meeting November 9,

2022 re dog park status at Hawthorne Park.

I would support a "dog friendly" status to include from 6:00am-9:00 am Monday-Friday. In addition, dogs would have leashes on, but leashes not held by dog owners, so dogs are free to play & be closely watched by owners. With the large # of dogs in the neighborhood & no dog parks in close walking distance, this seems reasonable. Also some renters do not have cars. I don't believe the park gets much use by other residents during this time period.

Thank you.

Mimi Farber

146 Jackson St.

From: Sunshine Doll <sunshinevoodoo@icloud.com>

Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 8:04 AM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Cc: Benford, Brian <district6@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Dogs at Hawthorne Park

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Commissioners. I am writing to comment regarding your consideration of no longer allowing dogs at Hawthorne Park on Rusk Street. This change would have a significant negative and punitive impact on the families in this neighborhood, some of us who have lived here 20 years or more. I am aware there is one dog owner that lives immediately adjacent to the park (on Rusk) that allows his dog to roam the park off leash and the dog at times can be aggressive toward people, children and other dogs – running at them because it is not on a leash - and it poops in the park and the owner does not clean it up. I believe this neighbor used to have two dogs but only has one now (large bully breed dogs) – not sure. This neighbor has allowed this behavior of his dogs for a long time, even before dogs were allowed into the park, and I believe this consideration/request to remove dogs from the park is mainly aimed at addressing this one person's and his dog's behavior. The rest of the neighborhood, and the families with dogs, should not be punished and deprived of their ability to fully use the park for their entire family, including the fur members of their families. The City should, instead, enforce its ordinances against the offending person(s) and dog(s) rather than punishing all of us.

Hawthorne Park is a place where families and their dogs get together as a neighborhood to meet one another, interact, play and have fun. Many more people have used the park, making it safer and more friendly, since dogs have been allowed to visit the park with their humans (we used to find needles and used condoms in the park, and we have not seen those things since more people and their dogs have been allowed in the park). Not only would this change penalize the families – especially the kids – that enjoy the park because of the actions of one or even a few, it will not solve the problem. The offending neighbor and dog will continue to do what they do regardless of whether the rest of us are still allowed to enjoy the park with our entire family. If the City wants to address the problem, the City needs to address it directly with the person (or persons) creating the situations that are being complained of.

PLEASE do not prohibit members of our families from enjoying the park – it will not only have a chilling effect on use of one of the benefits that makes Madison a great place to live, it will not solve the problem you are trying to solve – it will simply make the park less safe again, with the offending dog owners and dogs free to reign the park so that the rest of us no longer want to use the park at all. The

City has plenty of parks fees in it "slush fund" (@\$20,000,000?) to find a better solution to the problem and needs to make the effort to fix the actual problem, not make it worse and prevent the neighborhood from fully enjoying the park.

Thank you.

Rusk street resident and homeowner (note I am not including my name for fear of retaliation of this neighbor who is at times also aggressive himself when confronted about not having dogs on leash and the bad behavior of his dogs over the years)

From: Neil Thompson <neeelt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 6:04 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dogs in Parks Status Review: Hawthorne Park

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Board of Parks Commissioners,

My family and I live on Winnebago St. We've all enjoyed Hawthorne park for many years. We have a small friendly dog that frequently brings us to the park for fresh air and exercise.

I've met many of my neighbors, both with and without dogs because of the Dog Friendly policy at the park. While I sympathise with the minority of neighbors who fear dogs, in my experience the dogs that we meet at the park do more to foster community and reassure children especially that they need not be afraid of dogs. I've never experienced an incident of irresponsible dog ownership at the park and I feel strongly that this vibrant and friendly community would suffer a significant loss if dogs weren't allowed to enjoy the park.

Thanks,
Neil Thompson
2117 Winnebago St.

From: Kevin Frost <kevingfrost@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 8:07 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Hawthorne Park Dogs in Park Review

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I live on Division street and have a dog. We occasionally walk through the park but always stay away from the playground, and my dog is always on leash. I'd like the park to stay an allowable dog park for dogs.

I know a lot of other owners bring their dogs to the park. I've never seen any issues regarding people not picking up dog poop. If I've seen dog poop anywhere, it's along the fence on the sidewalk side of the park, which wouldn't change with dog-free status. I haven't heard of any issues with dogs and kids, or dogs and other people. In fact we've had two porch concerts at the park and people brought their dogs to the park while watching music, and there were dogs, kids, and everyone had a good time.

I do know that some neighbors allow their dogs in the park off-leash. Usually this is only in the morning when not really anyone else is around. I'm not a huge fan of dogs off leash, especially as a dog owner, but I think it shows people will use the park for their dogs regardless of its dog status. And as far as I know there haven't been issues with dogs in the park. I think the best option is for the park to remain dog friendly, and kindly ask neighbors to leash their dogs so other people feel like they can safely share with the park.

Kevin

From: Squirelly J <squirellyj@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 9:46 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Board of Parks Commission 11/9/2022 meeting public comment re: Hawthorne Park proposed change of status

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Board of Parks Commissioners,

I live at 142 Division St #3 with my 5 ½ year old dog Piper. She is gentle to everyone, shy and sweet, and adored by children and adults. Hawthorne Park is everything to her. Her friends are there, human and dog. In a neighborhood with dangerous high-traffic streets, the park keeps my dog safe. If I were to ever lose her, I'd know where to look. Almost any neighbor would know who to return her to and how to find me.

Concerns about dogs off leash, dog poop, and dog behavior are not problems with dogs. They are enforcement issues for their humans. Even if true, they do not rise to a reasonable standard for a policy change. Dog free parks are available for people afraid of dogs or who want a dog free outdoor place to relax. Changing the status of Hawthorne Park would exacerbate an existing deficit of dog friendly parks.

Dog owners pick up others dog poop and trash and keep the park clean. Dog owners use the park throughout the day and help keep the park safe. Dog owners yield to other park users and don't use the park when people have events. There are no known incidents of dog human conflict or with shared use of the park. Concerns are not borne out by evidence. There are no known warnings or tickets issued for off leash dogs, no dog bites, no police calls, and no harm.

The BPC should provide criteria and standards for changing the status of a park in either direction of dog free or friendly. Examples or times changes were previously made should be shared with the reasoning for those decisions. No criteria, standards, or examples are found in the city or park websites and publications. Residents deserve to know how the BPC makes its decision. This proposed change is widely perceived as a surprise without precipitating incident. The Parks website states they use education then enforcement. This is the education phase. It would be unjust to make a policy change without first having more education and enforcement of existing rules. Just like the F35s, trains, and an over-abundance of Thai restaurants, street festivals, enlightened egos, and free-range children, dogs are part of this neighborhood and park.

The published comments as of 11/7 are largely in opposition (29-5) to a status change and supportive of keeping Hawthorne a dog friendly park.

Those in favor of a status change have a current remedy of dog free parks including Elmside Circle, Hudson, Morrison, Orton, and BB Clarke within the radius defined in the 2019 long range committee study materials. In the same area, only Olbrich, Yahara Place, and Hawthorne are dog friendly. Dog parks at Commercial and Demetral are not frequented by neighbors since they are farther to walk to and East Washington Ave is a barrier to safe pedestrian traffic. Most parks in the isthmus are already dog free. Dog friendly parks receive greater use when there are fewer options overall.

Those opposed to a status change speak to the vibrancy and health of the neighborhood as it is improved by having a dog friendly park. Repeated comments praise the conscientiousness, cleanliness, and considerate behavior of dog owners overall. Many kids come to the park with their dogs or to see dogs. Adults who are afraid for the children should listen to them. They are not afraid, including the 8- and 9-year-olds who commented opposed. Dogs help acclimate kids to being around them. Kids who grow up with dogs get the same benefits from their companionship as adults. Parents with young kids and dogs use the park with their whole family and rightfully want to continue to do so.

Some neighbors don't like dogs and still oppose a status change. They rightfully don't want to harsh other neighbors mellow. It's not Wisconsin nice. Hawthorne Park is a safe haven for all. Dogs need a place to exercise, and the pandemic increased the number of dog owners in the neighborhood. With an existing deficit of dog friendly parks, why would the BPC want to make people drive more or exercise less?

The dogs are so well-behaved and watched over that people bring cats on leash to use the park at the same time as dogs are there.

Take a look around the room at the snapshot of this neighborhood as you hear the stories of our community at Hawthorne Park. It is probably the only time you'll see any of us without our dogs. Since you probably won't get to meet our dogs like we have, you should know their names and understand the impact of a status change on them and us.

There are a lot of dogs missing their owners during the hearing.

Piper. Helmut. Lena. Nita. Pickles.

These dogs aren't doing anything wrong.

Drizzy. Pip. Cody. Harper. Norman.

These dogs are living their best lives and showing us how to do the same.

Lily. Paul. Mary. Stella. Marcy.

These dogs are lifelines to our community. They are a refuge from work, stress, and problems. They get us outside talking to each other.

Ava. Apollo. Elliot. Ollie. Coco.

These dogs have friendships built with each other and human owners and neighbors. In Hawthorne Park. For years.

Frankie. Nahla. Bessie. Geoffrey. Paul (two Pauls and neither is a walrus).

How do you tell these dogs that their park was taken away? They will still want to go there and miss their friends. That's not something you can untrain. It will create depression and obesity for them.

How do you tell kids that dogs were taken away from their park? That will give them depression too.

Children, dogs, all of us are living in hard times. Don't needlessly alarm the neighborhood and make hard times worse. Educate and enforce the existing rules. Hawthorne Park reflects the neighborhood now as is and should remain dog friendly.

Jason Huberty

From: Madison Parks <parks@cityofmadison.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 8, 2022 9:34 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: FW: General Park Inquiry

From: rosemary.zurad@gmail.com <rosemary.zurad@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 5:11 PM
To: Madison Parks <parks@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: General Park Inquiry

Contact Information:

Name: Rosemary Brand
Street Address:
146 Division
Madison, WI 53704
Phone:
Email: rosemary.zurad@gmail.com

Comments / Questions:

Subject: General Park Inquiry
Comments / Questions:
Hello,

Please please please keep Hawthorne Park dog friendly!!! It is the only park in this neighborhood and many of us do not have back yards. Where are those of us with both children and dogs supposed to go??

This park is a vital spot for the community to gather; I have met so many wonderful friends and neighbors here because of our dogs. Some have even gone on to become clients of mine and helped my small business to grow!

We have lived on Division St for over seven years and not ONCE have I heard of a complaint or incident because of dogs. There is never any dog poop left out. All the children I've seen at the park have been excited to meet my dog.

Please don't let one grumpy neighbor who is "nervous" around dogs ruin a wonderful spot for our community. It would be just as silly to ban kids because they are loud.

Thank you!

From: Nick Bubb <njbubb@icloud.com>

Sent: Tuesday, November 8, 2022 12:58 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Dogs in Parks

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Board of Park Commissioners,

My position is that leashed dogs should be allowed on the paved path that connects Bradbury Rd to Fitchrona Rd. This walking path is hugely important to the neighborhood – it provides a way to walk to stores in the area, it links to the Military Ridge state trail, and it provides a way out of the neighborhood without having to go all the way back out to McKee Rd / PD. It is important that this path is maintained for all users, including people who walk their dog along this path. People should feel welcome to walk their leashed dog into and out of the neighborhood.

If it is necessary to designate Quarry Cove Park as Dog Friendly to make it clear that this path can be used by everyone, then I am in support of that. If there is a way to compromise to allow dogs on the path, but not in the park, I am also in support of that.

Thank you,

Nick Bubb
3334 Bradbury Rd
