

From: Susan Lauffer <lauffers497@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2022 3:30 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Making Merrill Spring a "dog friendly" park

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

We would love that. Like most dog owners in this neighborhood, we are conscientious about picking up after our dog. I see no downside to opening the park to dogs on leash. Thanks for considering this change.

Susan Lauffer
5324 Lake Mendota Drive

From: Marie Dietrich <mariemadt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2022 5:46 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs

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

I oppose making this small park dog friendly. As an avid kayaker, I have seen many people bring their dogs to the park to throw sticks into the water for their dogs to fetch! It is clearly posted that it is a dog free park, but it is especially NOT dog free early in the morning! It is quite unsettling to be paddling back to shore to be greeted by a panting dog swimming right at you! I have also found dog feces in the park. I believe that this park is way too small to be shared with dogs. There are many other places for dogs up and down Lake Mendota Drive(the public accesses that dead end into the lake). I think it's a bad idea because it is already a problem and it's not even legal! Many people around Madison have discovered the park during the pandemic. Dog owners will not keep their dogs leashed in my experience. I have often heard, "oh, he's friendly ". I am afraid of dogs and feel that this park should remain dog free. Thank you, Marie Infield--
"To be beautiful means to be yourself. You don't need to be accepted by others. You need to accept yourself." - Thich Nhat Ha

From: David Walther <davidpwalther@charter.net>
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2022 7:45 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Dog Status

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

Board of Park Commissioners,

I am writing to voice my opinion regarding the change of status at Merrill Springs Park from its current dog free to a dog friendly park.

Let me preface this letter by saying we are dog friendly and have had various dogs for decades. My grandson also has a service dog.

We live at 5104 Spring Court, directly adjacent to the park. We have witnessed the use of this park by various dog owners. I feel this is unsuited for a dog friendly park as the park size is very small. As you are aware, there are a number of structures which further hinder the area for dog activity. These include boat racks, a large well, picnic tables and benches. It is bordered by private property which is extremely close on the east and west ends as well as the south end with a dense woods.

Although we realize the need to exercise and interact with dogs, we feel there is very limited green space to truly enhance the dog activity experience.

There is a green space within close proximity next to the Harbour and Spring Harbor Middle School (see below). This has a large unencumbered grassy area and is not immediately adjacent to any residence and would be more suited for dog activity. Water access is immediately across the street at the boat launch.

Please consider this when making decision to turn Merrill Springs Park in to a dog friendly park. There are other alternatives which more closely mirror other dog parks in the city as far as size and layout.

Sincerely,
David Walther
5104 Spring Ct
Madison, Wisconsin 53705



From: Teresa Hyman <tmghyman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 8:49 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park Dog Status

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

Hello,

We would like to comment on changing Merrill Springs Park from "dog free" to "dog friendly." We would like the park to remain dog free. It is a small park and if you allow dogs there, many dog owners will let their dogs run free and leave dog waste behind. We live nearby on Merrill Springs Road and have to clean up dog poop in our yard from people walking their dogs on the street. It is nice to have a few parks, such as this one, free of dogs.

Thank you,
Teresa and Josh Hyman

From: rona finman <ronafinman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 12:13 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dog status at Merrillsprings Park

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

I am very much in favor of making Merrill Springs Park dog friendly. I use the park a lot and would love to be able to take my dog down to the lake front on a leash. I would also request that a trash bin be established at this park.

Thank you.

Rona Finman, PHD, LLC.

From: Warren Palmer <palmer@beloit.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 12:16 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Spring Park -- yes to dog friendly

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

I have lived in Indian Hills since 1984 and am a frequent user of Merrill Spring Park.

I strongly favor it being a dog friendly park. Yes, I have dogs. Yes, I always pick up after my dogs, as do all of the other people I see in the area walking their dogs. And yes, people already will walk into the park with dogs. But I have never seen dog droppings in the park. I see no reason for responsible dog owners to be excluded from the park while walking their dogs. As for

irresponsible dog owners -- well, no law effectively compels them to have good behavior. Fortunately, irresponsible dog owners are a rare breed in this area.

--

Warren Palmer
Professor Emeritus
Department of Economics & Business
Beloit College

From: Dawn Maasch <dmmaasch@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 8:37 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Re: Merrill Springs Park Dog Friendly

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

Typo on the sentence beginning, "It is a disgrace". It should read, "It is a disgrace, in my opinion, that dogs are currently NOT allowed".

On Tuesday, October 4, 2022 at 08:06:57 PM CDT, Dawn Maasch <dmmaasch@yahoo.com> wrote:

City of Madison Board of Park Commissioners,

It is long overdue that the Merrill Springs Park identifies as a "dog friendly" park. I live on Spring Court and am a registered dog owner. This neighborhood, which prides itself on diversity and inclusion of all, has missed the mark on allowing this park to remain "dog free" for this long. There are many responsible dog owners on this street, and many who walk by on a daily basis, that would enjoy this beautiful park even more if dogs were allowed. It is a disgrace, in my opinion, that dogs are currently now allowed. Enough is enough! Let the dogs enjoy the park and lake, along with their owners too!

Sincerely,

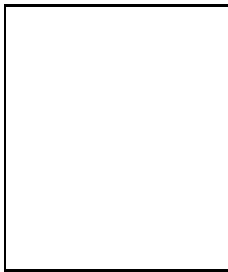
Dawn Maasch
5119 Spring Ct.
Madison, WI 53705
608-220-8002

From: John Maasch <jmaasch@veridianhomes.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 10:00 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park - Dog Friendly

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

Greetings Board and Park Members:

First, thank you for asking for our input on having Merrill Springs Park become Dog Friendly. I have a confession that when I first moved to the area I was not aware that parks were dog restricted and I took my dog (photo attached) in the park and would sit on the bench and look out over the water while reading the paper. Sherwood would sit at my feet and watch the ducks. This was great until a Park Ranger called my attention to the line on the park sign noting No Dogs. Shortly thereafter, bigger signs went up in the park entrance noting No Dogs. So I stopped using the park as Sherwood goes most everywhere with me. We walk by the park most every day as we take the trail up to Mendota Drive. I have noticed that not many use the park anymore. On occasion you will see someone sitting where Sherwood and I once did, but not often. We volunteer in weed control and help with the clean up so the park always look nice. I know I would be so excited to have the ability to hang out once again in the park. It is nice to see the neighbors get out and walk their dogs, they are respectful (leash and waste pick up) and its nice to get to know them better, having the park open to leashed only dog friendly would help greatly.



John Maasch

Vice President, Sales & Marketing
REALTOR®

Office: [608-226-3026](tel:608-226-3026)

Mobile: [608-220-9280](tel:608-220-9280)

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VeridianHomes.com

From: Dawn Maasch <dmmaasch@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 8:37 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Re: Merrill Springs Park Dog Friendly

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Typo on the sentence beginning, "It is a disgrace". It should read, "It is a disgrace, in my opinion, that dogs are currently NOT allowed".

On Tuesday, October 4, 2022 at 08:06:57 PM CDT, Dawn Maasch <dmmaasch@yahoo.com> wrote:

City of Madison Board of Park Commissioners,

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even more if dogs were allowed. It is a disgrace, in my opinion, that dogs are currently now allowed. Enough is enough! Let the dogs enjoy the park and lake, along with their owners too!

Sincerely,

Dawn Maasch
5119 Spring Ct.
Madison, WI 53705
608-220-8002

From: Alice Erickson <alicatraz@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, October 7, 2022 11:20 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill springs - dog status

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

I just realized something and wanted to add it to my note below where I indicated from 1979 I'd never seen a problem. It just occurred to me to think back on the summer of 2020 when covid had ramped up. People fled to the outdoors and the parks. Merrill Springs Park was unbelievably crowded. In fact, I pretty much didn't go down there all summer because of the intense use (it served a great purpose that summer). I'm guessing that might be when folks finally had it with dogs. However, people are back to normal and the park is very quiet with mostly folks walking in, sitting to enjoy the scenery and then leaving. I know that covid brought out a lot of craziness in people that still remains, but I would really like to see the park have a chance to return to its prior state with dogs on leash.

From: Alice Erickson <alicatraz@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 8:59 PM
To: pacommission@cityofmadison.com
Subject: Merrill springs - dog status

I would attend if I could, as I feel strongly about this, however I will be in MT helping a relative post knee replacement.

I've lived on Spring Ct since 1979 – just a few houses down from Merrill Springs Park. The park is one of the reasons we bought our house. I care deeply about it and along with Faith Fitzpatrick we co-founded the Friends of Merrill Spring in 2015, which I'm still active in as President. I'm mentioning that to indicate my caring of the park. However, what I write now is my personal opinion and I am not representing the Friends.

Over all my years here, I have only seen one misbehaved dog (well actually it was an owner who didn't control their dog). I have never seen any dog poop left in the park. I know of one Friends member who came from several blocks away to help with cleaning the cistern – a big job (bringing their dog). They no longer help as they can't bring their dog. There are so many dogwalkers that used this park as a destination– who used to go down and allow their dogs to

have a drink out of the stream. But now the dogs stay thirsty and the dog owners have to look at the lake from a distance rather than having a seat and a rest before their return trip.

As for myself, I'm really not a dog person. I was chased and jumped on too much as a child and now am wary of most of them. But, I have just never run into issues at the park and I believe having leashed dogs allows many more people to come in and enjoy the park. Sure – there will probably be the 1 or 2 that don't follow the rules – but isn't that the case everywhere? Should all the good dog owners be penalized because of one or two.

Please allow leashed dogs back in the park.

Thank you,
Alice Erickson
5109 Spring Ct

From: Elizabeth Niblack-Sykes <ebs1usa@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 8, 2022 1:16 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Support for Dog friendly status at Merrill Springs Park

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

I would like to offer my full support for making Merrill Springs Park Dog Friendly. I have been a daily visitor to this park for 30 years. I have only been a dog owner for 10 years. In 30 years, I have noted that people, not dogs, offer the most damage to the park. I believe that responsible dog owners and their dogs will not adversely affect anyone's enjoyment of the park. This park offers the safest access in the area for dogs to swim in the lake.

Thank you for considering this change of designation.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Niblack-Sykes
5005 Risser Rd
Madison 53705

From: Matthew Sykes <mds1usa@icloud.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 8, 2022 1:21 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dog status - Merrill Springs Park

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

Dear Commission members,
I'm sending this email today to register that I am in favor of changing Merrill Springs Park status to a "dog friendly" park. Thank you for taking up this issue.

Regards,
Matthew Sykes
5005 Risser Rd
Madison, Wi
53705

From: theobromine <theobromine@charter.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 8, 2022 3:17 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Mike <mikefritsch@charter.net>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park dog status

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

Hello,

My family lives in the Spring Harbor neighborhood. We'd love it if dogs were allowed in Merrill Springs Park. We walk our golden retriever a couple times a day and it would be really nice to be able to enter the park. We of course keep our dog leashed and pick up after him.

Fern Murdoch & Mike Fritsch
5110 Flambeau Rd
Madison 53705

From: theobromine <theobromine@charter.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 8, 2022 3:27 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Mike <mikefritsch@charter.net>
Subject: Dog Status at Merrill Springs Park

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

Hello,

My husband and I would like to support the proposal to make Merrill Springs Park "dog friendly" that a post card notice listed to be discussed on Nov 9. Our family lives in the Spring Harbor neighborhood and we walk our golden retriever a couple times a day. It would be lovely to be able to enter the Merrill Springs Park. We keep our dog leashed and always pick up after him.

Fern Murdoch & Mike Fritsch
5110 Flambeau Rd
Madison 53705

From: Keri Shehan <keri722@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 11, 2022 11:57 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Spring Park

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

Hello,

I understand that the BPC will be deciding whether to allow on-leash dogs at Merrill Spring Park. As a resident of the Spring Harbor neighborhood, I am in favor of the park being converted to a dog-friendly area. Please consider my input at the upcoming meeting on November 9th.

Thank you!
Keri Shehan

From: Britt Anderson <anderson.britt.j@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 9:06 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park - Dog Status

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

Hello,

I am in favor of changing Merrill Springs Park from a "dog free" park to a "dog friendly" park. My husband and I live on Merrill Springs Rd. and we purchased a storage spot for our canoe at Merrill Springs Park. Our dog, Mika, loves going out in the canoe, but right now, we have to have one person paddle the canoe to a dog friendly area to get Mika in the canoe. It would be much more convenient if we could walk her through Merrill Springs Park on leash and put her in the canoe there.

Thanks for your consideration.

Britt Anderson
(608) 358-9341

From: zboo32@gmail.com <zboo32@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park

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

Hi,

Wholly supportive of the potential change to make Merrill Springs Park dog friendly. Dog walkers are super users of the park system and in my experience, usually are responsible users as well. I of course admit some bias as a dog owner myself. Thanks, Zubin Gagrat

From: dockushner@gmail.com <dockushner@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2022 9:24 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Stefanie Kushner <stefaniekushner@tds.net>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park Dog Status Request

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

City of Madison Board of Park Commissioners,

We were thrilled to hear that the city is considering changing the status of Merrill Springs Park to “dog friendly.” We are relatively new to the neighborhood. Immediately upon getting to know the area, we were amazed how many people are out walking their dogs on a regular basis and how responsible the dog owners are. However, many of the nearby streets are very narrow and without sidewalks. This makes finding places to safely walk our dog somewhat difficult. One of the reasons we chose to live on Spring Ct. was this beautiful park at the end of our street. We love our dog, Ava, and she is wonderfully friendly and well-behaved. Not knowing any better, we assumed we could regularly bring her on leash to relax at the park. You can imagine the disappointment when we first realized that this park was “dog free.”

Because we are curious, we often walk by the entrance to Merrill Springs Park. What we have come to realize is that the park is actually “people free.” There is almost never anybody enjoying its beauty and history. We believe that is because most of the people walking in the neighborhood do so with their dogs. They have come to avoid the park, since they are not welcome. It is a true shame that this park is underutilized.

Thank you so much for bringing about this change! It is a win-win for our community.

With appreciation,

David and Stefanie Kushner
5144 Spring Ct, Madison

From: Diann Danielsen <dkdanielsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 17, 2022 1:18 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park - Dog Status Request

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

Please accept these comments for the November 9, 2022, Park Commission meeting regarding dogs on leash at Merrill Springs Park -

I strongly support allowing dogs on leash in Merrill Springs Park. I have lived in the Spring Harbor neighborhood for over 30 years. Merrill Springs Park is a treasure that I enjoy on only a limited basis because my daily walks and my park visits are always with my dog!

Most dog lovers are responsible and make sure their dogs are behaved and picked up after when in public places. Please do not punish all dog owners because of the potential of a bad apple.

My first visit to Merrill Springs Park was shortly after I moved to Madison to attend grad school. My daughter was 6 years old and this was a major move for her. I worked hard to introduce her to her new home and to create positive experiences and new memories. One day we drove over to Merrill Springs, parked on Spring Court, and emerged from the car - mom, child, dog, and a picnic basket. An adjacent neighbor ran out of her house, yelling that I could not park there, dogs were not allowed in the park and on and on. The "neighborhood policewoman" spoiled the day and we left without having a picnic. Unfortunately, that woman running out of her house - yelling, arms flailing in the air - is still the image that comes to mind every time I think of Merrill Springs Park.

Allowing dogs on leash at Merrill Springs Park is one way to make the park more accessible and more enjoyable for the public and taxpayers. Please allow dogs on leash, please create more public parking, and please please replace the vegetative screening in the southeast corner of the park that was so obscenely clear cut this summer.

Thank you,
Diann Danielsen

From: Jim Twesme <jim.twesme@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 20, 2022 11:19 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Cathy Sullivan <cathysullivan48@gmail.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park - Dog Status Request

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

To BPC -

My wife and I live two doors from the Merrill Springs Park. We are strongly against the proposal to change to status of the park to "dog friendly."

First, let me say that I am a "dog person." I have owned dogs in the past, volunteered at the Dane County Humane Society as a dog walker, and would likely own a dog today if it were not for our travel schedule.

My wife, on the other hand, does not feel comfortable around (especially larger) dogs.

Since the park was designated as a non-dog park, people have routinely brought their dogs into the park despite the no-dog signs at the entrance designating it as such. The signs have also been defaced to indicate it is in fact a dog park, and tennis balls, marked for dog play, left at the entrance.

This summer, as has happened in the past, 2 large dogs came into our back yard from the park and I had to not only ask the owner to remove the dogs from our property, but also from the “non-dog” park. It is the home owners in this neighborhood who have had to remind dog owners of park’s status and the potential for a fine for those who disregard this status. We have spoken to park rangers about the violations, and there have apparently been warnings given, but I have no knowledge as to whether any fines have actually been assessed. Thankfully, the number of dogs in the park has decreased. I believe it is a result of the diligence of the home owners in the area (no small chore), with the support of the rangers.

I understand the attractive aspects of the park for dogs, especially the access to the lake. But it is an extremely small park area, as you know. I firmly believe that if the park’s status were to change to dog-friendly, many dog owners would disregard the leash requirement, just as they have ignored the no-dog restriction. Again, as park ranger visits are infrequent, the neighbors will have the primary responsibility for enforcing any dog rules.

There are many dog-friendly parks in our area, both in Madison and Middleton. Can we not have one small public space free from dogs?

Jim Twesme
5106 Spring Ct

From: heidi sonnenburg <hsonnenburg@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 6:38 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merril Springs Park

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

I’m a dog owner and I also donate money to the Merril Springs park. I find it insulting and disrespectful to have this park posting signs against dogs. The signs take away the beauty and historical treasure the park is.

I would like to see this park allow all of the neighborhood with dogs to be able to sit quietly for a moment in this park with their leashed dog.

I am sad that I cannot sit for a minute to reflect or meditate just because I have a dog with me.

Please help make this right!

Many thanks!

Heidi Sonnenburg

From: Tim Piatt <tdpiatt5@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2022 11:50 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park - Dog Free to Dog Friendly

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

Hello,
I feel strongly that the status of Merrill Springs Park should be changed from dog *free* **to** dog *friendly*. I would love to be able to walk my dog (on leash) into the park to sit and enjoy the wonderful lake view.

Thank you,
Tim Piatt
5516 Greening Ln, Madison, WI 53705

From: David Van Sickle <dvansickle@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 7:49 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Spring Park

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

As a resident of Spring Harbor, I'm writing to strongly encourage the Board of Park Commissioners to designate Merrill Spring Park as dog friendly at the upcoming meeting.

Thank you for considering community input in this decision.
Regards,
David Van Sickle

From: Karen Lavalley <kslavall@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 7:55 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dogs in Parks

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

thank you Merrill Spring Park:
please have dog friendly, with rule leashed,,dog licensed, leash no more than 6' long, non-retractable.and leash held by a person all times

thank you, Karen LaValley 5129 Spring Ct. Madison, Wi. 53705

From: Tanya Cunningham <itmakesyousmile@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 3:02 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Dog free parks

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

With respect to the following: I live a few blocks from Merrill Springs Park and strongly urge the commission to keep it dog free. It's a small park, and one that is not suited to sharing with dogs. I am not a dog person and cannot be in close proximity to dogs in parks, therefore any park that allows dogs is basically unavailable to me. MSP is a wonderful terminus for a walk or bike ride, and a place to sit and enjoy the quiet sounds of the shoreline. Also, I HATE have to worry constantly about stepping in dog doo.

In general, I favor keeping as many parks as possible, but especially the smaller ones, dog free.

Tanya Cunningham

From: David A. Abraham <daad2000@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 5:35 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park Dog Status

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

Hello,

I live in 1114 Merrill Springs Rd. I think this park should be dog friendly. There are a large number of dog owners in the neighborhood and few places to hang out with your dog next to the lake. This isn't used that frequently by bathers and there are restrictions forcing dogs to be leashed so I don't understand the concern about dogs.

Regards,

David Abraham

From: Lisa Abraham <lisfabraham@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2022 7:30 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,

I am a resident of Merrill Springs Road and am emailing about allowing dogs at Merrill Springs Park. We have a very dog friendly neighborhood with many dogs, but no where to take them to enjoy the lake, one of the key draws to the neighborhood. All of the dog owners I've met, ourselves included, are very responsible dog owners and pick up after our dogs. It has not been a problem elsewhere in the neighborhood, so I see no reason why it should be a problem at Merrill Springs Park.

Thank you for your consideration,
Lisa Abraham

From: Helen Hartman <hartmanhelen@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 29, 2022 1:53 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Re: Dogs in Parks

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

Sorry. I didn't mean to push send.

I live near Merrill Springs Park. I often walk my dog on the adjacent path and would love to be able to sit on the bench and watch the birds on the lake. My dog is on leash and I pick up after her. I hope you will consider allowing dogs on leash at Merrill Spring Park.

Thank you
Helen Hartman
5118 Flambeau Rd
Madison WI 53705

From: Marie Dietrich <mariedt@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2022 2:16 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.

I am submitting this on behalf of my elderly mother (helendee4@gmail.com). She enjoys sitting in Merrill Springs Park. She is also very fearful of dogs. The park is very small as you know. There is only one way in and one way out. She thinks that it is a bad idea to allow dogs because it is so small. She had an experience sitting in the park while an unleashed dog & its owner were in the lake just in front of the park playing "fetch". The dog kept going on the land and went near her shaking the water off. Needless to say, mom just froze when the dog came near. The owner kept shouting, "he's friendly". Dog owners do not understand that many people are terrified of dogs due to past traumatic experiences. I realize that the "ask" is to allow leashed dogs, but who will enforce the leash on rule? There are other larger parks that can accommodate dogs. Perhaps a compromise could be made in that dogs are welcome in the off season when not as many people come to the park (October to April). Thanks for your consideration, Helen Dietrich, 5101 Lake Mendota Dr, Madison, WI 53705--

"To be beautiful means to be yourself. You don't need to be accepted by others. You need to accept yourself." - Thich Nhat Ha

From: noreen warren <noreen.warren@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 2:47 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.

I would like to support Merrill springs park as a on lease dog area.

It is one of the very few places to access water for a pet in the summer. The channel from the spring can provide a cooling refreshment during a dog walk. The park is too small to be a destination park, rather a walk through park.

Thank you
Noreen warren

From: Alkas Baybas <abaybas@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022 8:12 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill springs park

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Hi there,
I just wanted to add our support for changing merrill springs park to a dog friendly park. It's a beautiful spot to enjoy as a family but in the past we've barely gotten to enjoy it because we usually have our dog on our walks.

We were really excited to hear about this proposal. Let me know if there's anything we could do to help.

Thanks. Take care.

From: Kathy Schlimgen <kaschlim@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022 11:22 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Merrill Springs Park Dog Friendly

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

To Park commission,
I wish to let you know I think it is in the best interest of the Spring Harbor area that dog owners be allowed to have their dog on a lease in Merrill Springs park on Spring Ct. I live nearby at 5046 Lake Mendota Dr. So many people enjoy the small lakeside park. I think dogs and dog owners should be able to enjoy a leased walk through the park or to sit on a park bench.
Respectfully,
Kathy Schlimgen
608-238-4067

PS. I don't have a dog but know many who do.

From: Kyle E Metzloff <metzloffk@uwplatt.edu>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022 10:33 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Kyle Metzloff <kmetzloff@gmail.com>
Subject: BPC - Opposition to "dog friendly" status at Merrill Springs Park

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

Dear Board of Parks Commissioners:

I reside at 5105 Spring Ct.

I would like to voice my concerns and opposition to changing the Merrill Springs Park from "Dog Free" to "Dog Friendly. Not all people enjoy dogs and the danger to the public from dogs is very under estimated. If this park becomes a "dog Friendly" park there will be a change in the ability for people to use this park. I also would like to keep my name from being mentioned in the hearing for fear of repercussions from neighbors. I am working during the hearing so cannot make it in person.

Background:

I live within sight and hearing distance of the Merrill Springs Park and have lived here for 25 years. I use the park at least once a week and it is a refuge from the city around it. It is great that you can picnic near the lake and enjoy the beautiful view. I see many families with young children and couples sitting on blankets enjoying the park.

The park is "dog free" although many dog owners will disregard the signs for this and several signs have been taken down. There have been at least 5 signs removed and the one park ranger assigned to the area has had little luck in enforcing the restriction.

I understand that the owners want to have their dogs go in the lake, but this is a people park and we should have a separate dog park on the lake where they can enjoy this.

There is a "dog friendly" park at the other end of the street so I don't think we need another in such close proximity.

When using the lake most owners that use the park with their dog take their dog off the leash and let them run in the lake.

Noise

Owners get used to their dogs barking noise, but the people around are not used to this and it is very annoying, especially if you have to listen to it from your own house. When dogs encounter each other in a "dog friendly" park not only do they bark, it is sometimes dangerous to the dogs, the owners, and especially the public.

Dog Attacks

Dogs are dangerous. Many people are afraid of dogs including me. My son was bitten by a dog as a child and fortunately there was not permanent damage. Many dog owners do not have control of their dog even when on leash.

Each day, nearly 1,000 persons are treated in hospital emergency departments for nonfatal dog bite-related injuries.

[The Changing Epidemiology of Dog Bite Injuries in the United States, 2005–2018, by Tuckel PS and Milczarski W., *Injury Epidemiology*, 01 November 2020.](#)

<https://www.dogsbite.org/pdf/15-year-dog-bite-fatality-chart-dogsbiteorg.pdf>

Over the past 15 years there were Over 500 deaths from dog bites.

"On Leash"

I would estimate the half of the dog owners using the park run their dog off leash into the lake. I have been observing this for 25 years with more frequent violations recently. I have no doubt this will increase if the park were "Dog Friendly". I would not continue use the park as I feel I would be in danger.

Fecal Matter in Park

Most owners are fairly good at picking up the mess their dog makes, but the fecal matter left on the grass is disgusting and dangerous. The park had a new water pump installed about 10 years ago because it had bacteria in the water pumped into the cistern. In some cases the dogs go swimming in the cistern and the fecal matter from the dogs on the ground will not only keep people from sitting on the ground, it puts bacteria into the ground, the cistern, and into the lake.

Disrespect of Historical Ho-Chunk site.

From what I understand this site was a very special spot for the HoChunk native population. I think that having dogs voiding on this site would be disrespectful to their heritage.

Spring Harbor School Use:

Spring Harbor Middle School uses the park for many activities, with streams of middle school students walking from the school to do science experiments and learn about the Ho-Chunk history at this site. I would think the increased risk of a bite by a dog may prevent the school from using this park going forward if the park was "dog friendly"

Summary:

I think this park would change from a park used by people to a park for dogs if it changes to "dog friendly" as it will deter many people from using the park. Living nearby will be less enjoyable as the noise, the mess and the danger will prevent me from using the park.

I urge you to leave the park as it is. Enforcing the "on leash" part of the order is impossible with the current staff and will not be respected by many owners making it a dangerous place for people.

Thank you for your support on this issue.

Kyle Metzloff

5137 SPRING CT.
MADISON

CITY OF MADISON BOARD OF PARK
COMMISSIONERS
210 MLK JR. BLVD., ROOM 104
MADISON, WI 53703

DEAR PARK COMMISSIONERS:

I WOULD LIKE MERRILL SPRINGS
PARK TO BECOME "DOG FRIENDLY."
I HAVE LIVED ON SPRING COURT SINCE
1990 AND HAVE HAD CANINE COM-
PANIONS FOR MOST OF MY LIFE. OUR
NEIGHBORHOOD DOESN'T SUPPORT
MANY THOUGHTLESS DOG OWNERS,
AND IF I SHOULD ENCOUNTER ANY
DOG DROPPINGS IN THE PARK, I
INTEND TO PICK THEM UP AND DIS-
POSE OF THEM MYSELF.

SINCERELY,

RECEIVED

NOV 04 2022

John W. Thompson