

7117 Farmington Way
Madison, WI 53717
April 28, 2013

Mr. Kevin R. Briski
Parks Superintendent
City of Madison Parks Division
PO Box 2987
Madison, WI 53701

Dear Mr. Briski:

At its regular meeting on April 9, 2013, the Walnut Grove Homes Association (WGHA) Board of Directors passed a motion directing me to communicate, on its behalf, a series of advisory recommendations relating to the west side dog park currently being considered for possible location in Walnut Grove Park.

As municipally-recognized representatives of the Walnut Grove neighborhood, the WGHA Board offers these recommendations in support of the established deliberative process. We see them as well-grounded, constructive and reasonable. And, we trust, from statements made by Parks Division staff at several earlier public meetings as well as from postings on the Parks Division website (Attachment A), that such expressions, made solely in the public interest, are welcome and will be taken under serious advisement as part of that process:

- (1) the entrance to the dog park under consideration should be situated along an independent pathway extending between Westfield Road and the proposed dog park location, as indicated on Attachment B
- (2) the two pathways on park property should be separated by plants, hedges and/or arbors of sufficient height and strength to prevent encroachment from one to the other
- (3) signage should be posted throughout Walnut Grove Park clearly indicating that, except for the dog park access route, all other pathways on the public property are off-limits to dogs, and specifically discouraging dog walkers from cutting through the park and/or walking dogs in close proximity to the children's playground
- (4) the portion of the park adjacent to homes should have vegetative screens, constructed of fast-growing plant material, *arborvitae* or the like, located so as to minimize, and, ideally restrict, sound from carrying beyond the confines of the park
- (5) the hours of public access to the dog park should be established to allow for reasonable use while respecting the privacy rights of neighboring residents; we believe that this action is warranted given the proximity of the proposed facility to adjacent dwellings and we recommend fixing the hours posted for public use as from 6:00am to 10:00pm throughout the year

- (6) unaccompanied persons responsible for tending dog(s) in the park must be at least 12 years of age, children between 6 years and 12 years of age must be accompanied by an adult, and, and under no circumstances, will children under 6 years of age be allowed within the dog park – with signage posted to this effect.

Again, please note that the above recommendations are grounded in the standing interest of the WGHA Board in the west side dog park site location process – and in maintaining the integrity of that process. Please note further that we also are acting out of the due diligence required of us as municipally-recognized neighborhood representatives. We acknowledge that the City reserves the right to make park usage determinations with-out the expressed approval of neighborhood organizations, such as ours. And, we want to emphasize that this letter is not intended, nor should be seen, as either an explicit or implied statement of support for, or opposition to, the dog park now under consideration.

At the same time, it also should be noted that we do value a collegial approach to public/private projects as well as open exchanges in support of process transparency. In the absence to date of a specific written proposal from the City that we might react to, or a request to take a formal position on the park as might be anticipated from the Parks Division process flowchart, we see our best efforts directed at serving as interlocutors between decision-makers in the Parks Division and Board of Park Commissioners and Walnut Grove Homes Association members and area residents.

Consequently, we welcome this opportunity to make these considered views of the Walnut Grove neighborhood community available to you as Parks Superintendent and are pleased to be providing a courtesy copy of our letter to Mr. Pedretti of your staff, to District 9 Alder Paul Skidmore and to the Madison Board of Park Commissioners.

Sincerely,

Eric C. Lewandowski
President, Board of Directors
Walnut Grove Homes Association

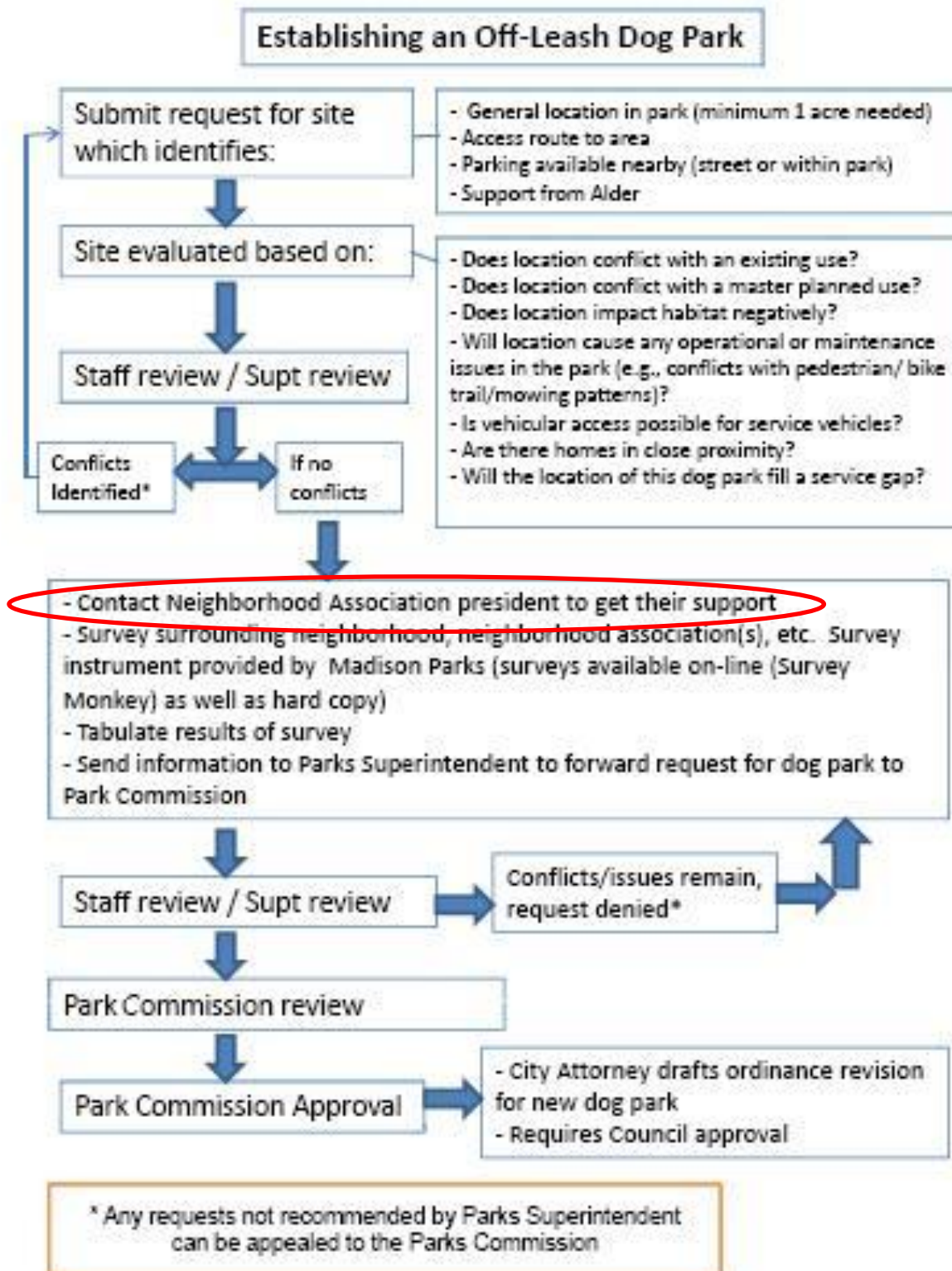
ECL/

Attachments

Cc: C. Pedretti
P. Skidmore

D. Wallner

Attachment A



Proposed Recommendations by the WGHA



Ordinance & signage: dogs must be accompanied by a person 16 years or older.



Signage: dogs must be on-leash.



New and separate pathway .



Ordinance and signage restricting park hours from 6am to 10pm.



New trees and arbors as barriers.



Signage to limit dog access, placed in area as indicated.

