

Silver Lake Neighborhood Council Dog Park Ad Hoc Committee
6/11/19 Meeting Minutes

Margaret gave call to order, opening comments, introductions of everyone at the meeting, approved last meeting's minutes, passed out speaker cards.

Sarah Ullman's presentation:

Sarah is taking committee info to the governing board, will give updates

We have a speaker coming later tonight to talk about landscape

The Dog Park is under the Reservoir Master Plan

Pro: Gets attention from designers, architects, etc.

Con: Won't be implemented for a few years

So in the meantime, let's make incremental progress

Joanna Pawlowska presentation:

Joanna is the new Region 7 Rep (includes dog park/reservoir)

Has a 45 lb dog

Elaine Harris Roark presentation:

Has a 45lb Australian shepherd, spends lots of time in dog parks

Knows about dog park design

Has been to parks across LA and can speak to issues like ground cover and shade

Could do a Q&A on "medium hanging fruit", like possibly moving the small dog park

Elaine can bring info from our meetings back to the Reservoir Committee

PB asks: do we have to go through SLNC to make changes

Mary Rodriguez responds: for long term, big vision changes, RAP doesn't have funding for big changes – so major changes have to go through the Master Plan

But regular maintenance can go through RAP

Reminder: June 27th is the Community Master Plan Meeting

Jose Monge: Johnny Meadows is at the dog park EVERY day

Miguel needs to send Johnny's checklist

Jose Monge presentation:

Current maintenance: we do leveling on the park, especially when it rains

The Wednesday morning crew used to just do "core function" (which includes litter, trash)

Now Johnny comes every day

Miguel is Johnny's supervisor

Jose brought a sample task sheet for us to look at, there's no timeline for the items, just as needed – every park is different

Every Wednesday the park is still closed in the morning for maintenance

Issues from last meeting: the lower leak in the small dog park is fixed

Lower leak was an RAP, domestic line (not irrigation line)

The upper leak on the small side is a domestic line, has been repaired before but it's an ongoing issue, and an irrigation specialist is coming to take a look tomorrow
Plants: The irrigation specialist is also going to hook up the water on the big side so that Johnny doesn't have to water all of the plants by hand or run hoses
Grassy Knoll: Apparently there are no dogs allowed there, though dogs are generally allowed on leashes in all LA city parks

Sarah mentions that the reservoir committee deals with the knoll, Sarah, Jose, and Mary can discuss separately, let's keep this meeting to discussing the dog park specifically

Signage:

The carpentry shop has been busy with the Echo Park lotus festival, but are working on our sign/pooper scooper holders
The old "pick up your poop" signs came from around the world – even Russia
They're already placed around the park but nobody sees them
So, placing them all together when you walk in at the entrance
We have enough for the big and small side
On big side: 4 foot high sign, and on the back there will be holders for the pooper scooper sticks

Pooper scoopers:

There are 2 racks for the big side, lots of new scoopers
Elaine says: let's separate the hooks, at top and bottom of big side
Jose is going to remove the bag holder from the small side, put pooper scooper racks there instead

In July, we're ordering more benches
Molly and Elaine both say rather than benches, we want shade
Mary says it was very difficult to get the shade we already have

Trees: Planting season isn't until winter/fall
Jose will get a list of tree types
We need small/medium trees, because of the size of the roots
Molly asks if we can get an umbrella for shade
Mary says it's an investment
Joanna suggests pop up tents

Molly says that this may be a Master Plan issue, but if we move the gate of the small side back 60 feet, we would get 2 benches and 2 trees
Mary says to get that idea approved by Gordon, then it would go to his supervisors
Sarah suggests that we pursue parallel paths: ask Gordon, but also look at the longer timeline

Sarah says that we're all willing to do the work and fundraising, but for now, what does it take to get more shade temporarily?

Mary says that Jose has to ask his supervisor
Sarah mentions that shade is a health and safety issue, human occupants can't enjoy the park
Mary says that this is a Master Plan issue, and short-term solutions are a liability
Juan is Jose's supervisor, Mary suggests we talk to him
Sarah says that there is a demonstrated want, so let's get this process started now.
Mary suggests that we could possibly get pop up tents, but they couldn't stay in the park all the time. Perhaps we could get a shed for them
Sarah says that's a good short-term solution
Perhaps putting up and bringing down the tents goes on Johnny's maintenance list

Jose says that in regards to moving the small dog park to the top, he showed Juan, and Juan said it was a possibility
Elaine says that expanding the small side to include the trees will be an easier sell than moving it, because the biggest shade area on the large dog side is already at capacity
Jose says that if Gordon denies our request to move the fence out, then it goes above Gordon
Mary says that we aren't going to convince people to give up more green space

GROUND MATERIALS

Elaine says that the main issue with the maintenance in the park now is that the dirt movers don't do much
Why don't we direct the water so that it doesn't erode so much when it rains, perhaps using swales?
Jose says that RAP is just maintenance, swales are an engineering issue
Elaine mentions that the dog park could move anywhere during the reservoir master plan, so let's think big but also small, because we may have to tear all of this down in 2 years when we enact the master plan
Elaine says that 5 years from now we may start seeing changes as a result of the Master Plan

Sarah says let's get pop up tents for this summer, look into sails for next year – we can go down the more long-term path even if it takes awhile to get it
For shade, Jose will talk to Juan and brainstorm
Molly and Margaret will talk to Gordon
At the next committee meeting we will share results for a shade-specific solution

Mary reminds us that we don't need to have Mary and Jose at every meeting, and maybe we should just pass along priority items

Elaine asks Jose if there are other ground materials he's heard of that are good
Jose says that he only knows that in Eagle Rock they have synthetic grass, but it has pros and cons
Mary suggests Mulch
Elaine says it could work, but you have to replenish it, but it also holds down smell

But the dirt we have now, you're basically breathing it in
Sarah says that mulch picks up poo with it when it's disposed
Santa Monica parks use mulch
Elaine says that the mulch would take the dirt down
Synthetic materials aren't environmentally friendly and will break down
A short term solution could be treated mulch, Jose will bring that idea to Juan
Elaine asks if we could plant jasmine or something similar?
Mary says that originally we had wanted the fences to be visible
We're phasing the plantings in the park
And if the irrigation system gets fixed, even better
We could even get some vining
Molly asks for an estimation of when the orange fencing will come down
Jose says Juan wants to try to take them down, Mary agrees
They will try to take down the orange fencing tomorrow

Pooper Scoopers: Jose says they'll be in this week, scoopers will be brought into the park this week, the hooks will come later

Elaine asks if we use spray or drip irrigation, Jose says spray

SPEAKER CARDS:

Hayley had to leave, but had asked about foxtails in the park
Jose says Johnny is working on it, but let's make sure he knows what it looks like

Phil mentions a comparison to other dog parks
He visited Pasadena and Griffith Park
Dogs love every park
The first meeting was about rain, length of time for repairs – nobody wants the dog park shut down for any length of time

Round of applause for Jose and the pooper scoopers

Phil asks who goes to the park in the middle of the day
Molly says wouldn't it be great if you could have shade, if you HAVE to go during the middle of the day, which some people do

Joanna mentions disaster preparedness for pets
She will share info, maybe we could do a disaster preparedness meeting at the park?

Gordon visits the meeting

Elaine mentions that she did rattlesnake training for her dog, but you need an active rattlesnake, so we couldn't do it at the park, but could do other community events

Sarah: let's make a motion for next time to discuss community events and disaster preparedness

Thanks everyone for coming!