



*A*rlington *G*reen *D*og



Pilot Program Proposal



Sharing Our Parks and Open Spaces

- Arlington is the third densest municipality in Massachusetts.
- We are proud of our parks, recreation areas & open spaces, which are enjoyed by many for a wide variety of uses.
- We want to insure that dog owners have safe options for exercising with their dogs while other recreational users are not disturbed by the presence of dogs.
- Not all welcome a dog approaching them, their children or their own leashed dog. Respect for others is important!
- Many dog owners consider themselves responsible and have asked the Town to establish off-leash and fenced dog areas, so owners can legally run their dog off-leash or in a safe, fenced area so that they do not affect other park users.



Basics of the Program

- Arlington's Green Dog Program is being modeled after the successful program in Brookline.
- To balance the needs of both dog owners and non-dog owners, the Town is being asked to establish a Pilot Off-Leash Green Dog Program with designated parks and hours throughout the town.
- The pilot program is a town-wide program to insure that no single park, neighborhood or open space will be severely impacted.
- Green Dog off-leash and fenced dog areas will be set up following multiple public meetings, where citizens' concerns can be heard, and a vote of Town Meeting in Spring '08.



Why "Green Dog"?

"Green" programs, in general, promote:

- **environmentally and ecologically friendly practices;**
- **focus on maintaining ecological balance / minimizing environmental harm;**
- **respectful behavior; and**
- **long-term sustainability.**

A "Green Dog" program:

- **promotes responsible practices (picking up after one's dog, ensuring good behavior, etc.) through peer pressure and self-policing;**
- **allows dog owners to enjoy parks while not causing harm to the parks or interfering with other users;**
- **is designed to be sensitive to environmental impact.**



Considerations in Selecting Areas

- Current use patterns of dog owners
- Input of park users / neighbors
- Distributing parks throughout town to serve neighborhoods
- Park size
- Athletic fields and playgrounds
- Wildlife / historic areas / sensitive areas / gardens
- Passive and active uses of the parks
- Impact on schools, children and the elderly
- Police reports of problematic dog issues



Fenced Areas

Each fenced dog area will have:

- **mulch as a groundcover;**
- **two entrance / exit gates;**
- **trash barrel and dog bags;**
- **four to six foot chain link fence surrounding the area;**
- **appropriate signage and educational materials.**



Funding for cost of fencing provided through:

- **private donations / fundraising efforts;**
- **an increase in the dog license fee and/or**
- **limited capital project funds** (McClennan).



Possible Fenced Locations

- Reed's Brook / McClennan Park
- Thorndike
- Poet's Corner





Designated Off-Leash Areas

Each off-leash area will have:

- **appropriate signage**
- **trash barrel and**
- **dog bags**



Off-Leash Hours:

- **Dawn to 9 am, April through November**
- **Dawn to Dusk, December through March**
- **Some limited areas - Dawn to 9 am or Noon to 1 pm (weekdays only)**



Proposed Off-Leash Locations

- Robbins Farm(hillside only)
- Menotomy Rocks Park (woods only)
- Crusher Lot/Ottoson Woods
- Mt. Gilboa
- Reservoir
- Hurd Field



- Hill's Hill
- Turkey Hill
- Waldo Park
- Magnolia Field
- Spy Pond Park & Field
- Thorndike (designated area)



Proposed Rules and Regulations

- **Dogs allowed off-leash in posted areas ONLY in the presence of a responsible adult. Hours are suspended when the park is being used for a permitted, school-based, athletic or special event.**
- **Dogs must be leashed when DPW crews are working in the parks.**
- **Dog owners must maintain effective verbal control of their dogs at all times and always be able to see their off-leash dogs. Dogs must not leave the off-leash area.**
- **Dogs who show aggression towards people or other dogs must be removed immediately. An owner is personally liable for any damage or injury his dog inflicts or sustains.**
- **Always carry a disposal bag and clean up after your dog.**



Proposed Rules and Regulations (cont.)

- **Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and leaving off-leash or fenced dog areas. Owners shall have a leash visible at all times.**
- **Dogs must wear a collar with identification at all times.**
- **Dogs must be at least 4 months old to be allowed off-leash or in a fenced off-leash area.**
- **Each person is limited to three dogs.**
- **Dogs are NOT allowed in: playground areas; sand-boxes; tennis courts; basketball courts; cemeteries; school-yards; on church land or private property.**
- **Dogs must not chase or disturb wildlife, or enter sensitive open spaces (such as gardens, wetlands and nesting areas). Areas to be posted.**



Proposed Rules and Regulations (cont.)

- **Dogs must be licensed, vaccinated, parasite-free, and healthy (no contagious conditions or diseases).**
- **Dogs in heat shall not be allowed off-leash or in fenced in dog areas.**
- **Dog owners in groups need to be aware that their voices can carry to the abutters of the park. Please be quiet and considerate during the early morning hours.**
- **Violators of these rules are subject to removal from off-leash and fenced dog areas. Off-leash privileges may be revoked.**
- **Rules and regulations pertain to posted off-leash and fenced dogs areas ONLY and have no bearing on bylaw regulations concerning dogs in non off-leash areas.**



Pilot Program Evaluation

If accepted by 2008 Town Meeting, the pilot program will expire one year from the pilot start date and must be approved for continuation at a subsequent Town Meeting.

Overall success of the program will be evaluated by:

- **Inspecting the off-leash areas regularly during the pilot period to determine compliance;**
- **Obtaining input from the Director of DPW, the director of Natural Resources and the parks maintenance crews;**
- **Inspecting police reports and reports of the ACO;**
- **Conducting a survey of abutters of the participating locations, dogs owners and other park users;**
- **Obtaining input from off-leash area volunteer liaisons;**
- **Scheduling public reports throughout the pilot program's duration.**

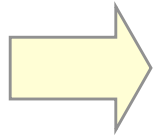


Schedule for Green Dog Pilot Program

Summer 2007: Publish initial draft ✓

September 2007: First Draft Review and Feedback ✓

October-mid January, 2007-2008: *Community Meetings with general public to present Green Dog Pilot Program & determine revisions for the pilot*



January 2008: Submission of Warrant Article(s) for Green Dog Pilot Program

May-June, 2008: Vote of Town Meeting to begin Green Dog Pilot Program

May-June, 2009: Report to Town Meeting on successes and failures of Green Dog Pilot Program - vote to continue or terminate



Schedule for Neighborhood Meetings

**All meetings to be held in
Selectmen's Meeting Room in Arlington Town Hall**

Thursday, November 8th: *Poet's Corner & Ottoson Woods;*

Thursday, November 15th: *Mt. Gilboa, McClennan Field,
Hurd Field & the Reservoir;*

WEDNESDAY, November 28th: *Menotomy Rocks Park;*

Thursday, December 6th: *Robbins Farm;*

Thursday, December 13th: *Waldo Park, Thorndike &
Magnolia Fields;*

Thursday, January 3rd: *Spy Pond Park & Spy Pond /
Hornblower Field* (across from the Arlington Girls and Boys Club);

Thursday, January 10th: *Hill's Hill & Turkey Hill.*