

# Danville Dog Park Committee

## Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, September 10, 2024, Danville Town Hall

Present: Chelsea Hewitt, Alison Low, Jo Oliver, Karen Hauserman

The meeting convened at 6:05 p.m.

**First up was a recap of the site visit on August 26**, which resulted in an alternate site plan, which entails an access point from the LVRT, approximately another 400 ft down the trail from the original access point. It's further away from the parking lot across from Marty's and not within site distance. The access point would still need a permit from VTrans (Jackie Cassino, contact), and would need a culvert. However, the access from the trail to potential fenced area is much closer and is a lower slope, which means that there would be less grading and sitework required. The alternate site plan contains all of the dog park in the upslope area of the land behind the wastewater treatment plant building, but we had mapped out an area in the lower area, closer to the driveway, that could possibly serve as an agility course in the future. Alison met with Tim Ruggles just before the meeting and reviewed the alternate plans, which included fence placement, access points, double gated accesses (gates about 4 feet wide), service gates from the wastewater treatment plant side for maintenance equipment (about 8 feet), and approximate length of access trail.

On review of the site plans, the group decided to drop the agility course, as it is so close to the driveway and lagoon. Future expansions could actually occur in some of the wooded areas upslope. Alison will communicate this with Tim.

Because we are an advisory committee, we need to go to the Selectboard to present the two site alternatives. We should plan on reviewing the plans (when we have the information completed by Tim) along with a PowerPoint presentation delineating the pros and cons of each one. We aim to have that on the agenda for October 8<sup>th</sup> for Dog Park Committee for final review before presenting to the Selectboard. If all goes as planned, we could be on the Selectboard agenda October 18<sup>th</sup> (third Thursday).

From a mapped site plan we should be able to determine:

- Linear feet of each fencing required for each alternative
- Square footage of each enclosures (which will also help to determine how much mulch from wood chips needed, and/or brush hogging and mulch
- Square footage of 8' pathways to determine how much brush-hogging/mulch for access points
- Required grading

Additionally, Tim can pull in contours from VCGI data layers, which might help identify optimal location for service gates. There is a fairly steep slope to reach the area behind the treatment plant building, and equipment such as bucket loaders or riding mowers need to access it.

**Woodchips/mulch updates:** Polly has obtained quotes by the truckload for woodchips. We need to determine square footage of the enclosed areas and pathways to complete this scenario.

**Fencing ideas:** A lot of discussion around this. What is unscalable for a dog? 8 feet is pretty excessive. What can we do to discourage people from exploring the lagoons, which are strictly off-limits, other than

clearly worded signage? There are alternatives to chain link. It comes to down to selectboard input, as well as cost (once we have determined the required linear feet.) Keep in mind that the back wall adjacent to the waste water treatment plant could be a sponsorship/memorial wall, so signage could serve as visual interest that directs people away from the lagoons.

**Movie Night Recap:** We made \$53.00.

**Autumn on the Green:** We can sell t-shirts and have a raffle. AOG is 10-4. Karen is willing to take on 10-1. Jo & Lisa can do 1-4. Alison can't commit for personal/family.

**Fundraising to date:** Michelle reports that we have \$2,802.72 in the Dog Park Account, which exceeds our initial benchmark of \$1,500. It's not clear that this total includes all the online entrance fees paid from the 5K. Chelsea to check.

In lieu of a detailed site plan we are still looking at about \$50K for installation, so we will rely on foundations/grants. Possibilities are:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund: <https://fpr.vermont.gov/land-and-water-conservation-fund> Next round opens October 24. Minimum award \$25,000. Recreational spaces must be maintained in perpetuity. Is that a no-go? Run it by selectboard.
- Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economy Grant: <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/recreation-grants/vorec-community-grant-program> Next round TBD. Danville has tapped this a couple of times for the Train Station. Alison to check with Train Station committee. We want to make sure we are not competing with other projects from Danville.
- Better Places: The program provides one-on-one project coaching, local fundraising support, and two to one (2:1) matching grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000 to make your community-led placemaking ideas happen. The Mad River Valley Dog Park applied to this program and received funds. You can read about it here: <https://www.vermontpublic.org/local-news/2024-05-21/applying-for-grants-can-burden-small-towns-a-vermont-crowdgrant> Unfortunately, this program doesn't have funding this year, but organization can be put on the pre-flight list. The Train Station did not receive funding for this. Alison to check with Train Station committee. We want to make sure we are not competing with other projects from Danville.
- Buildings and General Services, Recreational Facilities: This is a dollar-for-dollar grant that would have been a good fit, except that it was due today – and it's for last gap funding for shovel-ready projects. Without a site plan, we can apply for permits. Without permits, we are not shovel ready.  
<https://bgs.vermont.gov/sites/bgs/files/2021%20Building%20Communities%20Grants%20Programs%20One%20Pager-Rev.%202024.pdf> Maybe September 10 of next year, but that feels a long way away.

“Bark for Your Park” does not seem to be happening this year.

The meeting adjourned 7:15 p.m. Next meeting is October 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m., at the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Low