

July 11, 2022

Proposal: Temporary modification of “leash law” at Monterey Park, Capitola

The Situation:

Currently, Monterey Park (adjacent to New Brighton Middle School) requires all dogs to be on a leash, per Capitola Municipal Code 6:12.090B.

Background:

We, the undersigned, are members of the Capitola and Soquel communities. We are professional business owners, retired executives, doctors, health care providers, and homeowners - all living within walking distance of the Monterey Park.

To alleviate some of the isolation during the COVID lockdown, we began bringing our dogs together to play late afternoons (after 5:00 pm) in the back corner area of the Monterey Park. This quickly became a very enjoyable break – for both dog owners and dogs – from the forced isolation the pandemic imposed. We purposefully would go to the back corner of the park to provide a respectful distance between our group and anyone playing baseball on the diamond. We only allowed friendly dogs to participate in this small play group, and typically only stay for an hour or less.

This has brought many hours of enjoyment for both us and our dogs – and has helped generate a wonderful community of newfound friends and built neighborhood rapport. A few members of our group bring their dogs to gather even though their dogs just sit on their laps while we enjoy the time to socialize and watch playful, joyful dogs romp with each other. It brings happiness to all of us - dogs and people alike!

There are several days when we go to the park and no one else is in the park, yet we still go to the far corner to play with our dogs. Every one of us is very observant of our own dogs and other dogs who are defecating or need to be recalled so as not to greet someone walking by on the path. Every one of us picks up any poop we find in the field –even that which is left by people who are less responsible.

We respectfully request that the Capitola City Council consider the following proposal.

Proposal:

We believe that a park is for a community to enjoy. We are part of this community and believe we have the right to request off-leash access to one-quarter of the park for just one hour each day for people and their dogs to play.

To this end, we propose a 90-day "trial" period of suspension of the "dogs must be on leash" code 6:12.090B, subject to the following conditions:

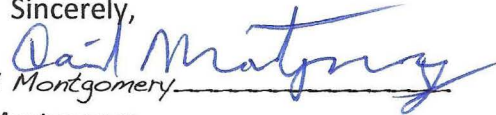
- 1) The "off-leash period" would only be between 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm each evening (summer hours)
- 2) All dog owners must pay attention to their dog to ensure it does not approach, or bother any other person/s that may be in the park at this time.
- 3) All dog owners commit to cleaning up after their dogs.
- 4) Dogs will not be allowed to interfere with any other activities going on in the park (e.g. baseball, etc.)

Failure to do any of the above will result in the immediate cancellation of the "off-leash trial period."

If requested, we could set up a temporary expandable fence for the back quarter of the park to separate our dog group from the larger area of the field during our one-hour off-leash period. We would assume full responsibility for the setting up and removal of this fence and will insure it does not damage any of the turf. We are a self-monitoring group that only allows friendly dogs to participate. We would like to request the code be amended to reflect the allowable off-leash hour.

Thank you for your consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to present our proposal in person to the Council at your next meeting.

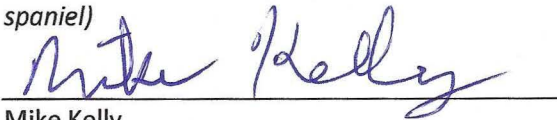
Sincerely,



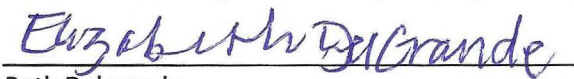
David Montgomery
Oliver (the treat-obsessed pug)



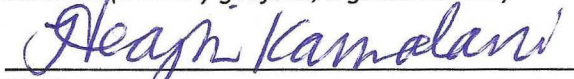
Kathy Macdonald
Finny (the elder of the group, a Cavalier King Charles spaniel)



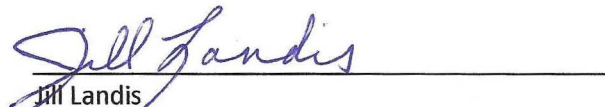
Mike Kelly
Yeti (the welcoming committee of one, a goldendoodle)



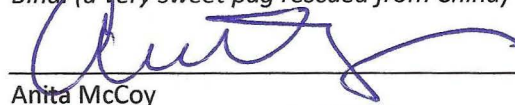
Beth Delgrande
Satchmo (a cuddly goofball, a goldendoodle)



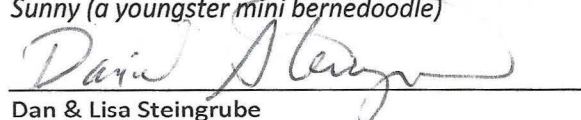
Heajin Kamalani
Bailey (a fun-loving toy thief, a white lab)



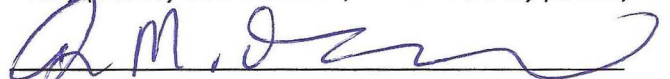
Jill Landis
Bindi (a very sweet pug rescued from China)



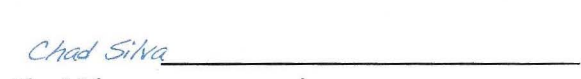
Anita McCoy
Sunny (a youngster mini bernedoodle)



Dan & Lisa Steingrube
Teddy (a teddy bear lookalike; an adorable toy poodle)



Jeanine Olsen
Bader (who has the ball? a golden retriever)



Chad Silva
Marleau (the smartest of the group; a border collie)