
Rollingwood Dog Park

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Cc Craig Cummings <craig@moonshotscapital.com>

Dear Rollingwood Parks Commission and City Council Members,

I am a Rollingwood resident, and I'm writing today about the use of Hatley fields, and potentially the back parking lot as a dog park.

My family and I first moved to Rollingwood in 2015 after building a home at [REDACTED]. We moved away briefly in 2022 but returned a year later, as we missed our community so much. In 2023, we bought our current home at [REDACTED]. We are big dog lovers, and we started taking our dogs to the dog park about 2 years ago.

I am writing first to express my support for dedicating half of the current shared space (hatley fields 3,4, and 5), along with the back parking lot, as long as it is covered in the same grass as the fields, to a dog park. I support this option as a compromise so that the families bringing their young children to play little league baseball, tball, and softball are able to have some dedicated space as well.

Second, I am writing to provide some insight on the importance of the dog park. We take our dogs to the dog park twice per day, every day. Our housekeeper is the one to take them three mornings per week, and my husband, Craig, or I take them the other 4 mornings per week as well as all 7 evenings per week. We are in our early, ahem, ok, mid 50s, and our kids are college students. Craig and my professional worlds are dominated by meetings, events, and dinners downtown, and we are active participants in the RWWC and RWGC.

The dog park is different. It is a place where we gather with many of the same people each night, many younger than us, many older than us, and this community space is where "loose ties" are developed. The term "loose ties" has been used in many of the articles written about the community spaces that dominated Americans' civic lives in the past, but that have been gradually eroding over the past 20 years, and the past 5 in particular (since Covid). Think rotary clubs, Wednesday night dinners at churches, etc. While one's family and life long friends may be geographically spread out, it is the "loose ties" that both **bind one to a community**, and **stave off loneliness** as one ages. Both of these outcomes are of the utmost importance to maintaining Rollingwood as the desirable and functioning community it is, and the dog park is a unique multi generational gathering space to accomplish these outcomes.

Finally, with any plan, please take account of the need for shade. It is extremely hot in the summer months, and there is a need for some basic shade and benches, particularly for our older residents.

Thank you so much for each of your service to our community and for your consideration of this important matter.

All my best,
Lawton

Lawton Cummings

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