

2  
10-13-01



**Sandy Murphy**  
10/12/01 10:23 AM

To: Phil Sunderland/Alex@Alex, Sandra Whitmore/Alex@Alex  
cc: Beverly I Jett/Alex@Alex  
Subject: Chetworth Dog Park

fyi

----- Forwarded by Sandy Murphy/Alex on 10/12/01 10:23 AM -----



**ppietra@earthlink.net**  
10/11/01 08:25 PM

To: mayoralx@aol.com @ INTERNET, billclev@home.com @ INTERNET,  
eberwein-council@home.com @ INTERNET, wmeuille@wdeuille.com  
@ INTERNET, delpepper@aol.com @ INTERNET, dspeck@aol.com  
@ INTERNET, council-woodson@home.com @ INTERNET, Sandy  
Murphy@Alex, mlynnsmith@home.com @ INTERNET,  
mbrandon99@home.com @ INTERNET, Beth Temple@Alex, Joanne  
Pyle@Alex, Judy Stack@Alex, Barfonce Baldwin@Alex  
cc: tmpf@erols.com @ INTERNET  
Subject: Chetworth Dog Park

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council:

I am writing to express my deepest concern and opposition to the effort to revoke the dog park status of Chetworth Park.

I understand that this will be an item on the agenda for October 13, 2001.

It is vitally important to have off-leash areas where dogs can exercise and socialize. Just as I am expected to support the education of children with my taxes, I expect that the City will be responsive to my needs for dog exercise areas. It is inappropriate to simply dismiss the needs of dog owners as being somehow less worthy than the desires of a few homeowners immediately surrounding the Park. Forty percent of Chetworth Park is already devoted to a fenced off children's park, despite the fact that there are many other parks where children can go, and despite the fact that there

are relatively few children in the neighborhood. The establishment of the dog park in a shared space with a children's park took into account the need for a balanced approach with respect to the competing desires of individuals in the neighborhood. That balanced approach needs to continue. While I have heard some argument citing health concerns with the dog park, they have been mere recitation of the claim, and are as unfounded as similar claims regarding health concerns over dogs in Four Mile Run Park that were scientifically refuted when tests were actually conducted by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and Virginia Tech in 2000 (results were published in October 2000).

Dog owners are residents of the City, pay taxes, vote in elections, and add tremendously to the social qualities of this City. The mere presence of dog owners walking dogs reduces the opportunities for crime and improves social

communication among neighbors. Without access to this park, dog owners will have little alternative but to flout City ordinances regarding leashed dogs in the rest of the City, and risk fines or worse. I am a responsible dog owner with docile and obedient dogs, and I clean up after my dogs when they relieve themselves. I do not wish to feel like some sort of second-class citizen of this City. Please continue the designation of Chetworth Park as an off leash dog park.

Peter Pietra

705 Avon Place

Alexandria, VA 22314

--- Peter Pietra

--- [ppietra@earthlink.net](mailto:ppietra@earthlink.net)

--- EarthLink: The #1 provider of the Real Internet.

2  
~~10-13-01~~



**Sandy Murphy**  
10/12/01 10:37 AM

To: Phil Sunderland/Alex@Alex, Sandra Whitmore/Alex@Alex  
cc: Beverly I Jett/Alex@Alex  
Subject: Sat., Oct. 13 Council Meeting/Chetworth Park

more....

----- Forwarded by Sandy Murphy/Alex on 10/12/01 10:37 AM -----



**tmpf@erols.com**  
10/11/01 09:41 PM

To: mayoralx@aol.com @ INTERNET, billclev@home.com @ INTERNET,  
eberwein-council@home.com @ INTERNET, wmeuille@wdeuille.com  
@ INTERNET, delpepper@aol.com @ INTERNET, dspeck@aol.com  
@ INTERNET, council-woodson@home.com @ INTERNET, Sandy  
Murphy@Alex, mlynnsmith@home.com @ INTERNET,  
mbrandon99@home.com @ INTERNET, Beth Temple@Alex, Joanne  
Pyle@Alex, Judy Stack@Alex, Barfonce Baldwin@Alex  
cc:  
Subject: Sat., Oct. 13 Council Meeting/Chetworth Park

TO: Mayor Kerry J. Donnelly  
Vice Mayor William C. Cleveland  
Councilwoman Claire M. Eberwein  
Councilman William D. Euille  
Councilwoman Redella S. Pepper  
Councilman David G. Speck  
Councilwoman Joyce Woodson  
Sandy Murphy  
Lynn Smith  
Michele Brandon  
Beth Temple  
Joanne L. Pyle  
Judy Malone Stack  
Barfonce K. Baldwin

FROM: Theresa M. Forster  
702 Avon Place  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: October 13 City Council Docket  
Chetworth Park

DATE: October 11, 2001

It is my understanding that you will be taking testimony this Saturday regarding the status of a portion of Chetworth Park as an off-leash dog exercise area. I would like to add my voice to those who support retaining the dog exercise area within Chetworth Park as an area where citizens can go to visit with their neighbors and give their dogs the opportunity to socialize.

I have lived at my present address for ten years, and have used Chetworth Park on a regular basis for much of the last five years, in large part to provide my dog an opportunity to run, exercise, and play with other dogs and people. As part of that activity, I have had the opportunity to meet and socialize with many of my neighbors. The park fosters a strong sense of community.

In the ten years that I have lived in my neighborhood, Chetworth Park has never been a "showcase" -- it has always been a little worn around the edges. It has also, at times, attracted a not-so-attractive element. (I have myself picked up used condoms, and know people who have disposed of used syringes they have found there.) I believe that the presence of dogs and their owners has helped to discourage these elements from frequenting the park. And, while some folks are describing their efforts to restrict or remove dogs from the park as "returning the park to the way it was", dogs were never on leashes in Chetworth Park. Never.

Certainly the relatively popularity of the park has produced some wear and tear. Over the last several years there have been a number of attempts to help relieve the heavy usage of the park, including a collection of nearly \$1500 from dog owners that we hoped might be used by the city to help establish another dog exercise area so as to ease some of the pressures on the park. Unfortunately, those efforts came to nothing.

Earlier this year several other neighbors and I met over three months and devised a plan to address the concerns other neighbors were voicing. We also spent several Saturdays as a group working on the park to improve its appearance. We have also, at different times, each spent a few hours per week raking, watering, and doing other maintenance chores. While we have been reimbursed for some of our expenses, I estimate that I have spent between \$250 and \$300 of my personal money to purchase tools and supplies for use in the park. I don't say these things to distinguish myself as some extraordinary human being, but rather to say that I TRY to be a good and responsible neighbor, and consider the concerns of others.

Earlier this summer we tried to come to some consensus for use of Chetworth Park, and proposed enlarging the children's area so that equal space would be allotted to the dog exercise area and to the children's area. We were not even given the courtesy of a response to our proposal.

I am a single woman, and while I am willing to walk my dog a short way to take him to a park where he can get the exercise and socialization he needs, I do not feel safe walking across the Monroe Street Bridge or into deserted areas for that purpose. But I also know that there is limited space in our little neighborhood, and that a common response to efforts to utilize space is, "Not in my backyard."

To be honest, I think it's embarrassing that the folks in my neighborhood can't learn to share. Maybe you can teach us.

I apologize for writing a much longer message than I intended, and I appreciate all your efforts on our behalf.

2  
10-13-01

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: DECEMBER 4, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT REGARDING ALTERNATIVE SITES FOR A FENCED DOG PARK NEAR CHETWORTH PARK

---

**BACKGROUND:** At the October 13, 2001 public hearing, City Council received comments from a number of citizens regarding the fenced dog park and the children's playground uses at Chetworth Park. Following Council discussion on these issues, Council unanimously voted that staff proceed with the playground changes<sup>1</sup> in Chetworth Park, and look for alternative sites for the fenced dog park by the end of year.

**DISCUSSION:** Staff reviewed five sites as possible locations for a fenced dog park near Chetworth Park, including the site identified by Councilwoman Pepper that is immediately west of and adjacent to Domino's Pizza on Slater's Lane. In reviewing these sites, staff took into consideration location, property ownership, and the potential cost to the City of developing the site for a fenced dog park. Of these five sites, the three acre site at Potomac Yard, called Rail Park, is currently designated to be a fenced dog park as part of the approved Potomac Yard plan.

Crescent Resources has agreed to accelerate the development of this fenced dog park by starting immediately to develop one acre of this three acre site for use by May 2002, with the remaining two acres to be developed later in 2002. I have directed staff to work with Crescent Resources to facilitate the development of this dog park as soon as possible. Crescent Resources will make application for a Special Use Permit (SUP) for a temporary fenced dog park in December, have it heard by the Planning Commission and City Council in February, and begin construction in March with completion planned by May, 2002. After receiving additional community input from potential users of the entire dog park site Crescent Resources will complete the remaining two acres in late fall of 2002. Crescent Resources will pay for the development of the site, with no cost to the City. A meeting for all City residents to provide input into the design of the dog park is scheduled with the architects from Crescent Resources on Thursday, December 13, 2001, at 7 p.m. at the Lee Center. Residents from the Chetworth Park area will be invited to this meeting, but they will also be briefed prior to December 13 at a separate meeting on December 6 as discussed below.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities had been working with Northeast Civic Association for several months regarding improvements to Chetworth Park. At the October 3 meeting of the civic association, the association approved the playground improvement plans recommended by the Department of Recreation, which include removing and replacing the playground equipment, and modifying the fence and gate so children can enter the playground area directly without going through the dog exercise area.

The following is a summary of the other four sites reviewed by staff, including why these sites are not recommended as sites for a fenced dog park.

- 1) The parcel identified by Councilwoman Pepper that is immediately west of and adjacent to Domino's Pizza on Slater's Lane: this property is owned by Crescent Resources and would only serve as a temporary park until Crescent develops the property. The City would bear the expense of developing the site. I do not believe it is fiscally prudent to expend monies for the temporary development of this site as a fenced dog park, and I do not recommend that the City acquire this site from Crescent for permanent use as a fenced dog park.
- 2) The City-owned property at Slater's Lane and Powhatan Street: this property is seen as a gateway for people entering Old Town Greens and, in the future, Potomac Yard. A fenced dog park would not be seen as an aesthetically pleasing gateway to these communities. The City would bear the expense to develop the site. This site is not recommended for development as a fenced dog park.
- 3) The property at Slater's Lane and Portner Road, adjacent to the City-owned parcel: this property is privately owned. If it were made available for a temporary dog park, the City would bear the expense of developing the site. I do not believe it is prudent to expend monies for the temporary development of this site as a fenced dog park, and I do not recommend that the City acquire this site.
- 4) The property at the corner of Bashford Lane and Powhatan Street: this property is owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the site is too small for consideration as a fenced dog park.

Staff from the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities will hold a meeting on December 6, 2001, at 6:00 p.m. to brief residents of the Chetworth Park area on these efforts to identify an alternative site, the plan to proceed with the development of Rail Park as the alternative site, and the time line for the playground improvements at Chetworth Park. This meeting will be held at Charles Houston Recreation Center.

While the one-acre portion of Rail Park is under development, Chetworth Park will remain both an off-leash dog area and a park for children and passive users. Once the one-acre fenced dog park at Rail Park is completed in the Spring 2002, I will docket the reevaluation of the fenced dog park at Chetworth Park for City Council's consideration, as required under the approved Master Plan for Dog Exercise Areas and Fenced Dog Parks.

cc: Sandra Whitmore, Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities  
Lori Godwin, Assistant City Manager

Sent to CC, CM, Whitmore

2 PD, 10/13/01 PH

The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council  
301 King Street Suite 2300  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of City Council:

Thank you for the full support of City Council in the motion to end the inappropriate use of Chetworth Park as an off leash dog run by the end of this year. This truly is an issue which affects the quality of life for the majority of residents in our neighborhood everyday.

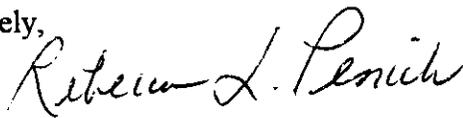
Our neighborhood park still suffers from the same problems discussed at the October 13th Council Meeting. It still smells of feces and there is no grass growing except for the children's area. I still have great concerns regarding the health issues associated with the park and the park is also very noisy.

Please hold true to your promise to return Chetworth Park to the small, neighborhood pocket park it once was - a park which can be used by all neighbors. More specifically end the dog run designation of this park.

I encourage Council and city staff to work diligently to ensure Chetworth Park will be restored to a "people park" by the end of this year.

Thank you for your support of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,



cc: City Clerk  
City Manager



Sent to CC,  
Clerk,  
Whitmore  
P.F. 10/13/01 PAM

The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council  
301 King Street Suite 2300  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of City Council:

Thank you for the full support of City Council in the motion to end the inappropriate use of Chetworth Park as an off leash dog run by the end of this year. This truly is an issue which affects the quality of life for the majority of residents in our neighborhood everyday.

Our neighborhood park still suffers from the same problems discussed at the October 13th Council Meeting. It still smell of feces and there is no grass growing except for the children's area. I still have great concerns regarding the health issues associated with the park and the park is also very noisy.

Please hold true to your promise to return Chetworth Park to the small, neighborhood pocket park it once was - a park which can be used by all neighbors. More specifically end the dog run designation of this park.

I encourage Council and city staff to work diligently to ensure Chetworth Park will be restored to a "people park" by the end of this year.

Thank you for your support of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

*Mary J. O'Brien*

cc: City Clerk  
City Manager



Sent to CC, CM,  
Whitmore  
P.F. 10/13/01 PHM

The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council  
301 King Street Suite 2300  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of City Council:

Thank you for the full support of City Council in the motion to end the inappropriate use of Chetworth Park as an off leash dog run by the end of this year. This truly is an issue which affects the quality of life for the majority of residents in our neighborhood everyday.

Our neighborhood park still suffers from the same problems discussed at the October 13th Council Meeting. It still smell of feces and there is no grass growing except for the children's area. I still have great concerns regarding the health issues associated with the park and the park is also very noisy.

Please hold true to your promise to return Chetworth Park to the small, neighborhood pocket park it once was - a park which can be used by all neighbors. More specifically end the dog run designation of this park.

I encourage Council and city staff to work diligently to ensure Chetworth Park will be restored to a "people park" by the end of this year.

Thank you for your support of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

PATTIE P. RYAN, 1330 CHETWORTH COURT, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

cc: City Clerk  
City Manager

