

NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the Committee Report as APPROVED by the Board of Aldermen. While reasonable efforts have been made to assure that this is the Committee Report that was presented at a meeting of the Board of Aldermen, you should check the Minutes of that meeting in order to confirm its approval, rejection or amendment. Do not rely on the accuracy of this information without first checking with the City Clerk.

March 8, 2010

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

The Committee on Parks and Open Space held a meeting on March 8, 2010, with Chairman Rebekah Gewirtz presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Maryann Heuston and Sean O'Donovan also present and voting. Also present were Aldermen John Connolly, Bruce Desmond, Robert Trane and William White, Arne Franzen from OSPCD, Director of Community Relations Carlene Campbell and interested members of the public.

188628 - update on the development of the open space on Quincy Street:

Mr. Franzen told the members that the city has heard from the community regarding this parcel and that residents prefer to have a green space use rather than a playground. There isn't a big budget for the renovation but it can be partially funded through a block grant. \$26,000 will allotted for design estimates and the construction budget will be \$200,000. Mr. Franzen said that the park would have to be ADA compliant and that vegetation would need to be irrigated with a water supply. The first public meeting on this matter should be held in May and Alderman Heuston indicated that she would hold community meetings, as well.

Off Leash Recreation Areas, (OLRA):

As requested at the previous committee meeting, Ms. Campbell investigated the ownership of 2 parcels and reported that the parcel at Powderhouse Square is owned by Tufts and the parcel behind Dilboy Field is owned by the state. Ms. Campbell suggested that the Board of Aldermen send a communication to the Mayor and the city's state delegation regarding abandoned property at Dilboy. Ms. Campbell also spoke about the sites at Cedar Street and Willow Avenue and said that both have arsenic in the soil and would need to be decontaminated. Neighbors asked that the soils be tested to determine if they pose any hazard for residents in the area. The committee expressed its desire to evaluate the level of contamination at each site. The approximate costs for creating OLRA's at these two sites would be \$279,250 for the Willow Avenue site and \$218,750 for the Cedar Street site.

Lisa McFarren, a member of SomDOG, said that she spoke to the Department of Conservation and Recreation about the possibility of having a dog run at Dilboy and she offered her assistance with policy changes at the state level. Alderman Heuston believes that a determination needs to be made relative to the agreement between the city and DCR for control of Dilboy and that this needs to be done before any action is taken concerning its use as an OLRA.

Chairman Gewirtz's motion **that the Administration report back to the Committee on Parks and Open Space regarding the parameters of the lease for Dilboy Stadium**, was approved.

Residents also asked about the Powderhouse School lot as a possible OLRA. The opinion of the committee is that Dilboy is the best site for a possible dog run. Chairman Gewirtz asked for clarification on the Cedar Street site and Alderman Connolly suggested that the City Solicitor review the tax title on the property. Ms. Campbell will follow-up on these requests and report back to the committee.

The committee discussed matters before it and took action on the following item:

188628: Order - By Ald. Heuston, That the Director of SPCD provide the Ward 2 Alderman with an update on the development of the open space on Quincy St.

RECOMMENDATION: Should be placed on file

VOTE: Unanimous, 3 - 0 in favor

Alderman Rebekah L. Gewirtz, Chairman
Committee on Parks and Open Space