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TO: John McKean, Chair Infrastructure and Recreation Committee
CC: Duncan McKinlay, Bob Gamble, Joe Halos
FROM: John Corrigan, Chair of the Dog Owners Support Group
DATE: 12 March 2013

RE: Off Lead Dog Park

I would like to offer my support and that of the Dog Owners Support Group for the recommendations included in the Staff report prepared by Shawn Everitt regarding an Off Lead Dog Park to be located in Moreau Park.

This project began with the passing of By-law 2006-32 to “control and regulate dogs within the Town Of the Blue Mountains”. Responsible dog owners accepted this By-law but identified the need for a special facility for dogs to run and play off lead.

A temporary “handshake agreement” between the Athletic Association, the Parks Department and a small group of dog owners to use the Blue Ball Diamond in Moreau Park worked very well over the past three years. During this time about 30 dog owners began bringing their dogs and a special community of people and dogs was created. This core group assumed the responsibility of explaining the rules to newcomers and making sure that the park was kept clean. Not only have they worked hard to pick up after their own dogs but they have also picked up after any other dogs whose owners were not as responsible.

Any morning or lunchtime you will find up to 15 dogs and their owners visiting the site. In addition we have regular visitors from Meaford and the Village at Blue as well as folks who are vacationing in the area. Moreau Park is not only appreciated by the owners, but every morning dogs in the area sit by their doors impatiently waiting to visit their friends.

The proposed site in Moreau Park is ideal for the following reasons;

1. It is centrally located within Thornbury and next door to the ball diamond used for the past 4 years which we are all familiar with.
2. The current dog owners are 100% in favour of this proposed location.
3. It will be located next to a paved parking lot at the corner of Victoria and Alice Streets. This will be much better than parking on the shoulder of Alice Street which can be muddy or icy depending on the season.
4. It will be another activity in Moreau Park along with the three ball diamonds, the skate board park and children’s playground, all of which are well used.
5. The site requires no preparation as it is already a grass area.

6. The site will not require additional maintenance as the grass is currently cut on a weekly basis during the summer. However the parking lot will need to be plowed in the winter.
7. There are no homes across Alice Street, only the club house and tennis courts for Rankins Landing.

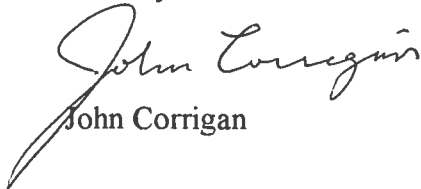
It is important to note that the dogs will have to vacate the ball diamond in May when the baseball season starts. For this reason it is critical that the proposed site be approved to-day. This will complete Phase One of the project.

Phase Two will involve fundraising in the community to provide the money to purchase the supplies required to fence the dog park and provide a proper gate for access for dogs and owners as well as a second gate for the lawn mowers in the summer. Our Dog Owner Support Group is prepared to take on this challenge as soon as the material specifications can be identified.

We will require assistance from Town staff on how to handle donations and the possible use of the list of names of residents in the Blue Mountains who have purchased 2013 dog licences. It is estimated that this may include 300-400 people and could help generate some of the necessary funds for building the new dog park.

Please help us complete Phase One of this project by approving the proposed site for a new Off Lead Dog Park in Moreau Park.

Thank you,



John Corrigan