



Agenda Item #: 07/09/18-14

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Aldinger and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager *GD*

FROM: Richard Gill, Director of Parks and Recreation *RG*
Idris J. Al-Oboudi, Recreation Services *IA*

DATE: September 18, 2007

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Commission for Additional Access for On-Leash Dogs in Sand Dune, Bruce's Beach and Polliwog Parks

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council approve, on a trial basis, the following recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Commission for:

1. Expansion of on-leash dog access to the upper trails at Sand Dune Park, excluding the north steps near the dune (please see attachment A).
2. Establishment of on-leash dog access for the western most path at Polliwog Park (please see attachment B).
3. Expansion of on-leash dog access to include the entire Bruce's Beach Park. This would allow walking or sitting on the grass but NO off-leash activities (please see attachment C).

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

There is a minimal expenditure association with this request for signage and mutt mitt dispensers (approximately \$1,000).

BACKGROUND:

During the January 9, 2007 joint meeting of the City Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Commission was given the go-ahead to hold discussions on future dog access areas and dog-run sites; to revisit old sites and try to gain approval from the various neighborhoods, based on the success of the current park access/dog run locations.

At the February 26, 2007 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, staff was directed by the Commission to utilize a committee of staff, F.I.D.O. and other community members to develop a strategy to present dog issues to the Commission at a future meeting. The Commission also requested that staff outreach into the community regarding the expansion of the current Dog Committee. Staff sent out several press releases that resulted in the committee expanding to 22 members.

Staff and the Committee made a presentation to the Parks and Recreation Commission on March 26, 2007 regarding the next steps and approach to future projects. The Parks and Recreation Commission advised the staff/committee to focus on a limited number of projects and suggested that the expanded park-access areas would be the preferable place to start.

DISCUSSION:

After numerous committee meetings and an extensive outreach awareness campaign into the neighborhoods near the affected parks, staff and the Committee made a presentation to the Parks and Recreation Commission on June 25, 2007 regarding the proposals. Approximately 20 residents spoke in favor of the proposals and one resident spoke against them.

Following is a summary of the comments made at Committee and Commission meetings as well as e-mails for Bruce's Beach, Polliwog and Sand Dune Parks.

Bruce's Beach:

Neighbors of Bruce's Beach expressed concerns that kids played on the grass and that there could be contact with feces/urine left on the grass. One resident presented pictures of feces that had not been picked up. Other neighbors stated that they rarely observed feces and they picked it up when they did. In response to this concern, the City installed a Mutt-Mitt dispenser. Others argued that the privilege of being allowed on the grass would induce owners to be more vigilant and apply peer pressure to offenders. It was pointed out that the grass areas of the Sand Dune path and the Water Tower Park co-mingle kids with dogs on leash and there have been no reported conflicts.

Concerns were also raised about a lack of enforcement by Animal Control to current code violations of leash length, dogs off leash, feces, etc. The Animal Control Supervisor and staff that were present at all meetings requested residents to call them when they observed violations. The Animal Control Staff and Park Ranger noted that the current on-leash dog paths and "off-leash dog runs" have helped in providing a service to the dog owners in the city by providing them additional safe and lawful locations to walk and play with their dogs. The Animal Control Staff and Park Ranger noted that they have received overwhelming positive feedback and comments from the community regarding the current dog run and paths.

It was suggested that Bruce's Beach could be split into two areas, one allowing dogs on the grass and the other not allowing them. During discussions, there was no consensus which half would be better as the dog-access area or how feasible it would be to enforce this idea.

Polliwog Park and Sand Dune Park:

There were no residents neighboring Polliwog Park or Sand Dune Park raising issues at the meetings. Staff did receive an e-mail regarding concerns of dog bites at Polliwog Park. Staff informed the concerned resident of the location of the proposed walk-through and the history and findings of these walk-throughs in other city parks and invited the person to the Commission meeting. Staff contacted the middle school principal regarding the proposed walk-through at Polliwog Park. Staff and the middle school principal explored their concerns with usage of the Polliwog Park path by students for fitness and exercise classes. They agreed that the weekday interactions would be minimal. Staff did not see any conflict between activities in the park and the proposed walk-through because its location is out of the way of such activities. As in other park

walk-throughs for dogs on leash, staff noted that the use is minimal and has no significant impact on park operations.

CONCLUSION:

Prior concerns raised by neighbors of the existing dog runs and existing park pass-throughs have not materialized in any significant manner since their opening. While the concerns raised at the recent community meetings are not trivial, the committee believes that they can be managed.

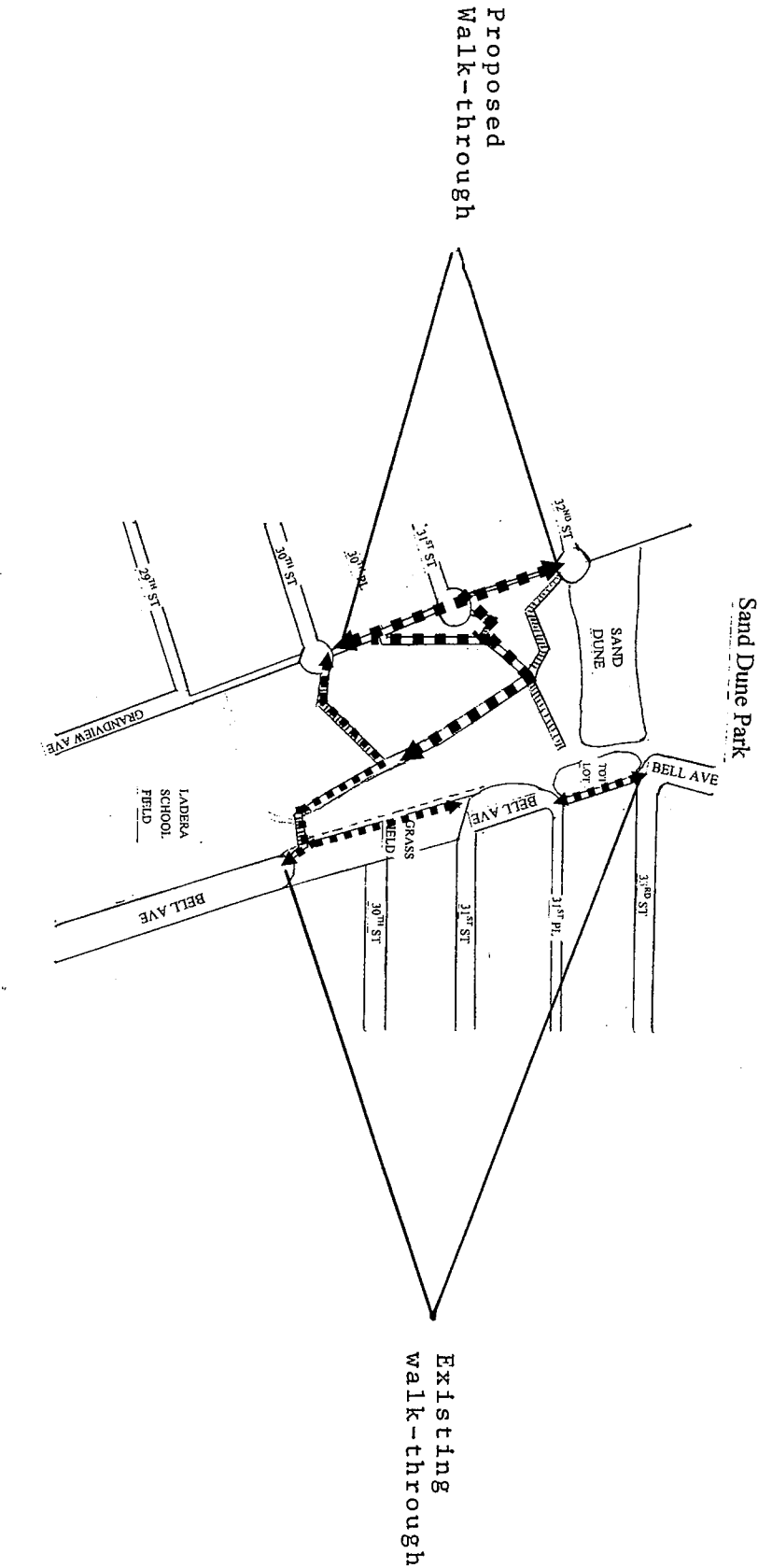
It is recommended that the three expanded/new on-leash dog access proposals for our parks be implemented on a trial basis, with three and six month feedback reviews. If significant or chronic problems occur, staff will work with the Committee and neighbors to find prudent solutions or discontinue the changes in use.

The Committee and City staff will monitor and gather information through user surveys and contact with concerned neighbors as was done for the currently established dog paths and dog runs.

- Attachments:
- A. Sand Dune Park Dog Access
 - B. Polliwog Park Dog Access
 - C. Bruce's Beach Park Dog Access

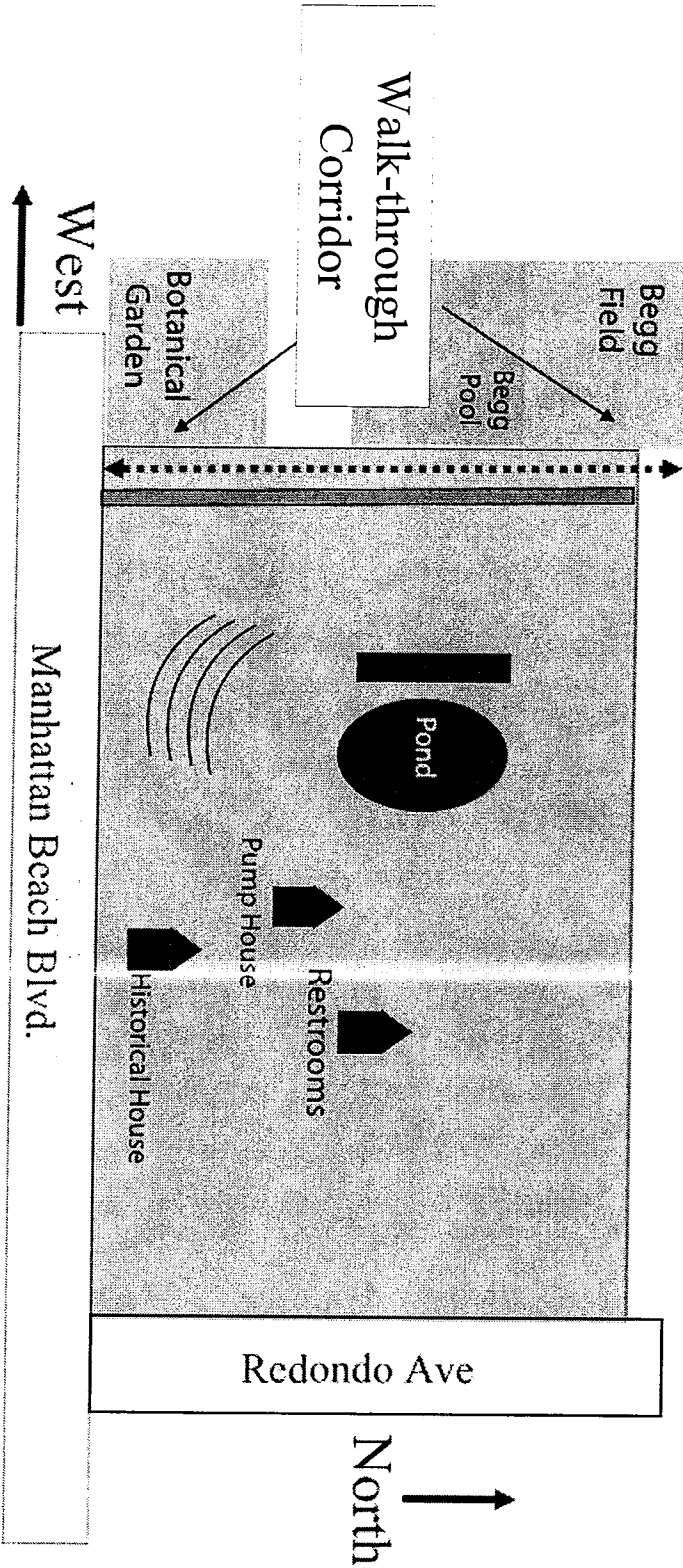
On-Leash Park Walk-Through
New areas for consideration:

1. Sand Dune Park
Resulting walk-through composite



On-Leash Park Walk-Through
New areas for consideration:

**2. Polliwog Park
West Corridor proposal**



3. Proposed On-Leash Park Access

Bruce's Beach Park On-leash park access options

