

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

October 15, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Cincinnati Board of Park Commissioners was held on this day at 950 Eden Park Drive. Commissioners present: President Molly North, Commissioner Susan F. Castellini, Commissioner Phyllis McCallum, and Commissioner John Neyer. Vice President Kick Lee attended virtually via Zoom. President North called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.

Acknowledgement of Public Comments

President North acknowledged eighteen in-person public comments about the Doris Day dog park and the Burnet Woods dog park. President North also acknowledged public comments received throughout the month via the CincyParks email address (cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov). President North thanked everyone for their comments.

President North asked that Parks Staff address two issues in response to comments from the public: 1) dog park maintenance; and 2) dog park accessibility. Director Jason Barron and Staff first addressed questions regarding the status of renovations to the Doris Day dog park. Director Barron then discussed accessible features of the current Burnet Woods dog park plans as compared to the original plans. Staff discussed the details of the dog park's accessibility based on the varying slope throughout the area. Director Barron then shared a report prepared by Deputy Director, Jenny Mobley, on regular dog park maintenance throughout Parks.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Approval of the September 19 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Castellini motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Commissioner Neyer seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

ACTION ITEMS

Ault Park Playground Award Approval and APAC Donation Acceptance

Division Manager Joel Gross shared an updated rendering of the layout and features of the new Ault Park playground. Staff recommended award of this project to DWA Recreation in the amount of \$374,087.22. Eric Dittmer, President of the Ault Park Advisory Council (APAC), presented a check to Parks' CFO, Herta Fairbanks, for funds raised by APAC to support building the new playground. Commissioner Neyer asked if a contingency could be included in the project to increase efficiency. Staff suggested a \$25,000 contingency to be held in reserve.

Commissioner Neyer motioned to accept the donation from the Ault Park Advisory Council with gratitude. Commissioner McCallum seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Neyer motioned to award the work to DWA Recreation in the amount of \$374,087.22, with an additional \$25,000 contingency to be used by Staff if needed. Commissioner Castellini seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

INFORMATION/ UPDATES

Planning & Design Update

Division Manager Gross provided a status update on multiple projects, including the Ludlow Headquarters DNR Service Garage, Art Museum Drive landslide repair and stormwater management, Theodore M. Berry International Friendship Park, and Smale Lot 23 enhancements. Staff thanked the Cincinnati Parks Foundation for their contributions to the Smale Lot 23 project. Staff also provided an update on early community engagement to inform the Inwood Park master plan. President North suggested partnering with local arts organizations to bring arts into Parks. The Board and Staff also discussed opportunities for keeping the community updated on projects via the Cincinnati Parks website. Staff also shared an update on efforts to organize and digitize Parks' historic planning documents at Hauck Botanic Gardens.

HR Update

Human Resources Manager Derrick Gentry provided an overview of recent promotions throughout Parks, as well as new hires and positions currently in the interview process. Staff shared that seasonal hiring has closed and efforts are already being made to improve next year's seasonal hiring process. Staff is also working to improve Parks' safety program and reenergize Parks Academy.

ACTION ITEMS

Foundation Grant Acceptance and Burnet Woods Dog Park Award Approval

Director Barron updated the Board on the status of fundraising for the Burnet Woods dog park. The Foundation has currently raised \$60,000 toward construction of the park. President North clarified that this is in addition to the \$45,000 previously raised that went towards the design of the park. The Board discussed the background, challenges, and opportunities of this project and shared support for the final plan. Staff shared highlights of the final plan and changes from the original, as well as efforts to assess and prevent tree canopy damage. The Board and Staff discussed the contract with Prus Construction and potential sources for the remaining \$41,415 funding gap between the project cost and existing identified funds (\$300,000 previously allocated, plus \$60,000 from the Parks Foundation), as well as the timeline for the project once funded.

President North thanked the Parks Foundation and donors for their partnership and support of this project over the past four years. Commissioner Castellini motioned to approve the application for and acceptance of a grant from the Parks Foundation in an amount up to \$60,000. Commissioner McCallum seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Neyer moved to award the work to Prus Construction in the amount of \$401,415, and to supplement any funding gap with dollars from the Commissioners Fund Budget in an amount not to exceed \$67,000. Commissioner McCallum seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Application for Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program

Director Barron shared background on the Land and Water Conservation Fund's (LWCF) grant program - a federally funded reimbursement grant program awarded by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources that provides up to fifty percent project funding, up to \$500,000, for the development and rehabilitation of recreational areas. Parks would like to apply for this grant to provide funding for the stabilization and repair of the historic pavilion at Owl's Nest Park. Commissioner Castellini motioned to authorize a resolution to file an LWCF application for Owl's Nest Park improvements. Commissioner Neyer seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Barron presented the following updates:

- This year's holiday show at Krohn, *Solstice* Glow, November 2 – January 5.
- Congratulations and thanks to Parks' Urban Forestry, Tree Crew, and Operations teams, who worked over the weekend throughout the days following the September 27 storms to respond to over 270 service requests for tree damage.
- New memorial benches have been installed, with the Parks Foundation's support, at Eden Park, Ault Park, French Park, and Alms Park.
- BLINK returns October 17 – 20 with installations throughout downtown and OTR parks.
- International Friendship Day at Friendship Park has been rescheduled for October 19.
- Halloween events at Caldwell Nature Preserve, Ault Park, Westwood Town Hall, Mt. Airy Forest, and California Woods.
- Parks' All Staff Gathering at Maple Ridge Lodge on October 24
- Parks' Volunteer Appreciation Event on Sunday, October 27
- The last CPAC meeting of the year is scheduled for November 14 at Friendship Park.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

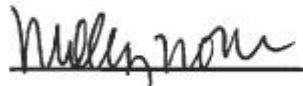
President North moved to adjourn into Executive Session under Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G) to consider the employment and compensation of a public employee. Commissioner Castellini seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote. The Board adjourned into Executive Session at 10:53am.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board returned from Executive Session at 12:11pm. Commissioner Neyer motioned to adjourn. Vice President Lee seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 12:12pm.

The next regular meeting date is Thursday, November 21, at 9:00am.

ATTEST:

PRESIDENT  DIRECTOR 11/21/24

[External Email] Public Comment

From Stich Bear <stichbear@gmail.com>

Date Wed 9/25/2024 4:27 AM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Dear Parks Director, Parks Staff and Commissioners,

Thank you for the beautiful restoration and repair of our historic pavilion in Mount Echo Park!

Countless memories have been made there, and the community was absolutely thrilled to see the structure brought back to its original glory!

Well done!

Sincerely,

Shari Frost

[External Email] Public Comment 10/15: Cincinnati Parks no longer acknowledging written public comments

From Cynthia Duval <cynthia@preserveburnnetwoods.org>

Date Sun 9/29/2024 4:14 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; CityManagerEmail <citymanager@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <CityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Good Afternoon -

In review of the meeting minutes from the Cincinnati Board of Park Commissioners beginning with **September 2023 and to present**, the Park Board President and, with the approval of minutes by the body of Commissioners, the Board, has ceased to acknowledge any receipt of written public comments received relevant to their meetings.

Prior to this time, fmr. Park Board President Jim Goetz had a habit of equalizing written public comments to make it appear as if equal amounts of support and opposition correspondence had been received relating to the controversial Burnet Woods Dog Park, which was inaccurate in that significantly higher volumes of opposition correspondence had been received. Subsequent to this time, and under growing scrutiny of the inaccurate written comment characterization, Cincinnati Parks is no longer attaching any obvious public comments to the minutes which are not clearly labeled "Public Comment MM/DD" regardless of whether that was practice prior to this time or whether this practice is prohibitive to anyone submitting comments in writing which may not have access to their website (the only location of these instructions).

Please consider this **written objection to Cincinnati Parks restrictive practice of requiring specific title to written public comments** in correspondence obviously intended as such, and as objection to the Board of Park Commissioners **failure to acknowledge the receipt of written public comments in their meeting minutes**. This discretionary practice also allows for staff decision-making as to which comments are considered public comments based on their own judgment and omit forwarding correspondence to the Commissioners as they so choose. These practices can be

interpreted as attempts to alter or discretionarily edit content of the public record of their meetings, whether intentional or unintentional, as it relates to written public comment attached to their meeting minutes.

Written public comments are part of the record of the public meeting and should be acknowledged by the Commissioners timely.

Regards,
Cynthia Duval
Preserve Burnet Woods

[External Email] Public comment October 2024

From Stich Bear <stichbear@gmail.com>

Date Tue 10/1/2024 8:27 AM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; CityManagerEmail <citymanager@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <CityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Owens, Meeka <meeka.owens@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Aftab, Mayor <mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

For close to 150 years Pleasant Valley has opened up her welcoming arms to us ALL. The idea of fencing her off and digging into her soil and replacing healthy turf with concrete creating a heat island full of concentrated dog urine and feces makes my heart hurt. 70 steps away from residents, directly across the street from our library.

The short sightedness of a few individuals with a little bit of power and money is impacting the health and well being of our entire community for generations. UC already has half of what used to be the entirety of this oasis, shouldn't we be saying ENOUGH!?? There are better suited locations in the area that won't have the impact of losing a beloved part of our community park.

This proposal goes against everything we teach our students regarding sustainability and the importance of protecting city greenspace.

Shari Frost

Nix the Dog Park Proposal in Burnet Woods



[External Email] Public Comment Oct 2024

From Stich Bear <stichbear@gmail.com>

Date Tue 10/1/2024 8:34 AM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; CityManagerEmail <citymanager@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <CityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Owens, Meeka <meeka.owens@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Aftab, Mayor <mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication



Positions are temporary.
Ranks and titles are limited.
But the way you treat people,
will always be remembered.

Please nix the proposal for siting a dog park in Burnet Woods and please respect the will of the majority who are trying to preserve our shared public greenspaces.

Can City Council declare this a historical landmark? It's a 150 Years Old and intentionally designed by world renowned landscape architect, Adolph Strauch.

Commissioners are poised to take a bulldozer across his canvas.

Shari Frost

[External Email] Public Comment October 2024

From Stich Bear <stichbear@gmail.com>

Date Tue 10/1/2024 8:10 AM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <CityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Aftab, Mayor <mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Early November 2022 was my when.

As in, WHEN I found out about the proposed development.

My who

As in, WHO did I learn about the proposed development from, were the immediate neighbors to the site taking it upon themselves to raise awareness about the non-existent public engagement in choosing Burnet Woods as the site for the dog park which had been defeated at Dunore Park. They invited the entire community to a gathering in Pleasant Valley. I met some members of the community that day who had a paper petition we could sign. I do remember hearing that the residents surrounding Dunore Park were victorious, silently celebrated with them, and thought that meant the end of the project.

I was both shocked and saddened to learn the proposal was not dead, and of the utter disregard for how the current proposed location will disturb the peace of those surrounding the area and the wildlife who depend on Burnet Woods for survival in the midst of a bustling city.

When I heard that residents gathered for what they thought would be the start of community discourse at a CTM meeting and instead were told by newly appointed Parks Director, Jason Barron, about the location choice as if it were a done deal, and they promised to do better "next time" in regards to community engagement and feedback, I felt outraged by the facts of the matter.

When I researched the dangers of dog parks, how frequently dogs bite other dogs and humans in that enclosed environment, I felt concerned for the safety of anyone who would choose to enter such a situation especially with a child or any person less able to defend themselves should dogs become out of control.

I learned about the danger to the health of our forest. Soil compaction, PFAS, heat islands, how trees communicate under the soil, how far roots extend, the importance of open areas to the ecosystem and how much they help to keep us cool and help prevent flooding, the use of cleaning agents and pesticides, prevalence of disease notorious in off leash dog enclosures, which made me curious about the spread of these diseases by rats, mice, and other wildlife that may enter the area at night.

I learned about algae blooms and wondered how any runoff would affect the lake.

I learned that Burnet Woods is a valuable stop for endangered birds, and how lucky we are to have such a place in our city.

I recently learned about the intentional design of our Park by famous landscape architect, Adolph Strauch, who believed in removing fences and creating beautiful vistas and sight lines in our magnificent parks.

I only

wish our Commissioners would take the time to learn more about the natural world.

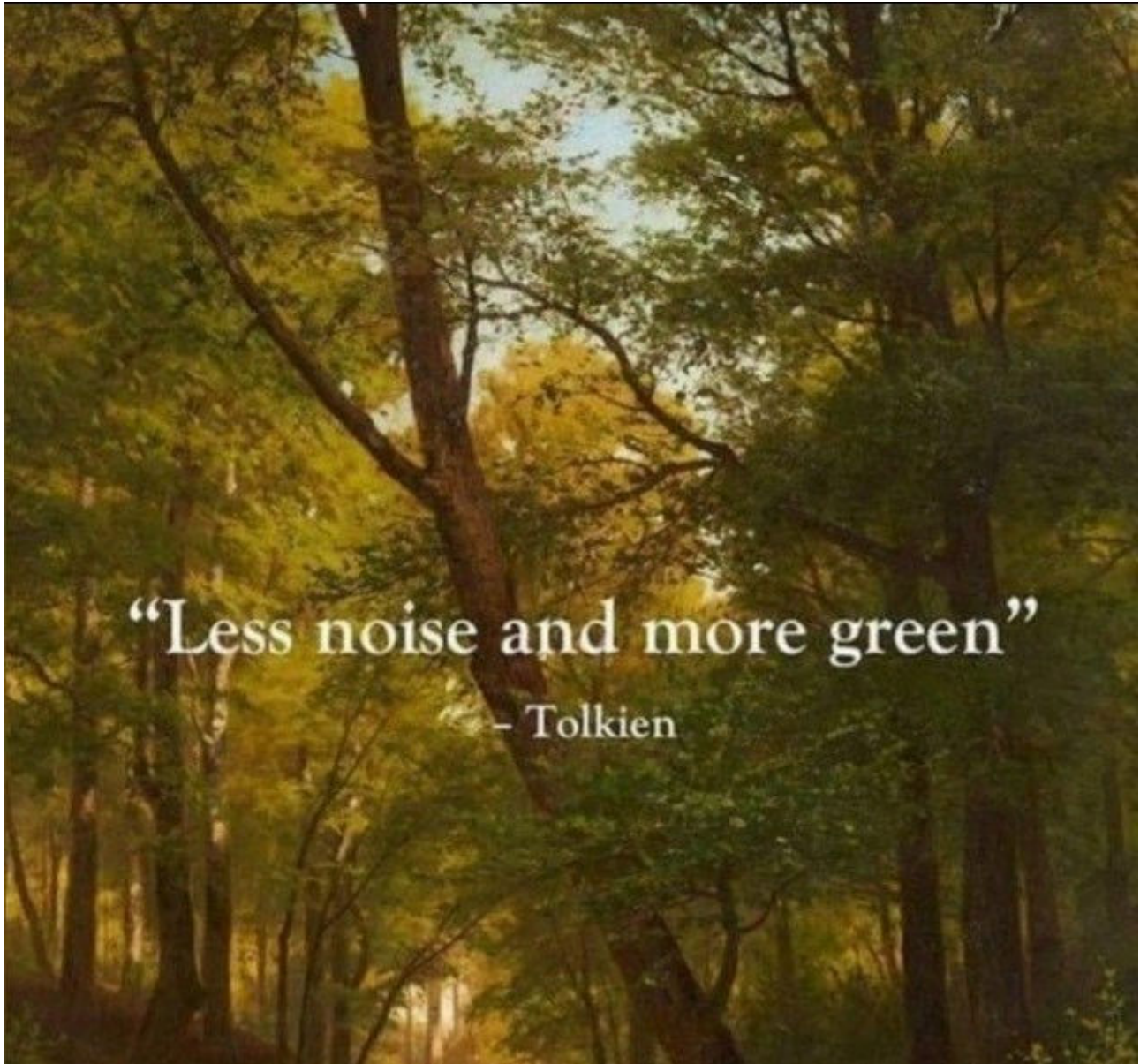
I also wish they were being honest about the facts of this project with the public. One only has to visit the Cincinnati Parks own FAQ page to see that they are not.

Marketing an obsolete rendering and selling donors on a fictitious project that may not even end up being ADA compliant?

Is that even legal much less ethical?

Please stop ●

Shari Frost



In memory of Karennia Shanti Miller, a direct neighbor to the site, who dedicated her life to building community in the area.

Park Stakeholders and volunteers deserve to be treated with respect, kindness and dignity. The behavior of some of our Commissioners towards dedicated Park Volunteers and Park stakeholders is wholly unacceptable. She was PROMISED by interim Director, John Neyer, that there would be opportunities for public engagement discussions forthcoming, those promises were never kept.



[External Email] Public Comment

From Canterbury, Ronald (canterrd) <canterrd@ucmail.uc.edu>

Date Tue 10/8/2024 7:20 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

You don't often get email from canterrd@ucmail.uc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

Hello, my name is Ron Canterbury and I am a professional ornithologist and national expert on birds and I work for the University of Cincinnati. My comments today are entirely and only my own!

I write to you today over my concern about the proposed dog park for Burnet Woods. I respectfully request that a different location be selected for this dog park. Below I explain, as a scientist, my reasoning. If politicians do not start listening to scientists, at least once in our lifetimes, then Burnet Woods, the whole of Cincinnati, Ohio, our heart, and the entire World is at great risk for demise. With our 6th mass extinction currently occurring due to us humans, and mankind ignoring and not heeding clear warning signs, from global warming and climate change, glaciers melting, annihilation of entire branches of the tree of life, etc., we must understand the urgency is now. Not 50 years to 100 years or more down the road. Can we at least put plants, habitats, and wildlife first for once rather than always the interests of humans, and our pets? Whether you believe it or not, and it is not my goal to give you one of my conservation lectures, it will become a time when it will be too late for putting wildlife first and humans will pay a price for this, which likely will eventually include our own extinction.

I ask that you please consider these comments, including the information on birds and Burnet Woods below. I am more than willing to come before your great body and explain in person and in more detail.

Birds in North America are in great trouble. Many species, from small passeriform songbirds, raptors, and shorebirds have experienced precipitous population declines since 1970. We have lost about one out of every four birds in NA since 1970. Not only are birds facing unprecedented loss of habitat due to man, many are at great risk of extinction, and humans are killing nearly six billion per year in

North America. Because most of the human-caused decimation of bird populations, such as collisions with windows, killed by cats, our vehicles, etc. are unnatural forms of mortalities, birds cannot withstand such population declines.

Many bird species are critically important to our ecosystems and human survival in the long run. Without aerial birds and bats, mosquito- and tick-borne diseases will increase. Without birds, our forest industry will eventually collapse. Birds are pivotal in dispersing seeds, controlling insect populations, and are at or near the top of our ecosystem food webs, and since one out of every person in the USA and Canada are bird watchers, the rate of loss of birds is extremely alarming. Many birds are indicator species and are telling us something is very wrong in the World in which we live, therefore, saving birds, will save our economies, physical and mental health, and provide us a better future.

Burnet Woods is the only significant greenspace in much of the Greater Cincinnati area where migratory birds can stop to refuel and rest. Because of its proximity to the ongoing development called the University of Cincinnati, where the "next bird dies here", constantly killed at all of UC's windows, Burnet Woods is extremely critical to the survival of many passeriform songbirds, especially forest-affinity species, such as the Wood Thrush and Ovenbird.

Cordially yours,
Ron Canterbury

Ronald A. Canterbury
Editor, The Ohio Cardinal
Ornithologist
Associate Academic Director
University of Cincinnati
Department of Biological Sciences
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0006
Voice: 513.556.9570
Mobile: 513.237.7791
E-mail: ron.canterbury@uc.edu

[External Email] Public Comment - October 15th

From John Juech <jsjuech@gmail.com>
Date Thu 10/10/2024 3:20 PM
To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

You don't often get email from jsjuech@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Dear Park Board:

First of all, thank you all for your service to our City and our truly wonderful park system. Our City is better for it. I cannot adequately express my gratitude for your public service in this capacity.

I am writing to you in strong support of the Clifton Dog Park proposal. I appreciate all the time and work and public engagement and fundraising that has gone into this effort to date. As a Clifton resident, there is not a single issue in our civic life I have heard more about in recent years. There has been no lack of dialogue and opportunities to engage. I do appreciate that there are variety of opinions on this matter and there are people that I care about and even love that disagree. That is part of our democratic process and I respect it.

Here is why I support the park and why it's not a close call for me.

I moved to Clifton 11 years ago. It is where I have chosen to invest and raise my family. The only house I have ever owned on this earth is in Clifton. I have put down roots here. There are days the neighborhood frustrates me and drives me crazy, but I love it. Some of the richest memories are in Clifton. I am eternally grateful.

As a non-native, I have also fallen in love with Cincinnati and had the extraordinary, life-changing opportunity to serve this city for eight years at City Hall. At our best in that time, this city opened herself up to new ideas, new developments, and new ways of seeing and doing things – I think of Lumenocity, Blink, FC Cincinnati, the return of rail transportation, the transit levy, the rebirth of so many corners of this city, a nationally recognized restaurant scene. The best change I have seen in recent years in Clifton is the Clifton Area Neighborhood School (CANS). I think this school is the best

thing to happen to the neighborhood in a long long time. A lot of people opposed it and fought it but brave supporters and parents brought the school into existence.

None of these things were easy to do. They all took vision and bravery and the courage to embrace change. They all took some leadership and even some unpopular decisionmaking, but they happened because people were not afraid to envision a different and better future and to strike out and act and take real risks to make things better.

I am a committed progressive. In that sense, I believe in human progress and flourishing, in concert with nature. I believe in environmental stewardship and richness – indeed that is the best of the Parks. I believe a dog park can absolute co-exist with that stewardship and richness; in fact we see that happening other places in our city and happening well.

Progress means change and growth. In our own lives and in public. It means openness to the new use of lands and repurposing of those lands. I want to live in a neighborhood that is constantly renewing and growing and opening itself up to growth – as hard as it is – and possibility. With growth and change come problems sometimes, but I believe we can collectively manage through those problems to make things better. I know that we can. I've seen good idea after good idea for Burnet Woods thwarted in recent years and that bothers me. Burnet Woods is not all it can be, and to take advantage of the possibilities – which are immense – we must be open to change. We must reject stasis and the status quo if we want the Woods to be all it can and should be.

I have talked to many families – many individuals without families -- in my decade plus in the neighborhood that just do not feel safe in the park, that do not feel it is inviting for them and their children. That is a reality, but it does not need to remain so. My own kids have spent a lot of time in Burnet Woods in their lifetimes – birthday parties, nature hikes, CCAC concerts – and I cherish those memories but am also left feeling the Park is not all it can be. A dog park can be an exciting step forward for many of us that invites other new possibilities and increases activity and vibrancy in the park. I personally worked to bring new playground equipment to the park some years ago under the same idea – investment can be a positive force multiplier for any park. We all know this to be the case. It can lead to other positive developments. That is what I want.

There are thousands of dog parks in this country and they are special places. I read a recent study that said there were 800 new dog parks built in one year (2019) recently. I have visited 1% or less of these dog parks, but I have found them to be wonderful green spaces. Vibrant, alive, filled with diversity, and human flourishing. I love dogs and dog owners. I welcome the opportunity to go to the dog park with my kids and meet new people and discover new possibilities and fall in love with the park and the neighborhood once again. I hope fervently for this day to come to Burnet Woods. I will be terribly sad and disappointed if we miss this opportunity. It will dim some of the enthusiasm I feel for Burnet Woods and our Parks system and my own feeling of possibility for the future.

I respect your role in this process, the different voices you have to weigh in this matter, and your stewardship of our parks. Please vote for progress and the continued positive transformation of Burnet Woods.

Thank you for your time.

John Juech

23 Belsaw Place

Cincinnati, OH 45220

[External Email] Public Comment 10/15 Mtg

From Cassandra Clement <cassandra.m.clement@gmail.com>

Date Fri 10/11/2024 9:52 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Dear Parks Board:

Thank you very much for your continued support of the Burnet Woods Dog Park. I am excited about this project for two reasons.

The first reason I am happy about a small dog park is that it is the perfect meeting place for people that need passive social interaction, like my son Troy who has Angelman Syndrome. People can engage with others around a common interest. Small dog parks such as Washington Park dog park and Westwood dog park have introduced Troy to many dogs and humans.

Burnet Woods dog park will be similar to those two dog parks known for promoting engagement. The placement of the Burnet Woods dog park near Jefferson Avenue, a busy street makes visitors feel safe; just as the locations of Westwood and Washington Park dog parks are along well traveled streets. Visitors know that people will be passing by the dog park frequently so they can be within visual distance of others.

The size of the Burnet Woods dog park is perfect for community building. At small dog parks, dog owners are within close proximity of all other dogs and owners so the best behavior is encouraged. The smaller parks allow for more interaction. At larger dog parks, dogs can run distance for exercise, but when away from owners negative dog interactions may occur. Additionally, we have not had any luck feeling a part of a place at the larger dog parks.

I am so happy to have a dog park in Clifton that will be a destination known to encourage community building for anyone looking to sit amongst others.

The second reason I am thankful for the dog park at Burnet Woods is that the park is a gem within the City that has lost its shine. My hope is that the dog park will draw more activity to Burnet Woods.

In the late 1990s when my two children were young, families knew where to go within the woods to find buckeyes, acorns with shaggy caps, and the best leaves to make "stained glass," art, which was leaves ironed between waxed paper. Entering off of Diggs Plaza across from Skyline at the corner of Ludlow and Clifton Avenues was where we could get to the tree with the best buckeyes.

Almost thirty years later my children are adults and Burnet Woods near Clifton and Ludlow Avenue is a place to avoid. Lack of activity at the park has allowed for illegal activity in the woods. It is common to

come upon people sleeping, passed out, or hanging out with open containers near the trails.

I so appreciate your willingness to help the park by investing in Burnet Woods.

Although my support never wavered, there had been times when I was uncomfortable about announcing out loud my support. And certainly so many Clifton residents have been afraid to say they are in favor of the dog park because of the continual bullying from opposition. Opponents' activities such as public pickets at neighborhood activities, publishing of supporters addresses on social media, and publishing comments from supporters on social media has made some supporters hide.

Dog park supporters are mighty. When feeling bullied, we give each other pep talks to continue public support. I am proud to have friends that remind me that a small dog park is a perfect use in an urban park. I hope you feel proud too. With everyone's support Burnet Woods can shine bright. It could one day be our Central Park.

Cassandra Clement
513.478.2477

[External Email] Public Comment 10/15: Written Public Comment

From Cynthia Duval <cynthia@preserveburnetwoods.org>

Date Sun 10/13/2024 3:48 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <CityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Please file this as a written objection to the meeting minutes for the Board of Park Commissioners dated September 19, 2024 as attached to the Park Board Agenda & Packet for the October 15th Park Board Meeting. These minutes again fail to register receipt of any written public comments submitted to the Commissioners intended for attachment to that meeting.

Regards,

Cynthia Duval
Member, Burnet Woods Park Advisory Committee
President, Preserve Burnet Woods
513.477.4584

[External Email] Public Comment: Request to Table Action Item IVD, Burnet Woods Dog Park Award Approval on the Board Meeting Agenda for October 15, 2024

From Eric Todd Inglert, AIA <einglert@cinci.rr.com>

Date Sun 10/13/2024 10:31 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

You don't often get email from einglert@cinci.rr.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Dear Mr. Barron, Director and the Board of Park Commissioners.

I write in opposition to Action Item IVD, Burnet Woods Dog Park Award Approval on the Board Meeting Agenda for October 15, 2024. My opposition is both personal and professional. Out of respect for your time and consideration of this email, I will make my arguments as comprehensive, concise and clear as possible. In short, I am asking that you lay this item on the table to seek greater community input and professional advice about the logic behind this site selection. This is not the highest and best use of this site.

Cincinnati Parks are in a word, spectacular! As young architects in 1988, my wife and I moved to live on Eden Park. Today, every morning I begin my day with three loops of the improved trails in Avon Woods Nature Preserve. Everyday I park my car on Hosea and walk across Burnet Woods to teach at UC. It is delightful to speak with friendly Parks staff, and the quiet peace and pleasant exercise Cincinnati Parks "gifts" me everyday in its natural splendor provides me great personal reward. Burnet Woods is home to dog walkers, students, lovers, frisbee golfers, hikers, joggers, walkers, people who fish, people who picnic, bird watchers, and the list goes on. It is open to all and without gates. It is perfect. I am amused by those who think it unsafe...come walk with me or sketch. Anyone who thinks it is not safe belies their lack of experience with Burnet Woods. Well behaved dogs on a leash make me feel safe. Dogs off leash in a public place is something I do not understand as a basic right of shared community amenities.

In addition to my personal reasons, there are two professional questions that I would ask. In honesty, if they cannot be answered in simple terms to the public whom you serve, then they may become wedge items for this development.

1. Does this development fully meet accessibility guidelines as prescribed by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990? My understanding of this law is that it is comprehensive for new construction. A designer may not pick and choose which parts are accessible and ignore which of these might be cost prohibitive. That would be unkind to our neighbors with a disability who may also enjoy the companionship of a dog; and, besides that it is illegal not to provide access for new developments.

2. Does this bid package fully meet thresholds of City of Cincinnati bidding requirements with respect to competitive bidding, EOE requirements, MBE/WBE/SBE certification programs, etc.? In other words is one qualified bid adequate to make this decision around an issue that holds some controversy around the development idea?

Others have perhaps argued successfully against the use of "plastic grass." Many have argued about the transparency of the site selection process. Still others have argued for the majestic trees and their subsurface roots possibly suffering damage. I have heard arguments for protecting the birds that frequent this area. I agree with these earnest neighbors of mine and rely on their expertise to inform me about these issues that I value. I finish with a more basic question. With all of this palpable and explicit opposition to this development in this location, is it politically wise to move forward with an underfunded and underdesigned and underscrutinized project?

Please lay this agenda item on the table for reconsideration.

Thanks again for this opportunity to speak against Action Item IVD Burnet Woods Dog Park Award Approval.

Respectfully,

Eric Todd Inglert, AIA
732 Avon Fields Ln
Cincinnati, OH 45229

[External Email] Public Comment from Karly morgan

From Karly morgan <ilove.burnet@preserveburnetwoods.org>

Date Sun 10/13/2024 9:12 PM

To Aftab, Mayor <mayor.pureval@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Kearney, Jan-Michele <jan-michele.kearney@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Harris, Reggie <reggie.harris@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Parks, Victoria <victoria.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Please enter the below transcript into public record for the next Cincinnati Board of Park Commissioners public meeting and ongoing for public meetings of the Cincinnati City Council Healthy Neighborhoods Committee. This record represents a unique response from Karly morgan.

Email address

karlyamorgan@gmail.com

In my own words, I feel that my voice has been excluded from organized public discussion designed to provide actionable feedback regarding the proposed dog park in Burnet Woods as a result of the Park Board's violations of best practices in community engagement in the following ways:

The Cincinnati park foundation continues to carry out plans for a dog park the public has explicitly stated they do not want. The park will in fact hard old growth trees and thousands of native species. Stop the dog park NOW.

Best practices in Community Engagement call for centering the voices of individuals who will be most directly impacted by the issue at-hand. The Cincinnati Board of Park Commissioners has remained unengaged and has even ignored

I agree that the Park Board has failed to center voices of those most directly impacted by the location chosen for a dog park in Burnet Woods.

residents of multifamily housing directly next to the selected site for a dog park in Burnet Woods. The Park Board's decision to ignore those who would be most directly impacted by a dog park in Burnet Woods is failure to professionally engage the community on this issue.

The City of Cincinnati has neighborhood councils for the purpose of ensuring a link between citizens and decision makers. From the city's own website: "These organizations [i.e., community councils] ensure that neighborhood development responds to the needs and goals of its citizens." Despite the two community councils whose boundaries include Burnet Woods having passed resolutions against the dog park, the Park Board is choosing to use a heavy-handed approach to the development in violation of the entire premise behind our city having community councils. Similarly, Cincinnati Parks has Park Advisory Councils (CPACs), to, according to the Cincinnati Parks Board website, "build and maintain public support for Cincinnati Parks by providing

I agree that the Park Board has violated the covenant of community representation by ignoring the opposition of the CUF Neighborhood Association and Corryville Community Council regarding the dog park.

I agree that the Park Board has violated the covenant of trust with its own volunteer Park Advisory Council for Burnet Woods by ignoring their resolution against the dog park.

**feedback to the
Cincinnati Park Board
and exchanging and
sharing information and
providing mutual
support between CPACs.”
Park CPACs often donate
hundreds of volunteer
hours to maintain park
spaces and host
community events. In
violation of its own
stated purpose for
CPACs, the Cincinnati
Park Board has ignored
multiple resolutions
passed by the Burnet
Woods Park Advisory
Council (BPAC) in
opposition to the
proposed dog park in
Burnet Woods.**

**As it relates to
community engagement
on the proposed dog
park in Burnet Woods,
and in addition to the
points above, the Park
Board of Commissioners
has further violated the
public trust in numerous
ways, including: ·
masquerading an old
survey about a proposed
dog park in a different
Cincinnati park as
community engagement
on a dog park in Burnet
Woods · using
accessibility as a red
herring to advance the
dog park in Burnet
Woods before
determining if the
amenity is desired by the
community in the first
place · ignoring other,
decades old**

I agree that the Board of Park Commissioners has damaged the public trust in its failures to develop and execute a professional, equitable and unbiased community engagement process applied consistently to projects in Burnet Woods and the Cincinnati Parks system.

infrastructure and
accessibility needs in
Burnet Woods in order to
prioritize the pet project
of a dog park in Burnet
Woods · excluding
various groups and
stakeholders, including
the most vulnerable,
from engagement and
decision making ·
mocking the community
engagement process
itself and those who are
demanding best
practices in community
engagement · boasting
that as Commissioners
they will use their power
to make amenity-siting
decisions for the
community because they
don't believe in the
community ·
greenwashing the clear,
evidence-based
ecological destruction
the dog park will cause ·
undermining the
legitimacy of process by
ignoring the fact that
two sitting Park Board
Commissioners have a
conflict of interest by
residing near enough to
the proposed dog park
that their private
property values could
materially benefit from
the development

**I acknowledge that upon
completion of this form,
an email containing
responses will be sent for
public record entry to
the Cincinnati Board of
Park Commissioners,
Cincinnati Mayor Aftab**

I acknowledge the above emails will be sent upon clicking 'Submit'.
I acknowledge that a summary of responses may be submitted to
members of Cincinnati City Council.

Pureval, and the current members of Cincinnati City Council Healthy Neighborhoods Committee: Jan-Michele Kearney, Reggie Harris, Scotty Johnson, and Victoria Parks. A Summary of responses may be compiled and provided to City Council also. A copy will also be sent to Preserve Burnet Woods.

Your Full Name Karly morgan

Your Email Address Karlyamorgan@gmail.com

Your Zip Code 45239

Respectfully,

Karly morgan

Sent: Sun, Oct 13, 2024 9:12 PM

Response ID:

2_ABaOnudhKfOgjGBskOrAW0nzGHXjQTZZV0IGpSDsDybqZYIClxEDcuDTYkdHBFn5cNOHeoo

Response Number: 82

[External Email] Public Comment October 15 2024

From Marijo Fraley <marijo.fraley@gmail.com>

Date Sun 10/13/2024 9:35 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Dear Park Board Commissioners,

In the last two weeks Florida has endured two hurricanes that killed scores of people and did billions of dollars of property damage. There is no dispute among educated people that the severity of these hurricanes is the result of global warming. Perhaps you think, "I don't have to worry about that here in Cincinnati !" But in fact, global warming threatens us ALL as even minute temperature changes in our climate interfere with growing crops (that feed us) and trees (which produce oxygen for us to breathe) as well as the impact on insects and birds. If it were not for trees and other green plants, the rest of life on Earth would soon perish, as plants are the "producers" - the foundation of every single food chain.

Every act of destruction of natural habitat contributes to global warming. Certainly, that cannot possibly be a new concept to you who have been appointed to carry out the mission of Cincinnati Parks, that being "to conserve, manage, sustain, and enhance parks' natural and cultural resources and public greenspace for the enjoyment, enlightenment and enrichment of the Cincinnati community". Destroying natural habitat in Burnet Woods for a dog park will kill the trees that are currently in that valley, kill the insects and eventually lead to fewer birds and wildlife in the park. Most of all, it will contribute to global warming. This is undeniable.

In the rush to destroy precious habitat for this meritless, wasteful and expensive project you are missing an opportunity to actually improve the park. Burnet Woods has been neglected terribly for decades. Burnet Woods needs hardscape maintenance, new tree plantings and new landscaping. The Trailside Nature Center needs renovation as does the former concession stand. There is a sewage issue that needs to be addressed. The park is not handicapped accessible. All of these things are a high priority and yet it doesn't get done. That is a reflection of your "stewardship" up to now, but that can be changed.

Please do not vote to move forward on this project. Voting to install a dog park is very poor judgement. Think about the permanent destruction of a lovely swale with mature trees that is enjoyed by many as it is. Leashed dogs are already welcome in the park and a dog park is unnecessary and far from an enhancement. (If you wouldn't want it next door to **your** home you cannot consider it an enhancement).

Please have the courage to put an end to this ridiculous project and put your efforts toward authentically improving this park.

Thank you,
Marijo O'Connell

I
Marijo F. O'Connell

[External Email] Comments: October 15 2024 meeting

From Anita Buck <aajbuck@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 3:03 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Aftab, Mayor <mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov>; CityManagerEmail <citymanager@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Kearney, Jan-Michele <jan-michele.kearney@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Parks, Victoria <victoria.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Albi, Anna <anna.albi@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Cramerding, Jeff <jeff.cramerding@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Jeffreys, Mark <mark.jeffreys@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Johnson, Scotty <scotty.johnson@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Owens, Meeka <meeka.owens@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Walsh, Seth <seth.walsh@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Preserve Burnet Woods <ilove.burnet@preserveburnetwoods.org>; Bob Hyland <bob@preserveburnetwoods.org>; Nolan, Evan <evan.nolan@cincinnati-oh.gov>

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External Email Communication

Dear Commissioners,

Once again I express my opposition to the proposed dog park in Burnet Woods.

1. It is not and can never be ADA-compliant because of the parking situation. The Parks and dog park proponents have gone pretty quiet about accessibility because of the parking issue but you did fundraise on accessibility and if anyone does sue the Parks over its non-compliance with ADA regulations that fundraising will certainly be brought up as part of the case.
2. The dog park itself does not follow best practices. It does not have separate areas for large and small dogs and the fencing, last we heard, does not comply with AKC guidelines. The entry does not appear to be double-gated and it seems to be the only entry point, leading to potential conflict if dogs become bottlenecked there. Perhaps the unmarked gate at the south end of the enclosure is intended as a second entry or exit point but again, if it is not double-gated, dogs running in the dog park can shoot right out of that gate if someone opens it. They can then run at children, at leashed dog-reactive dogs, or into the road.
3. \$400,000 is an insane amount to spend on a dog park this size. Not good optics, especially as TPL rates the Parks as way high in amenities but not in equity.
4. I don't know where all the Commissioners were in 1990 when it was proposed that the Clifton branch library should go into Burnet Woods — Commissioner Lee, I think, was in primary school — but this proposal was bitterly opposed by the majority of the Clifton community, who love the library but did not want to see any more Burnet Woods greenspace turned into an amenity. The library board quickly withdrew the proposal. Board member Charles Lindberg is quoted in the Cincinnati Post [June 18, 1990]:

“In tabling the proposal, the county library board asked the committee and other citizens groups to submit proposals for alternative sites. The board specified that sites must be supported by the vast majority of Clifton residents ‘I don’t think getting involved in a community fight is good for the library system or for the public we serve.’”

Commissioners, I suggest with respect that you would do well to take Charles Lindberg’s comment to heart. I realize that you have been attributing community opposition to the dog park to a few disgruntled individuals, but remember the outpouring of comments negative toward the dog park on the Parks’ own survey last December. Fully 85% of 962 responses were against the dog park, and although a few were negative only toward artificial turf, you’re still left with well over three-quarters completely negative responses. If you need to refresh your memory of the comments, here is the link. <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cincyparks/get-involved/surveys-and-feedback/burnet-woods-dog-park-summary/>

Because there has been no community engagement — and remember, too, that staff were specifically instructed by the Commissioners NOT to notify Burnet Woods neighbors of the decision to site the dog park near their homes — many Clifton residents remain unaware that the dog park is still intended to go through. They will not be happy to discover bulldozers in Burnet Woods.

5. If this dog park is built, it will be a continual source of conflict and complaint:

- It would violate the Brookline vista, which, as we have reminded you, is a designed landscape beloved by pretty much everyone.
- Despite the Commissioners’ desire to do better, maintenance of Parks dog parks is a chronic problem. Roughly half of dog owners do not pick up after their dogs and this percentage increases if they are not observed.
- The dog park will inevitably smell and this will be frequently noted on social media, as will any incident such as dogs escaping the park through the inadequate gating and fencing. The dog park will inevitably lead to an increase of dogs dumped in Clifton, as it will be quite convenient to lock an unwanted dog into the dog park and drive away, or tie it to the fence.

Commissioners, why insist on putting this dog park here where there is so much opposition? It will fester for years.

Why not use the impossibility of ADA compliance as your off-ramp for this project? Put a dog park where it’s really wanted. I hear Mt. Echo has been asking for a dog park for years. PUPP members may be unhappy with having to drive to Westwood or Washington Park to visit a dog park, but Price Hill residents have to drive all the way to Westwood or Washington Park as well, and it’s a LOT farther.

Sincerely,
Anita Buck

--

Anita Buck
writer and editor
8 Tanglewood Lane

Cincinnati, OH 45224

513 257-6986 cell

aaibuck@gmail.com

[External Email] Fwd: Public Comment 101524

From Bonnie Cipollone <bonniecipollone@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 4:43 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

Cc #COUNCIL <citycouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bonniecipollone@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bonnie Cipollone** <bonniecipollone@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Oct 14, 2024, 4:38 PM

Subject: Public Comment 101524

To: <citycouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>

Wanted to let you know that I disagree with the plan for a fenced dog park in Burnet Woods effecting the future of the beautiful 121 year old maple tree. I am happy walking my dogs in the park as it is.

Bonnie Cipollone

Mt. AIRY Resident

5642 Little Flower Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45239

[External Email] Public Comment 10/15: Fundraising Ethics

From Cynthia Duval <cynthia@preserveburnetwoods.org>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 4:30 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

As the Park Board considers accepting another donation from the Cincinnati Parks Foundation for the Burnet Woods Dog Park proposal, it is important to note a discrepancy in purpose of funds raised.

In 2023, the Clifton Golf Outing, which was advertised on and payment accepted through, the Cincinnati Parks Foundation website, purported to be fundraising for PROGRAMMING, ACCESSIBLE FEATURES AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS. Language indicating that proceeds were more than singularly focused was in the materials, presumably due to the controversy over the dog park and concern that people wouldn't register for the event.

In public comment 2 months ago, John Whedon, organizer of that golf outing, stood before the Park Board, with Jennifer Spieser in audience, and stated that the golf outing was to raise money for the dog park.

What portion of the funds raised by the Cincinnati Parks Foundation through that golf outing is being applied to programming and capital improvement? Or did both CPF and John Whedon mislead participants about the purpose of the funds raised?

Cynthia Duval



Clifton Golf Outing - Cincinnati Parks...

cincinnatiiparksfoundation.org



You're invited to the

CLIFTON GOLF

DONATE



OUTING

BENEFITING BURNET WOODS, CINCINNATI PARKS

*Programming, Accessible Features & Capital
Improvements*

SATURDAY, AUGUST



[External Email] Public Comment for Cincinnati Park Board Meeting of October 15, 2024

From Cynthia McCarthy <charlielimabravomike@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 4:28 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

Cc Kearney, Jan-Michele <jan-michele.kearney@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Aftab, Mayor <mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Parks, Victoria <victoria.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Albi, Anna <anna.albi@cincinnati-oh.gov>; CityManagerEmail <citymanager@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Cramerding, Jeff <jeff.cramerding@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Harris, Reggie <reggie.harris@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Jeffreys, Mark <mark.jeffreys@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Johnson, Scotty <scotty.johnson@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Owens, Meeka <meeka.owens@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Walsh, Seth <seth.walsh@cincinnati-oh.gov>

 1 attachments (44 KB)

Final Timeless Trails burnet woods final copy..docx;

Some people who received this message don't often get email from charlielimabravomike@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Dear Park Board Members,

I am writing in continued opposition to the planned Burnet Woods dog park.

Today you vote whether to accept the current bid for the current plan to move forward. You KNOW in your heart of hearts this is wrong. You KNOW you gave better treatment to the Dunore neighbors. You KNOW you pushed this site selection through in the dark, with your decision purposefully buried in the minutes of a long meeting. If you were proud of your decision there would have been a "coming soon" sign at Pleasant Valley with your false rendering. You KNOW you have been communicating privately with the dog park proponents. You KNOW your contractor, who was not selected by competitive bidding on the current plan, SITS ON YOUR FUNDRAISING BOARD. You KNOW you are committing environmental injustice in removing cooling green space from the Corryville community against their will. Of the three neighborhoods laying claim to Burnet Woods, two are opposed and one has now refused to take a side. ZERO out of three in support. You KNOW you are ruining the entry to BW for a handful of people to the detriment of the many. You are changing "Parkview" to "Barkview", or is it "Poopview"?

Didn't you learn from Digg's Plaza? A pet project that already took a bite out of Burnet Woods, now "activated" by people your dog park proponents find undesirable? Do you really think the dog park will be enjoyed by the smattering of proponents once it is "activated" by people and dogs they find objectionable?

Had you BOTHERED to attend the historical tours on Saturday at Burnet Woods' 150 year celebration, you would have a heartfelt understanding of the historical significance of Burnet Woods through the

eyes of those original benefactors and stewards. I have attached a copy of the narrative for your edification. Had you BOTHERED to attend Saturday, you would have seen a live barred owl, just like those who will be affected by your bulldozing of THEIR green space. Had you BOTHERED to attend Saturday's festivities, you would have seen dozens of volunteers, who cherish Burnet Woods, busy reenacting historical figures (after spending days memorizing lines and preparing costumes), setting up booths, carrying pumpkins and mums, and many other ways of supporting the event. What you would NOT have seen are the handful of dog park proponents.

Today would be a good day to vote NO to accepting this tainted bid to place an ill-planned, unpopular dog park in historic Burnet Woods.

IF after listening to and reading all of the opposition from friends, neighbors, volunteers, environmentalists, professors, doctors, UC students and more, you chose on behalf of a handful of proponents who haven't raised the required funds over YEARS of fundraising, just know:

We WILL be watching you. We WILL be holding you to proper tree protection. We WILL be reporting every piece of dog poop left behind. We WILL monitor and report on the harm done to the nearby trees, trees that are older than any three of you together. Your place in history will be duly noted, by living humans, our descendants, the spirit of the park's historic benefactors (who are no doubt spinning in their graves), and the creatures you harm. You can explain your decision to your grandchildren, and eventually to your god when your soul leaves your body. I will die knowing I did the right thing in standing up to you.

Cynthia McCarthy

Resident and Retiree of the City of Cincinnati

Timeless Trails: A Journey Through Burnet Woods Park History"

60 minutes: 10-12 minutes of walking, 48-50 minutes of talking, MAX 5 minutes each x 10 speakers. Suggest max 300 words per reenactor. Docents will have additional factoids to share while each group of guests is walking to hear the next reenactor. "Burnet" is pronounced "Burn-it" (barely over 1 syllable)

Intro: Lisa at Bandstand with maps and 1849 "Burnet Woods Park" sign:

"I am here to welcome you in the spirit of the history of Burnet Woods. We gratefully acknowledge the Native Peoples on whose ancestral homelands we gather, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities that make their home here [today](#). Where you will walk [today](#) are indeed Timeless Trails. Since the last glaciers receded and left the ground scraped bare, the soil around us in Burnet Woods has built itself up out of all of the trees and plants that have lived and died since then, about 30 areas worth with little human interference. This was a vibrant park, both a picnic park and a tree park, during a time when all the other trees had been cut down for building timber and firewood. Now, Burnet Woods is truly our community forest primeval, our Important Bird Area, and the trails in Burnet Woods are our local pathway to a sample of an Old Growth Forest.

"Please let me introduce your docent for [today's](#) walking tour, who will accompany you and be available to answer questions, as you learn a bit more about some of the people who shaped this park. The tour will take about an hour and will finish at the Trailside Nature Center on Brookline Ave. After the tour, please consider walking one of the trails to enjoy the day, and you are welcome to join us for the pumpkin carving party that will start at 1pm over at Trailside."

Docent: "My name is . . ." walking away from Bandstand towards hilltop shelter, act startled when just past Pin Oak, where you will find:

Tree: "Welcome to Burnet Woods. You will meet Mr. Burnet next, but first let me tell you about the woods. I'm a deciduous tree, which means that I drop my broad leaves at this time of year in order to get ready for winter. If I instead kept my leaves through the coming cold months, the water in the leaf veins would freeze and I would die of frostbite.

"Next spring I'll grow new leaves and begin to make food for myself through photosynthesis, which also produces oxygen while taking carbon dioxide from the air. I'll use up most of the food but will store enough of it in my stems and roots to get me through the next winter. Up the hill, you can see that the park also has evergreen trees that keep their antifreeze-filled needles all year. These trees don't naturally grow here but were planted by the Park department. Because of Cincinnati's climate and soil, these evergreen trees won't reproduce themselves. So when they die, new evergreens will have to be planted.

"But back to deciduous trees like me. There are over twenty kinds of us growing in Burnet Woods. There also are mosses, ferns, flowers, grasses, shrubs, vines, and all kinds of animals. Some of the animal species disappeared when settlers cut down the vast forest surrounding Burnet Woods. The park by itself isn't big enough to hold elk and bears and wolves, but all sorts of smaller mammals live here. Hawks, owls, and many other kinds of birds nest in the trees while snakes and salamanders crawl over the ground. And, of course, there are thousands of types of insects.

"The food for all these animals is ultimately provided by the plants in these woods. You get your food at the grocery store, but remember that it's plants like me that produce your oxygen and

capture your carbon dioxide. For your sake, many more forests like Burnet Woods will need to be restored and preserved in the future.” (

Docent: “Now, let’s go back to 1849 and visit with Judge Burnet. He moved from New Jersey to Cincinnati in 1796 when he was 26 years old, and he became the most prominent lawyer in the community: was on the Ohio Supreme Court, and he helped write the Ohio Constitution. He is buried in Spring Grove Cemetery.”

Jacob Burnet (circa 1849, standing at the crossroads between the Bandstand and hilltop Shelter, just above the bollards). “Greetings. Nice to see some folks out and about on this fine morning. I’m Jacob Burnet, and I guess you could call me a retired judge: I rode the Circuit Court as a judge back when Cincinnati was part of the Northwest Territory, before Ohio became a state.” (looking at a map, points to square, chuckling) “Ah, it seems like [yesterday](#), but it was right around 1800 that Squire McMillan and I purchased Section 14 of the Millcreek Township here. We divided it in half: I got the quarter-section to the east where Burnet Avenue is located, Squire McMillan took the middle half, and this west quarter section where we are currently standing has been my country home since then. My house is on the next ridge south of here, with an outstanding view of the Mill Creek Valley.

“As you can see, it’s hilly here: wouldn’t be a simple task to put houses here. Not to mention the ravine where the creek we call Bates Run flows from the Squire’s old land down to the Mill Creek.” (gestures from Corryville towards the west) “There’s quite a few houses up there these days, they call it Corryville now, after Mayor Corry. Enough houses that, this year, they commenced to make a sewer out of Bates Run. That should make it smell better when you go over the bridge to the Senator’s house. (gestures toward corner of Clifton and Ludlow Avenues)

“Although I retired from government in 1831, I’m still involved in local civic affairs. I want to leave a legacy for the people of Cincinnati. I would like for these woods and this land to become a Park someday. I think that I will talk with my family about this.”

Docent: “Jacob Burnet died in 1853, and he willed this land to 2 of his children, Robert and Elizabeth, who were also involved in civic affairs. We are now on our way to visit with his daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Burnet Groesbeck. Her husband, William Slocum Groesbeck, started practicing law in Cincinnati in 1836.

(on the way down the path) “Here are entrances to two of the ‘Timeless Trails’ in Burnet Woods: to the Warbler Trail on the right, and, just a bit further, to the Barred Owl Trail on the left.” (point to map in brochure)

Elizabeth Burnet Groesbeck (circa 1872, standing at the crossroads between Brookline and Burnet Woods Drive near the Lake, just below the bollards) “Welcome, so nice to see you all [today](#). I am sorry that my husband, William, was not able to be here to visit with you, as well. Ever since he served as President Andrew Johnson’s Defense Counsel during his impeachment proceedings 2 years ago, so very successfully, well, now he is even more in demand and travels incessantly. However, I’ve got something splendidly exciting to share with you: William and I, along with my brother Robert and his dear wife, Margaret, would like to offer this land that Robert and I inherited from our father, Jacob Burnet, to the City of Cincinnati for a park. Now, it is true that Robert and William had been thinking to subdivide this land to build houses, but we’ve all been talking, and we are in agreement that this is what Judge Burnet wanted us to do. After all, people have already been calling this land ‘Burnet Woods’ for many years.

“William is also planning to give the city fifty thousand dollars to create a fund so that there will be free music concerts here, forever! Imagine, people from all over Cincinnati coming here to enjoy grand concerts, right in the heart of these woods. I hope they name it the Groesbeck Fund, after this special idea that William has thought up. A park filled with music—it’s like a sanctuary in the middle of this bustling city. And I’ll tell you what, those concerts? They’re going to be something people talk about for generations.”

Docent: “After some resistance due to the poor economy at the time, the Park Commissioners, led by Joseph Longworth, convinced the city to enter into a lease agreement with Burnet’s son and the Groesbecks in 1872. The subsequent purchase price was \$3000 an acre.

“We are now going to visit with Adolph Strauch, who was the Landscape Architect for Spring Grove Cemetery. Born in Prussia in 1822, he was the Supervisor of the Imperial Gardens in Vienna before he met Mr. Bowler and subsequently decided to move here. He worked on the Bowler Estate in 1850, which is known as Mt. Storm. He was Superintendent of the Cincinnati Park Board from 1872 to 1875.”

Adolph Strauch (circa 1874, located on the bridge between the lake and the grotto): (gesturing to the park) “Ah, look at it! Burnet Woods, finished at last! Are you enjoying the views? Too bad there aren’t any horse-drawn carriages for you to ride [today](#), because I designed this park so that people could get out of the coal smoke downtown and in Over-The-Rhine, and come up here to take the fresh air in a relaxing carriage ride. Can you imagine the sight of families riding through these winding roads, taking in the groves of trees and the views? Or taking a boat ride in the lake?

“I believe that most people visit the park for the purpose of enjoying the productions of nature, and very seldom for brick and mortar. I wanted it to feel like nature was embracing you—open lawns for picnics, groves for quiet reflection, and plenty of space on these wide roads for phaetons, buggies, landaus, all manner of horse-drawn carriages. And now that I am the Superintendent of City Parks, I can design other parks – Such as Eden park - in the same manner. I hope you enjoy your visit here [today](#).” (179 words)

Docent: “Burnet Woods Park opened with a grand party on [August 26](#), 1874, and became tremendously popular with the public. The concerts at Burnet Woods Bandstand were greatly appreciated by thousands of music-loving people during the summers. The proceeds from the investment of the Groesbeck Fund paid for about 12 concerts every summer for a long, long time, and continues to pay for the [Wednesday](#) in the Woods concerts now. Back then, when the lake would freeze solidly enough in the winter, there would be skating days, also immensely popular, with attendance of about 3,000 people each day. The shelter house at the Lake was kept open to skaters from 10 AM to 10 PM, with a good fire.

“We are now walking towards the Burnet Woods campus of the University of Cincinnati. We will not walk quite that far [today](#), but we will stop to meet someone who was singularly involved in the creation of this campus, Dr. Cornelius George Comegys, who moved to Cincinnati in 1849 and married Rebecca Tiffin, daughter of Dr. Edwin Tiffin, the first Governor of Ohio. In addition to practicing medicine, Dr. Comegys was also Chairman of the Board of Directors of the University of Cincinnati.”

Dr. Cornelius George Comegys (circa 1894, located on the sidewalk west of the lake, closer to UC): “My friend, Mr. McMicken, died in 1858, more than 35 years ago, and he left his fortune

to establish the McMicken University and provide for education of our young people. I have felt so strongly about his bequest, and so suggested incorporating it with the old Cincinnati College into a new municipal university. To accomplish this, I became a Cincinnati Ward Alderman. Finally, we are successful! The Mayor has set aside 43 acres in Burnet Woods Park for a university. Just last month, we laid the cornerstone of the New University Building, in the exact spot where Jacob Burnet's home had been. Allow me to quote from my speech at that ceremony: (clears throat and strikes a pose)

'There stands the forest, connecting us with the unknown past. . . . On this hill was built the suburban home of the great pioneer after whom this park is named. He cherished the primeval woods and left it untouched to his children.' I'm not just thinking about [today](#), though. No, I have a dream—that this place will be a beacon of knowledge for generations. And the woods? Well, they're a remnant of Eden, untouched, and I believe they should stay that way. Let's build our university here, but let's also preserve the beauty of this land. After all, how often do we get to walk through the past and into the future all at once?"

Docent: "You will now meet Carl Freund, the "Parkitect" who designed what was first known as the Trailside Museum and the adjacent stone slide. These structures were built by the Federal Works Project Administration, the WPA, which was an American New Deal agency that employed millions of jobseekers (mostly men who were not formally educated) to carry out public works projects, including the construction of public buildings and roads, during the Great Depression.

R. Carl Freund (circa 1940, outside Trailside near the slide): R. Carl Freund: (with a grin, gesturing to the stone slide) "Now, isn't that something? A stone slide! People thought I was a little crazy, but I wanted something unique, something that would blend into the natural beauty of Burnet Woods. When I designed this place, I didn't want sharp corners—I wanted it to feel organic, like it grew right out of the landscape. That's why I gave Trailside Museum its curves and its Prairie-style design. I truly admire Frank Lloyd Wright. I have been an architect for Cincinnati Parks for about 5 years now, and I am proud of designing so many stylish stone buildings for Parks. But the Trailside Museum is one of my favorites: those beautiful textured stone walls, steel-sash corner windows, and flat, cantilevered roofs. And the "log loggias" of its entry front echo the rustic qualities of earlier American park architecture. And it is a very functional building, too, with public display areas and a large children's work room. Hester Stephenson can sit in the Naturalist's office on the 3rd floor and keep an eye on the activities below. This park, it's not just a place to visit. It's a place to play, to explore, to learn. And this building, the stone slide, everything here—it's meant to inspire, to connect people with nature. I think we've done a pretty good job, don't you?" (219 words)

Docent: "Hester Stephenson was the original Naturalist for Cincinnati Parks, and she was the Chief Naturalist at Burnet Woods until she retired in 1970. The lower level of Trailside acted as a clubhouse for the Junior and Senior Explorers Nature Clubs, also for the Trailside Museum Garden Club, and for the Rock Crackers."

Hester and Bernice Stephenson (circa 1945, inside Trailside Nature Center in the main room, Hester chatting and interacting with Bernice): "Oh, Trailside has come a long way! I remember before this building was even here—there was an old boat livery, along with the trees and the birds, and me leading children through these woods, telling them to 'walk, look, and listen.' Those were simpler times, but oh, the excitement of seeing children discover nature! And now,

we have clubs, [Christmas](#) Pixies made of seeds and pods, and even our very own nature trail! (gestures to tree map) I created that tree map back in '45, you know. It was such a thrill to document the trees that people love to come see here. They're part of what makes Burnet Woods so special. This park is a treasure, and I've always felt it's my job to make sure everyone sees that. After all, nature is the best classroom."

Docent ushers guests from main room to Planetarium.

Miss Olga Wolff (circa 1950, located inside the Trailside Nature Center at the Planetarium, gazing up with a gentle smile, with some Pixies to give away): "Ah, the stars... they've always fascinated me. My brother Clifford and I— we spent many nights gazing up at the night sky, trying to understand the mysteries beyond. It's funny how a shared love for nature and the cosmos can deeply connect people. That's why, when Clifford passed, I knew exactly how to honor him. (gestures toward the Planetarium) This little planetarium, right here in Burnet Woods, is in his memory.

It's incredible, isn't it? You don't need a fancy observatory to learn about the stars. With this planetarium, anyone can look up and see the constellations come to life, just like Clifford and I did as children. And, you know, this place—Burnet Woods—is the perfect setting. Out there, people can walk among the trees, connect with the earth, and then come in here to look up at the heavens. Nature and the stars—they belong together, don't they?

I hope that through this planetarium, children and adults alike will discover the same wonder we felt. Who knows, maybe one day one of those children will become an astronomer! That's my hope—that this place will spark curiosity and joy, just like it did for Clifford and me."

I first met Hester Stephenson in 1945 when my brother Clifford and I first joined the "Walk, Look and Listen" group in Burnet Woods. I am so pleased to be able to donate this Planetarium to Trailside in memory of my beloved brother. Mr. Spitz is so clever, to invent such a thing as a star projector. You know, he was a student at Hebrew Union College, and he would stay up late, studying the stars from across the street in Burnet Woods. Later, he wanted his children to enjoy the stars as he did, so he invented the Planetarium." (300 words)

Docent ushers guests outside of Trailside, where the Park Ranger is waiting to talk with them.

Park Ranger

Hello! I hope you enjoyed your travels thru time and Burnet Woods. Our public parks [today](#) play a vital role in enhancing the quality of life in Cincinnati, in Ohio, and in the entire country. Parks offer many benefits that contribute to the well-being of the community and the environment. As part of my role as a Park Ranger, it is important to highlight the various ways in which these green spaces impact residents and visitors alike.

Our public parks serve as essential recreational spaces. They provide Cincinnati residents access to nature and opportunities for physical activity. Whether it's jogging, biking, or participating in team sports, these parks encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Public parks are crucial for environmental conservation and urban ecology. They offer habitats for local wildlife, contributing to biodiversity in the region. Parks in Cincinnati, such as Eden Park and Smale Riverfront Park serve as green corridors that help filter air and water, mitigate urban heat, and reduce stormwater runoff. By maintaining these green spaces, cities not only enhance their urban landscapes but also address pressing environmental issues.

Socially, public parks act as community gathering places. Music, festivals, farmer's markets, and art fairs animate these spaces, drawing people together and showcasing the creativity that blossoms in the Queen City - such as the Oktoberfest and [today's](#) celebration of Burnet Woods' anniversary allow residents to celebrate our local culture and create lasting memories and foster a sense of belonging, creating social ties among citizens.

Public parks also play a significant educational role. Many parks have nature centers, gardens, and trees that can be used for educational programs about local flora and fauna, environmental stewardship, and cultural history. This kind of educational programming helps raise awareness about the importance of conservation and encourages an appreciation for the natural world.

Lastly, parks can significantly increase property values and enhance the attractiveness of neighborhoods. Proximity to green spaces is often a desirable feature for homebuyers, contributing to Cincinnati's overall livability.

In essence, Cincinnati's public parks embody the spirit of the city—a celebration of life, nature, and community. Public parks in Cincinnati and everywhere are essential for recreation, environmental stewardship, community engagement, education, and economic benefits. Their preservation and enhancement should remain a priority for our citizens, city planners, and local governments alike.

I hope to see you in a Cincinnati Park very soon. Thank you for attending our event today. our attending out event.

[External Email] Public Comment: 10.14.24 Park Board Meeting

From David A. Emery <emeryda@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 3:00 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

You don't often get email from emeryda@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Board President North & Cincinnati Park Board:

I am re-submitting to you for public record my support for the installation of a public dog park within Burnet Woods. I would also like to applaud the Park Board for allowing for continued public input while disregarding the numerous fallacious arguments that have been put forth by opponents, particularly by those who intentionally and conveniently conflate "being heard" with "getting their way." To bolster my support, here's a quick updated summary as I understand it:

- CLAIM: The process has been unfair and the City has not allowed for adequate public input.
 - FALLACY: Curricular reasoning and appeal to emotion.
 - REALITY: City Council, the Park Board, and various Community Councils have collectively had the Burner Woods dog park as an agenda line-item for discussion at no fewer than 40 different meetings over the past 36 months. Input has been duly heard, both positive and negative.
 - REALITY: Some of the most vocal and notable opponents have not only made dramatic scenes at some of these meetings, they have also received relatively significant press coverage in print and on TV when compared to that of the supporters.
 - REALITY: Opponents will not rest until this project has been killed, full stop. They don't want compromise -- any compromises the Board and dog park proponents have heretofore made have been among themselves.
- CLAIM: Burnet Woods "belongs" to Clifton, Corryville, and/or CUF. In other words, the input from citizens in other City neighborhoods is irrelevant.
 - FALLACY: Special pleading and appeal to territory.
 - REALITY: Burnet Woods belongs to the City of Cincinnati. While multiple neighborhoods do indeed claim "ownership" of Burnet Woods, it is technically within the boundaries of the Heights (according to the City-approved map on CAGIS).
 - REALITY: Burnet Woods is a public park that is open and accessible to all residents both inside and outside the City proper. That I happen to live in North Avondale should not negate my perspective, either wholly or partially.
 - REALITY: The somewhat arbitrary, pseudo-political boundaries of City neighborhoods are not tantamount to those of legally separate municipalities and should not be treated as such.

- CLAIM: The dog park cannot be installed because none of the immediately adjacent Community Councils have given their approval.
 - FALLACY: False cause and appeals to authority/tradition.
 - REALITY: Community Council support is not required for any City department to move forward with a City-level project regardless of location. Community Councils exist and serve at the pleasure of City Council in an advisory capacity at best and, cynically, as a tool of political expediency.
 - REALITY: Community Councils are far from the beacons of inclusive democratic representation that their most active members (and often the same rotation of leadership) would have anyone believe, especially when it serves the personal agendas of these same vocal members lock-step. I have witnessed this time and again within nearly every Community Council meeting I've had the "pleasure" of attending.
- CLAIM: The dog park must not be installed because Preserve Burnet Woods (PBW) doesn't support it.
 - FALLACY: Appeals to (false) authority and emotion.
 - REALITY: PBW is/was an important nonprofit that has done many good things for Burnet Woods. While its support may indeed be politically important, it is not objectively required for anything to happen.
 - REALITY: PBW's recent objectivity and ability to adhere to its core mission of preservation has arguably been compromised by unprofessionally behaving leadership who often conveniently conflate their personal agendas with that of the organization.
 - REALITY: As an example of the broadness of this unprofessionalism, PBW recently decried the Park Board's decision to continue the parking passing program for UC students at Burnet Woods. Nevermind putting a price (which is lower than on-campus parking passes) on parking within Burnet Woods helps control parking, reduce litter, and bring revenue into the park system, PBW's leadership opposed this with the seemingly clever retort "Burnet Woods is a park not a parking lot." This kind of unnuanced, unthoughtful, uncompromising positioning should be given as much serious consideration as it took time for the authoring keyboard warrior to type it.
- CLAIM: Burnet Woods is an "old growth forest" and the dog park is therefore an incompatible use.
 - FALLACY: Appeal to nature, false analogy, non-sequitur (also a lie).
 - REALITY: Among a wealth of absurd claims, this one is perhaps the most absurd -- as if Burnet Woods were somehow a pristine "Garden of Eden" replete with ancient redwoods. It's so ridiculous, it barely deserves addressing but here we are.
 - REALITY: Burnet Woods is a public urban park that has been modified and improved in ways that are consistent with being a public urban park. Dog parks are a compatible use with public urban parks -- to have to state this out loud is exhausting.
 - REALITY: Burnet Woods has existing man-made amenities that would not be compatible with the restoration strategy of Preserve Burnet Woods, including a man-made lake/pond, playgrounds, sidewalks, paved roads, picnic shelters, a bandstand, a frisbee golf course, and lawns.
 - REALITY: The area designated for the dog park is currently a manicured lawn with non-native grasses, hardly a feature of an "old growth forest." Replacing a small portion of this grass with a dog park is hardly worth mentioning.
- CLAIM: The location of the dog park within Burnet Woods is inappropriate, too large, and too close to residences.
 - FALLACY: One-sided argument and ambiguity.

- REALITY: The dog park amounts to less than 0.2% of the existing acreage and would require the removal of exactly zero trees. It's also 250 feet away from the nearest residential property.
- REALITY: Opponents of the dog park have offered no legitimately sincere alternatives or constructive feedback to find a compromise. Sites located within residential areas were immediately dismissed altogether.
- REALITY: Urban amenities are not useful if they aren't walkable which inherently requires that they're near residences and mixed-use properties. This is, not so ironically, why cities exist -- Cincinnati is a city. (Am I missing something here?)
- CLAIM: The dog park will be noisy and produce excessive amounts of litter.
 - FALLACY: Slippery slope and appeal to fear.
 - REALITY: Yes, dogs do bark but there is no indication that dog parks turn into "bark-fests" nor that this barking would even remotely come close to exceeding the decibel levels of already-existing urban noise (like the countless EMS vehicles going to and from the region's many uptown hospitals).
 - REALITY: Yes, dogs produce waste but dog parks have been proven to make clean-up easier by centralizing waste and providing the resources to capture and dispose of it on-site rather than expecting every individual dog owner to always have the appropriate amount and type of resources.
- CLAIM: The supporters of the dog park don't care about Burnet Woods as much as the opponents do.
 - FALLACY: Ad hominem and appeal to emotion.
 - REALITY: The supporters of the dog park, including myself, love Burnet Woods no less than the opponents do. We want more people to enjoy it by maintaining, improving, and adding compatible amenities to it.
- CLAIM: The dog park cannot be installed because some artificial turf products reportedly contain PFAs (i.e. forever chemicals).
 - FALLACY: False cause and composition/division.
 - REALITY: City Council heard concerns regarding PFAs and has instructed the Park Department to investigate their presence and effects throughout all City Parks. The opponents pushed a composition/division fallacy that the entirety of the project should be scrapped due to an element that can still be adjusted.
 - REALITY: The plan has since scrapped the inclusion of artificial turf and replaced it with all natural materials, but this is not good enough for the opponents. In particular, they now take exception to the use of crushed/decomposed granite arguing that it will hold onto smells and be unsanitary -- nevermind this was precisely why using an artificial was preferred in the first place.

I should note a few things about myself that may perhaps color my perspective in a light that gives it more credence: I do not live immediately adjacent to Burnet Woods, and while I do have a small dog, my dog is not particularly fond of dog parks so we don't frequent them. I should also note that I did not come to support this project outright because I especially love dog parks (I am neutral), or because I love dogs (I do), or even because I now have friends who do support this dog park. It was because the project objectively just made sense -- and because I saw the unfairness, the bullying, and the absolutely unprincipled way in which opponents were treating supporters. Not to mention, their arguments were and still are just sad -- I would've been more amenable to opponents if they had just been honest from the start and stuck with "we don't want it because we don't like it."

The bottom-line reality is this: The broader Uptown area is currently without a designated, off-leash dog park. Burnet Woods is centrally located and adjacent to hundreds of dog owners who may live in

multi-family housing who likely do not have an option to let their dogs off leash -- the location, size, and mere presence of this dog park is entirely appropriate. Opponents merely want their way and will do anything and everything to get it, including making up every argument possible until this project dies by a thousand cuts. I would like to assume they are well-intended, but the past two years have made this assumption very difficult to maintain because truth, honesty, and compromise have not appeared to be driving factors for them. On the other hand, supporters have been patient, thoughtful, and compromising (despite not having to be). I implore the Park Board to stay the course and see that this dog park is built.

Thank you.

--

David A. Emery, MCP

513.379.7147

[External Email] Public comment: October 15, 2024 (Tuesday Meeting)

From belle <isabella.hutton1@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 3:01 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

[You don't often get email from isabella.hutton1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

External Email Communication

Hello,

I'm asking the Board to reconsider the Dog Park project. Here are just a few reasons why this is a waste of taxpayer money:

The contract with Prus isn't included in the packet, unlike other contracts that need Board approval. When the scope of work changed, the Planning Manager recommended that it go back out for rebid both right after the first bid and before the July meeting, but that never happened.

The Parks Director hasn't provided a basic cost estimate for this project, which will now be funded by taxpayers. We also don't have a simple estimate for yearly maintenance costs, something the previous Director was able to provide. It's worrying that the Park Board isn't asking these basic financial questions. If it were their own money on the line, would they handle it this way?

I urge you to reconsider this, as it's clearly not serving the community in a way that would benefit us.

Thank you,

Isabella Hutton

[External Email] Public Comment: 101524 Do not put a dog park in Burnet Woods

From Nancy Johnson <nsjohnson51@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 4:09 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Aftab, Mayor <mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <cityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>

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External Email Communication

Dear Parks Board, Mayor Pureval, and Council Members,

I strongly object to the construction of a dog park in Burnet Woods. The proposed location is the only open grassy area between Ludlow and Martin Luther King Drive. A large portion of the Clifton Community is opposed and has been clear about that. The location is very near residences. It is close to a busy street (Ludlow Avenue) and will increase congestion that already creates traffic problems in the afternoon (and would endanger the dogs). There isn't sufficient parking. The dog park could disturb wildlife, migrating birds, and the many people who fish in Burnet Woods pond. And the park will irrevocably alter the character of a beautiful old-growth woods.

As a person who has belonged to dog clubs and has taught dog training classes, I know that dog parks are not good for most dogs, especially when owners socialize or hang out on their phones, paying no attention to their dogs. A dog park in Burnet Woods is an accident waiting to happen.

And all of this doesn't even begin to address what a woefully underfunded, poorly bid, and poorly designed the proposed project has become.

I am puzzled about why this project continues to be put forward, even though its design gets worse and worse and there is significant opposition. Construction of the dog park will be a permanent blot on the Burnet Woods Park and on the reputation of the Park Board.

Please don't construct this dog park.

Nancy Johnson

3442 Manor Hill Dr
Cincinnati, OH 45220
513-703-3897

[External Email] Public Comment 10/15/2024

From Nestor Melnyk <nestor.melnik@gmail.com>
Date Mon 10/14/2024 2:36 PM
To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

[You don't often get email from nestor.melnik@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

External Email Communication

Dear Board of Park Commissioners/

Thank you for your continued support of the dog park at Burnet Woods. I am excited to see this moving towards completion.

I appreciate the efforts to arrive at a design that offers an amenity that can be used by people of all abilities anytime the park is open as well as changes to reduce its impact on the environment.

As you know there are many people and business that are in favor of this project. Keep mind that opponents are always louder than proponents - when people know something is happening they tend to accept it and move on. Unfortunately endless bullying and personal attacks from those opposed have kept proponents quiet. When proponents do speak up, they are publicly and unnecessarily criticized. Names and addresses have been published and individuals verbally accosted in public. Even a charitable organization that supports accessible playgrounds has been attacked by opponents.

I thank you for not allowing these tactics to prevail. It is a human tendency to resist change and there is a group of people that want Burnet Woods to stay as it is.

But status quo is not working.

I have lived within walking distance of the park for nearly 40 years and little has changed in that time. There is unwelcome behavior that drives people away. I recently volunteered at two separate clean ups in Burnet Woods. During one a stash of over a hundred needles was found and I personally found a used needle near the playground.

More activity and amenities at Burnet Woods will bring more people to the park. With positive activities and enhancements to the park, instances of bad behavior can be significantly reduced. And these changes can still allow bird watchers, naturalists, disc golfers, and hikers to coexist within the almost 90 acres park. It can be "both/and," not "either/or."

I am thankful for your commitment to all of our parks and for your support of this improvement to Burnet Woods.

[External Email] Public Comment - Oct. 15 - 2024

From Rachel Wells <rachelgailwells@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 4:15 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Barron, Jason <jason.barron@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Dear Commissioners,

Once again, the information provided to you in your monthly meeting packet lacks clarity surrounding the finances of the proposed Burnet Woods Dog Park, so I am writing to underscore what is being asked of you. Director Barron is asking for yet another increase in Parks' funding for a project that faces overwhelming community opposition (85% opposed in Parks' single-question survey).

When the Burnet Woods site was first discussed in summer 2021, Cincinnati Parks expected to contribute \$150,000 of Parks funding, with the rest to be secured by donors. Director Barron then, in January 2023, requested that Cincinnati Parks double its contribution to the project to \$300,000, with \$150,000 additional funds to come from donors for a total budgeted project cost of \$450,000. After the actual bids came in more than \$100,000 over budget earlier this summer, Director Barron devised a plan to externalize project costs by shifting key features of the dog park to Parks staff and, apparently to Parks' general fund, all without providing actual estimates for those additional costs to Parks and the general public.

Now, the project costs are changing again. While some of the additional costs to Parks and the public remain hidden, it's clear from the director's memo that, at the low end, you are being asked to approve an additional \$40,000 in Parks funds. You are being asked to reduce donors' burden to a mere \$60,000 — an acknowledgement that fundraisers have found too little support for this project. If approved, Parks will be spending in excess of \$340,000 on this project's construction.

Additionally, the continued dismissal of maintenance concerns remains disturbing. The gravel lot that you now plan to place at the front entrance of Burnet Woods (and adjacent to residences, including my own) will require different methods of maintenance than the earlier planned artificial turf. At the bare minimum, Director Barron and his staff should be reporting before you vote how often the crushed granite will need replenished and at what cost. How often will the sod within the fencing need to be reseeded and rested? How often will the space be cleaned? What supplies are needed to keep the multiple surface types clean? How much do regular resupplies of doggie bags and cleaning chemicals cost? It is absolutely absurd to suggest, as Director Barron has previously said, that there will be no increase in maintenance needs or maintenance costs — unless, of course, Cincinnati Parks has no intention of maintaining the dog park at an acceptable standard.

It is no surprise that the costs of this project have ballooned — it is the obvious risk of a poorly vetted project. As a reminder, Cincinnati Parks made no effort to inform immediate neighbors or Burnet Woods visitors of the proposed project until December 2023 – more than two years after those who did know about it were told repeatedly that it was a “done deal” by proponents. Cincinnati Parks performed no legitimate community engagement related to this site – only about Dunore Park – and no environmental impact analysis. Proponents and lead fundraisers for the project also have advocated against the bare minimum of a proper siting process, killing a Clifton Town Meeting Parks Committee effort to advocate for more community engagement on the site in early 2023, before their fundraising had fully commenced.

This project has lacked common sense and, more importantly, integrity from day one. A “yes” vote on the requests in front of you will only signify a new phase of the conflict this park board has created in the community. A “yes” vote on the requests would be the true start to the nightmare for neighbors who are forced to live with the consequences of a dog park open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. every single day. A “yes” vote on the requests is just the start of an ongoing financial burden Cincinnati Parks simply can not afford. Reject the bid, reject the project, and start over.

Thank you,
Rachel Wells

--

Rachel G. Wells
rachelgailwells@gmail.com
217.853.9500 (cell)

[External Email] Park Board Public Comment: 10-15-24

From Susan <somnamblst@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 4:38 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; CityManagerEmail <citymanager@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <cityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>

4 attachments (13 MB)

audubon.pdf; TPL_MN.pdf; TPZ_trees_topoMap.pdf; design_1024.png;

Some people who received this message don't often get email from somnamblst@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Dear Commissioners,

I am emailing several attachments that do much to explain why the NE entrance to Burnet Woods on Brookline, across from the Library on Ludlow, selected by the Park Board, on July 15, 2021 was not a good site for construction activities due to the trees that would be impacted.

The location chosen is in the area of a curated grove of trees some of which were selected by renowned architect Adolph Strauch, to create the sight line we all appreciate today at the entrance to our 150 year old Burnet Woods.

<https://www.cliftoncommunity.org/adolph-strauch-great-garden-design-in-clifton-beyond/>

Those trees range in age from 62 to 172 years old and as we all know due to the decades it takes for trees to be mature, are irreplaceable. The species represented are Beech, Black Cherry, Chinkapin Oak, Northern Red Oak, Sugar Maple, Willow Oak, American Elm, White Oak, Pin Oak and Northern Red Oak. Some of these species are extremely poor candidates for any type of construction activities. See the susceptibility cell in the table below.

Generations have experienced the Fall color of the 162 year old Sugar Maple that can be seen from Ludlow (tree tag 473). The exposed root flare of this tree known for surface roots makes it along with the nearby 164 year old Beech (tree tag 471) and the 172 year old Chinkapin Oak (tree tag 467) all bad candidates for any nearby construction. In addition these Oaks, Sugar Maple, Beech, and Wild Black Cherry provide habitat as a keystone tree species, the loss of which will be felt by not just humans, but all kinds of creatures who are interdependent.

A keystone species tree hosts a significant number of caterpillar species and therefore has an outsize impact on the functioning of food webs in their ecosystem. All of these keystone trees in this area are at risk, and will be the most likely to begin showing symptoms that indicate the downward spiral to tree death that often follows construction stress.

In fact the Sugar Maple is right next to the 10-inch curb in the updated design, that has been added on the north side to step down the natural slope (12.2%) that would allow all of the decomposed granite area to be under a 5% slope. Those surface roots will need to be cut.

Species	Tag	Circumference	Diameter	Growth Factor	Age - year	TPZ	Susceptibility
Pin Oak	460	9"	33.4	3	100 - 1924	50.1'	Shorter lived and less tolerant of disturbance than the white oak group.
Black Cherry	461	5'8"	21.65	5	166 - 1858	33'	Very young plants adaptive to altered environment while older plants often decline over time following any disturbance.
American Elm	462	8'9"	33.4	4	134 - 1890	51'	Moderate
Beech	463	5'7"	21.33	6	128 - 1896	50'	Low
Scrub tree in poison ivy	464						
Willow Oak	465	7'9"	28.65	3	98 - 1926	43'	
Willow Oak	466	6'5"	19.4	3	62 - 1962	29'	
Chinkapin Oak	467	9'3"	34.4	5	172 - 1852	51'	Poor. Current research indicates that this plant is very intolerant especially if roots are compromised during construction.
Northern Red Oak	468	7'9"	29.6	4	118 - 1906	44.5'	Moderate
Pin Oak	469	8'1"	30.24	3	93 - 1931	45.36'	Shorter lived and less tolerant of disturbance than the white oak group.
American Elm	470	9"	33.4	4	138 - 1886	53'	
Beech	471	7'10"	28.9	4	164 - 1860	30'	Low
Magnolia (multi trunk)	472			?			Magnolia trees have unusual root systems that grow horizontally near the surface of the ground, making them more susceptible to damage from
Sugar Maple	473	5'9"	22	5.5	121 - 1903	33'	Large area of surface roots. Intolerant of fill, of increased light, and of restricted root space. All prone to surface rooting.
Paperbark Maple	474	11"					Possible memorial donor tree.
White Oak next to sidewalk		14'6"	53.5	5	277 - 1747	80.25'	Landlocked, near sidewalk and street, edge of ravine.

The above measurements of the tagged trees in the area of the dog park, have been calculated to arrive at the appropriate distance for which no construction activities can be permitted. It is not the same as the canopy/drip line seen in Human Nature's design document. For each inch of diameter, beginning at the furthest evidence of surface roots or flare, the tree is to be given 1.5' of TPZ.

That tree protection zone requirement is not reflected in the new design in the Park Board 10-15-24 Agenda Packet. The design shows a tree protection fence that only protects out to the drip line or canopy. Not a Tree Protection Zone.

Also missing from the Agenda packet is a Tree Protection Plan. I respectfully request that this be made available to the public at your earliest convenience.

Regards,

Susan Forman

2447 Fairview Ave,
CUF neighborhood
Cincinnati, OH, 45219

Burnet Woods Dog Park

October 2024



LEGEND

- A** Entry Plaza
- B** Vestibule
- C** Existing Street Light
- D** Concrete Curb with French Drain
- E** Yard Hydrant
- F** Park Sign with Donor Recognition
- G** Tree Protection Fencing During Construction

- New Concrete
- Existing Curb to Remain
- 2 Pea Gravel Islands with Concrete Curb
- Decomposed Granite with Binder
- Prairie Around Perimeter Planted by Park Board & Volunteers
- Plant Bed Planted by Park Board & Volunteers
- Bioswale to Filter Runoff
- Sod
- Existing Tree
- New Trees
- Perimeter Fence with 1 Access Point and 1 Maintenance Gate
- Bench with Center Arm
- Trash Receptacle
- Doggie Bag Holder
- Drinking Fountain with Pet Bowl



ASO Opposes Development in Burnet Woods

September 12, 2018 by Audubon Society of Ohio

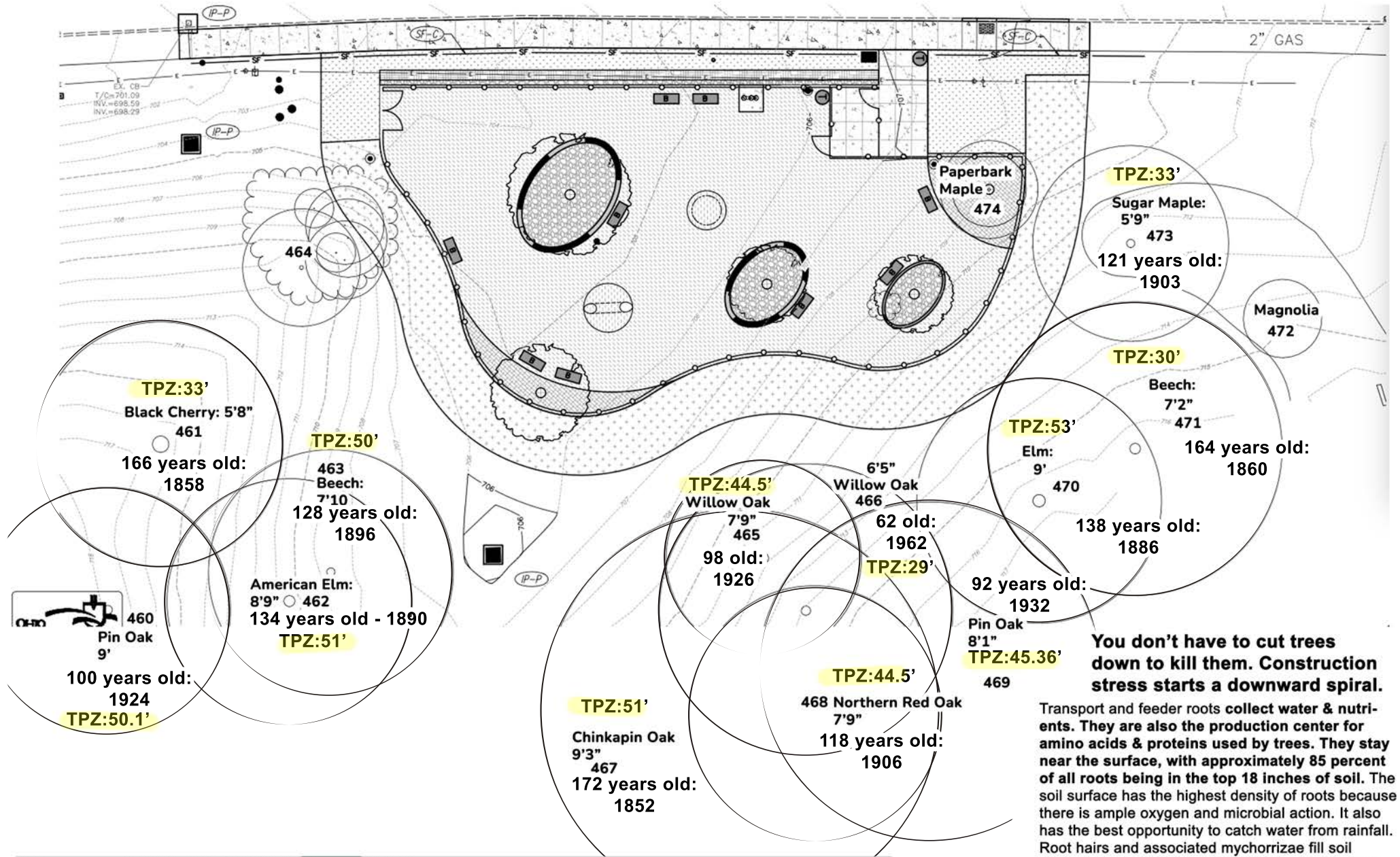
The Audubon Society of Ohio has adopted the following open letter, stating our position in opposition to any development of Burnet Woods:

To Whom It May Concern,

The Board of Directors of the Audubon Society of Ohio (Cincinnati Audubon) has approved an official position statement opposing the development of portions of the Cincinnati Park's 90 acre Burnet Woods site for the following reasons:

- Burnet Woods was established in 1872 as a natural area deserving of protection and is one of Cincinnati's oldest undeveloped park properties
- Burnet Woods is a well-recognized bird stopover for many species seeking food and shelter during migration
- Burnet Woods is an often utilized bird watching spot for both nesting and migratory birds, and it is widely recognized as such in the local birding community
- Burnet Woods provides pollinator support, a current proven environmental need demonstrated across the country via the existing ecological plant communities
- Burnet Woods supports over 100 tree species including some very large, old specimens that cannot be easily replaced in this or in the next generation
- Research is increasingly pointing to multiple benefits of urban green space preservation to surrounding community members
- Burnet Woods provides important green space within walking distance for an urban residential community, multiple businesses and their employees, and the entire University of Cincinnati student body.

Thank you for your serious consideration of these and other points presented on the Burnet Woods development issue by local conservation focused community organizations and citizens including the Audubon Society of Ohio.



You don't have to cut trees down to kill them. Construction stress starts a downward spiral.

Transport and feeder roots collect water & nutrients. They are also the production center for amino acids & proteins used by trees. They stay near the surface, with approximately 85 percent of all roots being in the top 18 inches of soil. The soil surface has the highest density of roots because there is ample oxygen and microbial action. It also has the best opportunity to catch water from rainfall. Root hairs and associated mycorrhizae fill soil cracks and crevices and become inseparable from the soil. Transport and feeder roots commonly grow outward, one to two times the height of a tree or up to three times further than the drip line. Thus, roots cover two to three times more land area than the aboveground parts. Consequently, roots are susceptible to construction damage because they occupy a large area and are concentrated at the soil surface. **Roots are the most difficult part of a tree to protect and their damage is the most likely cause of death.**

Species	Circumference	Diameter	Growth	Ft. Age - year	TPZ	Susceptibility
Pin Oak	9"	33.4	3	100 - 1924	50.1'	Shorter lived and less tolerant of disturbance than the white oak group.
Black Cherry	5'8"	21.65	5	166 - 1858	33'	Very young plants adaptive to altered environment while older plants often decline over time following any disturbance.
American Elm	8'9"	33.4	4	134 - 1890	51'	Moderate
Beech	5'7"	21.33	6	128 - 1896	50'	Low
Scrub tree in poison ivy						
Willow Oak	7'9"	28.65	3	98 - 1926	43'	
Willow Oak	6'5"	19.4	3	62 - 1962	29'	
Chinkapin Oak	9'3"	34.4	5	172 - 1852	51'	Poor. Current research indicates that this plant is very intolerant especially if roots are compromised during construction.
Northern Red Oak	7'9"	29.6	4	118 - 1906	44.5'	Moderate
Pin Oak	8'1"	30.24	3	93 - 1931	45.36'	Shorter lived and less tolerant of disturbance than the white oak group.
American Elm	9"	33.4	4	138 - 1886	53'	
Beech	7'10"	28.9	4	164 - 1860	30'	Low
Magnolia (mul trunk)			?			Magnolia trees have unusual root systems that grow horizontally near the surface of the ground, making them more susceptible to damage from construction
Sugar Maple	5'9"	22	5.5	121 - 1903	33'	Large area of surface roots. Intolerant of fill, of increased light, and of restricted root space. All prone to surface rooting.
Paperbark Maple	11"					Possible memorial donor tree.
White Oak next to sidewalk, row 146"		53.5	5	277 - 1747	80.25'	Landlocked, near sidewalk and street, edge of ravine.

Creating Dog Parks - Without Rancor: The Trust for Public Land

How to identify site selection criteria that would lead to successful locations, which turned out to be:

- (1) **avoid interference with other established uses** or department-sponsored activities;
- (2) **avoid locations directly abutting residences**;
- (3) assure availability of close-by parking;
- (4) avoid locations near children's play areas; **choose spots where there are minimal impacts on the visual character of a park**;
- (5) site so as to avoid spillover into non-dog areas; and (6) **avoid sensitive environmental habitats**.

Dog parks also take a physical beating. Even beyond issues of droppings and urine, there is no way to keep grass green, growing and healthy on any dog park smaller than about 15 acres, according to Don Colvin at Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation.

This is the reason why the Trust for Public Land has a measure for dog parks in urban communities as providing a significant asset in spaces. This is a place where Cincinnati Park ranks low. So I want to be clear that **there is a discipline around our parks, our Park Board, assessing how we continue to maintain our position** as a great, as one of the top parks systems in the country.

”

PARK BOARD PRESIDENT MOLLY NORTH

AUGUST 15, 2024

REBUTTAL TO PUBLIC COMMENT, PARK BOARD MEETING



Patricia Gallagher Newberry
@pattinewberry

...

A new survey about a dog park planned for Clifton's Burnet Woods Park drew mostly critics – by an 85% margin. About 140 of 962 survey respondents offered support of @CincyParks plans for an 8,800-square-foot dog park in the 90-acre park and 20 others posted general comments. 1/8

2:19 PM · Dec 28, 2023 · 861 Views



[External Email] Public Comment: 101524

From William Gordon <gordonwj2@gmail.com>

Date Mon 10/14/2024 4:01 PM

To Parks, Cincy <cincy.parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>; Aftab, Mayor <mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov>; #COUNCIL <cityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from gordonwj2@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Dear People,

Here we go again. Despite neighborhood opposition from much of the Clifton community and neighboring communities and a lack of the necessary funds, the planning for a dog park in Burnet Woods continues.

It's time to recognize that the planned dog park is a poor use of the only easily accessible flat portion of this historic park, and that the funds proposed for the dog park could be better used for maintenance of Burnet Woods and other city parks.

(Dr.) William Gordon
3442 Manor Hill Dr.
Cincinnati OH 45220