


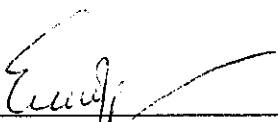
DATE: November 28, 2001

C.D. 11

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND APPROVAL OF PERMANENT OFF-LEASH DOG EXERCISE AREA AT BARRINGTON RECREATION CENTER

J. Combs		J. Kolb	_____
*T. Coroalles	_____	M. Tamuri	_____
J. Duggan	_____	M. Matthews	_____
H. Fujita	_____		



General Manager

Approved _____

Disapproved _____

Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Review, consider, and adopt the proposed Negative Declaration for a permanent off-leash dog exercise at Barrington Recreation Center, which finds that the establishment of this permanent off-leash area, will not have a significant adverse effect on the human and natural environment;
2. Approve the permanent daily use of the designated fenced area of the Barrington Recreation Center as an off-leash dog exercise area, subject to City Council approval by ordinance;
3. Request the City Council to adopt the Negative Declaration and to pass an ordinance amending Section 63 .44 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code permanently authorizing the designated fenced area of Barrington Recreation Center as an off-leash dog exercise area and that dogs not be allowed in any other areas of the recreation center, on or off-leash; and
4. Upon City Council approval of the ordinance, direct staff to file a Notice of Determination with the Los Angeles City and County Clerks.

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SUMMARY

The Department leases land at Barrington Park from the Veterans Administration, primarily for sports related activities. Over the last few years, dog owners in the community have requested that a portion of the park be designated as an official off-leash dog park. Although this site has been used in recent years as an unofficial off-leash dog area, there have been complaints from sports users and other park patrons regarding dogs running loose and other dog-related activities.

At the request of Councilwoman Cindy Miscikowksi, the Department evaluated the feasibility of creating an official off-leash dog exercise area at the park. Creation of a segregated area dedicated for off-leash dog activities would accommodate the recreational needs of both the dog owners and other park patrons, thereby helping to avoid conflicts between these groups.

The Department proposes the development of a 1.4 acre off-leash dog exercise area, which will be situated adjacent to the existing sports field. To help maintain the exclusivity of the area, it will be enclosed by 6 foot high chain link fencing, increasing to 10 feet fence adjacent to the softball field, and double entry-gates will be installed to provide controlled entry and exit to the dog park area. In consideration of designating this area exclusively for dog activities, dogs will not be allowed in other portions of the park, and owners will be cited when dogs trespass onto other park areas. Attached is a copy of the site plan.

There are currently six other off-leash dog parks at Department facilities. Of these, Westminster is the nearest to Barrington Park. The lease with the Veterans Administration is currently being renewed, and the VA has communicated to the Department's Land Management Division that the proposed conversion of a portion of the leased land to an off-leash dog park is acceptable. Several community meetings were held, at which overwhelming support was expressed for creation of an off-leash dog area.

Work on this project will be performed by Department staff and the estimated cost is \$60,000. Funds are available for this project in Quimbe Account 946BE. It is the number one prioritized project for the unexpended balance of \$733,957, as of November 7, in this account. It is anticipated that the project will have a positive fiscal impact due to a reduction in maintenance requirements. Less staff hours will be required to maintain the entire park area, due to the concentration of dog-related activity within a limited area, rather than over a wider area and more dispersed range.

The Department prepared, in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a proposed Negative Declaration (ND) for the establishment of a permanent off-leash dog exercise area at the Barrington Recreation Center.

The ND was filed with the City Clerk on July 3, 2001. A public notice was published in the Los Angeles Times on July 5, 2001, announcing the availability of the ND for public review and the intent to hold a public meeting on the project and the environmental document. The draft ND

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was circulated to governmental agencies and the public for review and comments for a 20-day period from July 5 to July 25, 2001.

During that period, a public meeting was held on July 17, 2001, at the Barrington Recreation Center. Approximately 35 people were in attendance. Environmental issues raised and addressed in the draft ND centered around sanitary and public health concerns related to the deposition of dog feces in the park, *Cryptosporidium* and other pathogenic organisms, parking and traffic circulation problems along Barrington Avenue, noise from barking dogs, and the incompatibility of off-leash dog activities with existing sports and recreational uses.

A Final ND has been prepared, consisting of the Draft ND, public and agency comments received, and staff responses to all relevant environmental issues raised. The Final ND is attached to this report for the Board's review, consideration, and adoption.

This project requires a modification to the City Municipal Code, to allow dogs to remain off-leash within a designated area of Barrington Park. This requires approval by City Council through an Ordinance change.

Staff believes the permanent establishment of an off-leash exercise area at the Barrington Recreation Center will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment, and, recommends that the Board adopt the Final ND and grant approval of the project. Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski concurs with these recommendations.

This report was prepared by Linda Clifford, Management Analyst II, Pacific Region Headquarters and Paul Davis, Environmental Specialist II, Environmental Management Division.