

Plans for fenced-in dog run at Beryl Gaffney Park scrapped

A plan by City staff to build a fenced-in dog run at Beryl Gaffney Park is OFF the table. It's the news/opponents of the project wanted to hear and from all accounts, most are happy. The search for another location for a fenced area for dogs in the south end of the city will continue.

In my short time as a city councillor, I have discovered there are few things that can rile residents as much as debate over dogs and parks. That's why I and everyone else was caught off guard when Park's planning staff unilaterally decided to scrap a fenced-in dog run on newly acquired land in Beryl Gaffney Park.

Opposition to the plan was swift from both dog owners and non-dog owners. Why everyone wanted to know, would we spend (dollar figure here) money on another dog run, when Beryl Gaffney Park and nearby David

GLOUCESTER, SOUTH NEPTUN WARD REPORT



by Carol Anne Meehan

Bartlett Park are both off-leash areas? It raised suspicions that a plan was about to change the off-leash designation at one of the parks. The explanation that it was needed for dog owners who will be temporarily displaced during water main construction at David Bartlett Park was never accepted.

So, armed with opposition, Councillor Scott Moffatt and I pressed staff to pull the plan, which they did. They will also reimburse the Beryl Gaffney development fund the 400 thousand used the purchase the land.

We all agreed a picnic area is more suitable for the land.

Beryl Gaffney Park is a jewel, unique in our end of

the city. The natural walking trails have never been busier, especially since COVID-19.

I and many others have always felt the beautiful meandering trails along the Rideau and Lock Rivers was enough of a draw and that ensuring they are well maintained and safe should be the priority.

However, a Master plan designed in 1999 that called for boat launches, zip lines over the river, and other attractions are still relevant to others in the community, even though it was never voted on or adopted by Council.

Opposing views for sure - that has led to very little being done. Now is the time, I believe, to end the squabbling over BQ

Park and move forward.

It's 2020, and Beryl Gaffney Park is now surrounded by development. It is heavily used and appreciated by people from all over the city.

City Staff and me it would be too expensive to work on a new master plan.

It doesn't have to be if the two stakeholder groups, the Manotick Culture Parks and Recreation Association (MCPRA) and Friends of Beryl Gaffney Park, work together on a refresh.

Both groups care deeply about Beryl Gaffney Park. Together their voices helped remove a staff proposal for a fenced-in dog run that was not needed and was far too expensive.



So why not harness that passion and work together to find common ground on a plan to enhance Beryl Gaffney Park - one that

everyone in our community can live with?

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