

Communication "A" May 6, 2008 Calistoga City Council Meeting
Item # 11: Establishing a Community Dog Park

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May 3, 2008

CITY OF CALISTOGA
City Clerk

Honorable Mayor Gingles
& Members of the City Council

MAY 5 2008

RE: Dog Park for City of Calistoga

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Mayor Gingles:

The Council has on their agenda to discuss a dog park for the community. In reviewing documentation for this project, it does not appear that much progress has been made in moving forward with this project. I would like to offer some suggestions towards a direction to make sure volunteer efforts, as well as Staff time are utilized appropriately.

The Calistoga Beverage Company has offered use of a portion of their property for an interim use as a dog park. I have a number of concerns about the feasibility of this property, but should that be the chosen (only?) suitable property, I will absolutely support the creation of a dog park there. I would personally support as a more viable choice property owned by the City South of the Little League fields on lower Washington Street. Part of my concern with the Calistoga Beverage property relates to the interim nature of the agreement. I would hate to see significant resources and funds be spent (either municipal or private donations) for a project that may only have a lifespan of two years after it is built.

Three major issues I see with the Calistoga Beverage property exist, which must be answered by Staff and the Council to determine if this property is even worth pursuing. This is the basis for my request of specific direction to Staff to explore and answer in a timely manner:

1. Staff and the Planning Commission need to determine if the property can legally support a dog park based on current zoning and general plan regulations. If not, is the City willing to come up with a statement of overriding conditions due to the interim nature of the project and support it's creation without lengthy, and expensive general plan and zoning amendments?

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(cont.)

2. Staff must be allocated the resources and directed to pursue an agreement with Calistoga Beverage Company outlining the release of liability that both sides can agree upon.

3. Dialog needs to occur with Cal Trans to determine what hurdles they will throw at the City in regards with encroachment onto Hwy. 29. As we all know, Cal Trans represents the world's top model of government inefficiency and that process alone could take years.

As the Council can see, the Calistoga Beverage property presents some challenges to make it a viable project. I need to reiterate, I am not against this site, I just would hate to see a lot of time wasted focusing on it if it is not a realistic alternative.

Sincerely,

Scott Atkinson