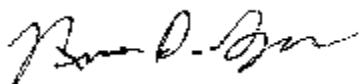


City of Calistoga

Staff Report

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Olivia Lemen, Recreation Manager
DATE: February 21, 2012
SUBJECT: Presentation of Citizen Proposal for Temporary Use of Logvy Park for a City of Calistoga Dog Park

APPROVAL FOR FORWARDING:



Richard Spitler, City Manager

ISSUE:

2 Receive presentation by Scott Atkinson, representative for Cal Dog Group (Cal Dogs) on their
 3 proposal for a temporary dog park on the vacant lot at Logvy Park site and determine whether
 4 staff should explore its feasibility.
 5

RECOMMENDATION:

7 Provide direction to staff.
 8

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

10 Scott Atkinson approached City staff in December of 2011 on behalf of the local volunteer
 11 group, Cal Dogs, about resurrecting the idea of a dog park in Calistoga. Cal Dogs is interested
 12 in using the vacant lot next to the Community Garden and requesting the City of Calistoga to
 13 cover all liability. They would pay for cost of park installation and maintenance. Mr. Atkinson
 14 was directed to provide staff with a formal proposal which has been attached to this staff report,
 15 to give a better perspective of what Cal Dogs is proposing.

16 Staff is asking the City Council to provide direction about whether staff time should be
 17 committed to further explore the feasibility of this proposal and come back at a future date with a
 18 detailed report to the City Council.
 19

FISCAL IMPACT:

21 Staff will determine if there is any fiscal impact should the City Council direct staff to further
 22 examine this proposal.
 23

ATTACHMENTS:

25 1. Dog Park Proposal from Scott Atkinson

CITY OF CALISTOGA
City Clerk

FEB - 6 2012

RECEIVED

SCOTT ATKINSON
2103 Oat Hill Court
Calistoga, CA 94515-1171
(707) 942.6670 fax (707) 942.1423
E-mail: atki@sonic.net

February 5, 2012

Richard Spitler
City Manager
City of Calistoga
1232 Washington Street
Calistoga, CA 94515

Richard:

Enclosed is our initial documentation to request usage of the Logvy Residence property for the establishment of a temporary dog park facility. Please review and advise the next step that we need to do to continue to move this project forward. We hope to get this request on the Council agenda as soon as possible. Our goal is to complete construction by springtime.

We believe our group has all funding necessary to complete this project with no financial assistance necessary from the City. I look forward to the support of your staff and the Council for the betterment of our community.

The documents I have enclosed are in Word format with the drawings in .pdf format, so if you would like them sent electronically, just let me know. Please let me know what legwork I can do to assist to minimize staff time and expedite our request. During the daytime, the best number to reach me at is 707-292-6508.

Best Regards,



Scott Atkinson

Project Description:

Members of a local volunteer group are asking for City approval to construct a temporary dog park on the property commonly referred to as the Logvy Residence property located at the intersection of North Oak and Washington Streets.

Property Information:

Property is currently undeveloped and under the ownership of the City of Calistoga. It is bordered by the Community Pool, fairgrounds property and North Oak Street. Property is slated for a future teen and art center to be owned and operated by the City of Calistoga.

History:

The Calistoga City Council directed the Community Resources Commission to add to its 2007-2008 Work Program a Dog Park Project. The purpose was to explore areas in the community where dogs could exercise off leash and define the elements that would go into a dog park.

The Community Resources Commission conducted an extensive review of various criteria which define a dog park. The CRC developed the following as considerations and criterion for a dog park in Calistoga

Property Criterion

- Size minimum of 1/2 acre of property
- Safe location, not isolated
- Accessible by automobile, biking or walking
- Accessible to potable water
- Parking

Based on discussions at the CRC and with various interested community members, recommendations for elements of the dog park were as follows:

- Entry - double gated
- Fencing - 4' high and gates. Deer fencing should be sufficient
- Shade (phased in at a later time)
- Water fixtures - for dogs and people
- Pet waste removal bags
- Safe parking area close to site
- Picnic tables and / or benches (phased in at a later time)
- Covered garbage cans
- Signage - dog and people rules
- Regular maintenance.

At the May 6, 2008 meeting, City Council accepted that recommendation and directed staff to explore possible public sites for a dog park. From that suggestion, a group of dog owner enthusiasts formed Cal Dog Group which did a lot of background research on developing dog parks and attempting to find suitable locations within the City.

Calistoga Mineral Water had offered a portion of their property on a short term basis for development of a dog park. However members of the group and City leaders had concerns about the possible pitfalls of a public use on private land.

Other existing public park properties were evaluated by City staff and Cal Dog members but none met the size requirements necessary for a dog park or had other flaws that would make them unacceptable.

Cal Dog Group suggested property beyond the Little League Field at the end of Washington Street, but City staff was not supportive of our attempts for this site. Staff suggested property near the intersection of Anna Street and the Fairway Extension. Cal Dog Group evaluated this site and felt the site was too narrow of a strip and expressed concerns about the neighborhood from a safety point of view. At that time, no other possible sites were visible on the horizon so Cal Dog basically went on hiatus.

In January 2012, informational meetings were held at the Community Center and the proposed property to gauge interest in re-establishing the Cal Dog Group with the focus on constructing a dog park on this property, knowing that it would be somewhat temporary in nature. Support has been building and as of this moment no vocal opposition has been expressed for the project. Some proposed designs were discussed and the Group was informed of the constraints and roadblocks that we would face if the project were to succeed. These included the lack of available funding from the City to construct the park as well as the need for the group to do all maintenance of the play area and remaining lands of the property. The group will also be mandated with setting up a self-policing board to handle disputes of dog owners who use the property. The participants understand fully that any use, if granted by the City is temporary in nature. The Group has yet to be formalized into an official committee, but it appears there is a strong consensus that if we know the property is available it will be set up immediately.

The Value of Dog Parks:

Off-leash dog parks contribute to the overall inventory of park land within a community and have the capability of serving a large segment of the population (dog owners) who are both residents, and visitors to our community. A fenced secure area allows dogs to get exercise and learn social skills which can reduce aggressive dog behavior both within the dog park and throughout the community. By having a place of their own, dog owners will not be tempted to use other park facilities to exercise their dogs, which previously has resulted in some conflicts and negative experiences with all users of existing parks. Dogs that are well exercised are less anxious and consequently less prone to barking, which could result in a reduction of calls to our police department for barking dog complaints. Having a property specifically designed for dog usage and maintained by dedicated volunteers should also reduce complaints of property owners having to clean up animal waste from dog owners walking their dogs or allowing them off leash to roam neighborhoods. An often quoted phrase is "if your community does not have a dog park, it is one".

The Proposal:

Cal Dog Group is asking for the City to grant usage of this property to the Group for the purpose of constructing and maintaining an off-leash dog park until such time that the City has the funding and means to construct the final desired use of the property. Cal Dog is requesting that the City take into consideration that the project is temporary in nature when placing requirements on the Group that will increase our funding needs. Our goal is to balance aesthetics, quality experience, secure and workable facilities without requiring a design that is cost prohibitive for a temporary facility. Cal Dog understands

that some Staff time will be necessary to finalize agreements and perform their oversight. The Group also feels that insurance should remain the responsibility of the City under their umbrella coverage, but are open to fundraisers to minimize any burden to the City provided those costs are directly attributed to the dog park. Beyond that, the Group is not asking for any financial assistance from the City.

Parking and Access:

We are proposing that parking occur at the existing Logvy Park property and no vehicle access be required or allowed (other than service vehicles) onto the property. Our goal here is to minimize any impact on the property, recognition of the temporary nature of the project and to keep costs minimized. The existing Logvy property has ADA compliant parking. Our proposal is to stripe a crosswalk (if required) at the stop sign across the driveway leaving the Logvy property and access the dog park play area via an ADA compliant pathway. Exact path of travel has not been decided as of yet but the intention is to utilize interlocking pavers, asphalt, or if allowed, compacted crushed gravel to accomplish this goal. The pathway will be designed in such a way that will eliminate any chance of vehicle access. Service vehicles can access the property via the existing gravel service road which is accessed from the community gardens area on the back side of the Community Pool property. A removable bollard at the back gate onto the property may be appropriate to prohibit unauthorized vehicle access.

Dog Park Play Area Fencing:

The Dog Park Play area will encompass an 80' x 200' x 5' tall perimeter fence. Within this area, a cross fence will be constructed which allows a separated play area for small dogs. Pedestrian & dog access will be a double gated system common in dog parks and a 14' wide drive through gate will allow for service vehicle access. Because of the temporary nature of the project, we are proposing utilizing deer (field type) fencing as opposed to chain link fencing. This will save approximately \$12,000 in costs for this line item alone. Wooden peeler poles will be used for all corner fencing and at integral points as necessary in accordance with accepted construction practices. All fence lines will be slightly trenched to allow 3" of the fence to be buried within a compacted base rock that will extend one foot out from each side of the fence. This will prevent dogs from digging under the fence and also provide a weed free fence line. Fencing will not be covered in any way to provide good site visibility from Washington Street for security reasons.

Dog Park Play Area Surfacing:

The surfacing within the play area will be composed of different materials. Wood chips may be used for part of the area, and a rounded pea or river gravel will also be utilized and depending on funding and participant desires. Some areas may remain native soil. The goal is to provide a variety of play surfaces which are suitable, easy to clean and maintain and provide an all-weather surface. Three primary goals again were considered, which included permeability, all-weather use and ease of removal, again given the temporary nature of the park. The park will not contain any lawn area.

Water Source:

According to City Staff, a water connection is available near the parking area of the Community Gardens. It is our desire to trench from that spot to run a line into the dog park play area for the purpose of providing drinking water for both humans and pets. Initially, because of cost, it may be limited to an auto shut-off valve utilized for the sole purpose of filling dog water bowls. As additional funds are

available it may be expanded to include a drinking fountain for humans. There will not be any need for irrigation watering on the property.

Site Amenities:

A few chairs and a picnic type table will be added as funding becomes available for socialization of humans while the dogs are getting their exercise. Agility course fixtures may be added depending on interest from the dog park community as funds become available. Emphasis will be on durable, low profile items which may include something as simple as a concrete culvert pipe. Because the surrounding trees provide some shade protection, no actual shade structures are being proposed.

Remaining Land of the Property:

The dog park is not in need of any area beyond the fenced dog park area except for the access pathway. The Community Gardens Group has requested a minor encroachment onto this land, which will not affect our needs.

Maintenance of the Property:

The group has committed to maintaining the entire property, not just the dog park play area. We will have a minimum of four work days per year where a large scale team of volunteers will provide all weed cutting, trash policing, leaf disposal, and any other maintenance required. This will include fence repairs not only to the dog park play area, but again, for the entire property. We will trim trees to the extent we are capable of, mostly with an emphasis on maintaining an unobstructed view from the surrounding properties and streets for safety issues in accordance with input from the police department. Minor cleanup and trash collection will occur on an ongoing basis by volunteers. Cal Dog Group will pay for garbage service and pet waste disposal per accepted practices and regulations. Consumables for the most part will be limited to dog waste disposable bags, which the group will purchase. We currently have an offer from a local business to provide them on an ongoing basis as part of their donation to our efforts. Again, the City is not being asked for any maintenance assistance on this project.

Cal Dog Group Board of Directors:

A five member volunteer Board of Directors will be established to oversee maintenance needs, schedule work groups and oversee all functions necessary for a successful dog park group. This Board will act as the liaison to the City to address any concerns or input the City or the community may have about our project. A sub group of three citizens will form a review board to handle any conflicts of over-aggressive dogs, park users not following regulations or other matters that may arise. An emphasis on this group will be a desire to have members that have some animal behavior training.

Site Visibility and Security:

As noted above, Cal Dog will maintain the property in such a way that brush, low tree limbs and tall grass will not impede visibility from North Oak Street, the pool property, nor the Pit Gate road of the fairgrounds. Perimeter fencing and all dog park play area fencing is of a field fence type which will not inhibit view from any angle. Potential "lay in wait" hiding spots will be minimized to the fullest extent possible and input from the police department will be welcomed and followed. Park hours are proposed to be dawn to dusk however there will not be any locking mechanisms to prohibit after hours entry. The

Dog Park Group feels strongly that self-policing, lack of any ability for un-authorized vehicle access and the open nature of our design will be sufficient remedy to any concerns.

Proposed Dog Park Rules:

As our group develops changes to these rules may occur. However, all rules will be posted at the entrance to our park. Below is a list of probable rules that will be included.

- Hours of Operation: Dawn to dusk.
- Bark Free Zone
Please be considerate. Noise from the park is a nuisance to our neighbors. Dogs that bark persistently must be removed from the premises.
- Do not leave your pet in the dog park without supervision.
- Owners are legally responsible for their dogs and any injuries caused by them.
- Puppies and dogs must be properly licensed, inoculated, and healthy.
- Animals should wear a collar and ID tags at all times.
- Owners must clean up after their dogs.
- Dogs showing aggression toward people or other animals must be removed from the park. Animals who exhibit a history of aggressive behavior will not be permitted to enter.
- Puppies using the park must be at least four months old.
- Owners should not leave their dogs' unattended or allowed out of sight. If young children are permitted in the dog park, they too should be under constant supervision.
- Dogs in heat will not be allowed inside the park.
- Owners must carry a leash at all times. Dogs should be leashed before entering and prior to leaving the park.
- Violators will be subject to removal from the park and suspension of park privileges.
- No more than 3 dogs per handler at one time.
- Do not leave dog toys in the park after you leave.
- No smoking within the dog park play area.
- No spiked collars.

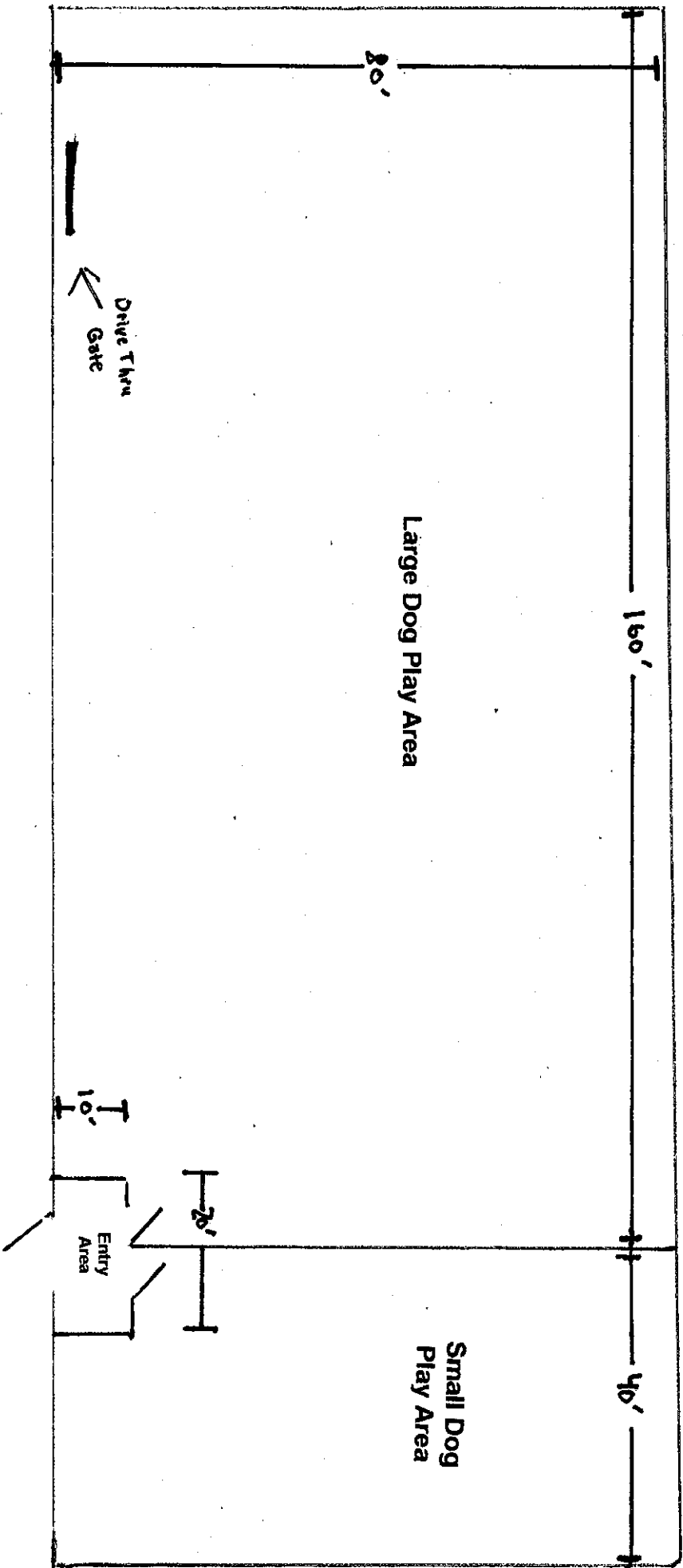
Agreement Between City of Calistoga & Cal Dog Group:

Cal Dog Group is prepared to enter into an agreement that is similar in nature to that which was used for the Community Gardens project. Cal Dog feels this is an appropriate type of contract which will insure both parties have similar expectations.

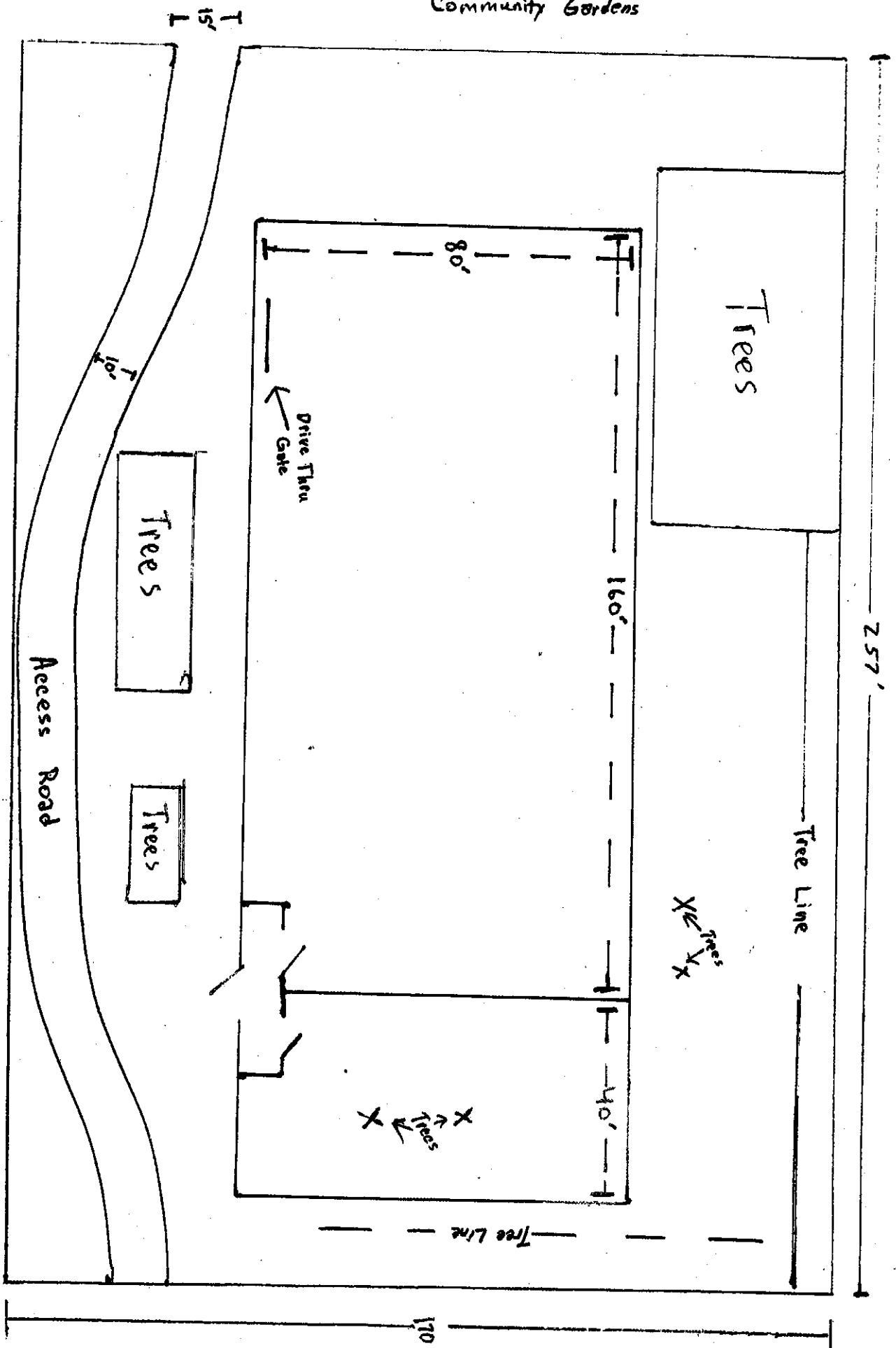
Our Request to the City Council:

We are requesting that the Council approve our request for usage of the property for the establishment of a dog park play area as outlined in this document. This agreement would remain in effect until the City wishes to further develop the property at which time the Group will remove all improvements from the property. Cal Dog Group further requests that the Council direct staff to prepare necessary reports and agreements and work with Cal Dog Group members to finalize design requirements of the entrance pathway and other site improvements keeping in mind the spirit of the temporary nature and volunteer funded effort we are trying to achieve.

Dog Park Play Area



Community Gardens



Pit Gate Road

North Oak Street