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Matthew Gardner, Chairman
Natick Conservation Commission
Natick Town Hall
13 East Central St
Natick, Ma 01760

December 17, 2015

Re Dog Park Proposal Middlesex Park

Dear Matt,

Thanks for taking the time to listen to my thoughts regarding the FIDO proposal to create a dog park at Middlesex Park along West Central Street (Rte 135) and Lake Cochituate.

As present Chairman of the Board of Health, the following summarizes the thoughts and opinions of our Board members as conveyed at our recent meetings. The net result was a unanimous vote by the Board to not approve the dog park being located at Middlesex Park as presently proposed by FIDO. This vote was taken at our most recent meeting of November 10, 2015.

From a Public Health standpoint, Middlesex Park is located in a nitrogen sensitive area, alongside South Pond of Lake Cochituate to the north and Fiske Pond to the south. As we know South Pond is a major source of drinking water for the Town.

Being designated a nitrogen sensitive area is intended to minimize the organic loading allowed within tributary areas of such sensitive natural resources as Lake Cochituate. Allowable loadings for subsurface disposal and treatment of wastewaters are more stringent and garbage grinders are not allowed. All are intended to minimize pollution loadings.

Years ago, Lake Cochituate was a pristine body of water and even served as a drinking water supply for the city of Boston and many surrounding towns.

Unfortunately, the years have not been kind to the lake. Development within tributary areas has increased nitrate loadings due to runoff and inadequate treatment. Industrial wastes runoff and leachate from treatment systems adjacent to the Lake and along Beaver Dam Brook have significantly affected Fiske Pond and South Pond. The Army Labs have historically contaminated the groundwater such that there have been remediation programs for many years to reduce contamination.

The net result is a lake with nutrients at such a level that water plants such as milfoil found a very fertile home and necessitated the types of programs employed in the last couple of years to maintain positive dissolved oxygen levels in the water. The Board believes these nutrient levels should not be increased with dog wastes.

Considering all of the above, the Board of Health believes it is not prudent to locate the dog park at Middlesex Park unless provisions are included in the design that provide assurances that no contamination from dog wastes could enter the groundwater tributary to South Pond. This could be done by excavating to a predetermined level always above the groundwater level, placing a plastic liner with crushed stone and perforated PVC pipe leading to an underground tank which would need to be pumped out and disposed of with other septage wastes.

If, after considering other issues regarding the appropriateness of the Middlesex Park location for the project, this site remains the preferred, the Board of Health can approve it provided positive provisions for pollution prevention like those described above are included in the design.

We are prepared to meet with you and your Board to discuss this matter at your convenience.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Donald J. Breda". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Donald J. Breda, Chairman

Board of Health