

Amberley Village Council
Public Buildings & Parks Committee – Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2019

In attendance: Peg Conway (chair), Ed Hattenbach (committee), Ray Warren (committee), Tom Muething, Natalie Wolf, Elida Kamine, Scot Lahrmer, Chief Wallace, Jim Frank, Frank Gallenstein, Kathie Kraemer, Pete Duffy, Steve Cushard, Monica Lira, Cindy Barr

Prior Minutes

Minutes from the meeting on October 7 were accepted as submitted.

Dogs Under Control at Amberley Green

This discussion was begun in May upon the request of residents concerned about safety because of so many dogs off leash at Amberley Green. At the conclusion of the previous meeting, the Committee requested to review dog ordinances from other jurisdictions. Accordingly, staff collected information from eight communities, including Wyoming, Reading, and Mariemont. By comparison, Amberley's present ordinance is less restrictive than others. The Committee expressed appreciation to staff for this useful data.

Those present shared a variety of dog experiences at parks in other communities and at Amberley Green.

Chief Wallace explained the enforcement challenges of adding a leash requirement. It would divert resources from other police activity (ie related to more significant crime). In his experience, under the present ordinance people are unwilling to press charges, so unless police witness the incident, no action can be taken. He does not think a leash ordinance would change that. In addition, the terrain at Amberley Green prohibits police vehicle access to the back parts of the property. He clarified that the present ordinance does permit action against dogs who bite or behave aggressively.

Ideas were shared about approaches to changing dog owner behavior. The ambiguous situation of Amberley Green as space that's used as a park but is not actually a park was noted, as was the larger context of the Village's ongoing discussions with the JCC about their proposal to move their summer day camp to a portion of Amberley Green. Questions were raised about who uses the Amberley Green and how many don't use it because so many dogs are present off leash.

It was suggested to survey residents about Amberley Green prior to creating any new laws. The Committee's consensus was to pursue this idea at the next meeting. Committee members should send their ideas for questions to the Chair.

Consideration of Fees for Non-Residents at Amberley Green

Pursuant to a resident suggestion, the Committee re-visited the possibility of charging fees for non-residents to use Amberley Green. The prior rationale for not charging was restated: 1) Advice that charging a fee would increase liability insurance costs. 2) Shared-use arrangement as part of WeThrive grant for the community garden and non-residents needing access as garden members. 4) Safety concerns about people parking on Fairhaven and crossing over Ridge. 5) Administrative burden on dispatch to collect fees. The Committee asked Scot Lahrmer to inquire again about the insurance, to refresh understanding on that aspect. He will report back to the Committee at a future meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by: Peg Conway, Chair