



District of Columbia Government  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A  
Box 75115  
Washington, DC 20013



June 17, 2005

Committee of the Whole  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Council Members:

At the June 9, 2005, regularly scheduled Commission meeting, and with a quorum of 7 of 8 commissioners present, the Commission voted to support and endorse the *Dog Park Establishment Amendment Act of 2005*, bill number B16-0028, introduced in the District of Columbia City Council by Councilman Graham on January 18, 2005. This legislation will authorize the establishment of designated dog parks on District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation parkland and allow for the Mayor to promulgate rules to implement dog park operations. The proposed bill is attached.

The Commission considered comments from residents regarding the benefits of designated off-leash areas for dogs, dog owners and the general public in our support of this legislation. Some of the benefits, which were included in this discussion, include that dogs allowed to exercise off-leash are happier and healthier, and are less likely to create a nuisance, develop anti-social or aggressive behavior problems, bark excessively, or destroy property. Further, the benefits to the community included making the surrounding area safer; providing a social hub and heightened sense of connectedness and community; and reducing the need for and cost of enforcement.

The Commission urges Councilwoman Ambrose and the District of Columbia Council to enact the *Dog Park Establishment Amendment Act of 2005*. Moreover, we recommend that during the promulgation of rules, as well as the designation of each dog park, include a rigorous public comment requirement and that respective Advisory Neighborhood Commission be given great weight in such deliberations.

On behalf of the Commission,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joseph Fengler'.

Joseph Fengler  
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23

---

Councilmember Jim Graham

A BILL

---

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Councilmember Graham introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.

To amend the Animal Control Act of 1979 to authorize the establishment of off-leash dog exercise areas (hereinafter referred to as “dog parks”) on District-owned parkland, to permit off-leash dogs within dog parks, and to permit the Mayor to promulgate rules regarding the operation and use of dog parks.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may cited as the “Dog Park Establishment Amendment Act of 2005”.

Sec. 2. The Animal Control Act of 1979, effective October 18, 1979 (D.C. Law 3-30; D.C. Official Code § 8-1801 *et. seq.*), is amended as follows:

(a) Section 2 (D.C. Official Code § 8-1801)(a) is amended as follows:

(1) Add a new paragraph (3A) to read as follows:

“(3A) The term “dog park” means an officially established off-leash dog exercise area on District owned parkland.”.

(2) Add a new paragraph (5A) to read as follows:

“(5A) The term “District-owned parkland” means outdoor property within the possession and control of the Government of the District of Columbia.”.

(b) Section 9(a) (D.C. Official Code § 8-1808)(a) is amended by inserting, after the first sentence, a new sentence to read as follows: “A dog in a dog park and under the verbal command of a responsible adult, shall not be considered at large.”.

(c) A new section (9a) is added to read as follows:

“(9a) Dog Park.

(a) The Mayor is authorized to establish dog parks on District-owned parkland in which a dog under the verbal command of a responsible adult may exercise off-leash.

(b) The Mayor may promulgate rules to implement this section.”.

Sec. 3. The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813 D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

Sec. 4. This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.