

Dog Park Project – Community Correspondence emailed/mail between November 9-15, 2020

I recently became aware of a significant change to our neighbourhood by reading your newsletter. Apparently no impact notices within the proposed re-development area were required to be distributed in our neighbourhood, as I believe would normally happen with a subdivision development/OCP change. I understood from others in my neighbourhood that filling out the online survey regarding the proposed off-leash Dog Park offered no alternative answers but to conclude that Powell Beach Park is the only option, so I chose not to fill out the survey.

I participated in the online open house which was attended by approximately 11 people. When there are 1007 dog licenses for the entire Municipality for 2020 (per Jody Nesdoly, Finance Department), I am surprised that there were only 11 attendees on that zoom meeting deciding what will happen within my neighbourhood. It may have been far more productive if staff had reached out directly to these licensed dog owners to ask them where they would like an off leash dog park and if one was created, would they even use it, as Kennel Cough can be spread through close proximity among dogs?

The proposed area in Powell Beach is presently used for many wonderful “people” activities like baseball, ActionFest, yoga, tai chi, drumming groups and children playing, to just name a few. Creating this new dog park will displace these people activities especially the fastball/softball players.

I feel that the current dog beach located within walking distance of this proposed Powell Beach dog park at Sunoka Beach Provincial Park is more than adequate and well-used by dog owners in the Trout Creek and Summerland area already. As per your Master Plan and Cultural Plan, a dog park in the downtown area would seem to be more appropriate for dog owners in the more urban area of Summerland as the public would like an accessible dog park within walking distance of their residences near the town centre. I doesn't seem to make any sense at all to propose a dog park at Powell Beach, which is within close walking distance of an already existing off-leash dog park at Sunoka Beach. A new dog park at Powell Beach provides little if any benefit to the larger population of Summerland dog owners nearer to the town centre.

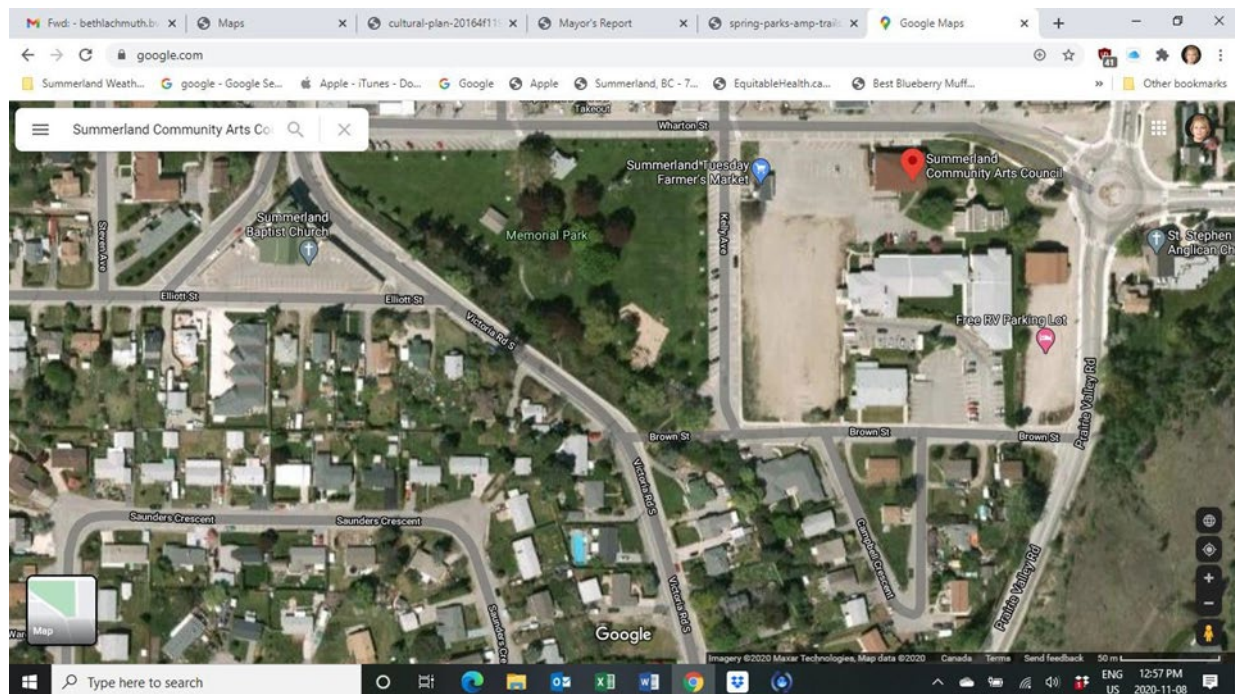
The Municipality needs to consider alternate options closer to the town centre before proceeding with the proposed Powell Beach off leash Dog Park.

The outstanding review of the Rodeo Grounds in 2022 and the outstanding Downtown Neighbourhood Plan Task Force committee being gathered to review how to densify the downtown core through stratification/condominium communities has not gotten underway and I believe that having a downtown off leash dog park will be a wonderful draw to enhance and reflect the needs of these new potential condominium owners as well as local business owners.

Why are we supplying a rarely used Free RV Parking area at 9600 Brown St, Summerland, BC V0H 1Z2 by Memorial Park and the Summerland Arts Centre, when we could convert this area to a dog park that would be right downtown, or for that matter what about the adjoining gravel area off Brown Street that could be swapped out for the Free RV Parking and partially used for a dog park as indicated on the map below, its right next door to Memorial Park?

Allowing an off leash dog park at Powell Beach is going to be a nuisance and major safety concern for the people that currently use this area. No dogs are allowed at the actual beach itself. When a dog owner comes to the new proposed park, they will not be able to use the beach washroom facilities as they cannot leave their dog unattended. The heat in the summer is what attracts all the wonderful dogs to Sunoka Provincial Park, as they can cool off in the water. How will Bylaw enforcement be managed to mitigate this safety issue, as dogs running in the off leash park will want to cool off in the lake which will cause stress between neighbours which is not the goal of our community.

I do not agree with this proposed change to our Powell Beach Park to accommodate an off leash dog park area when we already have one that is well-used by dog owners in our neighbourhood (Sunoka Beach).



I have read the survey but not visited the sites of Memorial Park or the Rodeo grounds. We are not dog owners and rather than doing the survey I have chosen to write this note. As I and my husband have lived in Trout Creek for 50+ years we wonder why Powell Beach is an option, because:

From my kitchen window there is a pretty steady flow of walkers, many with dogs onto the creek embankment through one of the undeveloped lots of the former Woodbridge property. There is also access to this walk from the side streets off of Wharf St. I walk this embankment as well east and west of the bridge on both sides of the creek and meet many walkers with dogs. The east side of the creek at the bridge to the lake or through Sunoka Park to the north west brings one to the designated dog beach--lucky dogs. They are having a lot of fun and exercise swimming and playing. Benches or driftwood for owners to sit. Parking is plentiful as well. There is a bag stand and garbage can -one on the beach and one at the entrance from the park.

Many people with dogs arrive in cars from where I don't know, but it is well used. The north end of Tr.Cr. along the lakeshore provides for another nice trail for walkers and dogs. We are not dog owners but do like them . We just wonder why Powell Beach would be considered given what dog owners have access to now. We appreciate that this is a municipal issue but humans are funny people and will no doubt carry on using these paths. For both dogs and walkers it is hard to beat.

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Powell Beach is a poor idea for a dog park since the area is used for so many other activities; having a fenced dead area in the green park does not seem like a good decision. We did not elect you for this kind of leadership.

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Some other considerations for choosing a different location than Trout Creek for a dog park, and maybe this isn't even a good time to be considering spending on non-essentials in the community:

- TriPower Triathlon Club has been using Powell Beach Park for over 12 years. Over 100 youth participate in their programs. They use the park for training, youth camps, and their annual triathlon event.
- Trout Creek elementary uses Powell Beach Park for field trips, sports and other outdoor activities.
- COVID19 has resulted in economic challenges for many in our community. Perhaps spending money on a dog park is inappropriate when there are more pressing needs in the community at this time.

Since there is already a dog beach not far from Trout Creek at Sun Oka, if it is necessary to have a dog park, it makes more sense to have one in town to serve more people.

Other suggested locations for the dog park:

9600 Brown Street behind the Summerland Art Centre Peach Orchard Park south of the boat launch
Dale Meadows - by reclaiming the excess gravel parking Memorial Park adjacent to the horseshoe pit.

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Having lived for 30 plus years in the Powell Beach neighborhood we are strongly opposed to the proposed dog area at Powell Beach Park. The following are some of the major reasons for our opposition to the dog area.

- Powell Beach Park is currently used by a wide variety of school, sports and family activities open to all. Taking a large section of the park away and giving it over to a special interest group is not the best use of community park land.
 - Adjacent homes would be negatively impacted by excess noise, traffic and loss of greenspace.
 - The cost is inappropriate considering the recent financial cutbacks the District has had to make because of COVID19.
 - There are ample existing areas for dog walking at Sunoka Beach that are already in place and do not require further cost to the District.
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I am writing to inform you of my opposition to the consideration of a dog park in Trout Creek. To take out a ball diamond to make room for a dog park is flawed in so many ways. I would think our children and adults are more important than dogs in a place where we have only 1 large open green space in our

small neighbourhood. I believe there are other parks in our community of Summerland that a dog park would fit in without disrupting the whole neighbourhood. I have a real problem with the fact that Powell Beach was even on the list and to make the short list is unbelievable. Without too much effort I could think of parks that would be a better fit. I would hope that you would do the right thing and remove Powell Beach from all considerations for this project.

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