

*Town of*  
*Amherst* Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

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June 18, 2018

Ms. Kate Dumeer  
Canine Welfare Program Officer  
The Stanton Foundation  
1 Broadway, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02142

Dear Ms. Dumeer:

The Town of Amherst is pleased to submit a design grant application to The Stanton Foundation for a dog park to be built on town-owned land at one of our closed landfills. With more than 1,600 licensed dogs and many more in neighboring towns Amherst is poised to build an exciting new gathering place for dogs and their owners. The vision is to construct a simple yet high-quality enclosed park that promotes off-leash play in a well-maintained and safe environment. The Amherst Dog Park will be free to all users and supported by a friends group committed to its long-term sustainability.

This project has been thoroughly vetted by all relevant committees, reviewed by the Planning, Conservation and Recreation Departments and has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the community. In May Amherst Town Meeting voted to authorize \$90,000 in Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds towards surveying, environmental permitting and for the required 10% construction match.

All of this work has been coordinated by the Dog Park Task Force which was established by the Town Manager in spring 2017 with a charge to shepherd the process of establishing a public dog park and to make recommendations to the Town Manager based on its findings. From a large applicant pool, the following members were appointed: Nina Allen, Mike Chesworth (Secretary), Ana Devlin Gauthier, Dr. Ted Diamond (Vice Chair), Kaye Dougan, Gina Fusco, Jack Jemsek, Ellen Keiter, and Jim Pistrang (Chair). Three non-voting members also serve on the Task Force: David Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Conservation and Development; Carol Hepburn, Amherst Animal Welfare Officer; and Jim Wald, Select Board liaison.

To date, the Task Force has conducted many public meetings and made numerous community presentations on the project. Its five working subcommittees—Site Location, Design, Fundraising, Rules and Regulations, and Sustainability - meet regularly. All Task Force meetings are posted and the public is welcome to attend.

Amherst has selected a two-acre section of an old capped landfill for the site of the dog park. It has frontage on a main road, public water and adequate land for parking. We have worked closely with Peter Wells from Berkshire Design Group in Northampton to develop a conceptual design for the project (see attached). Our application also includes a draft budget for the park. The Berkshire Design team has worked on a number of dog parks in western Massachusetts and has extensive experience with recreation areas throughout New England.

The park will have trees and structures for shade and comfortable benches for humans. As a public recreation area, it will be ADA compliant (paved paths, paved parking spaces, level ground) and access to public water. There will be two separate fenced-in areas, one for small dogs, and the other for large dogs. The enclosures, four- to six-feet high, will be constructed of attractive fencing and have dual-gate entries. Ample cleaning supplies, including covered garbage cans and waste bags, will be available. The Amherst Dog Park will be open year round from dawn to dusk; it will not have artificial lighting nor restroom facilities.

The Task Force will establish a "Friends of Amherst Dog Park" group to help the Town care the site, such as organizing clean up days at the beginning of each season. It will also be the responsibility of the Friends to continually supply the park with waste bags and other necessities. The group will work closely with the town during the design and construction phases of the project.

If awarded a design grant Amherst is committed to following:

- Using the town-owned landfill site;
- Continuing to apprise relevant committees/boards of the project;
- Providing a 10% construction match funding (already authorized);
- Designating David Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager as the project "point person";
- Applying grant funds to costs including the preparation of schematics, preliminary drawings, bid documents, construction observation and related expenses;
- Hiring a firm with previous dog park design experience;
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Stanton Foundation upon receiving a final bid for construction;
- Using best efforts to avoid permanent donor sponsorship signage using a sign template provided by the Foundation.

We are very excited to be moving forward with this effort and appreciate your consideration of this request. Thank you.

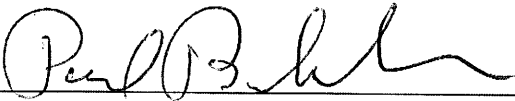
Sincerely,



Paul Bockelman  
Town Manager

The following (or substantially similar) assurances MUST be included in an Assurance Letter to be approved for design grant funding. Please review your letter, **check each box** in this checklist to signal its inclusion in the letter, sign the bottom of this checklist, and submit it with your other design grant application materials.

- The chosen site (or sites, if a final decision has not been made) is on city/town-owned land;
- The plan to use the site(s) for a dog park has been communicated to relevant city/town bodies;
- Confirmation that the city/town will meet a commitment of 10% of the hard construction costs;
- The city/town named "point person" who will be the Foundation's point of contact throughout the process;
- Confirmation that the design grant funds will be applied to costs including the preparation of schematics, preliminary drawings, bid documents, construction observation and, if necessary, an initial site survey;
- Confirmation that the city/town will select a design firm that has previously designed at least one dog park (preferred) or has extensive outdoor public space design experience;
- Confirmation that once the city/town has a final bid on construction costs, it will sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) reasonably similar to the example available on this website;
- EITHER:
  - A list of financial contributors to the park and any commitments the city/town has made to those contributors; OR
  - A commitment to use best efforts to avoid permanent donor sponsorship signage and a commitment to use a sign template provided by the Foundation if it is financially imprudent to avoid a sponsorship opportunity with requisite signage;
- The Letter is signed by the senior town administrator or elected official (e.g. mayor).

Signature: 

Printed Name: Paul Beckelman

Title: Town Manager

Date: June 27, 2018