



May 21, 2019

South Hadley Planning Board
116 Main St
South Hadley, MA 01705

**RE: South Hadley Dog Park
Mulligan Drive-**

Dear Board Members:

On behalf of the Town of South Hadley, we respectfully submit this application for Site Plan Review for a proposed dog park on Mulligan Drive. Per §255-145, a public town park is not required to apply for site plan review, however, because this project is required, §per 200-4, to apply for a stormwater permit, it is in the best interest of the project to undergo a site plan review with the Planning Board. The property is currently owned by the Town of South Hadley. The western extent of the parcel is currently used by the Town-owned Ledges golf course, but there is no current use on the proposed location of the dog park.

This letter discusses existing and proposed project conditions. A set of site plan drawings is enclosed.

Area Description

The site is approximately 1.76 acres bounded by Mulligan Drive to the south, South Hadley water tower to the west, property bounds to the north and east, as well as bordering vegetated wetlands on the northeastern and southeastern portions of the site. Wetland boundaries were determined as part of a re-delineation for the Town of South Hadley Ledges Golf Course in 2005. The site is a former agricultural site currently undergoing succession. Vegetation includes a mix of mature white pine, maple, oak, and sycamore along Mulligan Drive and within the wetland locations. Most of the site is dominated by herbaceous vegetation, young tree and shrub saplings, and a series of non-native, invasive species including oriental bittersweet and multiflora rose. The wetland locations may have developed overtime as former farm field drainage ditches.

Work Description

The project proposes to develop a publicly accessible dog park that will include an 18-space parking lot and park entrance area with double gates to enter two fenced in off-leash dog areas. Each dog area includes water fountain for dogs, benches, and accessible, walking loops. The large dog area to the west also includes a more naturalistic upper terrace containing a stone dust walking path, woodland grove, and native herbaceous grassland and wildflower meadow. Rice stone surfacing is proposed within the accessible path of the lower terrace of the large dog area. Within the small dog area, mown lawn surfacing is proposed within the loop walk. Outside the fencing, native grass and wildflower conservation mix is proposed to stabilize slopes, reduce encroachment from invasive species, and provide habitat for wildlife.

The proposed stormwater management strategies conform to all Massachusetts DEP stormwater management standards and design guidelines.

Site Plan Review Criteria §255-148

1. Compliance with all requirements: The proposed project conforms with all requirements of the Town of South Hadley's regulations and bylaws, except where waivers are requested.

2. Integration of the site: The proposed dog park design integrates existing terrain, where feasible, and strives to protect the character and ecological integrity of the surrounding landscape. The proposed design integrates the existing terrain features of rock ledge outcrops and woodlands in the western portion of the site, and where topography is altered, a diverse range of native flora is planted to provide soil stabilization, and erosion control, as well as, enhance wildlife habitat.

3. Appropriate site design: The proposed site design remains outside of the 50' wetlands conservation zone, and where feasible, is outside of the 100' wetland buffer. The proposed design reduces the existing slope to provide accessible pathways in both large and small dog areas, although it retains the existing slope in the upper terrace of the large dog area.

The site is currently undergoing natural succession. The site is heavily infested with multiflora rose, *Rosa multiflora*, and oriental bittersweet, *Celastrus orbiculatus*. Non-native, invasive species are proposed to be removed from the site. The proposed design intends to preserve a significant grove of white pines in the southwest portion of the site and forested areas within the 50' wetland conservation zone. Where slopes are altered, erosion control fabric, and a range of native perennial grasses and wildflowers are proposed to provide slope stabilization and increase biodiversity.

4. Special permit: The project is not required to obtain a special permit.

5. Compatible structures: No building structures are proposed. A 5' tall chain-link fence is proposed around the entire dog park. Signage is proposed at the entrance to identify the dog park and signage is proposed by the fence gates into the dog areas that display rules and donors. Signage complies with requirements set forth in §255-85.

6. Appropriate landscaping: This project proposes to maintain woodland groves and natural vegetation in the upper terrace to the west end of the site. Trees are proposed throughout the site to provide shade for dogs and people. Along the eastern slopes of the site, and in the stormwater basins, native grass and wildflowers, and native shrubs are proposed to reduce the need for supplemental watering and fertilizer, as well as, increase wildlife habitat.

7. Pedestrian safety and vehicular movement: The project proposes to construct an 18-car parking area, including 2 ADA parking spaces. At the end of the parking lot, a raised pedestrian gathering area is proposed that includes an accessible ramp, pedestrian gates into the fences play areas, and a maintenance access gate for general site maintenance. There are no existing curbs along the street and the proposed parking area will connect to the street at existing grade. Site lines for safe vehicular ingress and egress at the entrance will be maintained.

8. Surface and groundwater protection: The project proposes to use a combination of vegetated and structural stormwater management tactics to provide pre-treatment filtration and promote infiltration to protect groundwater quality and to minimize erosion. On areas of steeper slopes, erosion control fabric integrated with native grass and wildflower plantings are proposed to minimize erosion and stabilize soils.

9. Impacts to Town infrastructure: This project proposes to have a minimal impact on town resources and infrastructure. Water use is the only proposed addition to town infrastructure to provide drinking water for dogs and people. No other infrastructure will be impacted from this project.

10. Minimization of light intrusion: This project does not propose to add any lighting throughout the site. The dog park is proposed for day use activity only.

11. Placing utilities underground: The project proposes to add two water fountains to provide potable water for dogs and people, as well as, hose bibs for site maintenance. A new water line is proposed to be placed underground.

12. Drainage and groundwater recharge: A stormwater and drainage report has been prepared for the project. Peak run-off is proposed to be no greater than predevelopment conditions and will not adversely impact drainage on surrounding properties, Mulligan Drive, or wetlands down-slope. The proposed stormwater management strategies conform to all Massachusetts DEP stormwater management standards and design guidelines.

13. Frontage occupancy requirements: No buildings are proposed for this site, so frontage occupancy does not apply.

Conclusion

We are confident the proposed plan addresses the requirements of the Site Plan Review criteria set forth in §255-148. We look forward to presenting this site plan to the Board at your next meeting.

Sincerely,

Berkshire Design Group



Doug Serrill

Landscape Designer

FORM SPR

SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD

APPLICATION FOR SITE PLAN REVIEW

Date 5/20/2019

File one completed application form together with ten (10) copies of the site plan with the Planning Board. One (1) copy of Form SPR shall be concurrently filed with the Town Clerk.

To the Planning Board:

The undersigned herewith submits the accompanying Site Plan for review as required by Section 12 of the Zoning By-Laws.

1. Applicant Town of South Hadley

Address 116 Main Street South Hadley, MA 01075

Telephone 413-538-5017

2. Owner (if not applicant)

Address

3. Site Plan Preparer Doug Serrill c/o Berkshire Design Group

Title or License Landscape Designer

Address 4 Allen Place Northampton, MA 01060

4. Deed of property recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Book Page

5. Location and description of property (street and number if any) 18 Mulligan Drive

Assessors Map # 23 Parcel # 48

6. Fee Paid: Yes No X

Signature of Applicant

Town Clerk:

Date of Submission

Signature