



Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published August 3rd, 2011

Separating Kids and Dogs at Rancho Laguna Park

By Sophie Braccini

The recent dismantlement of the playgrounds that were located on each side of the large expanse of grass at Rancho Laguna Park has caused a reshuffling of the cards among the different users of the park -and the issue of kids and off-leash dogs has come under discussion once again.

After months of controversy between the Town and Lamorinda Dogs, the organized proponents of having a place where dogs may run off-leash, the parties had agreed to share the lawn, giving each group its own hours to enjoy the grass field.

But when a recent decision was made to replace only one of the existing play structures, a whole new possibility emerged: the chance to create a separate, 24-hour, fenced dog park along one side of the park, leaving the grass area always available to sports groups. The stakeholders are just starting a new round of discussions with the Parks and Recreation Commission; the Town Council will make the final decision.

Moraga Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram wants the Town to have its own sports field. "The Town of Moraga has a responsibility to offer fields for seasonal sports," says Ingram, "There are fields in town that belong to the school district, but none that belong to the Town. Having another sports field also provides alternatives and allows the existing ones to rest and not degrade because of over use."

Rancho Laguna Park is being largely used this summer for sports camps, and will be used again for that purpose in the fall.

"We are in our first year as a new soccer club in the Lamorinda area. We will be using Rancho Laguna Park this September for practices," says East Bay Eclipse Soccer Club Director Shane Carney, "I originally (wanted) to use the park all fall, but we couldn't work out a schedule where we could practice without dogs being on the field."

Carney, who led the Campolindo boys' soccer team to three titles this season, believes that the field is good for any age group, but he adds that sports users need to make room to accommodate dogs. "I think including a dog park in the plan as well is much more beneficial to the community as a whole," he says.

In addition to how the remodeling of the park will be financed, the size and fencing of the off-leash dog area are also issues that need to be worked through.

"We plan on having a few proposals prepared for discussion at the next Parks and Recreation meeting," said Lamorinda Dogs' Bill Carman. The next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 16, 7:00 p.m., at the Hacienda de las Flores.

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA