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Lopez, Donna

From: Kathleen Lancaster [katlancaster@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 7:37 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: craigkelley62@verizon.net; Michael Keating Keating
Subject: Ordinance amendment
Attachments: FP Ordinance amendment.docx; ATT00001..htm

Dear members of the Cambridge City Council:

We are writing in support of the attached proposed amendment. As longtime Cambridge residents, and as owners of two Cambridge-licensed dogs who accompany one or both of us around Fresh Pond daily, we can attest that the dog owners we encounter there who happen to live outside the Cambridge city limits are uniformly excellent custodians of the Fresh Pond Reservation. Not only are they great appreciators of its beauty and respecters of its regulations, but they go out of their way to help protect it and keep it healthy and safe. Furthermore, as we understand it, their Massachusetts tax dollars contribute to the cost of maintaining the reservation, just as ours do.

It seems outright discriminatory and unkind -- and not at all in line with the generally neighborly relationships Cambridge has sought with the communities contiguous with our own -- that our neighbors' duly licensed dogs should have to be leashed at Fresh Pond, rather than being free to walk, run, and play happily with their Cambridge-based dog friends. We urge you to adopt the proposed amendment as a clear instance of the Golden Rule: treating our neighbors as we ourselves wish to be treated.

Thanks very much, in advance, for your consideration of this request.

Kathleen Lancaster and Michael Keating
6 Hutchinson Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Proposed amendment to Cambridge City Ordinance.

Ordinance # 6.04.040.A.4 (Current)

All dogs using the City's off-leash dog areas must have a current Cambridge dog license, which must be displayed on the dog at all times. ADD

(Proposed amendment)

The exception to this ordinance is Fresh Pond where all dogs may be off leash provided those dogs have a current dog license from their area of residence, which must be displayed on the dog at all times;

Fresh Pond (FP) users from all contiguous communities have become a community within themselves, and are considerate, responsible, respectful users of FP. Cambridge as a whole has a very effective, existing, means of controlling numbers. Parking in Cambridge is notoriously sparse for non-residents. I, like many other Non-Cambridge Residents (N-CRs), can walk the short distance from my house in Belmont to the pond.

Cambridge has a justly earned reputation for being a welcoming, non-discriminating city. Why be xenophobic on this one small issue?

- FP users are a cohesive community in themselves comprising members from contiguous towns whose catchment area is probably a maximum of 2 miles radius from FP.
- FP has been improved using MA taxpayers (N-CR) money as a part of CPA funding.
- At least one N-CR has donated and erected a public seat at FP.
- Many N-CR dog owners already help at FP by picking up trash left by picnickers, teen drinkers, runners, and other users as they walk around FP.
- Many senior N-CR dog owners could not afford to pay an extra fee to Cambridge after already paying a license fee to their own towns.
- Statistics show that if you reduce the number of people in an area like FP by limiting access, then both crime and vandalism increase.
- **N-CRs are not looking for parking spaces**, but merely to have the same off-leash privileges for their dogs at Fresh Pond as Cambridge residents.
- If a Cambridge resident is caring for the dog of an N-CR friend is that Cambridge resident also discriminated against?
- Enforcement of the non-resident dog issue detracts from enforcement of other more serious issues at FP.
- There will be no huge influx of N-CR dog walkers to FP as a result of allowing N-CR dogs to be off-leash. The existing parking restrictions will prevent that from happening.
- Cambridge does not discriminate against undocumented immigrants, why does the city discriminate against your good neighbors who are hosts to your water sources and reservoirs?

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