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Next: EDOA's proposal

Members respond to proposed changes to dog rules at Wiley Park

EDOA members met to discuss attempts to change leashing rules in Wiley Park. A recap of the meetings of Conservation Commission and Open Space Committee and interaction with EDOA board members were reviewed. The intentions of those boards to attempt to limit dogs to on-leash only was clear.

Board members reported on tours of the area to identify areas of concern. An EDOA proposal to mitigate those concerns without limiting an activity much beloved by very many citizens and visitors was presented.

Concerned members expressed frustration with the lack of openness by the town committees to working together as a community to solve the conservation concerns and their apparent insistence that dogs owners must bear the blame for perceived overuse (or is it normal wear) of the park.

Dozens signed a petition and many volunteered to seek signatures of support of current dog / owner restrictions. Suggestions for a response included a dedicated area for off-leash dogs in the park and even looking into a legal objection if rules are changed. Most speakers expressed frustration that efforts to be good stewards of the park by the EDOA are being overlooked in favor of a simplistic, likely ineffective, and heavy handed rules change that seems unjustifiably punitive to dog owners.

Anti-Dog Climate Change

So, you don't go to Wiley or your don't walk your dog off-leash. Why should you care about this restrictive change?

This is not the end of it. Our traditional rights to enjoy our pets in a responsible and reasonable way is being squeezed—again. Here in Eastham we saw restrictions on beaches go from July 1st to June 15th. Restrictions were put in at Dyer Prince Rd. (Eastham's Rock Harbor area) due to neighbors wanting dogs off "their beach".

Town officials in the area often refer to neighboring towns which are contemplating new restrictions, as if we should all "jump off that bridge too". Wellfleet, Orleans, Provincetown, and Truro are all seeing attempts to change dog control rules much to the frustration of the dog owners. They are struggling to mount an effective objection. Justification for the rules changes go unsupported and unchallenged.

Meanwhile, town boards seem to want the dogs to just go away. Sure, they have better things to do. Things

more important and expensive and worthy of their time. The result is often that it is easier to just make a rule or a compromise and be done with it.

Such action results in less happiness. Such restrictions done without exploring alternatives result in a loss of something that gives a simple joy to many of its citizens.

Open Space Cmte
[View meeting video from February 15, 2023 \[link\]](#)
The section from minute 40 to 1:15 discusses committee's plans for our dogs

"Listening sessions" have been scheduled by Cons Com and OSC.

Please plan to attend one or both .

Can't make a meeting? Please write .

Details below!

Public Comment Session Scheduled by ConsCom, OSC

Thursday, April 13th 6:00 pm - 7:45 pm, in person, at the Greg Turner Room, Eastham Public Library.

Wednesday, April 19th 6:00 pm - 7:45 pm Zoom only.

Zoom information will be posted on Town website. After a brief presentation, the Conservation Commission and Open Space Committee invites attendees to share their experiences, concerns, and suggestions for improvement for these conservation areas.

Concerns might include, but are not limited to, safety issues, off-leash dogs, boat launching, trail issues, signage, or anything else you'd like to share.

To accommodate everyone who wishes to speak, participants will be asked to take no more than three minutes at one time.

Alternate ways to share comments:

For those who can't attend, would prefer not to speak in public, or would like to submit a more detailed response, comments will be accepted by email and letter until April 21, 2023.

Email: conservation@eastham-ma.gov

Letters: Conservation Department, Eastham Town Hall, 2500 State Highway, Eastham, Massachusetts, 02642

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Comments / Questions
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