

March 6, 2008

Mr. Bill Manning,
Manager of Operations
Stanley Park District

Dear Mr. Manning,

The False Creek South Neighbourhood Association supports efforts by False Creek residents to make the waterfall area of Charleson Park a priority area for families, especially kids. This area has been very popular in the past with small children but, as we understand of late, the area has become overrun with dogs. The times of the day when designated on leash, have not been observed by dog owners. Parents trying to converse with dog owners at these times have met with considerable abuse. There has been little or no enforcement which has encouraged dog owners to consider this area a dog off leash anytime. To reclaim this area for families will take considerable effort. We want confirmation that Parks will work with us in this effort. .

We want to confirm that the following has been agreed to:

1. Parks will clarify signage
2. A temporary snow fence will be erected in June this year to draw attention to this area as distinct from the bigger, adjacent off leash area, and
3. Enforcement as required, of on-leash times will begin in June of this year.

We are not confident that these measures will successfully return the area to family use in the summer season. However, we are willing to give this a trial run. If the dogs continue to tear up the area during the hours in which they are entitled to be off leash, making it unsuitable for families, we intend to pursue a change of policy so there are no dogs off leash in the summer months. If enforcement does not work, we will similarly seek to have this area on leash during summer months.

We are asking Parks administration now, to take this issue to the Board to seek flexibility in changing hours of use during the summer, if that should be required. We contacted Parks before the strike last year, waited until February this year for a meeting with Mr. Manning. If by end of summer this is not working, we expect a resolution in the fall. We don't intend to wait until this time next year before we have resolution.

At this time, we have no inclination to advocate closing the area to dogs year around. We are circulating a petition that we believe will indicate wide support for keeping the waterfall area a priority area for kids play.

At the same time, many of our parents have dogs and appreciate the amenity of the waterfall area as a dog play area. We believe that the solution to this issue is a partnership between the dog owners and parents, and if both work together we will achieve the best outcome. That potential to work together has been undermined by the poor supervision and lack of enforcement by the Parks personnel responsible. If you want us to be partners in addressing these issues, to

work with dog owners in a co-operative manner, we want to know you are in support of our efforts.

We thank you for meeting with our parents, who are a sub-committee of the F.C.S.N.A. and we look forward to your response.

Yours truly,

John McBride, subcommittee liaison

cc. Board of Parks Commissioners