

From: Sissy Shute <sissyshute@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 6:39:37 PM
To: Anderson, Rhonda <randerson@coralgables.com>
Subject: Re: Please, a Catalonia Dog Park request

CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Bless you, Commissioner Rhonda for this information. You are a good Commissioner and a good woman, and an attorney! Yay!

I'm just wondering if there is a new twist.....a stronger one. I'm being approached by dog owners to join in the campaign for the dogs @ Catalonia to run free. I've made it clear I do not want to cause a ruckus. If you remember you and I met months ago @ the Catalonia park and you asked me to come and speak at the commission meeting. I made it clear at that time of the same, no ruckus, not speaking. Again, it seems there is a stronger campaign against the neighbors who want us gone.

Absolutely, I will visit Barker Park and I mean mañana! Thank you!.....And mums the word! I will look for the most inconspicuous spot for my car!

Hugs for helping! Really!!!

Sissy 😊

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 19, 2022, at 5:10 PM, Anderson, Rhonda <randerson@coralgables.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Ms. Shute. There currently is an off-leash dog park open to the public that is suitable for large dogs. It is at Barker Park on Venetia. I did not mention that during the meeting because the last thing us dog owners want is another neighborhood dog park closed off to dogs being able to play off-leash due to their neighborhood being over-run by people driving to the park.

In case you did not hear, I have pressed long and hard for off leash dog parks to be added to our City. Like you, I have not one, but two dogs, that need to run. They are retired greyhounds. And, like you, I used to visit Catalonia Park when staff failed to add the signage that made it clear that it was not an off-leash park.

Once the park and the neighborhood became overrun by individuals tearing up swales and not picking up after their dogs, the residents living near Catalonia Park complained loudly. I have received many emails and visits from these very vocal neighbors. In respect for what was their choice for a children's park, I have respected their choice and have taken my dogs elsewhere. Keep in mind that I live three blocks away. Catalonia

was a wonderful place to connect with dog owning neighbors and watch our four legged furry family members play.

In my quest to find suitable space for a dedicated off-leash dog park where there will be no conflicts between small children and dogs, I looked in the North Gables for existing park space and empty lots. I first tried the large fields near the Youth Center, but the neighbors strongly resisted, even though I offered many concessions to address their concerns. I next tried several empty lots, all of which were privately owned with the owner not interested in selling. I also tried existing park space. After requesting staff to measure the area at Salvadore where the new park will be built, and tiring of waiting, I measured it myself to get the ball moving. I then approached a developer to allow their property at 1505 Ponce to be used as a dog park until the construction begins. That has borne fruit and should be open for the public in 30-45 days.

Your request has not fallen on deaf ears. But out of respect for the wishes of the neighbors living near and adjacent to Catalonia Park who long to have a dog waste free park for their children to play in, I must yield to their wishes. It is their neighborhood and they made it clear what their wishes were long before I ran for office. I cannot ignore these residents and push my preferences upon them.

Lastly, with regard to the proposal the Commission has offered in the interim, it would be a playpen for large dogs like the Villa Valencia park is for them. Please go check out Barker Park in the interim. Please do not spread the information far and wide about this park, because the last things dogs owners would like is for residents nearby to complain.

Please advise if you have any further questions or concerns.

Rhonda



COMMISSIONER RHONDA ANDERSON

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor

Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Dir: (786) 529-8766

randerson@coralgables.com

From: Sissy Shute <sissyshute@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 4:29 PM
To: Menendez, Kirk <kmenendez@coralgables.com>
Cc: Lago, Vince <vlago@coralgables.com>; Urquia, Billy <burquia@coralgables.com>; Mena, Michael <mmena@coralgables.com>; Anderson, Rhonda <randerson@coralgables.com>; Jorge L. Fors, Jr. <jfors@coralgables.com>; cataloniadogpark@gmail.com; Commission Aides <CommissionAides@coralgables.com>
Subject: Re: Please, a Catalonia Dog Park request

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Thank you, Commissioner Menendez!

Sissy

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 19, 2022, at 4:02 PM, Menendez, Kirk <kmenendez@coralgables.com> wrote:

Good afternoon,

Thank you for reaching out to us. I am asking the City Clerk copied here to add your email to the public record on this matter.

Best regards,
Kirk Menendez

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From: Sissy Shute <sissyshute@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 12:15:15 PM
To: Lago, Vince <vlago@coralgables.com>
Cc: Mena, Michael <mmena@coralgables.com>; Anderson, Rhonda <randerson@coralgables.com>; Jorge L. Fors, Jr. <jfors@coralgables.com>; Menendez, Kirk <kmenendez@coralgables.com>; cataloniadogpark@gmail.com <cataloniadogpark@gmail.com>; Commission Aides <CommissionAides@coralgables.com>
Subject: Fwd: Please, a Catalonia Dog Park request

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Hi Mayor Lago, Commissioners and Catalonia Dog Park Decision Makers!

Thank You so much for your attention on this matter. I hope my following email will matter, too!

Sissy Shute
2412 Country Club Prado
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sissy Shute <sissyshute@yahoo.com>
Date: September 19, 2022 at 11:53:12 AM EDT
To: cataloniadogpark@gmail.com
Subject: Please, a Catalonia Dog Park request

GM Catalonia Dog Park Officials,

Dogs are our children just like children are our children. To many, the only difference is one has 2 legs and the other has 4. We love them just the same.

I am emailing with the request that you keep the Catalonia Dog Park open for dogs FREE of a leash to play, run and exercise together. At least, please pursue this direction until the Salvador Park is completed for dogs.

Thank you,
Sissy Shute
2412 Country Club Prado
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Sent from my iPhone

Please Note: Florida has a very broad Public Records Law. Most written communications to or from State and Local Officials regarding State or Local business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your email communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.
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From: Menendez, Kirk <kmenendez@coralgables.com>
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 3:58 PM
To: lml1017 <lmlopez1017@gmail.com>; Santiago, Lina <lsantiago@coralgables.com>; Urquia, Billy <burquia@coralgables.com>
Cc: cataloniadogpark@gmail.com; lauracoralgables@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Important request

Thank you, Laura. I will make sure your email is included in the agenda package the members of the Commission receive prior to our meetings.

Best regards,
Kirk

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From: lml1017 <lmlopez1017@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2022 3:31:31 PM
To: Menendez, Kirk <kmenendez@coralgables.com>
Cc: cataloniadogpark@gmail.com <cataloniadogpark@gmail.com>; lauracoralgables@gmail.com <lauracoralgables@gmail.com>
Subject: Important request

CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commissioner Menendez,

My name Laura Margarita Lopez and I am a resident of Coral Gables. I'm writing in support of an off-leash dog park at Catalonia Park. My dogs and I enjoy the sense of community that has been created there organically — socializing with other neighbors who are young and old, longtime residents and newcomers alike, with and without children. It is unfortunate that in Coral Gables where there are over 60 parks, none allow all dogs off leash (Villa Valencia only supports small dogs).

George Merrick and the city beautiful movement wanted public spaces that would increase quality of life. To that I ask you, what better way epitomizes that goal than a community of residents gathering to enjoy those public spaces in-person and not merely looking at public spaces through a window?

While I respect the differing viewpoints of others, there is simply an overwhelming and growing number of Coral Gables residents with dogs who enjoy the community and friendships that have been formed at Catalonia Park and wish for that to continue.

I therefore respectfully request that the City Commissioners live up to their previous promise and fulfill the off-leash dog park at Catalonia Park.

Sincerely,

Laura Margarita Lopez

637 Sevilla

Coral Gables, Florida 33134

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Laura Margarita Lopez