

Memo

To: Parks and Recreation Committee Members

From: Chuck Osborne

CC: City Council
Parks Superintendent
Director of Administration

Date: 2/19/02

Re: Proposed Location of a Skateboard Facility at the Dogwood Park tennis courts.

I would like to ask that the members of the Parks and Recreation Committee and the members of the City Council to reconsider plans to replace the Dogwood tennis court with a skateboard facility.

Although I am very much in favor of building a skateboard park for skateboard enthusiasts, I have been a little reluctant to locate the skateboard facility at the present site of the tennis courts at Dogwood Park. After receiving both a phone call and a letter from Mr. Carl Goodin, my reluctance was increased and after further investigation of the Dogwood Park location, I will have to say that I am opposed to using the Dogwood Park tennis courts for a skateboard park for the following reasons:

- There is a very high density of recreational activities already located in close proximity at Dogwood Park. Residents tell me that parking is a problem in the summer with all the different activities going on in the summer. This includes all the swimmers and sun bathers attending the city swimming pool, players in Little League and other team sports at the ball fields, the Jaycee Fair each summer, families attending the covered picnic shelters, children on the playground equipment, individuals playing on the tennis courts, individuals playing on the basketball court, various groups using the Dogwood Park rental facilities and the wide range of people who come to enjoy the outdoors for the many other reasons that people come to a city park. Dogwood Park is not a very large park considering all the activities that take place.

- It does not make good economic sense to undo the dollars that have been spent creating a tennis court that is used and enjoyed by many.
- I have concerns as to whether the tennis courts are large enough to accommodate the needs of the skateboarders. And if there is a need to enlarge the facility, there is no room for expansion without removing yet another recreational activity, the basketball courts adjacent to the tennis courts.

I would like to propose that the city plan a skateboard facility in another location for the following reasons:

- This would allow the city to plan a skateboard facility from the ground up in a location that has ample room for expansion in the future if desired.
- Skating trails and bicycle jumps could be planned in conjunction with a skateboard park at this location. This could be done by incorporating in-line skating trails in the vicinity of the skateboard facility that would appeal to an even wider range of skaters. The area could also include an area for bicycle jumps. All of these activities are similar in that they require a lot of open space for enjoyment as well as safety. There needs to be ample room for parking. Such an area needs to be well removed from roadways and far enough from homes so that the tranquility of all neighborhoods in the city is maintained.

In light of these reasons, I have polled a sizeable number of residents and have started a petition against locating the skateboard facility at the Dogwood Park tennis courts. I have received the following response:

- I had overwhelming support **against** locating the skateboard facility at the Dogwood Park tennis courts from the residents on Dogwood Avenue and on 10th Street from Main Street all the way to the High School.
- I did not have a single resident on Dogwood Avenue that was in favor of the Dogwood Avenue location for the skateboard facility. One signer was a parent of a skateboarder who expressed concern that the tennis court site was not large enough.
- On 10th Street I had 24 out of 25 residents sign the petition against the Dogwood location for the skateboard facility. Here again, I had a couple that were parents of skateboarders who expressed concern about the small size of the Dogwood tennis court site.

I have started getting signatures on 7th street and the sentiment seems to be quite the same. At present I have 50 signatures against the proposed Dogwood Park tennis court location. I can continue to gather more signatures if it is felt that more feedback is needed from the public but I would think that if the residents in the immediate area of Dogwood Park simply do not agree with locating the skateboard facility in Dogwood Park that the city will rethink this whole plan.

I talked with Mr. Carl Goodin concerning his petition efforts and was advised that he has 45 signatures against the proposed Dogwood Park tennis court location. He has advised me that he is polling the following streets: Sutton, Briar and Weber Avenues at present.

I believe that a skateboard facility is needed in the City of North Canton. I would wholeheartedly support the needed funding to build a skateboard facility that would serve the needs of the city. The skateboard facility that has been proposed is an idea without a sound plan. Build a recreational skate facility from the ground up with a sound plan in the right location that will work for all the citizens.

Sincerely,

Chuck Osborne
Council at-Large
City of North Canton