

CENTRAL PARK
ALTERNATIVE TIME LEASH FREE

Comments from Residents

1. Just received the letter from the City of Burlington, and I think this is a wonderful idea.....while I personally don't have a dog (apt. dweller) the Dogs of Burlington deserve a free space to run and get rid of some energy. I will tell my daughter and son-in-law of this, as they have a dog.....again, smashing idea!!!!
2. We live on Drury Lane and weren't able to attend the meeting last week. We have lived here for the last seven years, we love walking our dog in central park. We find other dog owners very respectful, and have never experienced any problems. Those that do choose to run their dogs off leash are in complete control. We also feel that the scheduled time off leash example 9pm -9am daily is a fantastic idea, and would allow people to enjoy the park with their dogs in a controlled environment. We hope that everyone can continue to enjoy this beautiful park.
3. I am in favour of time limitations during the morning and the evening, and common sense used amongst the animal control officer as to whether they issue a ticket or not.
4. Hi I am writing to you about the leash free in central park. With a population of 175 000 and two leash free parks in the city is ridiculous. One of them is a complete dump and the city has nothing to do with and the other is probably about 20 by 30 feet and no dogs over 10 pounds can even run in it. This complaint **"I am writing to you now because it is time that this situation (dogs off leash) is enforced. ...there is a leash free park on King Rd. where all the dogs can run around freely. I should not have to worry about this when I take my dog for a walk."** Apparently they have never been to King Road. And that's not even in the city proper; it's about a 20min drive for me. Another great one "...wanted to alert you to the fact that the majority of dog walkers walk their dogs in this park off-leash. This has become an issue for us recently as our 5 year old was recently bitten..." I'm just gonna go ahead and call bull shit on this one because I believe if this happened animal control would be there all the time. From what I see at the park the amount of dogs that bother people is minimal. And if you want to come down on dog owners I will have to be calling the city daily and requesting that fine be handed out for every single other person that breaks a bylaw in that park (ie soccer teams. They are absolutely disgusting in leaving their garbage there, people who hit golf balls there, people who light fireworks off and the excessive noise a lot of groups make. And after 9pm? That's a horrible time for people to walk because it's in the dark. What I suggest is a fenced in area about the size of a soccer field somewhere in the city proper instead of a dirt square almost in Hamilton.

I forgot to add I did a little research of cities approximately the size of Burlington and the amount and location of them.

Our neighbor Oakville has 6 leash free parks

- Glenashton Park — located on Glenashton Drive
- Kingsford Gardens — located on Sherwood Heights Drive
- North Park — located on Neyagawa Boulevard
- Palermo Park — located on Dundas Street, east of Bronte Road
- Post Park — located on MacDonald and Chartwell Roads
- Shell Park — located on Lakeshore Road West

Hamilton while larger has 6 and use an interesting program where a dollar of every dog tag goes towards maintaining the parks.

Barrie has two parks and they are both located in well traveled areas, and are good sizes. One has a small dog and a big dog area.

Abbotsford out in B.C. which is larger than Burlington has 4 large dog parks in the city.

5. It is very naive to believe dog walkers will abide by any new bylaw. They blatantly disobey current bylaws, clearly posted at most entrances to Central Park. Central Park was and is not meant to be a leash free park. It is very much a sports park in evenings and on weekends, and a lovely walking park, with 2 playgrounds for children, and a beautiful labyrinth. But unfortunately, dogs have taken over, tearing around, chasing objects thrown by their owners. They have come charging up to me many times, with owners remarking, when I freeze in terror, "He won't hurt you". I have seen them enter a soccer game, owners unable or disinterested in controlling them. Many tax dollars are spent grooming the park. There is a sprinkler system on the sports fields. Rarely a day goes by that a machine or two are not at work in the park. Most leash free parks are torn up by the animals at play. This is not what we want for Central Park. As well, I walk the park with my head to the ground, in order to avoid stepping in feces. The area surrounding Central park is inhabited by a large senior population, who wander the park throughout the day with their large dogs off leash. It is a social outing for the owners. They are not going to change their schedules to abide by the law. So spend money creating a new bylaw, with new postings, and dog owners will continue to ignore the bylaw. A \$2500 fine posted on current signs is not a deterrent.
6. I have been one of the "complainants" regarding dog owners using Central park as a "leash free" park which now prevents me from using the park to walk my dog in. I NEVER take my dog off her leash. I understand that it is difficult to monitor the inappropriate (and unlawful) use of the park for leash free dog walking. There are signs posted advising of the rather large fine if caught walking dogs off leash or failing to pick up poop. (Both I have witnessed on a regular daily basis as you know). Still, dog walkers continue to do both. I am certain that this is because they know that the likelihood of being caught or actually charged is minimal. I have considered this possibility of "leash free times" for the park. As you aware that this occurs during all hours of the day, I am wondering if there will be designated staff who will monitor the park the rest of the day when the other dog walkers will be there. Also, who is going to decide what hours will be designated for the "leash free-ers"? You are probably sensing some dissatisfaction in my response. I feel strongly that by doing this we are not only catering to those people who are ignorant enough to disregard not only the posted bi-law notices , but also the rights of other individuals who do not feel that they can use the park because of the unleashed dogs. What time do I have to plan my dog walking at now so that I can cater to them? Please advise. In addition, I need not remind you that there are many designated "leash free parks" in Burlington- King Rd. and Roly Bird just to name two. Most of the people who use Central park as a leash free park drive their vehicle to the park. I live right in the neighborhood and walk my dog there. If they are driving to the park, why can't they just drive to one of the designated leash free parks? That is why we have them!! I assure you, if I was able to allow my dog to run free I would be taking her to one of these designated leash free parks. As I have sent several emails to you I know that you are aware that I have attempted to schedule my dog walking at many different times throughout the day and evening to avoid the leash free dog walkers, to no avail. I have been verbally harassed when I attempt to speak to those individuals I have crossed paths with and politely reminded of the leash requirement. These people who think it is their right to ignore the posted bi-laws and use the park inappropriately will likely continue to do so even if there is a "designated leash free time". I am certain that you are aware of this. I feel that instead of designing a "band-aid" measure to cater to the leash free dog walkers, we should be spending more time enforcing the current bi-laws and encouraging them to use the leash free parks that are available. As you know my health is not good. I have

Crohns, Kidney disease, underwent a bilateral mastectomy and chemo. for breast cancer and most recently a hysterectomy. I am walking not only for my dog's health but my own. I live minutes from the park so it is a great place for me to walk my dog. I am no longer able to do so because of the ignorant people who want to allow their dogs to run free. I have appealed to you several times about this situation and for the last three months (with the exception of a few times when I have attempted but ran into free running dogs and had to leave the park) I have had to avoid the park completely when walking my dog. I am unaware of how others feel about this, but I assure you, I feel that we dog walkers who are adhering to the bi-laws have been "dumped". This solution simply shows the leash-free dog walkers that they are right. Bi-laws will not only not be enforced, they can be ignored. I am very disappointed and displeased.

7. Does not want leash free area, because of the feces.
8. I have no objection to a designated leash free time frame for dog owners to run their dogs. While most owners are fully responsible for their dogs there are those who simply ignore the signage and let the dogs run freely at any time. They are not fully aware of what the animal is doing while they visit with friends. As a result messes are left in sports fields or play areas. I regularly enjoy this beautiful space and find it truly annoying to see the disregard that some individuals show for community property. While I no longer have a dog I had for many years and we walked the park together. He was just as happy on his leash. Making an accommodation is reasonable, but let's ensure the bylaw is enforced where needed.
9. I received the above notice in my mail box today, unfortunately I cannot attend the meeting on June 19th. I live right off the park on Barons Crt. and see how valuable the park is to everyone, that is dog owners and non dog owners, I see the daily stream of people walking their dogs to the park all day long. I do understand the need/desire of people to let their dogs get some good exercise by chasing a ball. As a dog owner and parent, I see both sides of the issue. I use the park for walking my dog and playing with my kids and yes, I occasionally let me dog run freely with his leash off, however I am very respectful that this is done at time when there is next to no one using the park. However, I do agree that when I am using the park with my kids, I do not want a dog running towards my kids or myself. As much as dogs can be good dogs and not known to harm people, they are animals and therefore unpredictable. I would like to suggest a few things...
 - (a) like the suggestion in the letter, allow the park to be leash free from 8pm to 9am (summer and extend the hours for winter) or after the last soccer/baseball has ended and people have cleared the park. This allows those folks that not only want to run their dogs, but those who also like to walk the perimeter of the park for their own exercise, to have the freedom to do so. Put signs up that clearly advise park users of the times that the park is leash free. I would also suggest policing the park and heavy fines for dog owners who violate the times.
 - (b) consider a fenced in area like King Road park or Roly Bird park. We should have more of these facilities. No one who lives close by such a large park, wants to get into a car and drive to a leash free park... defeats the purpose and benefits of living so close to the park..

I am sure there are other suggestions, but I am glad to see this up for debate. I would suggest that this topic be approached to look for a compromise and not a Yes/No decision.

10. Suggesting a fenced in area at end of park by Drury Lane so dogs can run free and play. Times 6-9am and 7-9pm is good as long as no sports is being played and in daytime around 1pm. Even if you have your dog on a leash and it runs, it's not bothering anybody; he's getting exercise and playing with other dogs. Also, leash free area as long as dog is running after people. Responsible dog owners can let off leash and run with them; it's good exercise for owner. After 9pm is no good. It's too dark for the dogs; wild animals run loose. Designate an area for dogs to run loose.
11. Does not support a leash free time in Central Park. She was bit by a dog last year.
12. I'm just reading the Friday Post article about Cricket in Central Park. Though I think it is great that a diverse city like Burlington is responding to the needs of its citizens, I think a bit of perspective is in order. According to your article, the BUCC has 30 members, and plays once a week at Central Park. I have been out in Central Park on a Sunday to watch the guys play, and it is quite something to see! I do however have a problem with putting the needs of a very select few over the needs of many. Time and time again I have read articles in the Post about the "menace" of off-leash dogs in Central Park. Every time this flares up we see an increased amount of patrol in the area for a period... then it dies off for a while... then more people complain, and the patrols are back... it is an endless cycle. People walk their dogs in Central Park every single day. There are far more taxpaying dog owners in Ward 2 than there are Cricket Players. I know for a fact that Ward 2 Councillor Meed-Ward has been contacted numerous times, both by people who complain about off-leash dogs, as well as people who seek an off-leash park in the area. In response to a request for a leash-free park in Ward 2, Councillor Meed-Ward sent out some documentation titled "Leash Free Criteria and Potential Locations"... in this document it states that Central Park is "programmed for other uses". Apparently one of these other uses is to install a Cricket Pitch to be used by 30 people? If the revenue lost by replacing a soccer or baseball field is 3802.24 (or 1062.84) as your article states, I'm sure that a leash free area, developed in co-operation with a citizens group, could easily make a leash-free area in Central Park revenue neutral. Clearly the city is not married to the idea of keeping the area a soccer or baseball field, so perhaps some outside the box thinking is in order! People have requested a leash free area in Central Park for years, and have been kyboshed by councillors and the city over and over. The recent complaints and letters about leash free dogs in Central Park show that there is an issue, and it is clearly not going away. A leash free area in Central Park would be used daily by the pet owners south of the QEW (where there is currently no leash free area), and it would end the conflict over dogs in Central Park. This is a solution that makes far more sense than installing a Cricket Pitch to be used infrequently by a very small number of people.
13. Suggest off leash, 6 – 9 a.m.
14. I live on Barons Court, love to walk & spend much time in the park with my two grandsons. I have noticed that since your sign went up about the fines, more and more people have taken to letting their dogs run freely. I would estimate that about **60%** of the dogs are now leash-free. It is almost as if they are doing it intentionally – no one can tell me what I can do in the park. My oldest grandson who is now 6 years old, got frightened from some of the dogs that were running wild in the park when he was younger and today he is still petrified of dogs. This is an example of the impact that these dogs can have on small children. This just is not right!! Many times I have reminded people that Central Park is not a leash-free park and they are most rude to me. There are people that meet their friends, let multiple dogs run wild and are so busy talking with their friends that they pay no intention to their dogs. And even if they did, most of the dogs do not respond to

their owners. If I were a dog running wild, I would ignore them as well. Many of the dog owners are multiple dog owners and let all of their dogs run loose at the same time. They all seem to feel that their dogs are trained & “would never hurt anyone”. This is not the way it is. Dog owners have a responsibility to be in control of their animals at all times but I find it difficult to see how they can control their dogs that are running freely in the middle of the park & they are standing on the perimeter!! The owners are totally irresponsible!!! I cannot tell you how scary it is for a myself or my grandchildren to see a great big dog running towards us from across the other side of the park. The owner is nowhere in sight and I am on my own. There was one instance where a child was bitten that I know of. My gut tells me that it is not the dogs that are out of control. It is the OWNERS!!! There is also a huge problem with dog feces that I see all over the park. There is absolutely no way that a dog owner knows where their dog has pooped when they are half-way across the park. My grandson who is 2 actually picked some up. This is a health threat!!! I really feel that you need someone to patrol the parks for a while to get a handle on the extent of the current dog problem before you start making decisions on a leash-free Central Park. You will never make the dog owners happy unless you continue to allow them to do what they are today which is doing whatever they want with no consequences whatsoever. It is not the dogs that are out of control. It is the OWNERS!!! Has the city ever issued any fines to any of the leash-free dogs? I would guess that this has never happened. If you set up rules, you need to have people monitor & issue fines if need be. Dog owners are not rule followers! Slow down & rethink what the consequences of a leash-free park in Central Park. Don't do it just because the minority of people – dog walkers - want it. Dogs are animals. They need to be kept in control at all times. I would be happy to hear what happens in your meeting next week as I am unable to attend. I have my grandchildren. I will be going in the park to monitor how many dogs are leash-free while you are having your meeting. They will disobey the rules right under your nose.

15. She would like a leash free area for dogs and suggested Optimist Park, behind student theatre. This space is underutilized. She is supportive of leash free times in Central Park.
16. I received the notification regarding the meeting tomorrow night for the leash free time for dogs discussion, however I am unfortunately unable to attend. I have been a resident of Burlington for approximately 20 years, however I have only been a dog owner for 3+ years. I am definitely in favour of official leash free time for dogs. If you wish for me to elaborate further on the topic, please advise.
17. I am writing in response to the June 4 notice sent to residents of your ward about possible leash-free time for dogs in Central Park. I am unable to attend the upcoming meeting, but I appreciate the opportunity to offer feedback on a subject I have thought about (and thought about writing to my councillor about!) since moving to the neighbourhood in 2007 and, soon after, adopting a dog whom I walk daily in Central Park -- sometimes twice daily. I should add that I almost always keep him on-leash and that I have two pre-school children, so my interests in the subject are varied. Based on my knowledge of the dog-walking community that uses Central Park, I feel that many people who are regular users of the park would enjoy and respect a leash-free period, such as the 9 PM to 9 AM period proposed by the first letter-writer you quote in your own letter. To get an appropriate and healthful amount of exercise, many dogs need a chance to run at a pace their owners cannot match. This is particularly the case in snowy and icy weather, when the park is the best resort for dog owners because the salt used on sidewalks and roads causes many dogs excruciating pain. We take our dogs to the park, and in these sorts of conditions find we're pretty much the only ones there; and I know from experience that we can be in danger of falling and being hurt if we are attached to our rompy friends by a rope. If we could simply let them go, we would be safer and they would get the kind of exercise they

particularly need in weather when they spend most of the day cooped up. Any time of year, of course, it is the case that dogs who get enough exercise are more likely to be calm, quiet, and well-behaved, both on-leash and off-leash, in the park and at home -- so there are real advantages to the larger community in permitting people to exercise their dogs properly with reasonable ease. It seems unfair, as well as environmentally unsound, to expect dog owners to drive, perhaps twice daily, to and from the only two off-leash areas offered in Burlington (in Roly Park and up King Road -- those are the only ones I know of, anyhow). I say "drive" because, as far as I know, Burlington's public transit does not permit people to haul their dogs. If it is legal to own a dog in the city, it should also be legal to care for a dog properly in the city -- and that includes ensuring the creature is well-exercised on a daily basis. For what it's worth, I would like to put in a kind word about many of the dog owners I know who walk regularly in the park -- I could name people who pick up and dispose of garbage as they go, and others who gather up empty bottles and donate the proceeds from the refunds to charity. In general, moreover, the presence of dog owners in the park on a daily basis is both healthful for those doing the walking (and their health in turn has a community pay-off in our publicly-funded health system) and a safety feature for the community as a whole, since these people, who know the park well, keep their eyes open and notice if something is not right. I feel we would be best off as a city if we focused on finding ways to encourage greater use of our existing public resources, including our remarkable parks. All this said, I particularly like the idea of the leash-free time that I mentioned above (9 PM to 9 AM) because I do have young children, and they have on rare occasions felt scared in Central Park by one or two dogs, not well-controlled by their owners, who have approached them at speed -- but never actually contacted them, I would like to add (not even to lick them!). These rare occasions have provided opportunities to teach them about how to behave when approached by a strange dog -- not a bad thing, on the whole. Again, it seems best if we can find ways to get along better with one another, since we're all here in each other's midst. I think there's a way forward for Burlington to help dogs, dog owners, and all other park users get along better, and this leash-free time plan sounds like one of them. Please feel free to quote or contact me if that would be of use in the upcoming process. Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment.

18. I feel very strongly about this subject as I back onto the park and know first hand that so many dogs are already leash free EVERY day from 3- when ever... The animal control has been called numerous times, they have said they try to police the area, but there are not enough staff!! This leads me to my next point of ... How will the area be policed!!!!if if can't be fenced off. You cannot possibly police the whole area of the park!!!! do NOT want dogs running behind my fence and gate... antagonizing my dog... At the moment the dogs are now free to bark, attack the gate and my dog feels she has to protect our back yard..our garden gets trampled on, dug up etc, both sides of our back fence. There are packs of 6 or so dogs with owners... who have their dogs off leash every eve in the area behind Courtland Dr/ Drury Lane... This is the area where there are MANY homes with gates...It is very disturbing having them run outside the fences of these homes.. There is also a soccer field..This area should NOT be leash free...If anywhere, it should be in the middle of the park away from homes!!!but how are u going to confine a running dog off leash?? We purchased on this street because of the beautiful peaceful area..where nearly every dog owner walked their pet ON LEASH and was responsible for picking up after them... I know there are soccer games, bands etc, but that's all part of being next to the park. But having packs of dogs off leash is NOT what this area of the park is for!!!

19. I strongly disagree with allowing this to happen. I have reside beside the park for over 50 years and it was always a park for people and if they wanted to bring their dog so be it but to allow them to be off a leash I strongly disagree.
20. I am just opening this e-mail now and realized I missed the meeting regarding leash-free times at Central Park. I am strongly IN FAVOUR of this idea - especially before 9:00 am. I look forward to hearing how the meeting went. Great idea!
21. Recently I was walking through Central Park when a large poodle came running at me from the far end of the park, barking ferociously with every intent, in my opinion, of taking a bite out of my leg. His owner was completely incapable of controlling him and I was forced to stand still for a couple of moments, thus depriving the dog of his moving target and causing him to become confused and distracted. With his attention diverted, I was able to continue on my way but considerably shaken. Dog owners repeatedly flout the bylaw and let their dogs free in this very well used, inner city park, causing it to be quite risky for non dog owners to walk there. I am not fond of dogs and feel I should have a right to walk in a park without having to worry that some dog will leap up on me or otherwise attack me and I see very little evidence that those who let their dogs run free are able to bring them back at will. As a senior, I seldom, if ever, use the park at night so would not be much inconvenienced if dogs should run free then. However, if this were to happen, it effectively closes the park to non dog walkers during those hours. It seems to me that there must be some other place for dogs to run free, if they must, in an area less travelled and attractive than Central Park. It is almost as if the dog owners are holding the city up to ransom by saying, "If you give us a dog free time, we will try (no promises, mind) to leash our dogs the rest of the time, but if you don't, we will just go on flouting the bylaw as there is no one around to enforce it." To my mind, a responsible dog owner, living in the city, owns a small dog that does not need to be run about in large spaces but which can be happily walked around city streets. He picks up after his dog and makes sure that the dog is under his control at all times. It is too bad there are so few such people around. The bottom line is that I think Central Park is too small and too well used to be given over to dogs. There is not room for a leash free area and I would like to see the leash law enforced in Central Park at all times. The rights of people should come before the rights of dogs.
22. 6–9am - leash free, all seasons in all areas of Central Park.
5-9pm – leash free all areas of the park – winter hours.
7-9pm – leash free all areas of the park – summer hours.
Review in 12 months to see if it should continue.
No fence as it encourages owners to assume responsibility – a fenced area doesn't encourage accountability.
Fenced area around children's play areas – protects children from running off and irresponsible dog owners who don't pick up. Common practice in England as it also is used to protect children from strangers.
Decisions to be made in the interests of reasonable, responsible people, not the exceptions.
23. I and most dog-walkers have always cleaned up after the dog (and often picked up food containers and empty water bottles left behind by other park visitors). In my opinion dog-walkers are not the big problem in that park. Unfortunately I cannot attend that meeting tonight, but I definitely would prefer a time for leash-free run for our animals.
24. Please don't change the law. I have bad experience with the dogs off leash.
25. I use the park regularly to walk my dog, sometimes 3x a day. There are numerous other dog walkers, especially in the morning, who also frequent the park to walk their dogs. It is

unfortunate that the City of Burlington has a rigid by-law that does not allow owners to take their dogs off-leash at any time in this park, and also have been very strict issuing fines to owners who have been caught with leash-free dogs. I can understand the importance of abiding by this By-law, particularly when the park is filled with children playing sports ie. soccer or baseball, but there are “non-peak” hours during the week when the park is NOT used for sports, but rather used quite extensively for dog walkers. My request is that flexibility/consideration be given to dog walkers to use the park during ‘off-peak’ hours ie. before 9am and 8pm-9pm during the week, and allow dogs to roam “leash-free”, without the risk of having animal control officers issue fines to owners. There is very little traffic in the “soccer field” area of the park during these times, other than owners walking their dogs.

26. I don't agree with the idea of allowing dogs off leash for the entire Central Park, at any time. I agree with the idea of providing a clearly defined area for dogs off leash, this space could be as large, or as small as the City of Burlington chooses. The only way of achieving this is to provide a fenced area. A Central Park that is entirely leash free leaves the boundaries to the discretion of the participant. Does this mean the Central Arena and Central Library parking areas? Does this mean the area by the Central Band Shell? Does this mean the area in front of Central Library? How does the City staff propose to enforce the current, un-enforceable, leash by-law between the planned enforcement hours of 9AM to 9PM? I feel this will somehow seem as a reward to dog owners that are clearly not respecting the current by-law. I could agree to support this idea if the City demonstrates a will to enforce the current by-law in place, not only at our Central Park but the many wonderful walking areas in our City's public spaces. Most dog owners are very responsible and excellent caretakers, however; some are not. Opening the entire Central Park for dogs off leash creates a huge public space, in the heart of our City, that will clearly be off limits to several groups of citizens, which; in my opinion, would be a mistake.
27. My wife and I live very near Central Park and we walk through the park to get to the curling club, seniors' centre and library, etc. and even downtown. So, we use the park even at night. We are definitely NOT in favour of a leash free area in Central Park. There is a safety issue with unleashed dogs from a personal experience perspective. Problems with picking up after the dogs who are not on a leash. Parks are made for kids and families and we shouldn't reduce the full enjoyment of the park. There is also a safety issue of the dog itself due to the vehicular traffic and bike use. Therefore, my wife and I are against unleashed dogs at Central Park.
28. As a runner and walker, I am regularly approached by dogs off leash with the owner's reassurance that "he won't bite". Possibly not however I don't wish to be the first victim. I also don't wish to be tripped or have a dog snapping at my feet. The reassurance of "he is only playing" does not overcome my concerns of being tripped. I would support a leash free time in many public areas if there was adequate enforcement of dogs off leash. I suggest that all by-law enforcement officials be accountable for a minimum number of warnings and fines. This may be seen as a quota system however it would certainly raise the attention and reduce dogs running free in public areas. I will not be able to attend the meeting on the 19th however I look forward to the feedback from other citizens.
29. As the father of two very active 4 and 2 year olds who use the Central park religiously, I am strongly against allowing dogs to roam leash free in the park. I have written to the Burlington Post many times over the past decade about the number of irresponsible owners who are convinced that because their dogs are okay with them, the dogs won't cause a problem when my boys are playing. On one such instance an owner took his dog off the leash and the dog sprinted toward my sons. The dog and owner were 100 yards

away from each other when the animal reached me and my kids. My sons were playing with their park toys and the dog ran right in between them and picked up a toy and ran off to his master with it. Since the incident, my children have not been able to walk next to a dog. Another instance, an owner allowed his dog to run free on the playground equipment in Central Park by the Guelph Line entrance. My kids were playing on it and I had to physically remove my sons from the equipment because they were terrified of the dog. The owner, once he showed up, said, "My dog love kids." I replied, "Perhaps you should abide by the laws and get him on a leash."

30. Fenced leash free no good – see King Road, ie. no clean up, large aggressive dogs and not controlled in any way. Suggest timed leash-free at the west end. Other than off leash times, enforcement should be increased. Rules should not include dogs not approaching other dogs – they're social animals. Has to be a designated area.
31. I would really like to attend, but won't be able to make it. I would however, like to add my name to the list of people in support of keeping the park family friendly- and having the ON leash bylaw enforced. We have tried to enjoy the park with our toddler only to be run out of the park by so many dogs off leash. Dogs are simply too unpredictable to be allowed to roam off leash, at the park, along the public path or anywhere they might hurt someone or be hurt by another animal. Particularly when we have designated off leash parks in the region. I can't imagine how you would be able to select a 'designated' time or day (or place) that would be suitable for off leash. Runners, children and sports teams use the park after 9pm and before 9am and I would think they would like to do so without the risk of being chased, bitten or startled. Thanks for the opportunity to share our thoughts.

In my opinion the proposed 9pm to 9am leash-free time is ridiculous. First: No one could feel safe to walk through the park after dark. Can you imagine a dog charging at you in the dark - you couldn't even see it coming. Second: If they make a mess, no dog owner would clean it up. In the last few weeks I have twice barely avoided stepping into a pile of feces. If they want to let them run from sunrise until 9 am ok. As long as everyone can see and observe them - but never in the dark of night!!!! I wrote to you about my experience of having been almost knocked off my bike by a charging dog last year and another incidence my husband and son experienced 2 winters ago - when a dog charged at my son and granddaughter (3 yrs. then) as they were coming down the hill on a tube. The dog bit, luckily into the tube - it could have easily been my granddaughter's face - that way only the tube was destroyed - the owners stuttered a sorry and just walked away. He didn't even have the decency to offer to pay for the tube. Just last week, when we had the first few snowflakes my daughter went tobogganing with her two sons (4 and 6 yrs old) a similar incidence happened again. As they were coming down the hill on their toboggan a dog came charging at them. No ruined tube this time and thank goodness no bite. You will have to admit how extremely dangerous free running dogs are, even if "they are a good dog and they only want to play" according to their owners. My family alone had 3 close calls in the last 2 years!!!!!! Leash free times won't do it!!! No way. One would have to figure out when to go through the park on a bike, or with a baby buggy, or when tobogganing is safe? Fenced areas-maybe, but where?

32. I am against allowing dogs to run leash free in Central Park. I like dogs and we owned two until they got old and ill. They always stayed on our property or on a leash. There will be always people who do not clean up after their pets and we do not need that in a park that is used by children in a lot of sports. I do not want to have to watch where I step in Central park. And we do not need to spend money to fence in a section. Also some dogs cannot be relied upon to obey their owners and will attack other dogs or people. We have leash free parks in other locations. That is where they should be taken.

33. I would like to state that I am most definitely opposed to a leash free time for dogs in Central Park. Since the dogs are currently off leash, against the bylaws as they stand now, it would not surprise me if dog owners did not obey the off-leash hours if they were made available. As it is now, whenever I cross Central Park, to go to the Library or the Seniors Centre, I often have to avoid dogs that are off leash. Owners do not poop-and-scoop after their off leash dog, so doggy-doo is also a frequent hazard. Adults and children play soccer, cricket and baseball where these dogs have spoiled the grass. This must be a health hazard. Any owner I have spoken to always maintains that their dog is the most friendly and harmless dog around. Even my neighbour, whose dog bit me, is adamant that her dog is harmless. Since my experience with off leash dogs has always been negative, I would prefer that the dogs be off leash in the parks already designated for that purpose. I notice one writer wants the park to be leash free between 9 pm and 9 am. This is probably the worst time to allow it. Who is going to be aware of a dog after dark. And how do you clean up if you can't find it. And I agree with the other writer that it is time for the off leash and licensing law be enforced. There is an individual who regularly walks their pit bull type dog on our street and when confronted the individual comes onto property and shouts obscenities. Needless to say it does not go any further as who knows what this person or animal is capable of.
34. I think we need to make sure the park is not leash free on Friday nights, and weekends. This is because of the heavy use by sports teams and the ability to monitor bad dog owners. I know in some areas that have leash free parks the owners must have bags and their animal must be kept within a certain distance.
35. ...at predictable time and/or places--nice thought but human nature being what is it is sooner or later this predictable. Time/place will be abused. Sorry to sound so negative but that is the way it is. One comment was that the majority of dog walkers walk or better yet, run, their dogs in this park off-leash and a 5 year old was bitten. The only place for dogs out to run should be in an enclosed space. An example, there is a park behind the condo where my daughter lives (near Liberty Village) and up until recently dogs ran anywhere in the park where children play. Just recently, an area was built with a fence and sand or such was put down at some expense I would imagine. Well, lately when we are outside of the condo, you can see the park very close, and now a short time later many of the dogs are running loose in the grass area of the park just as before. I have not yet seen anyone enforce the "rules" so people in the area take advantage and do whatever they want. I would not even think of allowing my granddaughter play in that park. And don't tell me these dog owners pick up after the dogs--this is pure fantasy. Our Central Park is used by many children and I am sure the dogs do not stay out of the playground area so whatever they leave behind is in the playground and on the grass---not a very sanitary or healthy use of community parks. Between 9pm and 9am???who is going out there during the night to let a dog run???Are we to install stadium lights too??? Am sure the neighbours surrounding the park would really appreciate this idea!!!! A pilot project--dream on. You can be sure that there will be glowing reports and once this free area is in it will never go away no matter how abused it gets. Against city by-law---is this like the people who let their dogs run in the power line at all hours that I have seen and there are children, seniors, etc who use the pathway all the time and have to contend with some idiot who takes the dog off the leash or the moron who crosses the street with no leash on the dog to get from one area of the pathway to the other. I personally have yet to see anyone patrolling the power lines to enforce the by-laws!!!! If a dog owner owns a home, let the dog run in the yard. If the person lives in a townhouse or apartment, then drive out to an area that can be safely used so no one is threatened or fear being bitten.

If you live in an apartment then maybe these people should have thought about dog ownership before buying a dog!!!!

36. Just a note in reference to your letter of June 4th., sorry about the slow response, but I would like to put in a good word for those very responsible dog owners who choose to let their pups run free in the park adjoining Lakeshore School. I have spent many happy moments watching them exercise their pets and feel that the ones that I HAVE observed would present no danger in any way to anyone else, whether they be passersby or local residents. The owners ALWAYS clean up whenever necessary and it is a joy to watch the dogs as they play 'fetch' or seem to kid their owners by playing dumb. They never appear when there are school children outside and they show excellent control over their animals. It seems such a shame that the majority have to suffer because of the odd inconsiderate owner. As a matter of fact, as I walk through the city I see so many dog owners fully obeying the law by keeping their pets on a leash as long as they are in a built up area. I do see the possibility of less considerate owners flocking to any open area which is announced as a free run for dogs and, since the Stratheden park in question is used daily by the students, I understand why some parents would be concerned. Incidentally, on certain days one may observe a flock of geese descending upon the same field and which city official can legislate against that?
As a point of interest, I do not own a pet.
37. I really like your idea to have Central Park leash free for part of the day. That strikes me as a good compromise between the two sides. My only suggestion is that the hours be extended a little bit into the main part of the day. As a woman, I would not be comfortable walking in the park (or to it) early in the morning or late at night. I will be out of town and not able to attend your meeting so am sending you this by e-mail. Thanks for taking an interest in this issue. I don't have a dog now but always wished we had a leash free park I could walk to when I did have one.
38. Please do not let this happen, I have 3 small grand children and we use the park alot,,,and they are afraid of dogs, also I have noticed that some people do not pick up after there dogs,,,not pleasant when you don't see it and step in it. We were away for the "pet in the park" meeting so this may be too late but, given people's idiosyncrasy no one will remember the times (or they will say so) and the dogs will still run free and my wife (who is terrorized by dogs) will not be able to enjoy the park . Could we not carve out a small area in the park, fence it in and then the dogs will always have a place to run - (no thought required as to specific times) and all the poop will be in one place. And my wife cannot worry.
39. My family and I back onto Central Park and wanted to alert you to the fact that the majority of Dog Walkers walk their Dog's in this Park off-leash. This has become an issue for us recently as our 5 year old daughter was recently bitten (un-provoked) by a neighbourhood dog. On a number of occasions recently while walking in the park we have approached by (I am sure mostly friendly) dogs, but as you can imagine my daughter is quite scared since her dog bite incident. When we have suggested to dog owners that they keep their dogs on a leash, we have been met with indignant stares, mild abuse or most recently on a walk this afternoon "it's not your park". While there are signs around Central Park stating that dogs need to be on a leash, there seems to be NO enforcement of this by-law. We think it is great the folks are able to walk their dogs in the park and most of the dog owners are great at cleaning up the mess left, but we ask that dogs are kept on their leash and that the city take some responsibility for enforcing this by-law.

40. A story about dogs not on their leashes and the people who lost their dear cat appears in the Burlington Post, just a few weeks after I sent you my email.
<http://news.ca.msn.com/ontario/burlington/burlington-cat-mauled-to-death-by-two-dogs>
 How tragic. Please note the paragraph where it is noted that 80% to 90% of the time dogs are not on their leashes in the park near their home. It appears this is city wide problem; not just specific to the bike path. Central part is another park where owners let their dogs run free. This needs to be addressed.
41. Please add our household to the list of constituents that endorse leash free zoning in Central Park. Yes we are dog owners and we live backing onto the park. We frequent the park daily - not while it is in use for other purposes- peaceful coexistence is really the name of the game. Embracing "our best friends", speaks well of any society. Living on the park, I maintain this philosophy/practice in regard to the wildlife that surrounds me daily. As a community we have chosen to leave the north side of the park "Natural" to allow the native wildlife to "freely roam" within our community. All of these animals (raccoons, rabbits, chipmunks, dogs and even skunks) enrich our lives. A "dusk to dawn leash free practice" is the most favorable, but any compromise would be welcome. South Burlington, the longest established area of Burlington, seems to be left short in terms of accessible "leash free dog parks".
42. Response to the Various Comments:
- One person said there is already a dog run on King Road. The two problems with that argument are (a) there are already parks all over the city with fields and playgrounds so, by the same logic, that individual could be invited to use those parks instead of Central Park and (b) the Dog Park at King Road is largely populated by German Sheppards and Boxers (I tried it once with my small dog and felt glad to get my dog back out in tact -- they were quite aggressive and a dog trainer who occasionally testifies in court on cases involving dogs has advised me it's a risky proposition to put my small dog around a pack of German Sheppards). One of the things I have valued about going to Central Park is that the dogs there were mostly smaller dogs like miniature poodle mixes, pugs, wheaton's, or gentler dogs like full size poodles and retrievers. I've been there many times and it was wonderful to see how easily the dogs got along ... I've never had a problem. Any of the dogs I've come across return to their owners upon command. I find this person's premise unfair, that we all get to pay the taxes that sustain central park and the other parks, but those opposed to free run get to dominate all the parks while taxpayers with dogs that they'd like to let run with other smaller dogs, get told to go to King Road and throw their pet in amongst a quasi wolf pack. Can this individual name even 1 small dog park in Burlington? The closest thing I know of is Central Park. I have not worried when I walk my dog there over the past few years. There has been no incident when my dog has been chased by another dog or when my wife and I were threatened.
 - the person who said their child was recently bitten has me really wondering about what the reality is. I've not seen anything like this at Central Park and I've been there a lot. So it's a shock to hear this. Either my assessment of the safety of the situation has been wrong, or this was a rare exception, or describing their child as having been bitten is an exaggeration. I know that once I was walking my dog on leash down a street when a father with a young child asked if they could pet my small dog. When the child waved its hand above the dogs head my dog thought the child was playing and tried to nuzzle it. The child screamed and said he tried to bite me. Since the father was right there and had seen what happened he explained that the dog didn't try to bite, she was just playing. He thanked me for letting his daughter pet the dog, but I

now tend to stay away from children who want to pet my cute little dog. Their imaginations are too big a risk.

Thoughts on the Various Options

- I hope the option of putting in a caged area at Central Park, where dogs can run, has been ruled out. It would ruin the character of the park. It would be a lose/lose for the vast majority of users of the park. It might also attract people with the big aggressive breeds. While I value letting my small dog run off leash, I would rather keep it on the leash than ruin the park with chain link fencing.
- I personally favor the suggestion of off-leash hours, but after 9:00 at night is too late (already getting dark most of the year which poses some dangers). But with the right hours, this strikes a balance between competing interests.
- Another option would be making it off-leash for small dogs, say less than 25, 35 or 45 pounds (someone could pick a limit), but leashed for larger dogs. The risk of danger to others should be quite minimal. I haven't seen many labs, german sheppards or boxers, and no rottweillers or dobermans, so owners of those dogs wouldn't be losing something they are now using. Most of the existing users that I've seen have smaller dogs, except those with retrievers (and those dogs have been quite gentle so it would be sad for them to lose out). When I have seen a rare sheppard or boxer, it has been on a leash anyway. Or perhaps just the more powerful, dangerous breeds could be required to be on leash (German Sheppard's, Lab's, Rottweiler's, Doberman's etc...)

The psychological impact of leash free dogs on older citizens going through the park should be taken into account. One Sunday I was there and a group of owners was standing around some with their dogs off leash. I knew all these dogs and felt very comfortable around them. But two ladies, perhaps in their late 70's, were walking through the park. The loose dogs moved perhaps 10 yards away from their owners, but never came closer than 30 yards to the ladies. Yet it was clear they were really quite scared, almost in a panic and yelled to keep the dogs away. If specific hours were established, people who would be genuinely afraid to be around dogs running loose would not have to worry

43. I have been walking my dog in Central Park for a couple of years with the same people every morning and up until recently we have had no issues. I propose that a meeting is arranged between the dog owners, non-dog owner, front line officers and you to discuss this matter. There is one woman causing a lot of grief in the mornings and we need to find a way to rectify this and allow our dogs to have time to run, maybe a time slot where we can let them run in a and anything beyond that time they must be on a leash.
44. Now, with our new dog, they ticketed us 125 dollars for letting him romp and get some exercise 12 hours before anyone uses the park. I can't afford this !!! I pay taxes here too and our dogs are part of our community. I will not keep him constantly leashed but I will respect others when they are using the park, which there are none at that hour. Why don't we go after the soccer players and nighttime parties who leave a ridiculous mess on the ground every day while we pick up? what about the yahoo's who shoot loud fireworks off out there until midnight for weeks on end? take a look at the pictures attached. this is just a sample of what we have to look at daily. try going out there on a Monday morning after a soccer tournament and count the water bottles and balled up tape. Look at all the broken glass in the forest hiking trail which I have been cleaning up daily for the past month. Instead of these people paying for it, it is the citizens who live adjacent to the park that are the easy targets. We are not criminals. As a dog owner and resident backing onto Central Park, my earlier emails last year expressed a strong desire to have leash

free in Central Park during certain times of the day. After living here for a few years, I now believe that Central Park should not be leash free, except in the winter or within a confined space. The problem I have seen is that some dog owners with leash free dogs do not pay attention to what the dogs are doing and ignore them while they are doing their business. As a result, the excrement remains on the ground. I don't think this is compatible with summertime activities and poses a health risk.

45. I walk my dog regularly in Central Park and am aware of the suggestion of a leash free time for dog owners. My dog is always on the leash because she is not reliable. We walk with other dogs who are not on leashes with no issues. I understand that this is against the bylaws but I am just saying there are generally not many issues. You may have recently been provided with information that a large majority of dog walkers are in agreement with the time based leash free plan. That is not what I have been hearing or endorse!! People MIGHT be in favour of that idea if it was in ALL parks in Burlington - not just Central Park. We do not want to see many more people with their dogs off leash that would normally go to the leash free fenced parks. I for one would be walking my dog at OTHER times if it was made available only in Central Park. I am very conscious that there are people who are afraid of dogs for a variety of reasons. It seems to me that if this became a reality that those people would simply not have access to the park during those times. That hardly seems fair for people who pay their taxes not to have full access to the park, due to their concerns, as the rest of us. Women with small children are also often concerned with an off leash dog coming up to them - rightly so!! So I guess my input is that I would be in favour of a trial IF this included all Burlington Parks. I have heard horror stories about the King Rd. off leash park and I will not walk my dog during those hours if only Central Park is included. At that point I would have to address my rights to enjoy a park, that I live right beside, being violated.
46. I'm interested in a leash free area in Central Park.
47. There should be a leash free area in Central Park, and (take precedence over cricket) and agrees that the waterfront should be more dog friendly.
48. Many people have provided a variety of ideas as to how a dog leash free public park should be controlled. Everyone I spoke to over the last few months stated they "do not want a fenced in area" because:

(I have condensed the key comments into the ones listed below.)

- a. "Some people just put them in the "cage" walk away do not control their dogs;
- b. Dog droppings are not cleaned up;
- c. The out of control dogs often injure one another;
- d. Some Vets will tell you that injured dogs they treat are most likely to have been injured in a confined, leash free park compound.
- e. It is cost effective to not put up a fenced in area."

People are generally supportive of a Leash Free Time Zones that are flexible and relate to other park uses. Fall, Winter and early Spring, no teams in the park so have extended hours and some afternoon hours for leash free use. Dog owners are saying "For a Leash Free time zone to work, you must have a protocol which spells out:

1. Dog owners must be with and have constant control of their dog;
2. If dogs being a nuisance they must then be leashed;
3. Dog droppings must be cleaned up";

49. I have seen first hand, people drive up, let the dog out to relieve itself the dog hops back into the car and the drive away leaving a mess behind. That type of behaviour is unacceptable and can be dealt with by taking license #'s and giving City Park Employees the ability, under the "no litter" laws, to fine dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs. I also strongly suggest that you get in touch with front line employees, not just Supervisory Staff, in Animal Control and our City Park Employees. They are a wonderful resource and see first hand the pros and cons of dogs and people interacting in our parks. It has also be brought to my attention and I do not know the process, but some groups who obtain permits to use our parks for special gatherings, sometimes leave a big mess not only in the park but in our washrooms, for our staff to clean up. Could these people be fined for not leaving the park in the condition they found it? Or maybe have them put up a bond in order to get the permit? However, I digress.
50. I hope if there is a trial it is not just in Central Park!! Having many more dogs there off leash would not be great - if this was done it needs to be affecting all the parks - most dog owners I walk with are of this opinion.
51. We didn't have a chance to make it to the open house to discuss this with you but I did want to let you know mine and my wife's thoughts. As cyclists and runners and parents of young children who often accompany us on outings, we strongly object to the idea of having dogs running around off leash at Central park. With the spring and summer activities that take place on soccer pitches and ball diamonds and children playing on the playground or simply enjoying the open spaces, we think that the opportunity to encounter an overly excited dog would create an opportunity to injure someone. We hope that you recognize the risks when animals run loose (even though most owners are responsible) and agree that this venue is not the best place for an off leash park, even with time constraints. We are sure that you have heard from many runners who run through the park in evenings and in mornings who would be fearful of encountering such an animal and we hope you take all these things into consideration when you make a recommendation. Please contact me if you have any other questions about our feelings.
52. Leash free times would have to be before 8 or possibly 9 am and after 9 or 10 pm. People walk through that park all the time, going to the library, Seniors Centre, the YMCA, Arena, Tennis Club, Lawn Bowling, Curling, let's not forget the 2 playgrounds, even believe it or not, some High School kids walking home from school, all day soccer camps in the summer and, in the winter tobogganing, (once we get more snow.) Working parents tend to take their young children in the early evening, teens are there until 9pm. Point 1 or question: are the dog owners going to pick up the poop their darling dog left behind on the other side of the field? They (dog owners) are standing around in groups talking, having social time, while their darlings run around free. How would they notice or see where their darling left something behind? And if they saw: would they walk all the way across to scoop it up? One more point on poop: dog owners should be encouraged to take the scooped up poop home. They throw it in the garbage bins at the park entrance - in the summer - it stinks!
- Point 2: the dogs are running free now, as if no law existed - why would the dog owners keep to the times allowed? The owners, talking to you, are maybe the ones following the rules anyways - there are some - these are the ones who should remind their fellow owners to keep the rules!!!!!!!!!!!!!! When we, the other half of the public, "the complainers", say something we get a cool look and dismissed as dog haters. Please point this out to them!**
- Point 3: maybe the most important: who would pay if something happened? The City won't pay for damages caused by a city tree. How about injuries to persons?** The City could make a lot of money if the by law officers would do their job. Instead of

looking at parking meters and giving out \$10, 20 or 30 tickets they could go to Central Park (and other parks) at certain times (i.e. between 4pm and 6pm? or around lunch time?) The "**dogs on leash**" sign at the park entrances says "**up to \$5000 fine**". Just an example: Yesterday, Friday, Jan.20 I walked through the park to go to Roseland Plaza at 4:20pm. There were 6 large dogs running around free. I came back around 5pm - there were 4 big dogs running around. (The little ones are usually on a leash - maybe to protect them from the big ones?) Anyways, the City could have made up to \$50,000!!!! The City could employ more by law officers with that money! How about that?

53. As for the Lease Free park, it should/could work as long as there are rules and the dog owners abide by them. The best list of rules which are clear and concise I found are on the City Of Hamilton website for both Dog Park and Free Run Parks. (see their link) <http://www.hamilton.ca/CityDepartments/PublicWorks/Parks/Programs/LeashFreeDogParks.htm>
- However, I don't agree with "Use at Your Own Risk", there are people who will abuse this; who is going to be liable if there is an incident of biting or attacks? Is it going to be the City as it is providing the space or the Dog Owner? Or Both?
54. I was a dog owner for many years and walked my dog on leash and at the Oakville and King Rd leash free parks. I do not want a leash free time at Central Park, no matter the hour. People don't always pick up after their dogs, the grass will die and it is dangerous for any other people out walking around or near the park (if the dog runs away or after another dog etc.)
55. We have just read your letter to residents of your ward inviting them to a meeting tomorrow evening regarding the above topic. It is excellent that you are keeping the residents of Ward2 informed and asking for input. However I believe that parks are a concern to all Burlington residents and not specific to the ward they are located in. My wife and I are residents of Ward5 and are regular users of Central Park, Central Library and the Seniors Centre. We also frequently have our grandchildren at the park playing various games. We object strongly to using the park as a leash free area. Dog owners have to be reminded to be responsible for their animals and should keep their dogs on a leash. If an area within the park can be fenced off then that may be acceptable but Central Park is well used by adults and children and it is difficult to imagine a fenced in area of a reasonable size being readily available. Allowing use of the whole park as leash free during certain hours would establish a precedent for parks across the City and would open the door to walking the dog off the leash anytime, anywhere. Glad that you brought this issue up, sorry we can't attend your meeting.
56. As grandparents, who take our grandchildren to Central Park, we are strongly opposed to dogs running leash free at CENTRAL PARK.
57. I am vehemently opposed to the idea for several reasons. I am a dog owner and fancier and used to walk my dogs on leash in and around Central Park. The number of dogs being allowed to run off leash put an end to my enjoyable walks through the park. It is my experience that in general the people running these dogs off-leash do not use the time to interact with their pet but rather use it as a social time. That is fine but they do not supervise their dogs and a bad situation can arise in an instant. I would hazzard a guess that the average dog owner many of whom would be taking their dogs to the park do not have a good understanding of canine behavior and pack mentality. Nor do they know how to read canine body language or know how to properly break up a dog fight. I should mention here that for those reasons (and more) I personally do not like to frequent the regulated off-leash parks either. There are just too many variables that can lead to

potential disaster (people's lack of savvy, dogs being mis-managed or not properly socialized, the potential for fights and for pack behavior to escalate etc.).

Don't get me wrong...I love dogs. My opinions are in the interest of the safety of my dogs and others, and the general public. For me to even consider supporting of an off leash area in Central Park, it would have to be a fenced-in, regulated area. Anything short of that is just irresponsible and potentially dangerous. It would be akin to opening up Guelph Line to a drag racing strip at designated times...

Have you or are you planning to consult with a canine behaviorist or at least a reputable trainer on this matter?

I personally do not think that an off-leash area that is not securely fenced at any hour of the day or night is a good idea. I admit to being a nervous nelly but a bit of prevention far outweighs any heartbreaking incident that may occur. My bottom line is, if you want to designate the area to being an off-leash area, then make it an official off-leash area complete with fences etc. Then those who frequent the park as well as those living near the park know the boundaries, what to expect and assume all of the associated risks. Anything less leaves a lot to chance and potential problems.

58. Following is a list of activities we see taking part in Central Park. Teen Tour Bank practice every Wed evening and Sun afternoon. If the weather is fine they march across the field while playing along with the colour guard,,,,,,,,,not looking down to step in a mess. 3 soccer fields. 2 baseball diamonds, 2 children play areas, 1 labyrinth, 1 cricket pitch, Sunday adult soccer in the centre of the main part, children and adults flying kites when the wind is present, remote model airplanes, gardeners coming to tend their plots, readers coming to the library, joggers taking in their laps for the day, seniors out for a leisurely walk, baby strollers with moms jogging along and even some powered wheel chairs taking a disabled person to enjoy the beauty of the park. In the winter we (when there is a fresh snow fall) families or groups of kids skiing across the park and tobogganing down the hill. Concerns regarding the unleashed hours of 9pm till 9am would be the walker would be more likely not to pick up after their dog, and they would not care, because no one could see it. Also the safety of late night walkers being met by an unleashed dog, and dog fights among the free runners. We feel that there are many parks within the vicinity, that if you are out for a walk, you can go to with your dog. Since counting up the activities that take place in this park, we feel that it would not be advisable for the number of citizens (adults and children) who want to enjoy the park be concerned about unpicked up dog feces, or unleashed dogs at any time. Because of our property being close to the park, we would not feel comfortable expressing our view points at a public meeting as someone might retaliate. Is there any possibility of getting the garbage barrel where dog waste is deposited moved to beyond the walkway which is between two houses over to a tree or the ball diamond where it was previously.
59. I write in opposition to a leash-free time for dogs in Central Park. When owners are not at leash distance from their dogs, it becomes much more difficult for them to find & clean up dog droppings. Consequently, there will be increased likelihood of those playing or walking in the Park to step or fall into droppings. Playing or strolling in the Park should be carefree, not an exercise in threading a path through dung, which we often need to do already at the front of Central Park Library due to an excessive quantity of goose droppings. In addition, a large leash-free zone at Central Park would probably attract a large number of additional pet owners who do not reside anywhere near the Park and who customarily walk their dogs elsewhere, thus aggravating the problem faced by players and walkers. At present there is insufficient monitoring of unleashed dogs at Central Park or elsewhere, especially on the Beach. We frequent the park and beach and often have to manoeuvre to avoid unleashed dogs running and playing in the water.

60. I was hoping to attend last night's meeting but something came up and I couldn't make it. I am very interested in an off-leash park at central park. I am a firm believer of keeping your dogs on leash and have never been to an off-leash park before. I have recently adopted a larger breed dog and it would be great to be able to bring her there to play with other dogs. I just live down the street from central park so it would be very convenient. I would love to hear the feedback from the meeting last night.
61. I use the Central Park daily for crossing over to the arena, library and to appts downtown for doctors and as a leisure area and pathway for exercise. Dog owners frequently leave their dogs off leashes, and a few times each year I have had the dogs run at me barking and at times growling in very menacing ways even though I try consciously to avoid them by going the far way around them. In winter I was told by one owner that her dog did not like hoodies..it was freezing temperatures with a cold wind and I was on my way to skating. I had to stop and wait for her to get her snarling animal. Was I supposed to freeze because her unleashed dog didn't like my attire? She got very nasty when I asked her to please leash her dog. After another incident I suggested to the owner that they put their dog on a leash but he said "my dog is friendly' and accused me of "not liking their dog". This is a frequent response from Burlington dog owners. Maybe they need to learn that dogs are loyal to them not to strangers. The Central Park is set up for soccer, baseball, cricket and play areas for children. The dog poop left by owners is a contaminant for us. The dog owners do not seem to have the proper manners to leash them nor often to pick up the dirt now. Do you think they will abide by time rules?
Suggestion:
- a. Instead of driving their dogs to the park to play how about suggesting owners walk their dogs for exercise to the park.
 - b. If you must have a play area in Central Park for dogs fence it in.
 - c. If you go ahead with leash free dogs please at least stipulate that they MUST BE MUZZLED while off their leash
 - d. If you set a time frame ensure that it is not in conflict with the activities such as concerts, New Years Eve and other public activities and that people using the park during those times are fully notified.
 - e. Safety for everyone should be the first priority.
 - f. If rules are established then they must be fully enforced by Burlington City Parks Department at all times (and the costs should be charged to dog owners directly by a service fee.)
- Thank you for this opportunity to speak about this issue now. Dogs off their leashes has always made the walk thru the park a very nerve racking time. I love the park and its open spaces..please keep it for the people as well as the dogs. Wouldn't it be possible to set up a leash free park somewhere less utilized by the public?
62. I am in favour. Perhaps from 8 pm onwards. Excellent idea.
63. I am a dog owner and would object to a leash free time in central park. I live close to the park on Delaware ave. I believe a leash free area, fenced would be much more appropriate. My supporting comments as follows:
Dogs off lead in a wide open area is not safe for the dog. No one has absolute control over their dog. There are too many variables and what ifs. Dogs off lease in wide open spaces should be well away from populated areas.
For much of the year the period 9 am to 9 pm is dark or morning hours. I would assume that much of this time is not utilized as it is dark. That makes am hours most popular and higher chance of incidence.

Dogs will pack in open areas and when in a group, owners have less control. I have seen what domestic dogs can do to a deer when they pack. No deer in central park but another animal is in danger or even a jogger or walker.

Who will pick up after the dogs. We already have problems with people who walk their dogs at night or early am. Many are not picking up after their dogs. We call them the night walkers. No way people taking their dogs to central park are all going to be picking up after their dogs, especially at night.

An enclosed leash free zone is much more responsible, safe for all and respectful to all park users.

64. I am opposed to any proposed pilot project for a leash free time in any of our parks as I do not feel there should be any leash free times in any of these open areas of Burlington. Any leash free times should only be taking place in designated "fenced in" Leash Free areas. The rule for keeping dogs on a leash exists not only for the safety of all residents it is there also for the safety of other dogs who are being walked. I know of one person who lost a very special dog due to it being attached by another dog which had not been kept on a leash. A leash free policy sets the scenario for various tragic incidents and people may start to be very reluctant to continue their normal use of Central Park. Even though it may be Central Park that is being considered for this pilot project, I believe that this proposal is relevant not only to the residents of Ward 2, but that it is also very relevant to the residents of all the other Wards as well. This proposal needs to be much more widely publicized and there has to be more time for the public to be encouraged to give their input. However, in the end, instead of even thinking about conducting such a pilot project, shouldn't we stop instead and simply be reminding ourselves of why we actually have the rule about dogs being kept on a leash? If our "dogs on a leash" rule actually makes any sense, then the proposed pilot project doesn't make any sense at all. Instead why don't we propose a pilot project in which we put more emphasis, than we currently do, on making dog owners actually take responsibility for keeping their pets on leash?
65. I had a chance to read the notice that you distributed today. As an area resident and frequent user of Central Park I am totally opposed to any area of the park being designated "leash free" I also agree that there are too many occasions where I have ridden my bike through the park to witness a dog running around leash free. The idea of allowing an off leash time of 9pm-9am is ludicrous. I certainly do not want to be cutting through the park in the late fall or winter, in the dark, to come face to face with some strange dog. There is a leash free park currently in the City. How many more do we need? Scrap the pilot, let your dogs run leash free in your backyard.
66. I am a dog lover but am against a leash free area in any part of Central Park. Central Park is one of a few parks in Burlington which is a major park and somewhat of a show place for several major sports activities. The park is extensively used by children and adults. When we walk or play who is going to pick up after these dogs. We have had dogs all our lives living close to Central Park and when we exercised our dogs we took them on a lease or they ran free in our back yard. Let the people who want a leash free park go to established parks which are not in a residential area. NO NO NOT IN CENTRAL PARK>
67. I am strongly against leash free, except in a fenced area. I walk the park daily at all hours and am constantly being approach by loose dogs who jump all over me with muddy paws while their owner tells me how friendly their dog is while I try and get the mud off my clothes. Even if they do not jump at me their approach is VERY unsettling as you are never sure of their intent. Another negative is the dog excrement all over the park.
68. I just received the letter regarding this issue, and would like to offer my bit. I have a dog, I have lived in Burlington for 2 years, I owned Once Upon a Tail Pet Boutique and Bath in

Village Square (closed Dec 2011). There are actually 2 leash free parks already - the one behind Costco/Tiger Direct on the Service Road and the one on King Road. These parks are great for off-leash for 1 primary reason, they are totally and completely fenced in. The ability to allow your dog to run "off leash" is a great one, but it is a dangerous one if the area is not completely secure. As a resident I am always sad to see signs of lost animals posted. They can chase a squirrel or a rabbit and be gone, they can chase cars, they may hear something and go seeking it, they WILL get skunked which will stink up apartments at night, they can be kidnapped etc. As a driver I would be concerned about hitting a dog at night that I didn't even know was off leash in the park. As a dog owner, I would not want unleashed pets coming up to my leashed pet. I have seen fights break out even between my dog and her best doggie friend over a toy that her owner and I have had to interrupt and put them in a time out before it escalated. I can only do this because of my knowledge and experience dealing with dogs. A new owner, uneducated owner, or timid owner may not have the ability to settle disputes. I would also feel uncomfortable if there were people "under the influence" in the park exercising poor judgment when it comes to other peoples pets. If a dog I don't know runs up to mine, starts a fight, bites me, bites my dog and the owner is nowhere to be seen, there is no accountability or responsibility. The idea of having a leash free zone is only feasible if there is a defined area that is completely enclosed. Unfortunately I know too many pet owners who are not as educated as they believe they are. Who don't have as much control or knowledge of animal behaviour or even their own pet as they think they do. Or perhaps they were simply too busy texting and emailing on their smart phone to realize their dog was gone/hurt/hurting others/hurting another dog/eating something it shouldn't be/ being surrounded by coyotes. Therefore I feel the safety concerns to the neighbourhood, community and the pets themselves are more important than a group of owners who have miscalculated the amount of time and energy that goes into providing and caring for active animals. I love my dog and love taking her to leash off, but her safety and that of those around us comes first. Always.

69. Central Park is already treated as a leash-free park by almost all dog owners. If the current by-law cannot be enforced then I cannot see any point in creating any more rules just so that they can be ignored too.
70. I feel strongly that any park that has facilities for children should, under no circumstances, have a by-law that allows dogs to run lease free at anytime. Central Park is a huge park that is not enclosed, and letting dogs run free is a recipe for disaster. How do you supervise your dog in such a large area? I am a dog owner, and I have seen people walking, holding their dogs leashes, while their dog is running free, a mile and a half in front of them. They aren't controlling their dogs now and they totally disregard the by-laws. These dogs will be getting out of the park, onto peoples properties and possibly the road. Unless you presume you are Bruce Jenner, good luck catching them. An enclosed area may possibly be an answer, but I feel it should be at another area, not CENTRAL PARK. Let's keep Central Park for the public to enjoy. I would hate this park to go to the dogs!! WHERE ARE THE BY-LAW OFFICERS???
71. Thank You for your asking for our input on this issue as we are residents of the Ward and live very close to Central park. We walk through the east end of Central Park daily and use the playground equipment daily as well. Very few dogs in Central Park are ever on a leash. We have had several incidents of dogs running up to our young children snapping at them and scaring them. Several dogs have run up to our stroller and eaten our baby's snacks right off the stroller. Very few dog owners are apologetic and others are completely inconsiderate. We have not ever seen an enforcement officer in the park. We are there daily and 90% of the dogs are not on a leash. We do not want to see Central

Park become a leash free park but it appears it already is. I agree that dog owners have the right to leash free parks in the city. I have lived and worked in several different cities where leash free parks are always located in non-residential areas that are fenced in. These leash free parks are in isolated industrial areas where young children do not frequent. Central Park with its play structures, soccer fields, ball diamonds, labyrinth and upcoming splash pad is **not** an area for a leash free park. Don't waste your time and the time of your constituents with posting ugly signs in the park with laws and times that will never be enforced.

72. I live right next to Central Park and enjoy this park on a regular basis. I do not believe having a leash free time at this park is going to work or serve the purposes of the vast majority of the residents of Burlington who use this park. Please allow me to explain my rationale behind that statement. Currently, dogs are supposed to be on leashes and it is not happening or enforced. I have heard of people being bitten by dogs not on leashes at this park and that is not right. And I have also experienced unpleasant encounters with unleashed "well-trained" dogs that the owners were at a loss to explain why the dog reacted like they had, didn't respond when they called them back, and were sheepish when trying to explain that their dog "never behaves like that normally".

The other by-product of leash free times, that I have discovered, is that it somehow translates to owners as freedom from the responsibility of pet ownership. There is invariably an increase in animal waste left behind as they have been allowed to run free and the owners often do not follow after them to ensure they clean up their messes. I think of having to try to find a suitable place to sit to enjoy the concerts in the park or play soccer with my kids when the area in front of the bandstand is littered like a minefield with dog waste.

My other concern is what would be the timeline that this would be happening, early morning, late evening? As I said earlier, I am a frequent user of the park and use it very often to walk to my mothers home at various times. Early in the morning or late at night, the fact that I can do this is one of the main reasons I enjoy living in Burlington. It is, by far, one of the safest places I have ever lived in my life. However, I have often experienced the trepidation of entering the park and not being able to enjoy it, not for fear of an attacker, but because I am on the look out for the unleashed dogs that tend to come running up to me to bark at me, or worse "to play". The owners find this cute but having been the recipient of a dog bite, I have to say I was not happy about it and should not have this as a worry.

Part of the responsibility of pet ownership is the taking care of that pet and ensuring that you have considered all that is entailed with that great undertaking. There is a leash free park on King Road so there is an area available to allow for dogs to roam free. Central Park is pivotal in Ward 2 and in the greater framework of the City of Burlington, hence the name, and is used for so many activities year round. Is it too much to ask that those pet owners who have dogs keep them on the leash while at the park and utilize that parks that can facilitate their desire to have their dogs off the leash when they need to? I don't think so. I feel, as a tax-paying contributor to the amenities of not only this park but the City of Burlington, I should be allowed to enjoy my park without risk of attack from dogs not on a leash. There is a place for dogs off their leashes just not at Central Park at any time.

73. I frequent Central Park with my dog several times a week at various times of the day as early as 630am and as late as 8:00pm. I empathize with each of the quoted positions in your letter, leash free times is worth consideration, there are times when I would prefer my dog not be approached by dogs off leash and I am sensitive to the safety of those utilizing the park, particularly the play structure behind the library. Perhaps a leash free time in the area behind the hill adjacent to the arena could be considered. This "pocket" in the park

is far away from the play structures and "off the beaten" track in terms of those wishing to walk their dogs on leash uninterrupted. As I am unable to attend the June 19 meeting, I would appreciate receiving the summary of discussion.

74. My family and I live beside Central Park and are dog owners. Unfortunately, we were unable to attend tonight's meeting however we wanted to email you and advise that we are very much in favour of leash free times being assigned to the park. In a community filled with dog owners and non-dog owners a happy medium is always hard to achieve. There is some truth to never being able to make everyone happy. I do however think assigned leash free times will certainly be a welcomed change for those of us raising dogs in the downtown core and will hopefully encourage dog owners to leash their dogs outside of these assigned times.
75. We will be unable to attend your June 19 meeting. As life time dog owners and current Central Park regular users/observers we offer our obviously biased suggestions:
1. Leash free time window(s) be considered that work-around other higher-priority uses such as soccer and baseball.
 2. Children's play areas should be out of bounds at all times.
 3. Strive (yes, easier said than done) to encourage/confining leash free to more passive use (walking strolling) areas such as the north-east wooded area and the Rotarian arboretum and to discourage forays and attendant poops over soccer areas etc.
 4. Establish/post a code of expected dog and owner behaviours including aggressive behaviours etc.
 5. Encourage a Loyal Order of Dog Owner Chowder and Marching Society (you name it) volunteers to help clean up the likely increased owner missed/ignored poops and ideally supervise the above code of behaviours
76. Every time I walk through Central Park there are dogs off leash. I have several neighbours who drive to Central Park daily to allow their dogs to run free off leash. All dog owners currently believe the park is all "off leash" all the time. I do not see any point in making new more complicated rules when no one is following the rules currently in place. Any changes to the rules would have to have some serious consequences for breaking the rules – that are enforced to the point that people learn to follow them. There are plenty of signs now and all dog owners know the basic rules – dog owners just believe the rules do not apply to their dogs. Enforcement with fines would have to take place on a weekly basis to the point that most dog owners would be caught once a month if they went off leash in the wrong time period.
77. I am sorry that I cannot attend the meeting this evening, but I would like to express my opinion on the free roaming of dogs at Central Park. My wife and I enjoy walking – many times through the Park. My wife is deathly afraid of larger dogs, and no matter how 'good' they are, they are prone to approach any person walking in the area. This creates severe anxiety in my wife and consequently affects me as well. We believe that as residents of Burlington, we should be able to walk in all public spaces without being confronted with uncontrolled dogs. (In that regard, we walk on the beach many mornings as well and are often in the situation of leash free dogs roaming there – in a dog prohibited area for that matter.) I understand the request by dog lovers to have such an area, but – despite the owner's insistence that 'their' dog is safe, the nature of dogs vs. people is not conducive to a "safe" Park area. I emphatically protest any request to have a leash free time for dogs in Central Park!!
78. I walk my dog every morning at Central Park with a few others. Every morning we are forced to clean up the park from the soccer people leaving their garbage all over the place. Water bottles, paper, coffee cups and worst of all the black or white tape left it

wads all over the grass. The dogs eat it and can become very ill. Every year I'm forced to contact the Burlington Youth Soccer club and complain, to little effect. It seems as though dog walkers are constantly being picked on for using the park but anyone coming early in the mornings will see us with our poop bags filling them with the garbage left behind from the soccer games. It's disgusting. We ALWAYS pick up after our dogs and yet we're constantly under attack from the same people who so blatantly disrespect the grounds and other users. Nothing seems to be done and I'm fed up cleaning up after parents and kids who don't have any respect for either the park or their own community. I would appreciate if this could be brought up at a parks and rec meeting or with someone who could help with this ongoing issue.

79. I received a notice about dogs on or off leashes in Central park as well as building a waterpark. I have 2 young children and we walk through the park often as we live across the street. I see a lot of people with their dogs off their leash throughout the day. They tend to be off in the distance but who is to say the dogs won't run over to us? How do we stop this? Anyway, I think having a leash off time is a good idea rather than a section that is fenced off. I don't think dog owners will listen to the rules anyway, so why not have a time frame for them so the rest of us steer clear during these hours. I don't think 9-9 works though because a lot of young children are already out in the park by 9am. Maybe 9pm-7am. Another concern though is if these dog owners will clean up after the dogs?
80. We intended to attend the meeting Tuesday, June 19 at the Seniors Centre regarding Leash-Free Time for Dogs, but unfortunately could not make it. Could you please email us with summary of the meeting? We live at the edge of Central Park and often walk through it with or without our son's dog. We feel that this park is not feasible for off-leash unfenced since so many activities occur here at varying times - Teen Tour, cricket, baseball, soccer, children's playground, communal garden. Possibly a fenced area would be better or a larger area like the former Brock High School green area.
81. The other day my Grandson and I were at Optimist Park. We were there to throw a ball around. Unfortunately there were so many dogs as well as excrement that it made it difficult to avoid the animals and left over's. I noticed that while we were there most of the dogs were allowed to run loose. The problem was that when others arrived with their dogs on a leash they were attacked by the ones running loose, to the point where the owners had to drop the leashes and let the dogs fend for themselves. This would appear to be a regular thing as I have seen individuals walking towards the park on other occasions with the same dogs I had seen there that day. The only way this can work is to have a fenced off area where patrons are in control of their dogs and expected to pick up after their pets. This is not the case in regular parks and if you confront the abusers they will tell you in few words what they think of your bylaws and to mind your own business. The individuals are usually people who don't respect the rules but have been approached in the past by a Bylaw Officer and feel they deserve a Sports, fun Park to be turned into a dumping ground for their dogs. An area where children are put at risk (even by a friendly dog who means no harm) because a dog running loose scares them. Families now have to leave the park so the dogs have their time. Parks are made for people and already the dog owners who are breaking the law daily at Central Park think they should be given equal time. This is why Bayview Park dog area was created and it is there for all to enjoy. Once again Parks are made for people and Central Park is full of people who are involved in many different activities, should they leave because DOGS are the priority?. Dog laws need to be enforced at Central not enlarged for a select few who are continually breaking the law. This may seem harsh but if you read the Wednesday Post regarding the dog run away story at the beach? You would have noticed the dog was not on a leash and ran away. People come up with all kinds of excuses but the reality is if you allow your dog to run

loose (in most cases) the dog is out of control. I would not consider endorsing this Leash Free Time at Central Park.

82. I read with interest your piece on the leash-free area at the park. I am a dog owner; however, I have strong reservations about putting a leash-free area in such a park. This particular park is full of children, using the playground, the library and the field. It is not fenced. There is no reason that dog owners can't take their dogs for runs at leash-free areas we already have in the city, which are generally separate areas and not on a site such as Central's. It is very common for owners to not notice what their dogs are doing as they run across to the other side, and is therefore very common for these parks to have a lot of dog poop that doesn't get picked up. Having the park opened 9 p.m. to 9 a.m., basically in the dark, would further exacerbate this problem. Then the next morning the kids would be playing and stepping in it. I also think it's unfair to expect kids and others to essentially lose the park at 9 pm when the unleashed dogs take over. At the end of the day, people do take precedence over dogs and this is a park meant for and used by kids and their families. Not everyone loves dogs and not all dogs are friendly.
83. When I owned my pets, dogs included, I realized that it is my responsibility to make certain my pets don't become a nuisance to individuals who just wish to enjoy a day out at the park. I make certain that I picked up after my dog and that he did his business in an area of the park where people don't normally walk or jog or play their games. I know many dog owners feel the way I do, but I live just around the corner from Central Park and now that I am a grandfather and take my grand kids to the park, I am ever more observant to those annoying individuals who don't keep their dogs on their leash and who don't pick up after them just because they feel no one is watching, or just daring someone to say something. I have had many a dog owner tell me, "so what are you going to do old man", which is just the kind of attitude I would expect from individuals who are all about them and no consideration of others. I feel that a section of the park should be "Leash Only", and that this section be close to a roadway so when people take their dogs out of their car, the pet park is right there, so there are no excuses that "my dog pooped just when I was going to the dog park". I also feel that there should be a hefty fine for people not obeying the by-law just like there is a fine for parking in a handicapped spot. This fine should also increase with each infraction. I have not begun discussing the health issue of dog poop because that is another area which shows peoples ignorance, nor have I begun discussing the issue of having to remove the dog poop from my grandkids sneakers and the aggravation this causes. Parks are for people first.
84. As a dog owner I would love to see a pilot project in place. One question: is the potential area fenced off? If not, I would suggest it's not at all a good idea. Whatever works for the community!
85. I am not sure I can attend Tuesday's meeting re. leash free times in Central Park, as I have a 21 month old (and an 8 year old) and it is often difficult to get away from the house in the evenings. I am VERY AGAINST any leash free times, in any park, in Burlington. I am a walker and a runner and use the downtown path that goes through Seneca, Delaware, etc, and I use various parks as well. I also use the Hydro path that runs through Headon Forest and Millcroft. I can't tell you how many times dog owners have their dogs off their leash. It is a **frequent** occurrence and it is bothersome. Sometimes I actually keep count and there might be up to 10 dog owners who are allowing their dogs to run free. I have never seen

a single by-law officer around (in the last 10 years) giving out tickets to people who are breaking the law.

I am a little afraid of dogs myself and dog owners seem to have no regard for this, or the city by-laws that exist. In addition, dog owners always assume that their dog would "never bite" someone and there is **no way of guaranteeing this**.

I find that the saying "give an inch, take a mile" applies to this situation. People are running/walking their dogs off leash all the time in Burlington (I just saw someone on Sunday morning in Optimist Park, beside Martha St.). If off leash times are given, people will assume they can do it at other times, or claim they weren't informed, etc.

Another argument I will make is this -- parks, with playgrounds, in particular, were put there for people. I have no problem with dogs being around, as long as they are under the control of their owners.

For everyone's safety, I don't think leash free times in an open park are a smart idea. Just a question, but are there liability issues regarding this matter?

86. I am skeptical about leash-free times for any public park for the following reasons:

1. It is not at all clear how the pick-up of pet stool would work when the pets are roaming free and away from their owners. Would the city need to hire cleaning staff for this? If so, would the owners pay for their wages?

2. There is always a possibility that some pets may wonder off the park and into residential areas. How would this be avoided? I do not think fencing a public park is an appealing solution.

3. Many people are allergic to certain kinds of animals. Repeated use of a park by such animals might leave residual matter, which would trigger allergenic reactions to people visiting the park in off-pet hours. Apart from the health hazard involved, serious allergenic attacks may trigger lawsuits; have the legal aspects and potential costs been considered?

4. An acceptable alternative might be to designate certain areas as pet-roaming areas, accessible at all times, and charge pet owners a reasonable fee in order to cover maintenance and clean up costs. Such areas should be completely fenced and located away from residential areas and schools.

87. FABULOUS! Central Park is already loved by dog owners, and therefore used illegally, because there is heaps of room. Dogs have the freedom to interact freely, or not. If there are dogs that owners are wary about, you have the time and the space to move away. If there are children or non-doggie people around, you have time to take control of your dog and/or move to an entirely different section of the park. But if this project takes off, I think the City would definitely need to keep an eye on numbers. You don't want Central Park becoming like 'fenced in' doggie parks, nor deter non-doggie people from using the park because it is overrun with dogs.

Existing leash free 'fenced in' parks can be absolutely horrendous - especially for smaller dogs - and most dog owners have horror stories about incidents that have happened there. Enclosed spaces are not natural, you don't have the space to avoid/move away, and owners aren't as responsible with their dogs because they don't have to be. Dogs are allowed by owners literally to run wild. Fenced in areas can exacerbate anti-social dog behaviour and, in turn, peoples' fears about leash free spaces. But because Central Park won't be fenced in is precisely the reason why I think this project could be successful. If managed properly, it will still be used by a variety of people for a variety of reasons, and dog owners will be forced to keep an eye on their dogs and not let them run wild.

The City should also note that dog owners do talk, and it is a very small community. Word gets around about which dogs/owners to avoid, and with whom to exercise caution. So maybe if there is a reporting procedure to prevent the few bad apples from ruining it for

the rest of us (without being Big Brotherish or abused by people who hate dogs), &/or even perhaps have a representative from animal services present during leash free times to assure non-doggie citizens that it is a supervised environment, concerns/fears might be assuaged(?) I'm not entirely sure I would want Animal Services there, but if it meant the dogs could have a good run around, and in a safe environment, I'd be all for it.

88. We would support leash free times in a fenced in and secured area at Central Park. We have a service dog and are required to keep her on leash unless it is fenced in and secured. It would be very convenient to have more of these areas in Burlington as we currently have to drive to one.

89. Fact#1: Dogs are unpredictable.

End of story but if you need more reason to oppose leash free park/times trial keep reading.....

As a resident of 25 + years who backs on to the park I find the decision to allow dog owners to let their dogs run free at any time **WRONG** for this park and this area. I have experienced the assault of a dog not controlled by an owner who 'thought' their dog was well behaved. My son was literally run over as a toddler by 2 large dogs who did NOT respond to their owners yelling. This left him traumatized for years. I have observed all form of bad pet ownership with no respect or regard for walkers, other pet owners and local residents. Owners always sheepishly apologize although the gentleman whose 2 dogs ran over my son proposed that they were working on making the park leash free as a defence for his allowing his dogs to be off leash!!! Reprehensible! My son is still waiting for an apology. Need I go on? Yes? Okay....

This park is frequented at all hours by all ages, dog walkers, runners (often in the early morning or late evening), sports enthusiasts even teen agers 'hanging out'. This park currently lacks any form of law enforcement, by-law or otherwise. So who will enforce leash free times and proper leash free behavior by pet owners? Can anyone guarantee an animal's behaviour? Really?

- 1) The proposed time frames will often occur after dark when I understand small children are less likely to frequent the park but what of residents and others (joggers, other pet owners, early morning walkers etc.)who would like to frequent the park without fear of being attacked by dogs off leashes at **ANY** time. What about their rights? Young people use this park as a short cut between Drury Lane/Brant Street and Guelph line or New Street and Woodland.
- 2) This is an unsafe concept in the center of the city with two major streets (Guelph Line and New street) bordering it. This would allow unrestrained dogs access to major streets which could lead to motor vehicle accidents. This park is bordered by Drury Lane theatre, the arena and the youth theatre where the teen tour band often practices. These major venues are frequented late in the evening during proposed leash free times. Who will protect those people?
- 3) I have observed many dog owners and they often seem to be under the impression that *their dogs* are well behaved, friendly and listen to their commands. Myself and all of my family including all 3 children have been the object of such dogs 'affections' from the most well-meaning owners that already do NOT respect leash laws. How can we expect them to respect this new law?
- 4) These time frames will occur at night in a park that is not well lit. How is it proposed that dog owners will be able to control a dog they cannot see when they already cannot control a dog they can see.

I could go on and on but I go back to

Fact#1: Dogs are unpredictable. Period.

90. I have been a resident with a home that backs onto the park for 25 years and have raised 3 children here. All 3 of them have had run ins with dogs in the park. My youngest son who is 18 now was run down by a pair of dogs that were allowed to run free when he was 5 and he didn't get over the incident until he was 13 or so. My daughter was also run over by a big dog but the effects didn't last as long. My point is that for the past 25 years there has been a blatant disregard for the bylaw and because I didn't see a point in calling enforcement to have them check up on the park it has been going on unchecked for years. I am not saying that all dogs are mean but there has certainly been enough incidents of poor control over a pet that would strongly vote against any off leash time afforded to dogs in a park that is constantly filled with children of all ages. There is also a proposal to have a splash park put at Central. That will encourage even more kids to come and play there with even more chances for the irresponsible pet owners to allow their dogs to run other kids down.

I don't hate dogs we had dogs while I was growing up and I have very fond memories of that. My objection is based on my kids experiences and that fact that it is a park designed for people to play in not dogs.

Please please do not allow dogs off leash and please ask bylaw enforcement to come by at around 7 am and 530 pm just to see the total disregard of the law.

91. I received your flyer in my mailbox about the issues surrounding Central Park and people using it sporadically for leash-free activity with their dogs, however, I missed your meeting last night. I live at the end of Courtland Drive where the park opens up, and I am a dog owner, myself, and my take on it is **not** to allow any leash-free activity at any time. Central Park houses not only frequent dog owners walking their beloved dogs, but also soccer games, the Teen Tour Band, certain public festivals, and simply people wanting a scenic stroll through a gorgeous piece of land in Burlington. It's not a place for dogs to be able to run off-leash at any time, not only for the reasons you had on your flyer as feedback from other residents, but for my own experience, my dog feels threatened by other dogs running up to him while he IS on leash and they are not. Mine is the type of breed that when given the freedom to run off leash, well, he takes off and wouldn't ever come back... it's just in his nature, so I always need to have him secured. So, when there is a dog off leash - no matter if it's the sweetest, gentlest breed - that approaches my dog without an owner to control it, my dog certainly feels threatened/confined and begins to growl and is a bit standoffish, which causes major stress for me to yell to the owner to call their dog back or this possibly won't end well. I am nervous when I see any dog freely off leash and I'm walking my own, because I don't know if that dog will just take off towards me, not listening to whomever it's with, or just stroll beside its owner quite casually. I absolutely hate the feeling of dread this gives me, and I actually avoid walking into the park if I see a dog off-leash from the get-go just to avoid a possible encounter.... which is a shame because my dog absolutely loves walking through the park and woods when he gets the chance.

I understand that there are a lot of owners who are great at controlling their dogs and just want to let them have some space and freedom to run in the park, however, I believe that population is in the minority compared to all of the other people and activities in the area that would prefer not to have to wonder if this strange dog off-leash who's coming up to me/or my child/or my own dog is friendly or safe or, possibly, the awful alternative. It simply isn't fair for everyone else to have to be aware of this animal and be on guard, when having it on a leash at all times keeps everyone safe and sound.

Can we not plan to build a new off-leash dog park in this area of Burlington where it is accepted in its own complete space? We have one in Oakville off Lakeshore at Shell Park, plus one off King Road but nothing in Central Burlington. I would love a dog park closer to me and a way for all of us to allow our "pet children" to run and play within the

confines of a safe fenced park. I fear that with simply imposing hours of restriction for off-leash in the park, people will take advantage of that and just come whenever's convenient to them, anyway, and who will really be there to enforce it or tell them not to? I am afraid no one will and we'll be right back to where we are now, debating the issue as a whole. Thank you for your time and for inviting feedback on this topic, as it's been on my mind since I moved into the neighbourhood last October.

92. As a dog owner I am in support of this. During the hours of 9PM or even 10PM to 9 AM the park is not typically in use by anyone other than dog walkers and I see no harm in dogs being allowed to be off leash. I have a small dog and find the current leash free park on King Road to be unsuitable, it is frequented by large dogs who can be quite rambunctious and intimidate my small dog. Plus King Road is not very convenient. For the most part dog owners in Central Park are responsible, maintain control of their pets, pick up after them and frequently pick-up garbage including bottles/cans and other assorted 'party paraphernalia' discarded by other park users.
93. As a resident of 37 years on Drury Lane I use the park often to walk to the library, to take my grandkids to the play area etc. etc. It has become a real problem with HUGE dogs running loose and I am very fearful to take my grand kids as a result of a safety issue for us. This has simply escalated over the years and dog owners seem to think they own the park and throw balls and have their dogs chase them etc. I am NOT in favour of leash free at ANY TIME as this is a park for all; with dog owners allowed with their pet on a leash. Why not run with your dog on a leash and get into shape!! I have complained for years and there is next to no supervision and no repercussions for disobeying the law. I feel the problem is passed from one department to another and nothing positive happens. If the park were off-leash from 9 pm to 9 am daily it would only encourage ALL THE TIME. Pet owners don't listen to the law now so why would they adhere to a time frame. Take your dogs to the leash free parks. The park at Tom Thompson school is also a problem area-- people just drive up, open their car doors and let the dogs run. When I politely tell them this is not a leash free park they just say "oh, she won't hurt anyone" so dogs seem to rule in Burlington parks and I don't like it. I wish I could attend the meeting but I have a previous commitment. I voted for you during the election and I hope you will see **the danger of a leash free park in the core that is well used by families**. Thank you for listening as I rant but I do get very agitated about aggressive pet owners.
94. There should NOT be a pilot project for leash free times!
WHY:
- 2 years ago I was with my granddaughter. We were snow tubing on the hill north of the arena. As my granddaughter fell off the tube, I noticed a mid sized dog running at full speed towards her, the owner yelling at the dog to stop. The dog grabbed the tube shaking it violently. The tube was ruined. It still comes to mind, what if it were my granddaughter the dog grabbed???
 - I have experienced dogs off a leash running up alongside and barking as I rode my bike through the park.
95. If you decide to allow leash free time in the park, your message is that if you ignore or disobey a bylaw long enough, it will be ok and pretty soon we will make it legal. Why bother with a bylaw? I'm not very happy about this.
96. Thank you for this opportunity to pass along comments. I wanted to attend your meeting but was unable to and this allows me to still have a voice. I am a dog owner and would love to be able to take my dog for a run off leash in our beautiful Central Park, so I am supportive of a leash free time being established. I do though hope that the dog owners using the park in this way would understand very clearly that they are still responsible for

closely supervising their dogs' behaviour so that the experience is still enjoyable for all.....dogs and humans alike. This is a great chance to explore some new ideas. Let's carry on the conversation.

97. My recommendation would be a fenced -in portion of Central Park East of the baseball /cricket field and south of the walkway along the south side of the soccer fields or at the north west corner of Central at the end of Courtland. We see a lot of dogs / owners going down Courtland on leash to the Park Oakville has two nice fenced -in leash free parks at Shell Park and the new Arena Park on Nyagoya (spelling) north of Dundas Hwy 5. Fencing in with a 4 ft high chain link is good for dog control; dog interaction with each other; child safety; poop & scoop; and dog owners able to chat with each other while their dogs play. One or two picnic tables for chatting or seniors to rest would also be suggested. Dogs would have to be on leash when outside the fenced leash free enclosure. The fenced area doesn't have to be too large to be effective. It would be a win - win solution for the pro and con proponents to follow Oakville's pattern
98. Unfortunately we could not attend the meeting on the 19th June. We are in favour of lease free times during the day when we are allowed to let our dog run free in Central Park. Central Park is a wonderful green space with-in our City that we enjoy walking in at least three times a week.
99. Why not enforce the law? Also we would like to see a check for dog licenses which we believe are not being collected .
100. We are unable to attend the meeting in regards to this topic, but wanted to provide our opinion. We actually understand both sides of this issue. We have a son who was bitten by a dog and, as a result, can be very intimidated by off leash dogs that are not under good control. However, we are about to become dog owners in the August and live close enough to central park that it would be fabulous to have some off leash times to go there with our new family member. As responsible dog owners we wouldn't think of having our dog off leash until it was trained in basic obedience commands, "down, come" etc.. so that you would still be in control. We recognize that not everybody shares this opinion or belief and, though we personally think it irresponsible, we recognize that it would be impossible to police.
So, I would recommend a compromise. Have some stated off leash times. Therefore citizens who are not comfortable with off leash dogs, should avoid the park during those times. Perhaps these would be early in the day and later in the evening (after all the games have finished on the grounds in the summer). Individuals who would like to walk their dogs off leash would have to comply with those times. It would mean that you would need to have by law officers up their observation times to ensure that the rule was being complied with. My guess is that the majority of dog owners, if they had stated times, would be respectful of them.
Hope this is helpful. It is a wonderful green space that we enjoy in all seasons in our family, so we appreciate a thoughtful approach to this concept.
101. I walk my dog in Central Park sometimes, and always off leash. I feel strongly that my dog will never get healthy exercise by walking on a leash at my slow walking speed. When does it run? My dog is very friendly, extremely well trained and is a registered St John's Ambulance therapy dog.
The Guelph example will work really well here, and with those time restrictions, almost all of the concerns of the people at the meeting are addressed. In the summer, we will be gone by 8:30am and will not be back till ... say 9:00pm.

As someone correctly pointed out, we will never get rid of irresponsible dog owners, but those in Central Park are a cut above the norm, and the incidence of dog poop is significantly less than elsewhere. The park on King Rd is disgusting, and no responsible owner will go there ... same for Shell Park in Oakville.

There is plenty of time to walk the dog in a healthy way up to 8:30am, and not bother people arriving to use or pass through to the library buildings.

In the winter, not many people are in the park, so maybe longer hours are appropriate.

In regard to the ones who break the regulations, I vote to double the fines.

There is a concern that this initiative will attract vast numbers of "new" dogs. Not likely in my opinion, but if it does, so what? I regularly hike with a group of up to 20 dogs off leash, and it is a joy to behold! It will show the experiment has been successful, and we can then open up other areas such as the beach, and other parks, as they have obviously done in Vancouver. We have lots of parks!

102. As the father of a small young girl, I am adamantly against dogs being off-leash in public areas. Even the best of dogs is unpredictable. Surprised or scared, a dog may snap, doing serious damage. I frequently note dogs off leash in public parks my daughter visits, and I can say it makes me rather mad. If tickets were given with any frequency, I would not see these off-leash dogs, so I expect there are occasional warnings but little more. I advocate for a fenced-in dog run. The dogs can play, the mess can be contained, and the children can be safe. These areas are cheap. A fence and a sign is all that is needed. I suspect dog owners would police their own doggy messes too; they would cast an evil eye upon those who messed up the common area. I strongly favour the safety of children over more off-leash freedom for dogs.
103. I'm not in favor of leash free park zones dog owners should accept their responsibility when they buy ' ROVER " & not expect the administration to help out .
104. As I was unable to attend the meeting, I would like to contribute my personal comments. I live in the downtown core and really miss a leash free area to walk my golden doodle. Many residents own a dog for companionship and to make them go out for walks, etc. What good does a leash free park do when one has to get in the car and drive all the way to King above the QEW – just to give the dog and oneself a bit of exercise. I think it is about time that the public parks are being shared for pets and their owners as well as children and their parents. Instead of having an open slot for central park from 9PM to 9AM, I would suggest two time slots – one in the morning and one in the evening. There should be a winter and a summer schedule to accommodate all the different interest groups and daylight lengths. I would not encourage lose dogs during the night as this may lead to confusion or wrong accusations by residents abutting the park. I would be very interested to know what is going to happen and what steps are being taken to accommodate such a large interest group who are mostly responsible Burlington taxpayers.