

No dogs allowed

Written by Sean Green

Tuesday, 16 October 2012 16:33 -

Several amenities coming to South Bossier Park, but dog park not one of them

South Bossier residents can look forward to several amenities at their new park, but a dog park isn't one of them...For now.

The park, a joint venture between the Bossier Parish Police Jury and the Bossier City Council, plans to include not only mutli-purpose fields and baseball/softball fields, but extras such as a frisbee golf course and fishing piers.

The idea of a dog park was breached at a September workshop.

The jury and council briefly discussed setting aside 1.4 acres of space for a dog park in the planning. However, it was abandoned as several members expressed concern over the liability of potential for dogs fighting and aggressive dogs biting owners.

“When you mix people and dogs, dogs are going to be dogs and dogs are going to get bit and people are going to get bit,” said Police Juror “Coach” Bob Brotherton.

However, he noted that while it's not in the plan now, a dog park could be in the future.

“It's something that we're going to look at the future, we're going to get our fields and ball parks up and running (first). In five or six years, if it comes back up and it's something we feel that's a good fit for the area, we may do that,” Brotherton said.

Brotherton began researching the possibility of including a dog park when the construction of the South Bossier Park became a reality.

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“We have enough property and land to do that — research said you only need two to five acres — but I don't believe it's feasible because there are no trees,” he said. “There's very little shade, which is ideal for athletics, but to take a dog out there in the summer time when it's 100 degrees and the sun's bearing down on you, it's not a good idea.”

He also noted the lack of demand for a dog park in Bossier, citing the public demand in Caddo Parish.

“The proximity of old Hamel Park (proposed site of a Shreveport-based dog park) and the south Bossier complex being five or six miles away may be overkill for that area,” said Brotherton.

A item that has been requested by the public is a frisbee golf course. It's low cost — \$15,000 — makes it a candidate to be part of Phase I.

“It adds something for people that may not be in to baseball, football, soccer, or softball,” said south Bossier City Councilman Scott Irwin.

Other parts of this phase are 10 baseball/softball fields; four multi-purpose soccer/softball fields; earthwork, water/sewer, and power for the entire complex; restrooms; a playground; pavilions; and fencing for the fields.

South Bossier juror Mac Plummer noted that the group's main concern is the athletic fields.

“Original premise was to have a place for our kids to play ball. Let's make sure we've addressed the immediate needs,” said Plummer. “As long as these kids can practice, then we've taken care of square one.”

Plummer noted that all the amenities will be looked as funding becomes available in the future.

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One of these being fishing piers, which are scheduled as part of Phase II.

Parish Administrator Bill Altimus is working on securing state funding from the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to help fund the piers.

A precedent exists for this with the parish currently using funds on Lake Bistineau to extend a boat ramp from the Bossier side to the body of the lake.

"It's new to me they had monies for that type of project. When's the next round of money going to be available?" Plummer asked rhetorically, before answering, "We'll see."