Diaz design L.L.C.

Landscape Architecture

November 27, 2013

Ms. Laine Sweezey
President, Brook Run Dog Park Association, Inc.
1424 Vernon Ridge Close
Dunwoody, GA 30338

Dear Ms. Sweezey:

As requested, I have visited the Brook Run Dog Park and, as a Registered Landscape Architect, I offer my analysis for your consideration. It is my opinion that the existing Brook Run Dog Park is a unique facility which can be enhanced to satisfy the needs of the Dunwoody community.

The dense canopy of trees does not appear to be threatened by the activities of the Dog Park. I consider the tree cover to be an asset to the community as well as the park. As stated in the Arborguard report "Trees provide numerous environmental benefits that can both be measured and quantified. Of primary importance is the role trees play in the carbon cycle and as filters for pollution. These roles include: carbon storage, carbon sequestration, and the filtration of carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide, and particulate matter; moderate temperatures beneath the canopy, provide sound reduction barriers and act as buffers between residential neighborhoods and commercial entities."

There are several factors which support my opinion for maintaining and upgrading the Brook Run Dog Park in its current location.

**1) Amenities such as pathways, perimeter fencing and water facilities are already established.**

Currently, there are gathering "nodes" for dog owners established throughout the park. I propose making these gathering areas more prominent through the use of landscape timbers, alternative surface material and plantings to draw human traffic to these areas and to utilize existing pathways to reduce human foot traffic across established tree root systems. Since the pathways are already established, no new impact to trees is proposed. There are several possibilities for alternative surface materials:

Bark or wood chips. This substrate is easily maintained. It needs to be replenished periodically, but does afford adequate drainage. Care should be taken when selecting a wood product so that dogs do not get splinters. Wood chips that are used for playgrounds are a good choice. Feces may be difficult to detect on the wood chips, but are easily removed. I would not recommend wood chips as a path surface. It would need to be contained in specific areas in order to avoid being washed away. This can be accomplished through a combination of plantings, landscape timbers and stone.

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Decomposed granite is a durable dog park surface. It needs no water except to manage dust in high wind or high dog activity. Decomposed granite surface is an environmentally conscientious material since it uses less energy to produce than other choices. This material is weathered granite which provides adequate drainage. Decomposed granite varies in particle size from sandy to a larger particle size up to 3/8 inch material. It is easily brushed from a dog's fur. Decomposed granite is more sterile than soil as it is devoid of organic material and microbial life present in soil that will support the growth of grass. (Crusher run gravel is a mix of granite particles and sand and is typically used on road and pathway beds) I recommend using this on existing pathway surfaces.
Pea Gravel. consists of small, rounded stones. It provides excellent drainage and would be a perfect choice for the seating (node) areas in the park.

I propose plantings adjacent to these enhanced gathering areas (nodes) to preserve the slope, to improve water penetration and to guide dog and people traffic in the desired directions. For these areas I propose the planting of Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*) and Big Blue Liriope (*Liriope muscary*) as shade loving groundcovers. Liriope is already established within the Dog Park. I also propose Aucuba (*Aucuba japonica*) as well as native Sweetshrubs (*Calycanthus floridus) and native Mountain* Laurels (*Kalmia latifolia)*

Wintercreeper is pet friendly and very hardy.

**2) The current tree canopy provides needed shade for dogs and owners during the hot summer months. This condition would be difficult to mimic in a new location**.
I acknowledge the benefits of an open grass area for the dogs to play, but I also appreciate the unique shade qualities that are offered at the current Brook Run Dog Park.

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I believe we can take steps to add a grass component to our current dog park. (See Item #3 below)

**3) The current acreage borders potential expansion area for the dog park at the site of the former Georgia Retardation Center visitor center to provide a contiguous piece of property for dog park purposes and to allow for a separation of small and large dog activity areas as well as an open grass area to accommodate field recreation for the dogs.**

The importance of having a small dog area has nothing to do with the behavior or socialization of dogs. Rather, mixing dogs of different sizes presents an opportunity to avoid injury to the smaller dogs. These risks are often due to the size differences in dogs. Small dogs may accidentally get stepped on or knocked over by larger dogs playing together. The Pet Care Services Association recommends using size as one of the factors in placing dogs in the appropriate play groups.

Including a separate small dog area is worth the investment to avoid the risks and hazards described above and will also ensure that residents with small dogs are able to utilize the dog park.

The total recommended area for a small dog area should be ¼ the size of the large dog area.

The adjacent grass area mentioned above would also offer the opportunity for a separate field sport area for the larger dogs should the need arise for such activities.

Since the site generally slopes toward the existing ditch (described below in item #4) toward the east side of the existing site, the ditch would make a natural dividing line between a large and small dog area and would impede fence running between areas.

This would also be a logical location for a new safety gate to accommodate both areas. A new gate in this location would be close to existing parking and would accommodate future handicap accessibility should the need arise. I would leave the existing entry gate in place for secondary access. The asphalt path to the existing entry gate should be repaved.

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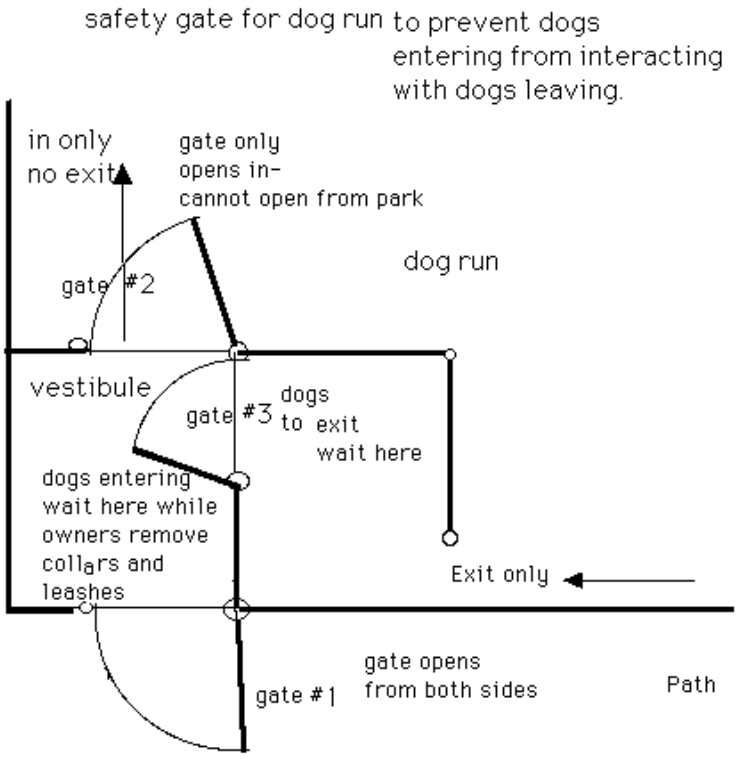


Fig. 1

**4) Countless volunteer hours have been utilized to address concerns raised during the relocation discussion.**

**-** One of the primary activities TheBrook Run Dog Park Association and local Boy Scouts of America have accomplished is the installation of downed logs perpendicular to the water flow throughout the slope. This is a highly affective method of decreasing loss of topsoil on a slope. Since I see no evidence of erosion, my only suggestion would be to stagger the logs along the slope to impede water from creating a channel. Currently, the logs run the entire length of the slope. By removing some of the logs, it would allow for easier access for the dogs while still accomplishing the erosion control intent.

Selective tree removal is possible but not necessary at this point. For instance, the removal of a few pines and limbing up of branches on select trees would allow for additional sunlight at ground level.

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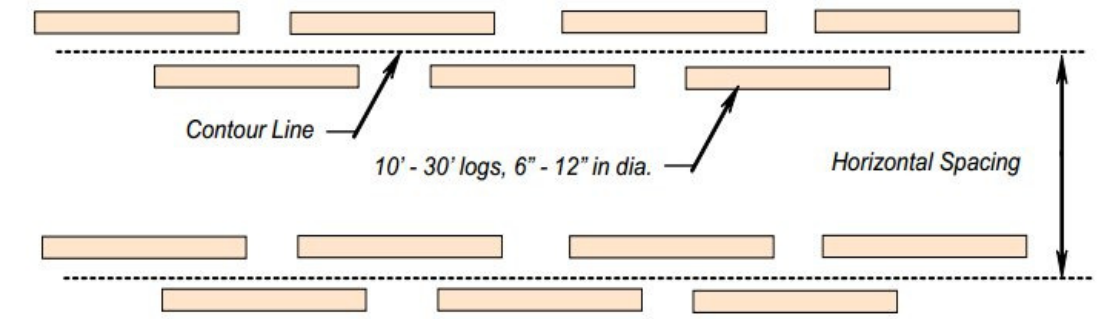


*FIGURE 1 - Theoretical log terracing pattern*

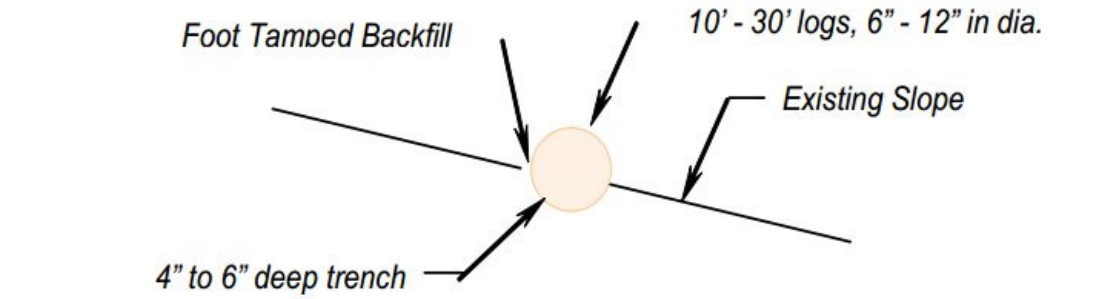


*FIGURE 1 - Typical log & bedding detail*

Another essential accomplishment of the volunteers has been the establishment of a dry stream bed/drainage ditch in the valley of the site which runs from the outlet of the storm water pipe in the existing parking lot through the entire length of the site to the creek. This swale prevents unnecessary erosion from the parking lot as well as catching the water from the majority of the site and directs it toward an outlet control basin at the rear fence of the site. I have two recommendations regarding this drainage system: I would add some large boulders and add some curves to the channel so the velocity of the storm water will be slowed during a large rain event. I would also add a "trash rack" or an erosion bale filter to prevent clogging of the structure.

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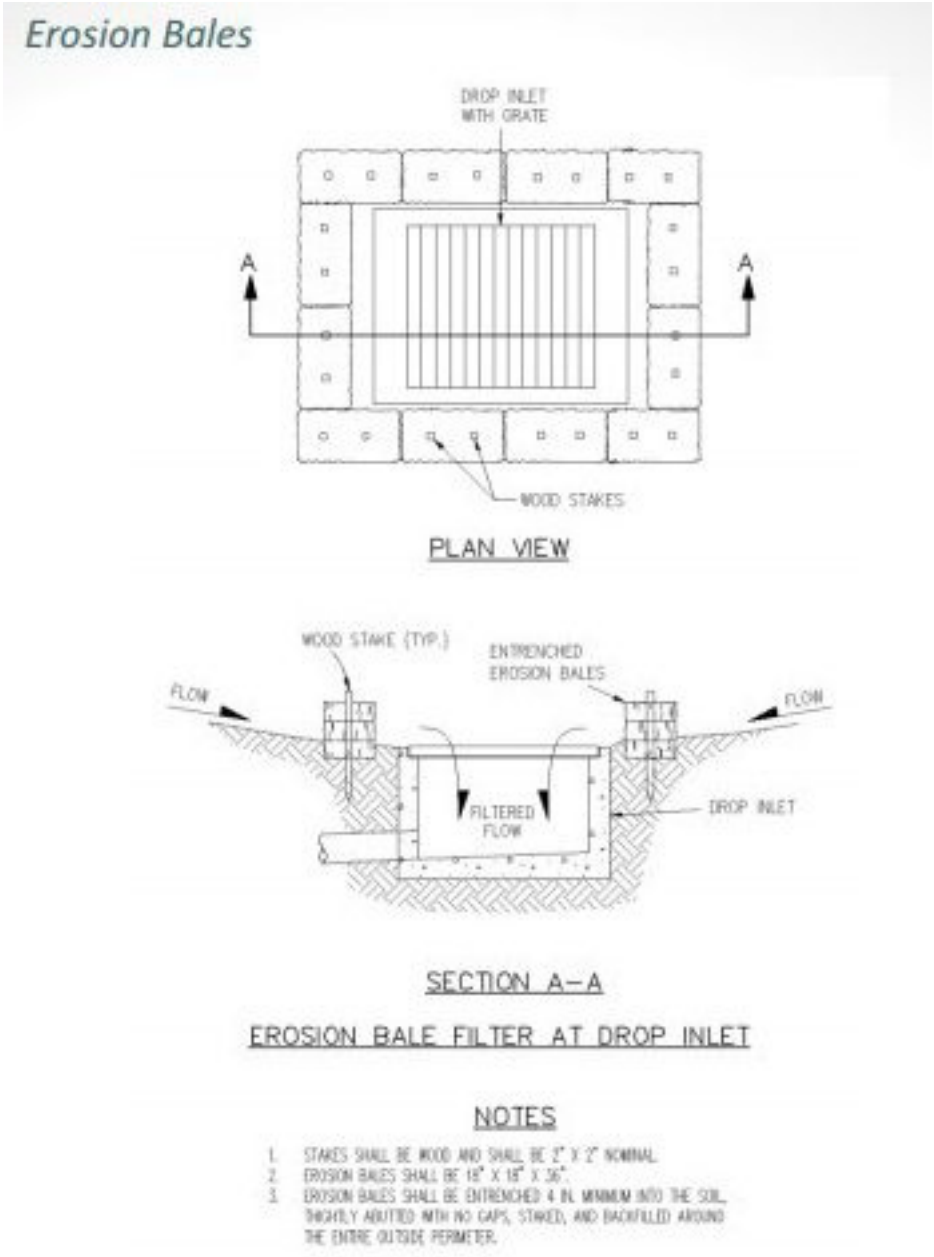
## Erosion Bales




Rip Rap placed at the outlet pipe of the storm structure would also alleviate any erosion after the water exits the dog park through the pipe under the rear fence.

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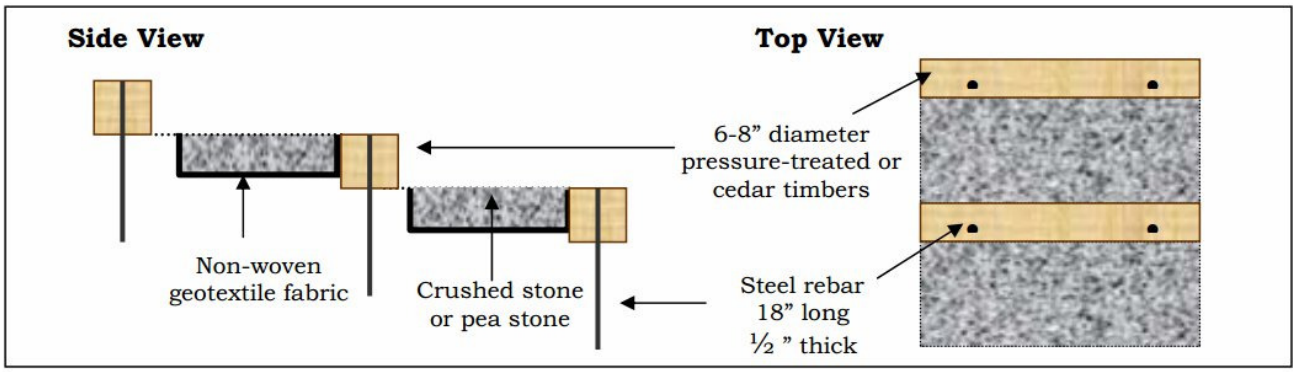
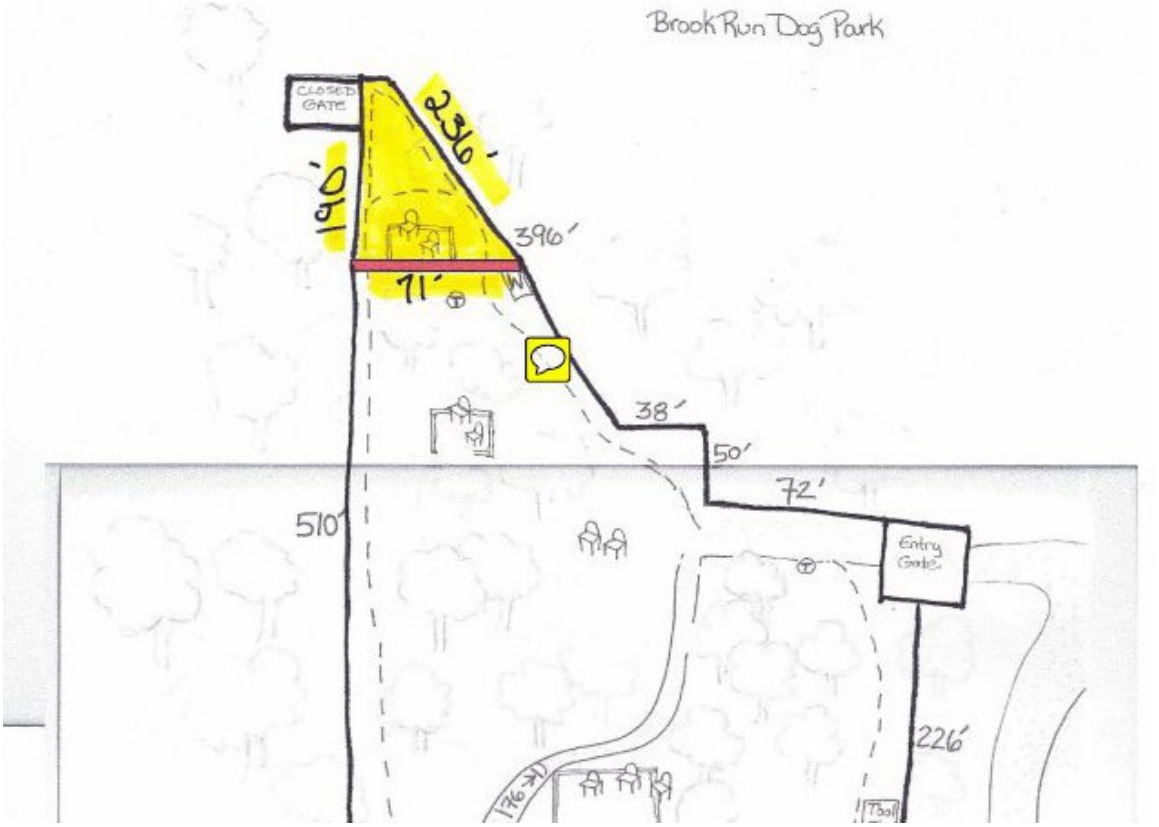
Currently there is a path which runs parallel to the dry stream bed described above. In order to prevent this path from diverting water runoff prior to entering the dry stream bed, I would recommend adding landscape timber steps periodically on the path to prevent erosion.




**5) The Brook Run Dog Park Association is a good neighbor who is willing to work with the community to satisfy all reasonable questions or concerns.**

When the concern was raised that noise may be an issue for the residential neighborhood located to the Northwest of the two lane road and 12' multi use trail separating them from the Brook Run Dog Park, the drawing below indicates the willingness of BRDA to relocate the existing fence and create a planted buffer.



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I suggest native Southern Magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*) and fast growing and dense Leyland Cypress (*Cupressocyparis leylandii*) be planted along the outside of the fence to reduce noise and to visually screen the park from the road.

In conclusion, I find the existing Brook Run Dog Park to have excellent potential to satisfy the needs of Dunwoody dog owners as well as the community at large while preserving the natural character of the site. The improvements I have included in this report can be accomplished within a reasonable budget and time frame.

Respectfully yours –

David M. Diaz, RLA

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