



City of Evanston
Historic Preservation Commission
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July 3, 2024

To: Stefanie Levine, PLA
Senior Project Manager
Public Works Agency

Cc: Councilmember Clare Kelly
Chair, Administration and Public Works Committee

Re: Evanston Dog Beach Access Project | Lakeshore Historic District

Ms. Levine and Chair Kelly,

On Tuesday, July 2, 2024, the Preservation Commission convened a special meeting for further comment and study of the referred city-initiated Evanston Dog Beach Access Project.

The Commission's consultation powers and duties allow for broad review and comment on city-initiated projects or activities which may affect historic resources. Pursuant to [City of Evanston Code §2-8-3 \(G\) \(24\)](#) requiring the City to seek review and comment from the Commission for any City initiated projects or activities that may affect historic resources, or historic resources deemed eligible for designation by the Commission, we have reviewed the scope of work for the Evanston Dog Beach Access Project located within the Lakeshore Historic District.

Please take into consideration the following comments and recommendations:

- Commissioners wondered if the right questions were asked of the designers to properly identify the problem and study corresponding solutions that incorporate the priorities of all stakeholders including seniors, wheelchair users, handicap-stall parkers, dogs, passersby, preservationists, and bird and plant habitat supporters.
- The scope of the work does not adequately minimize impact to the sites character and avoidance of adverse impacts to the historic and environmental setting could be achieved by restricting construction to the area south of the breakwater on the existing dog beach without impact to the existing natural area.
- Consider exploring a scaled down or temporary option due to the extensive public testimony of what works and does not work for dogs, accessibility, budget, and habitat.
- Seek a more efficient use of money to solve the accessibility problem without added amenities. Priorities should include a double-gate entry, security-card access, dog wash, multiple benches along the stretch of beach if the rocks will remain blocked by fencing, lighting at the gate, and of course, smooth, safe wheelchair access along as much of the dog beach as possible.

- Moving forward, the City needs to act diligently to follow the mandated process for Commission review of City-initiated projects or activities that may affect historic resources. The City should follow best practices to engage with the Commission as technical experts and consult with and solicit input from the Commission early in the design phase of projects where the Commissions comments can guide design approach while suggested changes remain feasible and practicable.

We recommend watching the [video](#) recording of the meeting in order to listen to the Preservation Commission's full deliberation as well as comments and feedback on the project given to Public Works.

Respectfully submitted,
2024 City of Evanston Historic Preservation Commission

P.P. Carl Klein - Secretary, Preservation Commission

Cc: Cade W. Sterling – Staff Liaison to the Commission