

Review of Pets on Parks & Public Lands
By the Land Management and Acquisition Committee

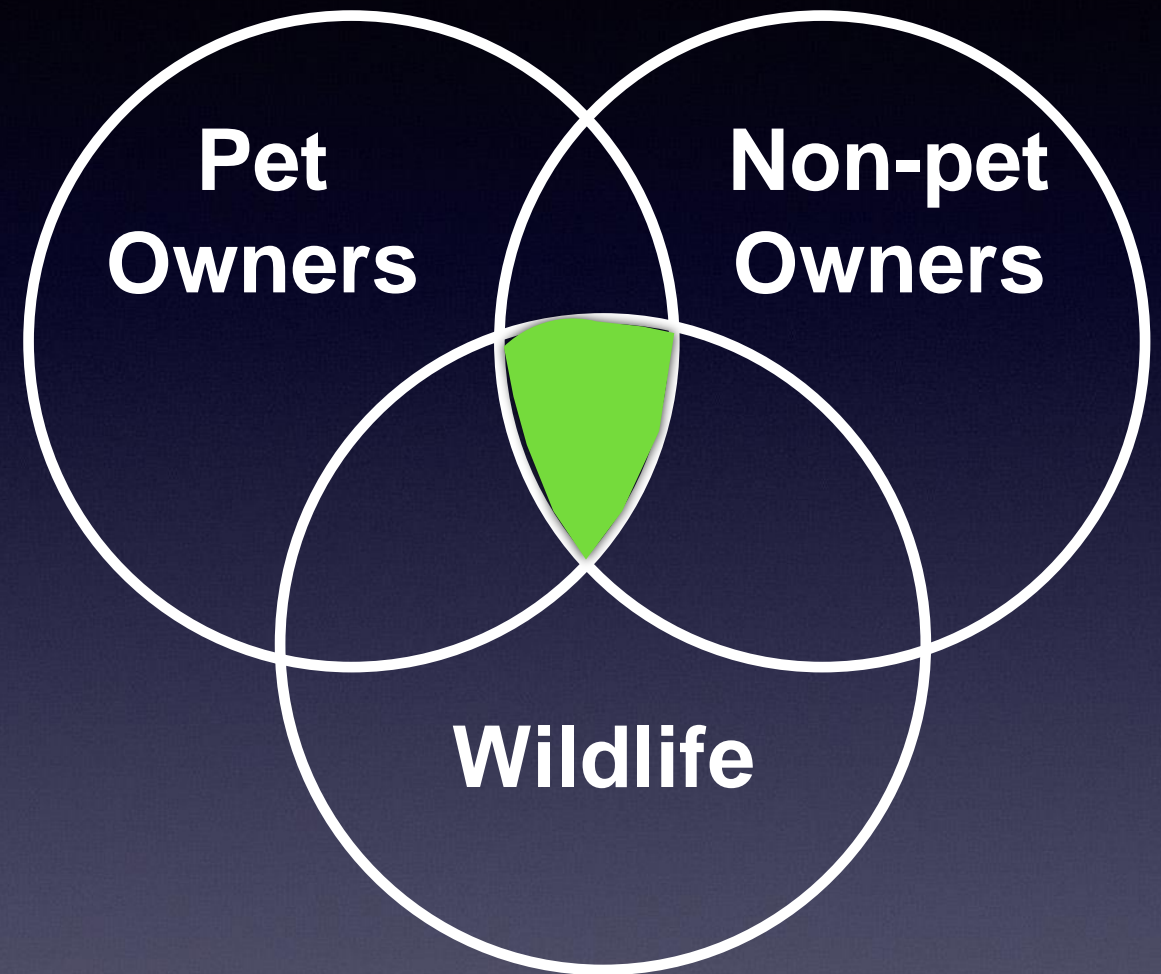
Town Council Update
November 14, 2016

Review of the Process

- ☑ January, 2016 Public Forum – gather input from the public
- ☑ LMAC and PACPAC evaluated seven recommendations presented at the January, 2016 Public Forum
- ☑ June, 2016 Public Forum - shared input from January Public Forum along with LMAC, PACPAC and staff recommendations for possible regulations of pets.
- ☑ Present recommendations for ordinance changes to the Town Council – Nov 14, 2016
- ☑ Next steps to be determined by the Town Council

Assumptions & Our Challenge

- ☑ People need places in town to walk their dogs. Walking dogs is good for both dogs and their owners.
- ☑ All parks and public lands trail users should feel safe when using trails.
- ☑ Uncontrolled dogs can have a negative impact on people, other dogs, & wildlife.





Parks

- Primarily intended to serve the needs of people as places for active recreation.
- Managed to meet the recreational needs of people.



Conservation Lands

- Primarily intended to preserve & protect natural ecological systems; people are visitors.
- Managed for wildlife, water quality, education, aesthetics, and passive recreation.



Concerns: Safety, Sanitation & Wildlife Impact

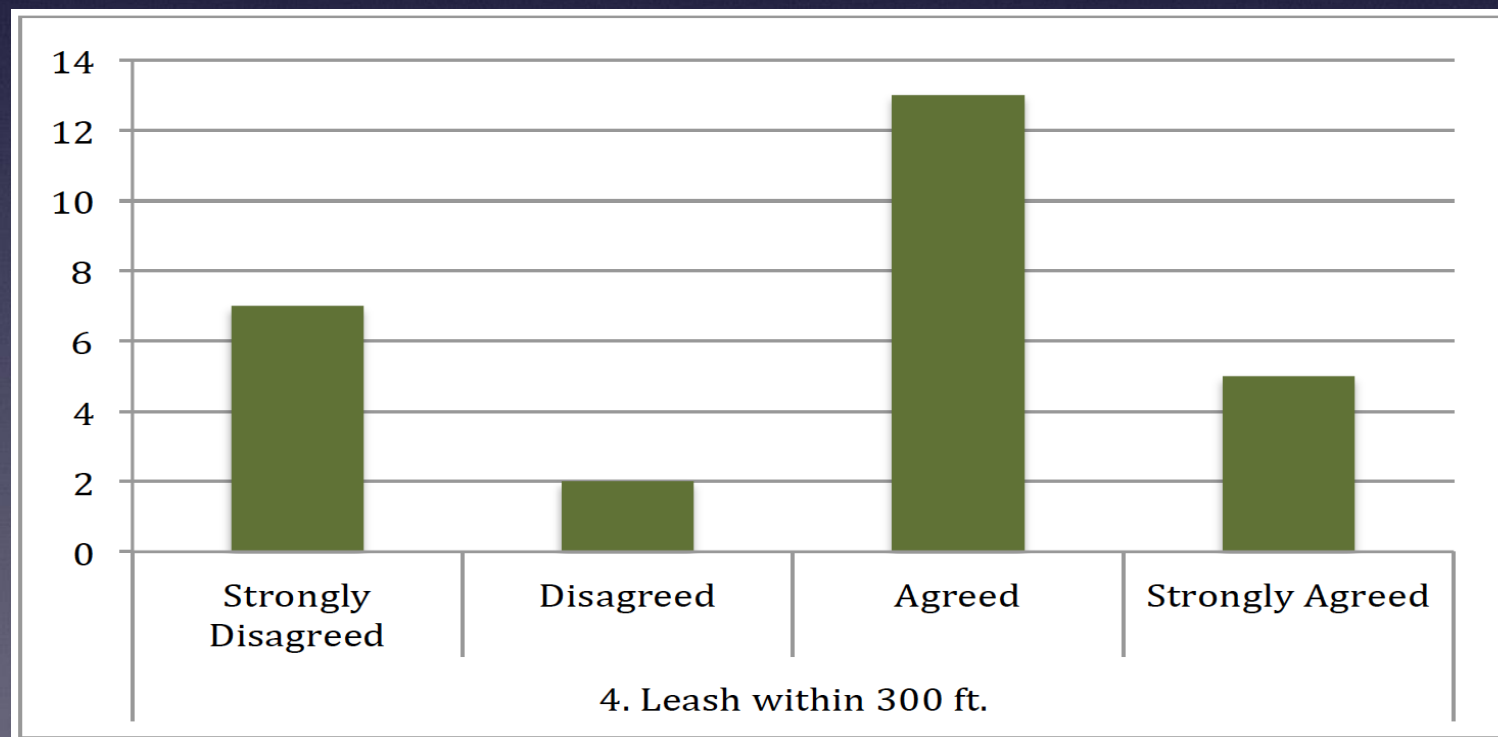
- ☑ People are frightened, bitten, jumped on, knocked down, or injured (some children, senior citizens and disabled people are particularly vulnerable)
- ☑ Threat to nesting birds, young animals, deer yards
- ☑ Dog feces left on trails, playing fields, at trailheads, etc.



Proposed Ordinance Change #1

Require pets to be leashed within 300 ft. of parking lots and trailheads.

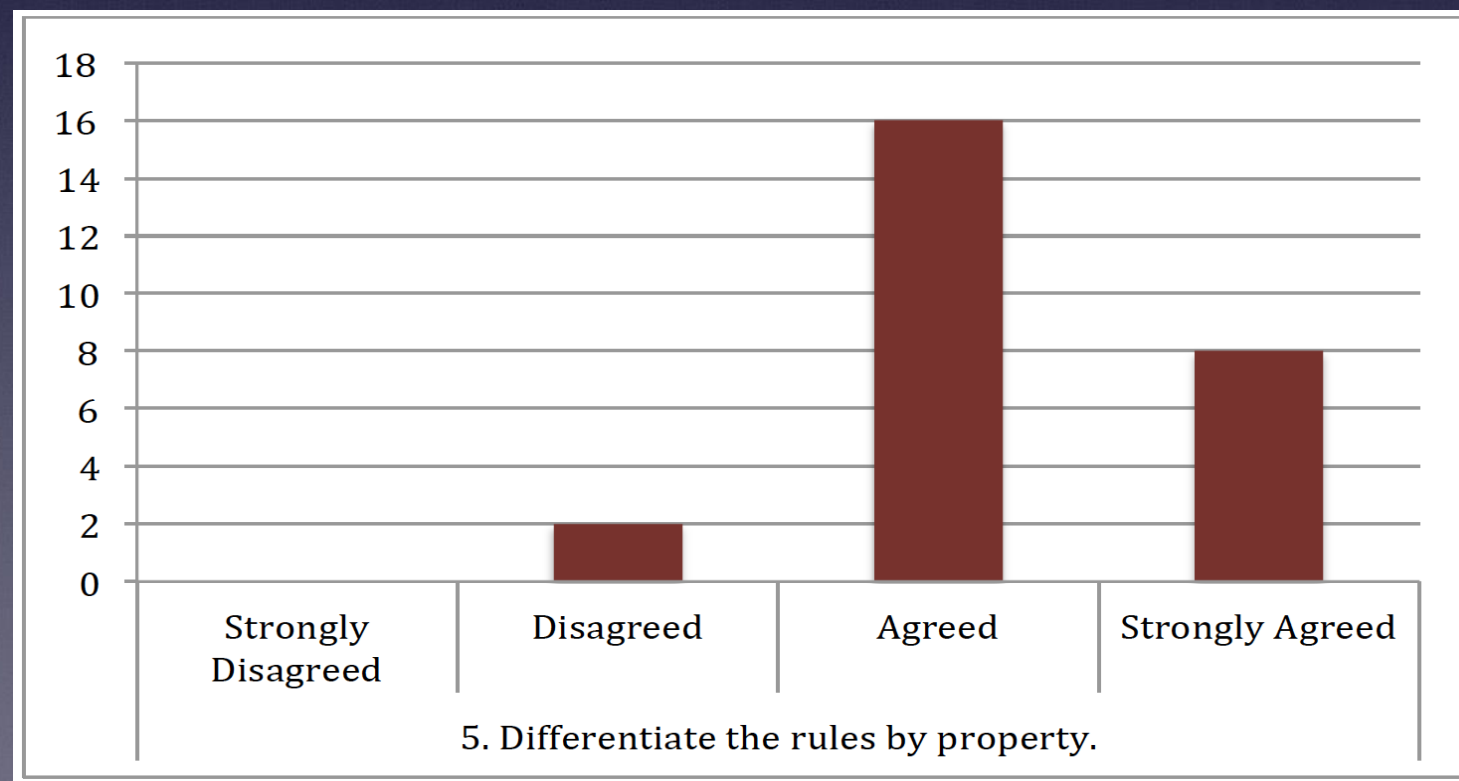
Participants who attended the second public forum were asked about their level of agreement regarding this proposed limitation.



Proposed Ordinance Change #2

Differentiate the rules according to specific properties. Some properties might be off-limits to pets; others allow no leashes; and still others require leashes at all times, etc.

Participants who attended the second public forum were asked about their level of agreement regarding this proposed limitation



LMAC / PACPAC Recommendation

- 1. All parks and many conservation properties should allow pets to be unleashed 300 ft. beyond the trailhead(s), except child play areas, fields, and during activities as per current ordinance.**
- 2. One or more conservation property should not allow pets on or off leash. *River Point Conservation Area* is one such property that should not allow pets. This will provide people who fear dogs a place to go where they won't encounter pets and also protect the property as one of our highest value wildlife properties.**
- 3. Leashes should be required during the breeding season (April 1 to September 30) on three other important wildlife conservation properties: *No. Falmouth & Hadlock Community Forests and Suckfish Brook Conservation Area.***

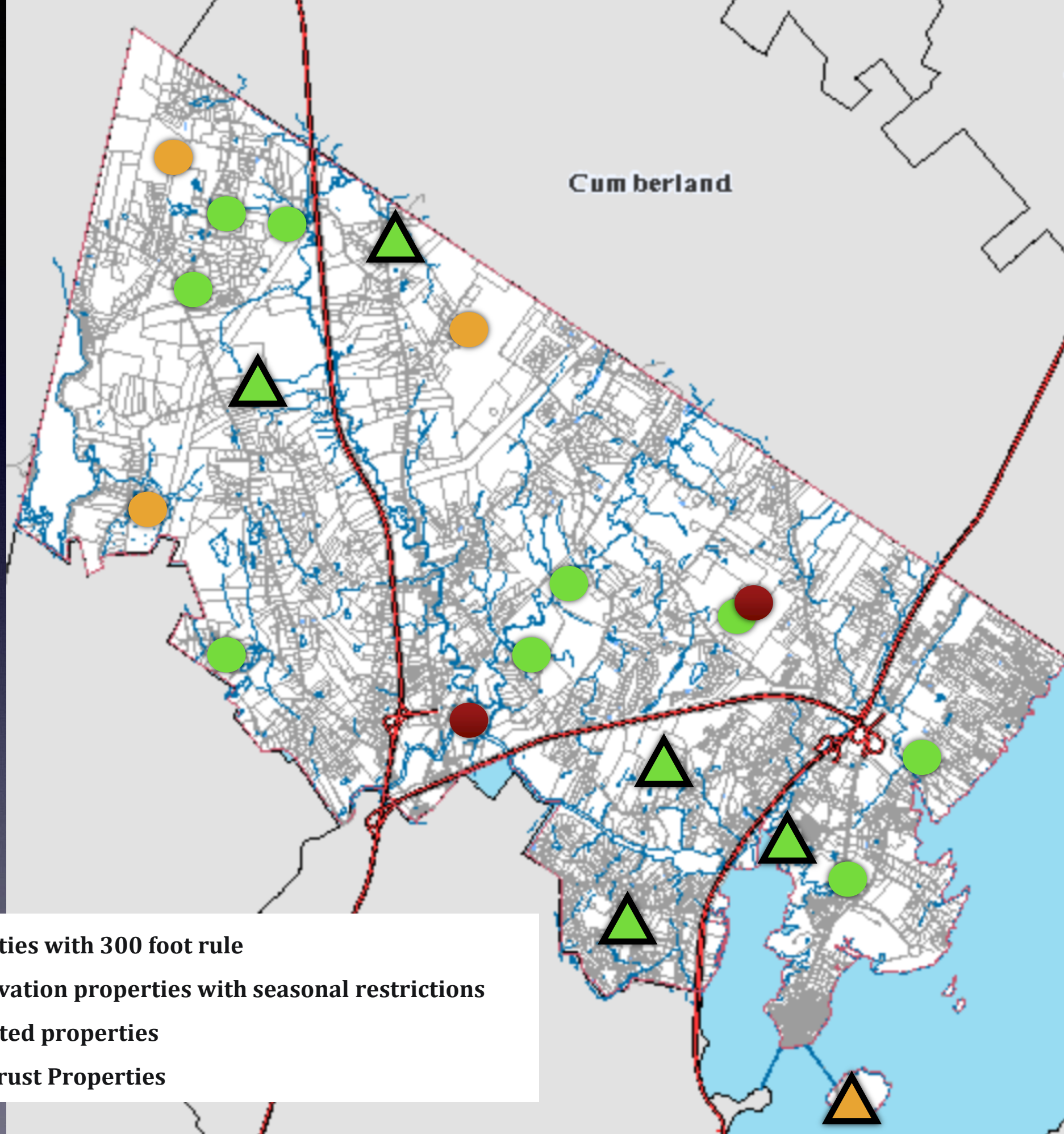
LMAC / PACPAC Recommendation, cont

4. Woods Road Community Forest should be closed to pets from December 1st to March 31st because it is a state sanctioned deer wintering area.
5. LMAC and PACPAC do not believe different rules within a specific property are feasible (e.g. - some trails open to pets, some not).



Summary of Proposed Ordinance Changes

300 ft leash, voice control	300 ft leash, voice control, seasonal leash	No pets
Community Park	Hadlock Community Forest	River Point Conservation Area
Blackstrap Hill Community Forest	North Falmouth Community Forest	Woods Rd Comm Forest [Winter only]
Falmouth Nature Preserve	Suckfish Brooks Conservation Area	
Hardy Road Conservation Area		
Pine Grove		
Town Forest		
Woods Road Community Forest		
= 24.5 trail miles	= 14.5 trail miles	= 1.3 trail miles



WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY NOW, MISTER NOBODY-IS-LOOKING?



Conclusion

LMAC & PACPAC Committee members feel that these proposed new ordinances would equitably accommodate the needs of pet owners and non-pet owners alike. And thus, will likely ameliorate some of the problems and concerns that have been expressed by residents.