

Cityside

Ah, spring – and the whiff of a South Loop Dog Park

South Loop dog park boosters are a little crestfallen this week. After casting about for months and months in search of a likely (read: inoffensive) spot to unleash canines pent up most days of the year in neighborhood high-rises and townhomes, Dog PAC members this winter seized on D'Angelo Park, a circular scrap of garden enclosed by a Congress Parkway exit ramp just east of the South Branch. Eagerly signed by the dog-owning and dogless alike, petitions circulated the neighborhood. And for weeks, pet boosters solicited—without response—the blessing of park namesake Oscar D'Angelo himself. Finally, at a Monday meeting, 2nd Ward Alderman Madeline Haithcock burst the D'Angelo Park bubble for good, according to a late-night missive Dog PAC spokesman Gail Merritt E-mailed to this paper's offices Tuesday.

"The bad news for the dog park organizers is that Haithcock heard directly from the mayor that Oscar D'Angelo [Park] is not available for consideration," Merritt wrote.

But it's not all bad news. According to

Merritt, Haithcock promised to throw her weight behind efforts to find somewhere for local pets to stretch their legs, and with "the mayor's ear," Merritt said, keeping alive and well hopes of one day building a South Loop dog park.

Merritt said she and her pet-owning neighbors, with Haithcock at their side, plan to start afresh with deliberations over usable sites.

"Maybe the dog park efforts, seemingly frozen once again, will find spring holds real promise," Merritt wrote.

For those interested in taking part, the next Dog PAC meeting is set for May 16. Neither Haithcock nor Mayor Daley were available for immediate comment.



Haithcock: No dogs at D'Angelo Park