



11th & Bark



2018 Annual Report

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11th & Bark is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to making the Columbia Heights Dog Park an official city off-leash dog park. We formed in 2015 to work with the District of Columbia to purchase the land, or create a lease agreement with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), so that we can improve the park. We are a partner of Green Spaces for DC.



The 11th and Bark Board

Lori Robertson, Chair

Maggie Garrett, Vice Chair

Eva Guenther, Secretary

William Brown

Eric Cuevas

Cecilie Lindsay

Yared Mekbib

Eric Gronning
(term ended July 2018)

Penelope Poole
(term ended June 2018)

Mona Kishore
(term ended February 2018)

2019 – 11th and Bark Highlights



2019 was a year of challenges and successes.

In January, WMATA announced its plan to sell the property at 11th and Park Rd NW, which has been used, with WMATA's permission, as a community dog park since 2009. The uncertainty of the park's future has been difficult for all who rely on the park to exercise their dogs and connect with their neighbors. Yet, the park community has grown stronger. Together, and with the help of elected officials like Councilmember Brianne Nadeau and ANC 1A Commissioner Angelica Castañon, we waged a successful grassroots campaign that led to the District allocating \$1.5 million to purchase the dog park. We launched a new website, created Instagram and Twitter handles, and increased our email list. We organized cleanups and, often with other neighborhood partners, sponsored community events. Our story even made the front page of the *Washington Post's* Metro section.

The year ended with the future of the dog park still in limbo. WMATA refused to accept the offer made by the District, but Mayor Muriel Bowser indicated she would likely be able to make an offer equal to that which WMATA claims is its fair market value.

We hope 2019 is the year the District finally purchases the park.

Fighting to Save the Park



In reaction to WMATA's January announcement that it plans to sell the land, 11th and Bark ramped up our grassroots movement to urge the District of Columbia to buy the property.



Grassroots Advocacy

We sponsored and joined events around the neighborhood to advocate for the park. In the end, we collected nearly 1,600 signatures from District residents supporting the District's purchase of the dog park. We also obtained letters of support from most of the local businesses on the block.



Advocacy at the Wilson Building

11th and Bark board members held meetings and sent letters to District Councilmembers to urge them to support the purchase of the park. On April 12, 2018, several members of the Board even testified before the DC Council to explain the many benefits the dog park provides to the entire community.



Dogs with Signs

11th and Bark encouraged park users to participate in a social media campaign in which their dogs wore signs in support of the park. What began as an Instagram and Twitter effort transformed into a postcard campaign that resulted in community members sending hundreds of postcards being to elected officials that told their personal stories and reasons for supporting the park.



Social Media

In 2018, we launched a new website that provides dog park news and information. We created a Twitter handle to share park and community information, and we created an Instagram handle, which has already grown to more than 900 followers. Our email list has also grown to an impressive 600-plus subscribers.



Community Engagement



In addition to our advocacy work to support the dog park, we continued to hold our annual events and joined with new community partners to start new traditions.



Mardi Paws

We joined the Community Wellness Alliance Collaborative, North Columbia Heights Civic Association, Patrick's Pet Care, Green Spaces for DC, Encounter Church DC, and the Friends of the Trolley Park to sponsor the annual Mardi Paws event again this year. The activity brings dog owners and members of the community to the park for fun, prizes, and a dog costume contest.



Columbia Heights Day

In June, we joined the neighborhood street festival celebrating diversity and community. We organized a dog show that attracted dog owners and many onlookers. The show awarded ribbons prizes donated by local businesses to the first and second place winners in seven categories. We also sponsored a table so we could talk to people about the park and our efforts.



Halloween

We teamed up with other community groups to once again sponsor the annual Halloween Dog Costume Contest at the dog park, which has become a Columbia Heights tradition. Individuals, families and children from all over the neighborhood came and competed for prizes.



Dia de los Muertos

We worked with the Petworth Arts Collaborative and organized various Day of the Dead events in the neighborhood to celebrate the lives of loved ones—both humans and pets. People from across the District came out to make decorations and offrendas, which were displayed in the window at Odd Provisions and the park for the community to enjoy.



Dogs Meet Santa

In partnership with District Dogs, a neighborhood pet care company, we hosted Santa. The good dogs of 11th and Bark were able to tell Santa all their Christmas wishes and their parents could take home pictures for their Christmas cards.



Neighborhood Cleanups

In 2018, 11th and Bark organized four cleanups in and around the dog park to keep the space clean and presentable and clear the surrounding streets of trash. With the help of many volunteers we also completed a number of special projects. Our most ambitious project was creating a dry well to decrease the standing water issue not-so-fondly referred to as "the pond." We also painted benches and replaced the plastic meshing that keeps small dogs safely in the park. In addition, we installed a new poop bag dispenser to keep the park clean between events, and we hung up a city banner reminding dog owners to be responsible and picking up after their dogs. As part of the Mayor's Clean City initiative 11th and Bark has also officially adopted the blocks surrounding the park.



Financial Information



We were able to do this work because of donations from the community.

Donations

We received \$2,829.27 in cash donations for the year.

In addition, several 11th and Bark board members spent money out of their own pockets for various items, including website development and graphic design fees, printing costs, cleanup and dry well supplies, Columbia Heights Day supplies, photography costs, architectural rendering services and a Santa costume. We estimate those in-kind contributions to total more than \$1,000.

Expenses

In addition to the non-reimbursed spending by board members, we incurred expenses totaling \$1,363.30 for the year.

We ended calendar year 2018 with a balance of \$1,632.57 cash on hand.

<u>Donations:</u>	\$2,829.27
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Management fee to Green Spaces for DC	\$300.00
District licensing and fees	\$136.10
Dog bandanas	\$434.98
Columbia Heights Day table fee	\$200.00
Printing expenses	\$94.84
Waste bag dispenser	\$84.99
Dog show/Halloween ribbons	\$44.80
Cleanup supplies	\$37.78
Office supplies	\$29.81
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	\$1,363.30

