

## Eileen Harrington

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**From:** Miriam Jacobs [mimi@polaritywellness.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 01, 2011 9:57 AM  
**To:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** save our sand

Dear City Council,

I am writing to urge you **NOT** to pave over the children's park at the Darmouth Top lot with black rubber. Although, I am not a parent, I have brought several visiting children there who love the fact that there is sand in that park. Their parents tell me that their children remember the sand most of all.

Thank you,

Miriam Jacobs  
1110 Stannage Ave #A  
Albany, CA 94706  
510-517-5649  
[www.polaritywellness.com](http://www.polaritywellness.com)  
[mimi@polaritywellness.com](mailto:mimi@polaritywellness.com)  
<http://polarity-tarot.blogspot.com/>

**Eileen Harrington**

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**From:** thanya suwansawad [tsuwansawad@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 31, 2011 11:16 PM  
**To:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** Opal Staniek Tot Lot

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission,

We have lived in the neighborhood for one year with a 2-year old toddler and rarely use the park. My mother and my other caregiver refuse to go to this park because they feel that the park is not well maintained. Please consider my comments:

The sand is dirty. I have also found small shards of plastic in the sand. It needs to be replaced. Sand or rubber, it is important for it to be frequently maintained.

The recycled toys are great, but there are too many. Can we leave some and get rid of 50% of them?

Who is the tot lot designed for? There are often older children playing there who are able to navigate it's multilevel terrain. Whatever the decision is, let's remember who we are trying to make the park safe for. Many of the photos that are shown in the "Dartmouth Tot Lot Improvements" report from May 19, 2011 don't show what it looks like with children playing in the park. Perhaps this would guide some of your usability decisions.

Although, I tend to prefer a non-sandy surface, I am concerned about the toxicity of the rubber. I would choose sand over the use of a toxic material. Rubber mulch made from ground-up recycled tires seems to have a harmful effect on human health.

[http://www.ehhi.org/turf/rubber\\_mulch\\_facts08.shtml](http://www.ehhi.org/turf/rubber_mulch_facts08.shtml)

[http://healthychild.org/blog/comments/the\\_myth\\_of\\_rubberized\\_landscapes/](http://healthychild.org/blog/comments/the_myth_of_rubberized_landscapes/)

Besides regular maintenance of the park, Option 3 of the new proposal brought forth by Joanna Manqueros seemed to address many of my concerns while meeting ADA and safety compliance.

Thank you,  
Thanya

**Eileen Harrington**

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**From:** Eileen Walsh [walshgreene@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 31, 2011 3:45 PM  
**To:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** please consider alternative for Tot Lot on Dartmouth

Dear Mayor & City Council:

I am an Albany parent living on Cornell Ave. My kids have outgrown the Tot Lot. But when they were tiny we were there every day, enjoying our community. I hope that you will consider an alternative plan to that proposed by the Parks Commission. The Parks Commission's proposal would make the park quite generic with a rubberized surface, and moreover, there was little community input on the proposal since the local park users were not aware such a redesign was being considered.

Thanks for your consideration --

Eileen Walsh  
1056 Cornell Ave  
Albany  
510-558-3169  
[walshgreene@gmail.com](mailto:walshgreene@gmail.com)

**Eileen Harrington**

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**From:** Amy Neil [a.neil@sbcglobal.net]  
**ent:** Tuesday, May 31, 2011 2:38 PM  
**. o:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** Tot Lot Sand Issue

Dear City Council Members,

I have lived on the same block as the Tot Lot for 17 years. Recently it has become a flash point for a certain group of Dartmouth neighbors. The latest issue is the planned replacement of a portion of the sand with a rubberized surface. The sand has been a problem for all the years I've lived here. It just won't stay inside the park and there is almost always sand on the stairs and ramps into the park and on the sidewalk outside the park. There have been complaints for years.

I attended the most recent P&R Commission meeting at which the issue was revisited at the request of the Dartmouth neighbors who had missed the notice and had asked for an opportunity to comment. The Commissioners listened attentively and discussed the comments and issues raised but ultimately decided to stand by their original proposal. This group continues to complain that their "voices weren't heard" when in fact the Commissioners simply disagreed with their request to keep virtually all the sand. This group recently sent out flyers mostly focusing on a strict interpretation of minimum required ADA compliance but in making their decision the Commissioners noted a whole group of goals for the resurfacing project:

- Alleviate sand encroaching on the concrete walkways and sidewalk which is a slip hazard
- Remediate the abrupt edging of the current rubber sections which also pose a hazard
- Alleviate sand run-off into storm drains
- Make all the play structures fully ADA compliant
- Retain sand in some portion of the Lot

These seem like reasonable objectives to me and the solution appropriate although perhaps not perfectly optimal. But nothing is perfect and not everyone can always be satisfied no matter what plan is put forth. I do not envy you your position in reviewing this matter but I want to express that many in the neighborhood, including myself, support the objectives and design of the already approved plan.

Sincerely,  
Amy Neil  
1020 Talbot

**Eileen Harrington**

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**From:** Rodney Thomas [rodney.thomas@earthlink.net]  
**ent:** Tuesday, May 31, 2011 9:15 AM  
**o:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** Dartmouth Tot Lot

I strenuously object to the Albany Park & Recreation Commission vote to remove over two-thirds of the sand in the Dartmouth Tot Lot and replace it wit rubber.

The users of the park have worked with the Albany city staff to come up with an alternate plan that is ADA compliant, reduces maintenance issues, retains most of the sand and preserves the character of the park for its users.

The Park & Recreation Commission won't re-consider their vote. This is the sort of political garbage I thought we didn't have in Albany. I urge the City Council to review and approve the alternate plan, a plan created by the users of the park.

Regards,  
Rodney Thomas  
1062 Kains Ave, Apt 2  
Albany, 94706  
510 558-6884

## Eileen Harrington

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**From:** dedec@sonic.net  
**ent:** Monday, May 30, 2011 10:46 PM  
**o:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** tot lot on Talbot st.

Dear City Council

I live at 1122 Talbot, one of the blocks near the Tot Lot at Talbot and Dartmouth.

I understand from a flyer I received today that changes are to be made rather soon there.

I would like to support the city council looking at the alternative plan that concerned users of the park have put together. The flyer says that the Park and Rec commission seemed uninterested in even considering it. A city commission should always be ready to reconsider when citizens use their time and energy to present another idea.

I don't have children of an age to use the park, and I do understand that the dumping of toys in the Tot Lot often seem to overflow the place. I didn't think that the children would learn much from the money spent on the recycling pictures put up on the fence, but I salute the effort. I also salute the volunteers who have painted the fences with colors, planted flowers and maintained them. That really makes the place "informative" for children--they learn that where they play is important to many grownups around them. And that a place to play should be beautiful.

Living in the neighborhood, what happens there is part of the quality of

our lives all around the area. I would always be more interested in

what concerned users want to see there than simply the first ideas that the Park and Rec commission had previously. When people get involved, it is always a better solution than whatever came before.

Additionally, i have had several friends who spent their careers in Early Childhood Education facilities that always, always included a sandy play area.

Please take the time to consider helping the alternative plan have a fair hearing--i would be happy to attend such a meeting.

Christina Creveling

510-526-1122

**Eileen Harrington**

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**From:** Janet Shu [janetshu@gmail.com]  
**ent:** Monday, May 30, 2011 6:41 PM  
**o:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** save the land of dartmouth Tot Lot park

Hi,

We learned about dartmouth tot lot park is going to be slated to begin June 6. We are sending this email to request to enact the new community plan that takes care of all children.

If you have any questions, please contact with me at [janetshu@gmail.com](mailto:janetshu@gmail.com)

Thanks,  
Janet

**Eileen Harrington**

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**From:** Janet Newman [janetnewman54@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 30, 2011 2:17 PM  
**To:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** Dartmouth Tot Lot

Dear Council members: As a member of the community who uses this tot lot frequently, I would like you to consider carefully the alternative plan which retains the character of the lot, is ADA complaint and reduces maintenance.

Thank you,

Janet Newman



## Eileen Harrington

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**From:** Nancy Zinn [nzinnie@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 29, 2011 8:51 PM  
**To:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** tot lot

I received a notice at my door tonight re: the paving over of our local tot lot. I am just amazed that this can be done despite neighborhood opposition and the presence of alternative plans. I have lived on Talbot Street for over 20 years. My children played in that lot. It is such a local treasure. Now that my children have grown, I look forward to taking my grandchildren there.

There are so few places for children to play that isn't gravel or tar. Let's step back and reconsider this before it is too late.

Nancy Zinn and Robert Williams  
1130 Talbot Ave  
Albany, Ca 94706

## Eileen Harrington

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**From:** Eric Bergman [erbergman@yahoo.com]  
**ent:** Sunday, May 29, 2011 8:28 PM  
**o:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** tot lot travesty

I am shocked to learn that the City of Albany plans to pave over (with black rubber!) the beloved and much used Tot Lot on Dartmouth. Obviously the planners of this horrible idea don't remember anything from their childhood. The sand IS the best part of the playground. The ADA is the justification for this?? This is a playground for CHILDREN not a handicapped center. Are people supposed to wheel up and climb the jungle gym? That doesn't even make sense. I am proud of the Bay Area's leadership in disabled access but does that mean we have to replace our brains with some policy?

I can't believe the government has the gall to complain about lack of funds one day and then spend our tax money to thwart us and our children the next.

Kids love to play in the sand. It is really that simple. Just leave it and don't take the toys either. Did the grinch come up with this plan? Don't take my word for it, go look yourself and you will see the children play more in the sand than the jungle gym or swings. Are you going to take away the jungle gyms and swings next because they are not wheelchair accessible?!

If your hands are tied by your own policies, pass a variance or something. Paving over the the Tot Lot to create access for the disabled would be reducing the useability of the facility for the intended user group to support a group that doesn't need to use the facility.

We are having a baby next month and have been eagerly looking forward to the chance to play with our child in the sand and now we are faced with that being taken away from us.

Eric Bergman  
1044 Stannage ave.

## Eileen Harrington

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**From:** Grandmastormwolf [grandmastormwolf@aol.com]  
**ent:** Friday, May 27, 2011 1:31 PM  
**o:** City General Email Box  
**Subject:** dartmouth tot lot

to whom it may concern:

i have lived in albany for many years, raised my kids there and have enjoyed taking my grandsons to the tot lot when they were small. i now have a new grandson who will soon be able to play there and look forward to seeing him play in the sand with the toys we and others have donated. we have enjoyed the sand, the toys and the concerned, supportive and friendly parents (great neighborhood atmosphere) there for many years. it felt like our own backyard, PLEASE don't destroy this little gem with all rubber surfaces and no toys, making it into a sterile environment. it seems that albany should be able to find better things on which to spend. if you want to spend money on the tot lot, make sure that surfaces which are there as well as the swings, etc. are updated and safe, but please don't destroy what people have spent many years making into a warm and fun place to take our kids.

kristina wolf