

Petition to Close Goose Green Park at 9:00PM

To whom it may concern,

While there has always been a higher ratio of unresolved crime, violence, and extensive drug use in our area, there has been a significant and distressing increase over the more recent months that the city has failed to acknowledge or rectify. The residents surrounding Goose Green Park are formally requesting that the board amend the park's working hours from 6:00AM-11:00PM to 6:00AM-9:00PM.

As it stands, the park is already overrun with used drug needles and has often been unusable to families in the neighborhood hoping to take their children. There has always been an unsheltered presence in the area that has been a cause for safety concerns; however, the presence in recent months has become intolerable. On any given night there are at least 3 people actively camping in the playground area on the north end of the park, making it unsafe and uncomfortable to use. We understand that it is within their rights to be in the park during open hours, however, when those open hours linger into the late evening as they do now, it impacts the way people function in their own homes. The unsheltered have openly used propane tanks near the playground equipment while cooking their drugs. They have harassed those in the neighborhood walking by on family outings, yelling profanities and threatening people going about their day. In the late evenings, the unsheltered will get high, leave the propane tanks on, and nod out, scaring the neighborhood while it attempts to go to sleep.

When concerned citizens in the area call the police, we are told there is nothing that can be done, as it is within park hours and they "technically" are not camping and that we must all wait until after 11:00PM for anything to be done. We are done waiting. We would like our neighborhood back. Many of us have fought for years to reduce the crime and drug use in our area and have taken great pride in the strides we've made as a community. We would like our kids to be able to play in their park and for neighbors to be able to come together in this "third space" and are confident that this would be a strong step in that direction. By closing the park earlier, police will be able to act sooner and—if there is continuous trouble—have the authority to trespass repeat offenders. We hope that you will take our request into serious consideration.

Sincerely,

The constituents of the Lower Northside and Depot neighborhood

Kari R. Hanson

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