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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOUTH LOOP DOG PARK ACTION COOPERATIVE SPINS OFF FROM SOUTH LOOP NEIGHBORS

South Loop Neighbors served as “incubator” for organization raising money to build Dog Friendly Area in the South Loop

Chicago, IL (January 2005) – South Loop Neighbors and the South Loop Dog Park Action Cooperative (P.A.C.) announce the incorporation of the South Loop Dog P.A.C. as an Illinois not-for-profit corporation.

The South Loop Dog P.A.C., launched in 2001, had been a committee of the South Loop Neighbors organization since early 2003. The Dog P.A.C. benefited from South Loop Neighbor’s organizational support and 501(c)3 not-for-profit status in its initial fundraising efforts. \$55,000 of the \$75,000 needed for the park’s construction has been raised to date.

“South Loop Neighbors is the most resident-focused, independent, and activist community organization in the South Loop, so we were delighted when they committed to help us. Their support of Dog P.A.C. is an example of how they work hard for worthy quality of life initiatives and we are grateful for their generous financial, marketing, and organizational support. South Loop residents—whether their interests are dog-friendliness, education, history, the arts, real estate/economic development, or historic preservation—all benefit by joining South Loop Neighbors because it is an organization that does so much for our community,” stated Gail Merritt, president of the South Loop Dog P.A.C., who is also a board member of South Loop Neighbors and chaired the committee until the spin-out.

Leslie Sturino, president of South Loop Neighbors stated, “Dog P.A.C. has been very effective in raising public awareness of the need for a dog-friendly area in the South Loop and in raising money for the construction of Grant Bark Park. We are proud that we helped them get started and we wish them the best of luck reaching their goals.” Sturino added, “We look forward to future collaborations that will help make the South Loop even more attractive to dog owners and non-dog owners alike. And, we ask all our neighbors who haven’t yet pitched in to contribute their support for the dog park by donating to the garage sale on EBAY, purchasing a brick, or joining as a member. Let’s help get Grant Bark Park over the finish line!”

The South Loop Dog P.A.C. expects construction of Grant Bark Park to begin in spring, 2005. The Chicago Park District requires communities to contribute half of park construction costs. Grant Bark Park is estimated to cost \$150,000 to build.

South Loop Neighbors is the South Loop’s premier membership-based community organization, dedicated to enhancing quality of life in the South Loop’s neighborhoods and landmark districts from Jackson to 16th and from Lake Michigan to the Chicago River. For more information visit www.southloopneighbors.org.

South Loop Dog Park Action Cooperative works to make the South Loop the most dog-friendly community in Chicago by promoting responsible dog ownership and pursuing spaces where people can play with their dogs safely off-leash, without risk of fines or conflict with other park users.

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