

**MINUTES
AVON HIGH SCHOOL SYNTHETIC FIELD PROJECT SUBCOMMITTEE
AVON ROOM TOWN HALL BLDG. 1
MAY 2, 2016**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 AM by Chairman Peter Ponziani in the Avon Room, Town Hall Building 1. Subcommittee members present: Chairman Peter Ponziani, Todd Donovan, David Jadovich, Donald Droppo, David Magrini, Sara Roberson, Dan Neagle and alternate member Kelly Jackson. Staff members Town Manager Brandon Robertson, High School Coordinator of Athletics and Student Activities Timothy Filon and Recreation & Parks Director Ruth Checko attended. BSC Group's representatives Vice President Kurt Prochorena, Landscape Architect Jess Harris and Manager of Landscape Architecture Eric Roise were also in attendance.

II. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING – April 28, 2015

VOTE: Mr. Donovan motioned, Mr. Jadovich seconded and all agreed to accept the April 28, 2015 minutes as presented.

V. PROJECT HISTORY/UPDATE

Mr. Ponziani noted that this was the first meeting of the Avon High School Synthetic Field Project Subcommittee, adding that the committee had been commissioned by the Town Council to proceed with some additional planning for a synthetic turf field at the high school. Mr. Ponziani asked Mr. Robertson to give some history and explain the task of the committee. Mr. Ponziani introduced the members of the committee.

Mr. Robertson welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. Mr. Robertson referred to 2014 when the subcommittee was charged by the Town Council with preparing a preliminary plan and budget for a project to be located on Thompson Road. He continued that in 2015 the focus changed back to the high school location with a report made to the Council in June 2015. A joint meeting with the Town Council and BOE took place in December, 2015. Mr. Robertson continued that basically the Town Council and BOE have reached a consensus that the location for the project would be the high school. He noted also that typically at this time of the project we would be going to referendum but not with this case. Mr. Robertson continued that it made sense to go out of sequence because of unresolved site issues and use a process called design development. He noted that the members have received a copy of the approved charge and minutes of the March 16th Town Council meeting where these unresolved issues were discussed. Because of the charge, the subcommittee will be giving a final recommendation on the base bid and alternates. Mr. Robertson noted that the Town Council had already approved the core of the project which includes the multi-use field, track and lighting. He continued that the subcommittee will be discussing drainage, buffering, and geotechnical surveys. Mr. Robertson added that they would also be concerned with how the site would be used, lighting and the PA system; noting sensitivity to the abutters on Sudbury and West Avon Road. To sum, Mr. Robertson said the Council and BOE will be looking for a recommendation on a base bid and alternates, dealing and solving all the issues involving the site and recommendations on hours of

operation, programming and usage. The Council will then decide the next steps in the process and whether it will be submitted to referendum and be permit ready. Mr. Robertson introduced Mr. Eric Roise as Mr. Luke McCoy's replacement, assuring we were in good hands.

VI. ARCHITECT UPDATE

Mr. Ponziani requested that the agenda go a little out of order to allow for BSC's report.

Mr. Roise introduced himself and his colleagues and noted that he'd been in the field for 25 years, with knowledge of both natural and synthetic fields. He continued that the meeting was to review what we already know, why the high school site vs. Thompson Road. Mr. Roise referred to Concept A: expanding the existing track to an 8 lane one, turfing the interior of the track and providing for a multi-purpose field hockey field nearby, how bleachers and lighting fit into the project, how the layout will fit and the needs of programming for the track and how people get in and out of the site. He noted the high school was the preferred site for the project with reasons including proximity to all the existing programming and taking advantage of the infrastructure that is already in place. Mr. Roise noted that synthetic turf fields are controversial right now because of the infill material, the SBR rubber. He continued that lighting would be looked at and how to best take advantage of the existing infrastructure.

Mr. Roise referred to the Statement of Need draft which outlines Avon's need for the project. He noted some of the items such as the increase in population, increased popularity of soccer and addition of men's and women's Lacrosse programs. He noted the 2007 Recreation & Parks Facilities Master Plan identifying the need for additional athletic fields, both synthetic and multipurpose. Mr. Roise noted the higher cost of synthetic really costing half as much because one gets so much more use out of it and the cost of maintaining it is so much lower compared to natural grass fields.

Mr. Roise noted the base cost (includes new bleachers and press box) being \$2.8 – \$2.9 million. He noted that escalation costs have risen 15 – 20% higher from last year citing a better economy and contractors raising their prices. Mr. Ponziani clarified that the figure represented the cost for one field. Mr. Roise said the higher figure of \$3.8 million included the alternates of a second field, lighting and a storage building. He continued with a figure for soft costs at \$186,500.00 and \$1.375 million for lifecycle cost over a 15 year period. Mr. Neagle clarified that the per-use figure of the synthetic field was based on its full use: 800 uses per year, the field lit up every night: its full utilization. Mr. Roise continued that it was the committee's project and he was here to help them to get there. He said the next meeting would be one to refine the project program: locate the utilities, survey information, irrigation, grading, constraints of possible wetlands or zoning issues, adding amenities and costing along the way.

Mr. Roise suggested visiting some projects around the state: O'Brien Stadium in Windsor, Bloomfield High School, East Lyme High School, Wallingford, Torrington and South Windsor High School to name a few. He suggested looking at the track surfacing when visiting the schools. Mr. Roise would like to answer questions at the next meeting regarding parking, potential ticketing the facility, drainage, or what problems we've had. Mr. Ponziani asked what Mr. Roise will be doing until the next meeting and what did he need from the members. Mr. Roise said he'd have questions prepared as he has had on past projects. He asked the members to

review the Project Decisions Matrix that was handed out at the meeting and come ready with questions or adjustments. Ms. Roberson asked that he share the list of questions beforehand for better preparation. Mr. Neagle asked what the design standards were for the fields. Mr. Roise said CIAC, which is the National Federation of High Schools, and if they'd like to do something different that could be discussed too. He clarified that it would be the standard for every field. Mr. Jadovich questioned how many sports were lined on the main field. Mr. Roise said typical "municipal" was 4-5 sports. He added that maintenance needs to be factored in as no lines would need to be added for different games as they'd be permanent in the fabric of the field.

Mr. Ponziani suggested moving the next meeting up to May 16th. Ms. Checko will check on the availability of the room. Mr. Donovan asked where we were with the budget: high, middle of the road or bare bones. Mr. Roise said what was budgeted so far was typical municipal level, what was durable and would last. Mr. Neagle asked if the price included a new scoreboard. Mr. Roise said yes and that it could be taken out. Ms. Jackson asked if recycling the current bleachers could be done to offset the cost of new. Mr. Roise said they'd have to be looked at for code compliance and then decide. Mr. Ponziani thanked Mr. Roise for his presentation.

III. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE

None.

IV. COMMUNICATION FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Donovan asked the members if they had any other questions and said Concept A is the best use of the area. Mr. Neagle reminded that the project was still in the conceptual stage and some of the designs could be worked out such as bleacher seating and location. Members discussed possible multiple uses of the other field. Ms. Roberson reminded of the intramural play as well. Mr. Roise added that most municipalities cannot afford to have dedicated fields but do have multi-purpose ones. Mr. Magrini asked that the more information Mr. Roise could give ahead of time would make for good decisions on behalf of everyone.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

VOTE: Mr. Ponziani motioned to adjourn, Mr. Neagle seconded and all agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 AM. None opposed.

Peter Ponziani, *Chairman*

Susan Gatcomb, *Clerk*