

MINUTES
AVON HIGH SCHOOL SYNTHETIC FIELD PROJECT SUBCOMMITTEE
AVON ROOM TOWN HALL BLDG. 1
MAY 16, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 AM by Chairman Peter Ponziani in the Avon Room, Town Hall Building 1. Subcommittee members present: Chairman Peter Ponziani, Donald Droppo, David Magrini, Sara Roberson, Dan Neagle and alternate member Kelly Jackson. Staff members present: High School Coordinator of Athletics and Student Activities Timothy Filon, Director of Operations Myles Altimus and Recreation & Parks Director Ruth Checko attended. BSC Group's representatives present: Manager of Landscape Architecture Eric Roise and Landscape Architect Jess Harris were also in attendance.

II. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING – May 2, 2016

VOTE: Mr. Magrini motioned to accept the May 2, 2016 minutes as presented and Mr. Droppo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

V. FIELD RENOVATIONS PROGRAMMING DISCUSSION

Mr. Ponziani noted that this was the second meeting of the Avon High School Synthetic Field Project Subcommittee. Mr. Ponziani asked that we proceed out of order and drop down to number V on the agenda which is the Field Renovations Programming Discussion. He introduced Eric Roise with BSC and stated that Mr. Roise provided the committee with an agenda/questions paper that will direct the discussion this morning. It will be an informal question and answer session. Mr. Roise will get us started. From there the committee will respond with questions. After that we'll turn it over to the audience.

Mr. Roise thanked Mr. Ponziani for the introduction. He explained that at the last meeting we did an overview of where the project is, where we've been, where we're going. This meeting we'll get into the nuts and bolts of programming, the site and the facility – what you want, what you don't want, what you need, what you don't need. This portion of the project gets us to the point where we put pencil to paper and design. A lot of the questions Ms. Checko has probably asked in the past as part of the early SD process. This is getting more into detail and confirming where you want to go with the project.

He said that this will be an informal working session and asked if everyone had copies of the questions and the packet.

Mr. Ponziani remarked that the questions were very well organized and asked that we go out of order with the questions. He asked that we begin with Field Planning on Page 3.

Mr. Roise agreed to start with the big picture – facilities planning. Typically for a High School project we would design at the CIAC and National Federation of High School Standards. That's the first question because it gets into who else do you think might be using this facility? If you're going to get into a Joint Use Agreement, we might want to go to an NCAA configuration. That's the first question.

Mr. Magrini asked what the difference was. Mr. Roise explained that NCAA track has a curb on the inside – slightly different layout. National Federation has a little greater tolerance in the slope of the track and the width of the lanes. NCAA is a more expensive configuration.

Mr. Ponziani asked about the size difference and Mr. Roise answered it's a little bigger – bigger lanes, bigger track configuration. Mr. Droppo asked if there's enough space and Mr. Roise answered that we'll get into it.

Mr. Ponziani addressed Mr. Filon and Mrs. Checko to answer. Mr. Filon answered that there's really no need for NCAA, everything is going to be high school, recreation and middle school. NFHS is perfect.

Mr. Ponziani added that we do have to be cost conscious. It will have to be an overriding concern as we go forward.

Mr. Neagle added that he built a track up at UCONN. NCAA tolerances for constructability are exacting. It makes construction much more expensive.

Mr. Roise said that he'll design to NFHS. Next question – Conference and Event Hosting. Do you want to host conferences? If you're going to host a conference or state wide event, you need to have a provision for ticketing, certain amount of seats at the facility.

Mr. Ponziani interrupted to ask what conference event meant and Mr. Roise responded with if you're going to host a regional track championship. That kicks in requirements for bleachers, parking. No written guidelines, but they look at the ability to program everything they need for a big event. Ticketing, ease of access, lighting. Any thoughts on that?

Mr. Filon answered that if they had a two team tournament, they could do that. We would only do a track invitational on a Saturday. Conference meets right now are held at New Britain or Simsbury. His biggest concern right now is not our field, it's our parking for people coming to watch. They sometimes start at 2:00, right at the school ending traffic. That could be tough. We could do track invitationals on Saturdays without a problem. Conference championships are locked into three sites right now and state meets are at Middletown or New Britain.

Mr. Roise took that as a yes and no. We'll get into that later.

Mr. Magrini added that if there's a cost consideration, we'd like the ability to be able to host.

Mr. Roise brought up Title IV requirements, as far as equality of facilities. This usually doesn't apply to track design. Baseball field and softball fields, that's where Title IV kicks in. You need to provide both. Any thoughts on Title IV?

Mr. Magrini responded just when it comes to lining fields for lacrosse. Mr. Neagle added turf for field hockey. Mr. Ponziani asked if that was a Title IV requirement and Mr. Neagle responded that we don't want to lose sight of field hockey. If there's an opportunity to accommodate that sport, we should. Mr. Roise added that field hockey is a pretty small field. Women's lacrosse is a pretty big field.

Mr. Roise moved on to Joint Use Agreements, Rental Potential or Alternate Uses. These are all things to think about. Is the goal to rent out the facility? Ms. Jackson responded with just youth leagues, feeder programs coming up. Mr. Roise asked about alternate uses – camps, graduation, carnivals? Mr. Filon and Mr. Ponziani both responded with graduations.

Mr. Roise skipped to page 2 on Field Planning – sports played/intended uses. We have both a track proposed with a field on the interior and we have a secondary field to the North. For the track, what uses do you want to get on the inside of the track? Presently it's about 200 feet, so it's too narrow for soccer.

Ms. Jackson replied football and lacrosse. For field hockey, she spoke with Terri Ziemnicki, and she said that she doesn't even need to use that field. They use shorter field turf on the field hockey field. All the games can be used on that field, she won't have to move over. So women's lacrosse, men's lacrosse and football.

Mr. Neagle asked about soccer. Ms. Jackson said that soccer uses Fisher, but they want to do their night games, spirit week games. Will they be able to do that still?

Mr. Roise responded that it depends on the size of the field – 8 lane track with a narrow interior. 195 foot width soccer field, that's the minimum width for a high school soccer field.

Mr. Neagle advised that they played on the field now. Idea moving forward was an 8 lane track, so the interior could accommodate a sanctioned conference game in the infield. This has been vetted out hasn't it? Mr. Ponziani responded assuming that there's room. Mr. Neagle responded depending on baseball, bleachers. The idea was to have a playable soccer field on the inside. Lacrosse, football, soccer on the main field. Mr. Ponziani inserted that we've got to consider field hockey. With the money issues, he's not sure that the other field is going to be done.

Ms. Jackson responded that she (Ms. Ziemnicki) said she wouldn't ever need to use the lacrosse field. Mr. Roise added that's another discussion coming down the road – what other sports want to go on the other field and what the design ends up being. Artificial turf football field is a very different design from an artificial turf field hockey field. Artificial field hockey field is a different design from an artificial turf soccer or lacrosse field also. Thinking that field should be a hybrid field made for field hockey, lacrosse and probably not football because that would be thicker, slower turf and it's not big enough.

Mr. Filon added that it's traditionally been lacrosse and field hockey. That field gets used more than the big field does. It's a tremendous asset.

Ms. Jackson added that it brings revenue for the girls' lacrosse and the Farmington Valley Field Hockey League in the evening.

Mr. Roise asked if the main field doesn't get used more because we're trying to preserve it and Mr. Filon confirmed yes because it's grass. Mr. Magrini added that the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grade girls could use the field hockey field for lacrosse games. But the 7th and 8th graders can't because there's no space behind the goals.

Mr. Ponziani added that the principal use will be field hockey. There is the possibility that nothing is going to happen with that field do to cost.

Mr. Roise added that there's nothing in any artificial turf design that prohibits field hockey. They prefer short turf, but they play on the deeper turf too. Mr. Ponziani stated that field hockey should be incorporated for purposes of lining.

Mr. Roise said there's the potential not to line the fields every time. Have you thought about which sports you want permanently inlaid and which sports you want painted?

Mr. Filon added that he's coached at Conard High School. They put a field in. They play lacrosse, soccer, football and field hockey all on that field. No one's complained about all the lines down.

Mr. Roise inserted that typically its four sports on a field.

Ms. Jackson commented with regards to logo. In South Windsor, the logo is in the end zone vs. horizontally. When they lined the circle for lacrosse, it was over the logo, so it was hard to see. We should consider that. Mr. Roise responded that the question will be line striping priority. It will be part of the discussion further on. Part of that discussion will be field graphics – logos, end zone. Detailed discussion on synthetic turf at the next meeting. In this meeting, do you have a turf that you prefer? Any thoughts on turf for infield because of issues with crumb rubber? Mr. Ponziani responded that we'd like a fill with no health issues. If we can avoid a health issue, we should.

Ms. Checko asked about the coated crumb rubber. Mr. Roise responded that crumb rubber is tested for performance, resiliency, environmental impact, outgassing, everything. The other alternative systems to coated crumb rubber, sand infill, TPE, EPDM, organic infills – none of those have been extensively tested. As far as crumb rubber and coated crumb rubber, they're both fairly inexpensive. As soon as you jump into any of the other alternatives, you need a pad under the field and that adds \$120,000 – sand, cork, TPE and EPDM.

Ms. Jackson added that sand is very difficult to play lacrosse and Mr. Roise agreed.

Ms. Roberson added that we would be irresponsible to consider crumb rubber. Given concerns, we would be inappropriate to consider crumb when there are wonderful alternatives. If we need

to invest in our children's' futures with a \$120,000 price tag, we need to find a way to do it. We should consider alternatives.

Mr. Roise added that \$120,000 is just the start. It's just the pad. Mr. Magrini added that we want to consider everything. We want to look at options.

Mr. Neagle added that there are other variables – lighting, stadium seating, and outbuildings. Maybe it's worth having the alternative fill material and backing off on some of these other stuff.

Mr. Roise agreed that he'd like to discuss that other stuff. We will revisit the turf and the infill at a separate meeting. Regarding turf, it sounds like you don't have a preference on brands. You'll probably need to be educated. We'll plan it for the next meeting.

Mr. Ponziani inserted a quick question regarding irrigation. What are we talking about? Mr. Roise explained that we have an existing natural turf field now. It has irrigation. Do we preserve that? In that we have connections to wash down the fields. Do we abandon? Do we bring in potable water? Also, if you have any water problems now, artificial turf is going to take pressure off your irrigation system.

Related to that are what sideline appurtenances do you want on the field? For a track field, we'll bring in conduit. We'll put in manholes or boxes at the start/finish. It's a portable system, a linked system, which is not a permanent system. Scoreboard ends up being for the field, and for the track. Doesn't make sense to link scoreboard with timing system. What kind of power and communications do you want to bring in to the interior of the track and have available at the 50 yard line start and finish?

Mr. Filon said we have the wireless links right now. We're running power behind our bleachers to the computer. We'll definitely need start and finish line the same. We can run the starting gun from the 100 without power. Football and other sports, it would be good to have an outlet. If we have to run anything, we could.

Mr. Neagle asked if there was any reason to do it on both sides of the track. And Mr. Roise responded that there are reasons to do it on both sides, the start and finish. Mr. Neagle clarified the visitor's side and Mr. Roise responded that it gives you more flexibility on how you do events. Conduit and boxes are pretty cheap. Do we install the conduit and boxes so you can run the wires and put in outlets? Ms. Checko responded yes.

Mr. Roise asked about any maintenance or vandalism considerations? Ms. Jackson responded no.

Mr. Roise asked who maintains the fields now – schools or town? Mr. Filon responded school.

Mr. Roise asked if we had enough storage on site for extra turf, extra infill? Mr. Filon responded that we'd probably need more storage.

Mr. Roise moved on to synthetic turf drainage. Synthetic turf drains vertically - down into the gravel underneath the field. Stays very dry. Very permeable fields. Question is are there any groundwater problems?

Mr. Neagle responded yes – south side of field. Water ponds and pools on the fields and off the trackside. In a heavy rain, the field is wet and so is the track. There are some yard drains along the property line with Sudbury. Not sure if they drain properly. Questions about if the pipe is damaged or clogged or undersized.

Ms. Roberson explained that it creates sinkholes in one of the yards. Mr. Neagle said somebody needs to look at the pipe. Ms. Roberson said it goes under Sudbury. Ms. Checko added that she could put Mr. Roise in touch with the Town Engineer. He's familiar with it.

Mr. Roise stated that because of the stone under the field, these fields are considered a benefit to drainage because it really slows down the drainage.

Mr. Neagle said we use it almost as a detention basin. He asked if you still have to discharge it. Mr. Roise answered yes, we'll have to figure out what's going on.

Mr. Neagle asked if there's times when we don't discharge. Mr. Roise answered that we always have a discharge of some sort. How about on the North field, are there any drainage issues?

Mr. Neagle responded yes, where the existing parking is. The east side gets wet. Could be resolved by exporting soil. It was the contractor's staging area when they did the High School renovation. That gets very wet. No drainage. If that were turfed, it would get resolved.

Mr. Roise asked if there were any other drainage issues. Mr. Filon responded no.

Mr. Roise moved onto lights – where do those get hooked up, how we feed those? We'll install conduit, provisions. Last on the field planning is goals (football, field hockey, lacrosse, soccer). Football goals are typically specified – gooseneck. Do you need goals for any other sports and should we include in the project?

Mr. Filon responded that we're definitely going to need soccer goals, field hockey. We have an abundance of lacrosse nets in really good shape. Mr. Roise said that we'll revisit this. We'll include a package of non-fixed equipment – new hurdles, new pads for high jump, new pads for pole vault, loose goals, and football equipment.

Mr. Neagle asked about fencing behind goals. Mr. Roise answered that it's the next thing we're going to talk about. Pedestrian access – no formal entry. Do you want to ticket? That gets into how we fence. Two levels – taller security fence on the perimeter and inner spectator fence.

Ms. Jackson brought up Joel Barlow – one large fence. Mr. Roise said that's exactly what we're talking about.

Mr. Filon added that right now we have no security based on our perimeter. Need ticket entrances. People cross the track to get to concessions. CIAC has talked with athletic directors about putting provisions in. We want to avoid situations. We need to put fencing in.

Mr. Roise asked how people get to the fields. Mr. Filon referred to the map. The primary way is the long path where the ambulance comes down, near the high jump. Another is where the stairs are. Need two areas – one at this end, and one at this end.

Mr. Ponziani clarified one entry below the existing high jump entry and one above it. Mr. Filon responded yes. We need one area where people can branch off.

Ms. Jackson shared that she thought we were going to do all seating on one side (near the baseball field). Press box in middle, visitors on right, home on the left. So, entrance should be on one side.

Mr. Neagle added that we can't put the bleachers on that side because of the baseball field. Ms. Jackson thought that we had talked about flipping the bleachers to the other side due to widening of the track. Mr. Neagle said that would be a problem with baseball. He recalls talking about replacing the existing bleachers, expand to a visitors side bleachers, new bleachers on the opposite side. Risk of foul balls. Limitation on size of bleachers.

Mr. Magrini added that the size of the bleachers would be a problem with the sightline to the road.

Mr. Filon added that it would be a tight fit for security purposes. One set of bleachers, with two crowds – can cause problems. Mr. Roise added that in the majority of projects, they're splitting the bleachers. Mr. Neagle said that we don't need a large section for visitors.

Ms. Jackson pointed out that because of the two entrances, there's not one main lot. Mr. Roise agreed that people would be coming from the East and the North. Mr. Ponziani added if we had one entrance, we could funnel people two ways.

Mr. Magrini brought up bleachers again – the hill where the steps are. If we could incorporate that area for a seating perspective, it might be aesthetically unique.

Mr. Neagle said he thought they talked about that. With the widening of the track, they'd have to put in a retaining wall along that line and ADA access. Not realistic. He thought that when Luke presented the conceptals, there was a ramp and a retaining wall.

Mr. Roise spoke of protective netting. He asked where we see the need. On the end zones of field, we'll put it in. If you're playing lacrosse, we'll put it on either D-zone or provide provisions for it. Mr. Magrini added that with the amount of residents that use the track, we should net the entire field. Mr. Filon added that we have to shut track practice down as soon as lacrosse practice starts. We've had students get hit with lacrosse balls.

Mr. Roise asked if there was any other protective netting. Mr. Neagle responded that there's a 4 foot high chain link fence on the driveway. If that could be extended. It wouldn't affect viewing. Ms. Roberson added that we also talked about netting on the baseball side for visitors.

Mr. Roise brought up bleachers. Currently you have five main bleachers off the track. Out of them four are out of code. What capacity do you want? Mr. Ponziani responded that we talked about replacing what we have. Mr. Magrini chimed in 750, 250 visitor.

Mr. Roise asked about press box/filming platform. Mr. Filon responded yes.

Mr. Neagle added that if we replaced the bleachers, we should consider using the space underneath. Mr. Roise replied that that gets into design. With the angle design, which we currently have, you cannot use the space underneath. The I-beam design, is more expensive, but you can use for storage. It's not weatherproof. Mr. Neagle added that we could put goals, hurdles, cones, etc. under there though.

Ms. Checko asked if there was storage under the press box. Mr. Roise answered it depends on the design.

Mr. Roise moved onto the public address system. It can be \$5,000 or \$100,000. Do you want us to include it or do you want to wire yourself? Ms. Checko advised that the Board of Education has electricians.

Mr. Roise added that where that will work in is when we talk about field lighting, speakers. Typically the speakers are hung off the field lighting by brackets. Mr. Neagle added that he thought that would be a problem with pole mounted speakers. It needs to be a ground level system with controls for the sound.

Mr. Roise added that that's where the \$5,000 system or \$100,000 system works in – to control the sound. Cheaper systems are loudspeaker systems. Smaller speakers around the bleachers instead of a couple of big speakers is where the cost comes in.

ADA accessibility, we talked about. Outbuildings. You have existing concessions. Do you want to preserve – warming trays? Mr. Filon added that they would like more flexibility. It gets great use, it's a nice facility. It serves a purpose. It's seasonal.

Mr. Roise asked about water service? That brings us to restrooms and sanitary facilities. Right now everyone uses the school for major events? Ms. Roberson responded no, two high school baseball players used my yard. She likes the idea of an entranceway.

Mr. Roise asked about thoughts for separate restroom facilities. Ms. Jackson responded that it should be outlined. Because of security and the location of the stands, a lot of schools such as Joel Barlow are not doing the plumbing. They are doing Port-A-Toilets. The cost is significantly less. We should get the cost of a pad to put the port-a-toilet on.

Mr. Ponziani asked about location – North side of the facility. Ms. Checko responded that it would have to be accessible to the port-a-potty company.

Ms. Roberson interjected that it was her understanding from the last Board of Ed Meeting and from speaking with Mr. Mala that the schools are now staying open and the custodians are being paid to stay longer, so the restrooms can stay open, even on Saturdays. Mr. Filon added that they are there 7 – 3.

Ms. Checko added that there would be times when there would be community activities when the schools are closed. That's why I have port-a-potties at the school.

Mr. Roise talked about field planning – scoring. He said that there are two fairly recent scoreboards. Any comments? Mr. Magrini said we should use the existing scoreboards and tear down the one on the baseball field that's not worked in 15 years.

Ms. Jackson added that the scoreboard on the field hockey field is not wired, a generator is brought in. Mr. Filon agreed that a portable generator has to be used. Ms. Roberson stated that there's some problem with the wiring.

Mr. Roise asked about the existing scoreboards. If they are LED, we could use solar panels. What about athletic lighting, if you could fill me in? Mr. Ponziani responded that it's for the major field. Mr. Roise asked if it would be for track or field events and Mr. Ponziani responded just field events.

Regarding track and field planning, Mr. Roise said the plan is for an 8 lane track, wider than the existing one, with an infield wide enough for soccer. Field events, the long jump would be on the left side, high jump on the right side, discus on the inside of the track. The whole D area would get turfed. Mr. Ponziani asked what the D area was and Mr. Roise explained it's on either side. The warm up areas. When we move the high jump into the D area, we might have to move shot put to where high jump is now.

Mr. Filon said we could move shot behind the football goal. We'll need two runways for long jump and triple jump. We've always had one and it slows the meet down. Pole vault can stay where it is. Mr. Neagle said that there might be a space problem with the new configuration of the track.

Mr. Neagle asked if you could accommodate the track and field events within the confines of the outer lane of the track. Do you need to spill out onto the field? Mr. Roise said it's tough to fit runway in that space. We might be able to fit it in.

Mr. Roise asked about steeple chase and Mr. Filon responded no.

Mr. Roise advised as far as fixed track equipment and non-fixed equipment – hurdles, discus cage, and netting.

Regarding track surfacing – latex (bottom of the line). It looks similar to urethane – less durable, more susceptible to temperature changes. 90% of the track and fields in CT are a urethane based mat system. Red is standard color. As far as surfaces, we'll talk more about that.

Crossing mats and protective mats – provides protection from cleats. Maintenance considerations – specify maintenance training for staff – how to use lights, utilities, how to maintain the field and track. The track has a 5 year warranty and the field has an 8 year warranty.

Mr. Neagle asked if the warranty on urethane was longer. Mr. Roise answered that they're about the same. He said the life cycle of urethane is longer – 20 years. 3 coats on top of that. Urethane base mat is permeable. Water and vapor flow through them. That 3rd surface code at year 15 is where you see blistering.

Mr. Ponziani asked what else we need to talk about. Mr. Roise said he wanted to talk about schedule - when the fields get built and how they get built. Track and field facility is a 120 day project. Longer than June 1st – September 1st. Would like to start earlier in spring or go farther into fall. The north field is a quick summer job.

Ms. Jackson added that with the new school schedule, and school getting out early in June, if construction starts right after school ends, will the field be accessible in September? Mr. Roise responded no.

Ms. Jackson then asked Mr. Filon whether moving spring or fall sports would be easier for him. He responded spring. Moving football would be a major cost.

Mr. Roise also advised that cost is a major factor. 90% of municipality projects are from June – September. Contractors are slammed for this period of time.

Mr. Magrini asked if Mr. Roise, Ms. Checko and Mr. Robertson, could give us a schedule. Lay out the calendar for us. Are we going to Referendum in November, June or March? People want to know. It's been a 15 year conversation.

Ms. Checko responded that one of the things that comes into play is the bonding and where it falls with the debt services. The permitting process would be P & Z. That would be 2 meetings.

Mr. Ponziani asked what else Mr. Roise would need. He responded that the future things we need to educate the committee on is the turf types, turf infills, track surfacing types, lighting types.

Ms. Roberson added buffering. Mr. Ponziani said that buffering could be brought in with usage discussions. Ms. Checko added that she could get some details from P & Z because they have very strict regulations.

Mr. Ponziani suggested that at the next meeting, the committee focuses on turf types and lighting. At the next meeting after that, we focus on usage and buffering.

Ms. Jackson asked about urethane vs latex. Mr. Roise advised that conversations need to be had if you want to discuss upper scale materials, which costs dollars. 95% are urethane based.

Ms. Jackson stated that no one asks about cost. They want to know is it good or bad turf? Is it going to hurt my children? Mr. Ponziani added that there's another whole segment of the

population that is concerned about cost. Ms. Jackson responded that cost and safety should be kept together.

Mr. Neagle inserted that if we price ourselves out of the 2nd field, we're doing ourselves an injustice. It's not just the main field. We need to look at this as a whole.

Mr. Droppo added that he always thought it was two field projects. Mr. Ponziani commented that it will be this committee that makes the recommendation.

Ms. Checko added that there will be a threshold on Town side. Town and fundraising. Mr. Magrini stated that Mark Zacchio and Gary Mala need to come to our meeting and give us their view on fundraising. Rise of naming rights – private funding for public schools. Are we going 100% to Referendum and no private funding? We need to assemble.

Ms. Checko recommended that we meet next Monday. We'll talk about Field and Lighting. Ms. Roberson added buffering. Mr. Ponziani advised that time constraints may not allow this. Ms. Checko added that buffering may resolve itself through P & Z.

Mr. Neagle said that it's a project cost. Buffering on West Avon Road needs to be talked about.

Mr. Ponziani reiterated that the next meeting will be about turf and track lighting. He asked that the audience members hold their questions to next week's meeting. Mr. Neagle suggested our meeting start earlier and Ms. Checko suggested 7:00. Everyone agreed.

III. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE

None.

IV. COMMUNICATION FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

VOTE: Mr. Ponziani asked for a motion to adjourn, Mr. Neagle motioned, Ms. Jackson seconded and all agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 AM. None opposed.

Peter Ponziani, *Chairman*

Usha Srivel, *Clerk*