

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL
PECIAL MEETING MINUTES
December 7, 2015**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Avon Town Hall, in the Selectmen's Chamber by Chairman Zacchio. Members present: Mrs. Maguire and Messrs: Pena, Evans, and Stokesbury.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Zacchio.

III. OLD BUSINESS

13/14-48 Synthetic Turf Field Project: 99 Thompson Road & Avon High School

Chairman Zacchio gave an introduction. He reported that we will go through presentations from Luke McCoy with BSC Group who was the lead on design for both the High School site and MH Rhodes site, asking the Town Council or Board of Education to ask questions. He noted that this is the first time that the Board of Education will see the body of work for the High School site. He added that Ruth Checko, Director of Recreation and Parks, and Tim Filon, AHS Athletic Director, will talk about how we expect this operation to run assuming that we go forward with the project. He noted that we do not have a project we are moving forward with at this point. He added that we have a conceptual plan that we have designed for both the MH Rhodes property which was considered as part of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan done around 2007 and we also have a plan for Avon High School. He reported that at one time we looked at Avon High School as a site for a turf field and for a number of reasons it was decided that was not the right time or spot to do a field and happened to be when the Master Plan was being developed so the Plan looked for an alternative site as a need had been developed within that body of work. He reported that the MH Rhodes site which was a time device factory and the Town purchased that property and had remediated the building and found that it was polluted and there were a number of wells being tested to make sure the pollution had been remediated which took a long period of time. He noted that in 2007 the Recreation and Parks team that was putting together the Master Plan moved the idea for a turf field to the MH Rhodes site and there it sat for all of these years.

Chairman Zacchio reported that in 2012 the MH Rhodes site was cleared by DEEP as being clean, good news for Avon, and this conversation started again. He added that the Council hearing some interest went through a process, put out an RFP, the architect BSC Group was awarded the RFP, Luke McCoy joined us and the Recreation and Parks team that we gave a charge to and to design what the best fit would be for that piece of property. Having done that, we realized that there is no infrastructure there so we would have to build sewer lines, parking lots, and all of the other amenities for such project and the cost was over \$5 million. He commented that we had some money left in the appropriation that we had done for this body of work, decided to look back at the High School, let's see if things have changed and take a fresh

look. We recharged the Recreation and Parks Committee, BSC Group came back in, did that body of work, brought us to June 2015 when it was presented to Town Council and here we stand. He reported that tonight's goal is to give the Board of Education a formal presentation on the High School site, a presentation on the MH Rhodes site, collect the Board of Education's feedback and let them think through in terms of the site and whether we think that is the best site to pursue a project like this. He asked the Board of Education to take time to do this and would not be fair to ask for a decision tonight and allow for public input to be heard and then ask for something in January. He added that after that process is done he will open the conversation to the floor and we will stay as long as we need to and hear everybody's comment. He noted that we are specifically focusing on site tonight so questions can be asked about other items but we do not have those answers yet. We will collect those questions and if we decide to move down this path to build a field then all of those questions need to be answered. He reported that there will be questions around the operating models which is what Ms. Checko and Mr. Filon are presenting and are in a format which we can adjust and accept your feedback on and make changes to as time goes on but it is at this point our best shot at how we would operate this type of field whether it be at MH Rhodes or Avon High School.

Luke McCoy, Senior Landscape Architect with BSC Group out of Glastonbury, CT, made a presentation which is attached and made part of these minutes. He reported on the Thompson Road Recreation Complex, noting the existing site and scope of services. He commented that after a number of reiterations back and forth with the Recreation and Parks Subcommittee and the Town Council a site master plan was drafted that met the list of criteria and laid out on the site the best. He noted that some of the storage in the existing building would be kept as the Town currently uses it. He added that one of the main things that came up during this was large high school events or tournament where both fields would be utilized and handling parking for that and it was discussed looking at the school that is located up the street as an overflow and pricing out sidewalks to connect the two facilities. He noted that the site was designed such that it could be a phase construction with the secondary field being built at a later time if funding was not available to do the whole project at once and would allow direct access off Thompson Road to construct that and not affect any of the other site features once it is built. He noted that we also looked at heavy screening along the roadway and fields which is a combination of a berm and landscaping to meet zoning requirements and go above and beyond for the neighbors that are adjacent the site and also when you are traveling along the road. He reported that once a master plan for this site was drafted they developed costs for it. He highlighted the soft costs (design) in an amount of \$213,000. He highlighted the hard costs (construction) in an amount of \$4,811,805.25 for a grand total of \$5,024,805.25. He highlighted the alternates cost estimates and if all were chosen would increase the budget by \$990,425. He noted the Base Bid & Alternates Project Total of \$6,015,230.25. He reported that while presenting this to Council the pros and cons were discussed of this facility. He highlighted the pros and cons. He reported that all of this was presented in late spring and then they were asked to look back at the High School site.

Mr. McCoy reported on the Avon High School as an alternate site for converting one of the fields to synthetic turf. He noted that there is not enough to add more fields. He highlighted the scope of services. He noted that currently the natural grass field there does not fit a regulation for tournament play soccer field. He added that soccer has minimum and maximum requirements for the size. He noted that federation size can be as small as 55 yards in width but

cannot use that field for anything more than your regulation play matches so no premier leagues, States, semi-finals, etc. He reported that after looking at all of the options, Concept Plan A was deemed to be the most effective for the site. He noted the all new track events. He added that the proposed visitor bleachers would not affect the baseball field and a netting system would be installed to avoid contact by foul balls. He added that an additional all-weather turf field, not full size, but would work for field hockey and good for practices however does not meet regulation size for soccer or football. He highlighted the soft costs (design) in an amount of \$186,500 and hard costs (construction) in an amount of \$2,691,000 for a grand total of \$2,877,500 which is less than what we saw at Thompson Road because there is a lot of existing infrastructure at the High School site. He highlighted the alternates cost estimates in the amount of \$1,197,725. He noted that the total, Base Bid & Alternates Project, for the High School site is \$4,075,225 and could be done in phases. He noted that the track and the field would have to be done at the same time because we would reconfigure the track to accommodate that field. He added that the track could be done first and come back and do the turf field later but there is a large economy of scale by doing both at the same time.

Mr. McCoy reported that when initially presented there were comments on why synthetic versus natural grass. He highlighted the Lifecycle Cost Analysis. He noted that the natural grass field would accommodate a multi-sport field for field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, and football. He added that at legislature there is a push to ban the use of pesticides and herbicides at high schools and parks; currently that ban is in effect at elementary and middle schools. He noted that if that happens it will be an expense that you have to account for and made sure to track that as part of this comparison. He noted that the all-weather turf field is based on a sand and crumb rubber in-fill system which is the conventional system and 95% of them across the country are done this way. He noted that the all-weather turf field has a limited life span. He added that when you are comparing the costs it does not factor in the amount of use you can get out of each of these fields for that cost. He commented that 100 events per year on the natural grass field equates to about a season and a half of use and the rest of time down for maintenance or re-growth. He noted that you can use it more but your maintenance costs will go up significantly to keep it safe and playable during that time. He noted that the more you use the all-weather turf field it will last less; the life span is twelve to fifteen years now with using it every day as much as you can as long as you maintain it correctly. He noted that you get approximately three times the use of a synthetic field for almost the same amount of money over fifteen years. He highlighted the maintenance with a synthetic field. He noted that monthly maintenance is based on typical use such as a community high school where it is used all the time from when school is out and on weekends. He reported that maintenance costs approximately \$4,500 per year to do this work. He gave an example with New London who put two fields in and their Public Works staff spends less time grooming two fields in a year than they do painting the one main field for football before it was converted.

Ruth Checko, Director of Recreation and Parks, and Tim Filon, Avon High School Athletic Director, discussed the benefits of synthetic turf fields for the Avon High School athletic program. Mr. Filon noted that he has spent many hours on a football field and track and has also coached in West Hartford when their turf field went in and part of that process and is one of the best things that has ever happened to high school sports.

Mr. Filon reported that right now Avon High School sports are spread out between Fisher Meadows in the fall with soccer with six travel teams by bus every day, the football teams all practice at high school between games so the grass gets worn down. He noted that with turf there is a cushion year round which is a safety point especially given how concussions have affected sports in the last few years. He reported that if we have multiple fields we have spaces for all teams to practice and nobody gets cancelled. He noted that currently with inclement weather multiple games are played during the week which is what the CIAC does not want us to do but unfortunately we have no choice. He added that for a Field Hockey tournament due to two days of rain we gave up our home field advantage and had to play somewhere else which was Simsbury and also had to pay a rental fee which is not budgeted. He noted that the same occurs with Football when for example, a varsity game is played in the rain one night and then the junior varsity game scheduled for the next day is cancelled because the field is not playable. He commented that with turf you can change the schedule, play the game, and not worry about ruining the field. He noted that we are taking it away from the players, coach, and parents. He noted that we have a great maintenance program but sometimes it is stressed when they are trying to move sports to different fields. He noted that with the alternate field it can be used for practice for any sport and do not have to overuse the grass space behind the baseball field which after the fall is torn up. He commented that we cannot expand our fields to where Avon High School currently is; we have beautiful fields at Fisher Meadows and Buckingham which will still be in use but if we bring synthetic turf to the high school we can bring more games to the high school. He noted that as a coach traveling around the State for the last 19 years it is nice to take a bus ride to a high school, get off and play a game, and not have to redirect to a park. He noted that one goal at the high school is to have more students involved in extracurricular activities.

Mr. Filon commented that the synthetic turf field would be used primarily for our use from 2:00 to 5:30 p.m. daily. He added that football would be Friday night and for those that came this year you see the crowds that come, that is Friday Night Football. He noted that the crowds that came out for Spirit Week were crowd but it is not like that every night. He commented that with the current facilities we cannot hold those events. He noted that he has had media representatives wanting to do live games at the high school but then realized that we do not have a press box so they cannot bring in a crew and they are right. He commented that we should not be penalized for that; we have a great school with a great athletic program; we show that we can come out and support as a community and this is the step we take to do that. He noted that being around the Central Connecticut Conference now where we play, 85-90% of the schools have synthetic turf fields. He noted that their athletic directors will tell you that it brings out school spirit, parents, alumni back, and make a better program than what we already have. He added that their big usage of it would be Football Fridays, Track Invitionals (if we have them), or Tournaments with larger crowds and regular games with normal crowds.

Ruth Checko, Director of Recreation and Parks, reported on Usage and Oversight for the fields and that her job is to communicate what the needs of the community are and the way we achieve that is a partnership with the Board of Education. She noted that we have a long-standing agreement that the Board of Education Athletics use Town and School fields from 2:30 to 5:00-5:30 p.m. and from 5:30 p.m. on in the evenings and weekends the Recreation Department coordinates the communities' sporting leagues needs on Board of Education and Town fields as well. She highlighted fees being recommended. Mr. McCoy commented on athletic lighting. He noted that currently for athletic facilities of this type there are two types: conventional sports

field lighting or newer LED lighting which for this application is not quite there yet as it is the first reiteration of it and still going through the process. He noted that most fields are still being done with the conventional system which is not the old type of sports field lighting that you may see with a big flood light on a wooden pole that is maybe 60-70 feet high and can see it from two miles away. He added that sports field lighting has advanced in a number of ways from those. He commented that the taller the pole the better it is for an athletic field because the lights on the pole are able to focus directly down onto the field. He noted that it gets rid of the wash that would affect neighbors that are behind or adjacent to the facility and there are visors on the front of them that stops the glare. He added that they are specifically designed and aimed in the factory based on the survey and design so when they show up the poles are erected, set and rechecked once they are on and adjustments can be made and make sure that there is very little spill behind the poles and that you have a consistent and uniform light level on the field. He added that most are designed so the lighting of them stays consistent and if they design this, current code, they are looking at 50 foot candles for the types of sports you have for the life until you re-lamp them. He noted that some of the older systems were designed when set a minimum 50 foot candles they design and start with 80 or 90 feet and as the bulbs start to dim you would end up at 50 feet or if poorly designed you would end up down around 20 feet. He commented that they can now be adjusted based on the power input and output they put to the lights and remotely monitor all of that. He noted that the Town can monitor who is using them through a smartphone or wireless computer and with a permit can be tracked, turned on and off remotely, track the usage and charge for such, very programmable and easy to do from different locations.

Ms. Checko added that with community use of the synthetic field the Recreation Department will provide port-o-lets, which is no different than Fisher Meadows or Buckingham. She noted that regarding litter the Board of Education maintainers would be responsible for cleaning up the grounds in addition to the users that are there for the events.

Ms. Checko highlighted on the Current Community Sports uses at Avon High School which is generally used by Avon Youth Lacrosse. (inaudible)

Chairman Zacchio commented that this type of detail for the proposed project is not usually done until we go to permitting through Planning and Zoning Commission but we tried to do a little bit more up front this time because there were a lot of questions and wanted to communicate the maximum numbers something could be used and have that as a starting point to work from.

Houston Putnam-Lowry, Board of Education member, questioned what the recommendation is. Chairman Zacchio responded that we are not recommending anything at this point. Mr. Putnam-Lowry clarified that his question for BSC Group. Mr. McCoy responded that we are tasked to present what we have done so far and the question is probably better suited for the Field Subcommittee that was tasked for this order but at this point it is us to present their fact finding and the two options and to hear feedback, pros and cons, from the Boards and public on both of them. Mr. Putnam-Lowry questioned all-weather turf and what would be underneath the turf. Mr. McCoy responded that old turf which is referred to as astro-turf, very short pile height, and was originally designed on concrete or asphalt surface. He noted that has not been done for 15+ years and the new turf system are designed on a stone base, multiple layer dynamic stone, which allows water to flow horizontally and vertically so the stone not only retains water when it rains which is why the surface stays dry but it is also stable enough that you can put turf on and does

not move. He added that the turf system (shared a sample to pass around) is a carpet on top and is infilled with a material currently about 95% of the fields are done with a mixture of crumb rubber and sand and will probably be about 2.5 inches overall in height with about 2 inches of sand and rubber inside so when you play on it you will never feel the stone base below it and have a constant G-max which is the new standard and refers to the ability to have a concussion by your head to surface interaction. He noted that when they design the fields they are also tested for different performance standards, ball roll, ball bounce, and cleat interaction. Mr. Putnam-Lowry commented that the level of injuries with your implementation of all-weather turf are less than with grass. Mr. McCoy responded yes and has been tracked at the professional and college levels; for high school there is really not a reporting mechanism for it but if you infer that professional and college levels are maintained at a higher standard than most high school or community there have been studies that show anywhere from 5-10% less injuries for practice and games on a synthetic field. Mr. Putnam-Lowry questioned if there are studies that show there are more injuries. Mr. McCoy responded that he has not seen from the ones he has reported. Mr. Putnam-Lowry questioned where one would go to look at such studies. Mr. McCoy responded that he does not have those references with him but can provide those. Chairman Zacchio commented that through this process and being involved with high school sports with his sons, he has learned that it is hard to compare apples to apples when you compare injury rates because it all depends on the level of the grass field that you are playing on. He added that if you play on our grass field and it becomes all torn up and full of holes because it was wet and you play a game on it and we have seen more injuries after that because the playing surface is no longer good. Mr. Putnam-Lowry commented that his only knowledge comes from listening to WNPR when they had something on this a few years ago. He commented on field hockey field at the high school and questioned if it is too short north to south or not wide enough east to west. Mr. McCoy responded both. Mr. Putnam-Lowry questioned if consideration has been given to move the fire station across the street where the Town pool used to be to allow an increase north to south but would not solve the problem with east to west access. Chairman Zacchio responded that there is not enough room to move the fire station as it was considered at one time and whether the Town should purchase that piece of property from the Fire Department but the piece that the community club used to sit on is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ acre and rest of the surrounding property is wetland and has setback rules from West Avon Road where any new development would have to be pushed back further off the road and deems it not buildable at this time but is a good question. Mr. Putnam-Lowry commented that swimming has been a difficult process for us and if that has been considered for the Thompson Road property. Mr. McCoy responded that we did not as it was not one of the items but could be looked at with the large existing building. Chairman Zacchio commented that one of the advantages of not doing something at Thompson Road is you get the opportunity of the land that still exists for other purposes and whether that means other athletic facilities as you suggest or an expanded Senior/Community Center, or a Police Department or Board of Education Annex, there are opportunities in terms of the land and value as it presents to the Town.

Kathy Zirolli, Board of Education member, questioned health issues related to numerous articles that continue to come out about cancer related to the fill. Chairman Zacchio commented that tonight's conversation is around site, but the question is important as it has come up from the public before and has been in the news. He noted that we do not have a full vetting of other infill materials we have an opportunity to use different kind of fills that do not include the crumb rubber which the new story suggests this is tied to. He added that we have also talked with

Jennifer Kertanis, Director of Farmington Valley Health District, regarding this. He noted that other towns have gotten comfortable with it and we have to get comfortable with what kind of fill we would use if we chose to move forward with the project. Ms. Zirolli commented that considering the site could be the high school with a turf field she would feel that she was not doing her duty by not asking. Chairman Zacchio responded that we are partners on that at any site and would do that due diligence. Mr. McCoy responded any alternate infill that we are looking at we want to make sure that it is budgeted correctly; they are more expensive to install and to maintain over the life span. He highlighted the different systems: sand and crumb rubber (convention system) in turf fields as in Farmington, Bloomfield, Windsor, Plainville, Manchester, Canton, and Simsbury. He noted that alternate infills can be organic (coconut, corn husks, walnut), others are alternate (green rubber, TPE acrylic-coated sand, or 100% sand). He added that they all have pros and cons; one of the cons for all of them is the cost and increased maintenance. He noted that they are all newer on the industry of market so some do not have any sort of long-term testing for performance, safety, durability and even health as is in question with the crumb rubber right now. He commented that there is a number that stemmed from Pierre EHHI and the interpretation linking crumb rubber to cancer from the soccer coach who has put together a number of adolescence athletes with soccer and believes there is a link which came out in the media about a year ago. He noted that there have been statements made that the EPA has retracted their statement of the crumb rubber however that is not correct; they have said that their study was limited in nature to a small area meaning they did not travel across country to look at hundreds of different fields but they did find that with the fields that they looked at there is no health concern from those fields and was conducted in 2008 and reaffirmed but added language that the study was a small study in nature. He added that regarding the story from NBC to this date they have not been able to link crumb rubber to cancers; she has had a year to do testing and provide a link, a number of fields have donated their infill material, and to this time there is still no testing data back that proves it so it is a theory and NBC states that at the end of their show. He commented that there are over 50 technical studies and research papers that have been done and third party review that shows no levels of raised health concern with crumb rubber and includes toxicology, ingestion, and PHAs that are out there right now. He summarized a few and if this moves forward they would have a more in-depth. He reported that one is from Dr. Laura Green, Toxicologist from Massachusetts who did testing and stated “no type of cancer in adolescence is known to be caused by over exposure to chemicals instead many of these cancer causes are known or believed to occur spontaneously or to be caused by factors common to us all.” He added that Dr. Green states that tires do not contain benzene as EHHI states in their study; air contained with crumb rubber infill turf fields have reported either no detectable concentrations of chemicals or only very low level concentrate found throughout suburban and urban environments. He noted that overall she has found no reliable basis for the notion that crumb rubber infill system turf fields pose a significant risk to cancer or no merits to EHHI’s apparent hypothesis as to how and why soccer players have developed cancer at excess rates, the cluster has almost certainly arisen entirely by chance as have essentially all of the others. He reported that Teeter Engineering in California which is very proactive and doing a lot of studying on this found very similar results and tested PAHs on a number of sites, natural grass fields, parks, and synthetic fields, and compared those and found that all compared very similar and found on synthetic fields that they fall below the California soil screening levels. He reported that a study was done where a private school in Canada sent the infill material overseas to Europe to be tested under EN71, testing to be proven safe for a child’s toy and is more stringent than in the U.S. He note that Europe is ahead of us in synthetic fields and have had

them longer; we are starting to see their technology here. He noted that the infill material passed all of the required testing to be classified safe as a child's safety toy, i.e. bottle, pacifier, etc. and under European standards which are more strict than here in the U.S. can be distributed as safe. He reported that New Zealand did a study where they mimicked the exposure airborne to off-gassing from synthetic crumb rubber surfacing and compared that to the Australian form of OSHA, much more stringent to ours and can be exposed to the gassing or material for forty hours a week, five days a week for your entire career and whether or not that is considered safe and if you hit a certain threshold by OSHA it means that special precautions have to be taken, and the testing that they did came back well below for the off-gassing. He noted that some may have seen that when a turf field is being installed the installer spreading it will wear a basic mask and the reason for that is that sometimes the machines that drop it have talcum powder put it so the crumb rubber will not stick to the machine when it is dropped.

Ms. Zirolli commented on the need for more fields and doing it at the high school has lots of benefits which she agrees but it does not provide more fields. Mr. McCoy responded that the Thompson Road property adds two fields whether they are natural or synthetic. He noted that at the high school it adds hours of use but not additional fields. Ms. Zirolli questioned if we still need more fields. Ms. Checko responded that we are recommending that if we do the high school project we would ask to also consider adding fields to Fisher Meadows. Ms. Zirolli questioned if we have more land. Ms. Checko responded yes. Chairman Zacchio added that we also have a shovel ready project to add seven additional grass fields for \$900,000 on the north side to where the corn is grown which the Town has property. Ms. Checko commented that she would propose some of those be Lacrosse fields at it is a growing sport. Mr. McCoy noted that with the flood plain at Fisher Meadows trying to use it for Lacrosse which is a spring sport will tend to be wet and potentially putting a Lacrosse team on a wet field can tear up the field and ruin it for a whole year. He noted that Burlington ran into this issue a few years ago, held an early spring game when it rained and had to shut their field down for two years and \$180,000 later it is open again.

Jennifer Kertanis, Health Director for Farmington Valley, which also serves the Town of Avon and noted that in a previous career worked twelve years at the State Health Department doing risk assessments and hazardous waste site assessments. She noted that there have been any number of studies that have been peer reviewed and published in journals that speak to the health risk specifically of crumb rubber turf fields and almost consistently they are, while the methodologies may be slightly different, coming back with very similar findings that the risks associated with playing on these fields posing no increased health risk. She added that these studies have looked at both cancer outcomes as well as non-cancer outcomes like irritant respiratory effects and many of them have incorporated very conservative estimates about exposure, inhalation rates, the duration of exposure for an individual so when doing a risk assessment toxicologists really build in those worst case scenarios to really be conservative and ensure that we are taking into account the worst case and maximizing our potential for finding a problem. She noted that some of the studies that have been done in the last few years actually did air sampling under a worst case, hot summer condition with players on the field with personal air monitors, to mimic what they would be exposed to while playing on a field and using those worst case estimates for the risk assessment. She reported that concern about cancer and cancer that may have been precipitated during childhood raises a lot of concerns but cancer unfortunately is common and many different diseases so it is not unusual when we have an issue

of concern that people start beginning to try and identify the people who may have played on fields that got cancer. She noted that the challenge with that is they often miss the people who played on fields that never developed cancer. She added that to the best of her knowledge, and is tracking this with the State Health Department, these are self-reported and have not been substantiated and has not been a true epidemiological study at this point where you are tracking and monitoring and making sure you have a good denominator as well as a numerator. She noted that at this point those stories while they can be very alarming do not tell us much at all about cancer risk and the toxicology and risk assessments that have been done have really looked very closely at some of the carcinogens that are of concern in crumb rubber and how people can be exposed and what that means. Mr. Checko added that anyone who follows FIFA and the World Cup saw some of the controversy for the Women's World Cup and the push by a few of the players not to play on synthetic fields. He noted that one of the main women out in front on that has since retired and is now their national spokesperson by Scotts, the natural grass fertilization company and apparently was during FIFA but was not publicized at the time. Chairman Zacchio commented that it is an extremely important issue and good conversation about it and if we choose to move forward there will be more to come and more discussion and study on it to make sure we are comfortable with it. Mr. McCoy commented that they will continue to stay up on the latest researches if it moves forward. He noted that BSC Group is one of only nine companies in the U.S. to be certified by the Synthetic Turf Council as independent designed professionals which means that they have gone through a rigorous application and review process and are not tied to any synthetic turf manufacturers or infill product and are completely unbiased to any of it so throughout it they will present to you all of the different options, the pros and cons, and work with you to make a decision that is best for you.

Ken Birk, Board of Education member, questioned how the choice of location will impact private or public financing. Chairman Zacchio responded that it would not impact the financing and have not had a lot of discussion around how that might go. He added that if we were to move forward we would expect this to be similar to other projects we have done in Town like the Library where we have had some public funding, private funding, and State funding. He noted that we have talked with Senator Kevin Witkos and Representatives LeGeyt and Becker that we are talking about this and considering moving forward with the project and expect that Avon might have its place at the Bond Commission table as others communities have in terms of some State funding for a project like this; we have no comment or discussion beyond, more an FYI. He noted that Plainville received almost \$1 million from the State, Farmington received \$800,000 and Granby received some funds.

Jay Spivak, Board of Education member, questioned if the location at Thompson Road be used for additional fields with a much lower cost than what is projected. Chairman Zacchio responded that it could. He noted that Fisher Meadows is a shovel ready project that gets you six or seven fields. He added that Thompson Road could fit two grass fields and you still have the travel issues and the infrastructure would only allow for practices and not games. He commented that this was one of the reasons we looked back at the High School with regards to a community atmosphere. Mr. Spivak questioned if the two fields at Thompson Road would be instead of doing anything at Fisher Meadows. Chairman Zacchio responded that we need more than two fields and does not solve field space issue from a practice facility perspective but solves more of a game issue and a playability issue at the High School as it does not need to be rested and can be on it every afternoon and whether it rains or not you can still play a football game on

a Friday night or Saturday afternoon. A member of the public questioned if shovel ready means that it has been approved and is in the capital budget. Chairman Zacchio responded yes and we could fund it and move forward. The Town Manager commented that the construction documents for this project are complete and have been since 2001 and is ready to roll subject to financing. Peggy Roell, Board of Education Chair, commented that one of the reasons it was done was so that when potential financing became available we would have something ready to go. Chairman Zacchio responded yes. He noted that right now that property is being utilized by Farmer Dan Logue who we lease to and he plants corn. He added that there are some other pieces of property not being used by Farmer Phillips and might be able to swap with.

Peggy Roell, Board of Education Chair, questioned that with the proposed project at the High School if parking changes. Mr. McCoy responded that our intent is to maintain the parking that is there from a cost wise perspective and knowing that the previous permit application for it required that amount of parking so we could not lose any nor does this site allow for any additional space to add any.

A member of the public questioned if there is a recommendation from the Recreation and Parks Subcommittee at this point. Chairman Zacchio responded that we do not and we did not ask for one. He added that when we were looking at it from an MH Rhodes perspective it is really just a Town project but as soon as you put it on school property it becomes a Board of Education and Town project as it would be with any school expansion, etc. He noted that is why it was important to introduce you to the concept of the field and start thinking about what your site preference might be if you wanted to move forward with it.

IV. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE

Chairman Zacchio asked members of the public to keep their comments to two or three minutes, state your name and address for the record, make any comments regarding the proposed project, and should be we move forward with either one of these sites we will incorporate and consider any comments that we hear tonight and likely have another public information meeting as we move forward.

David Magrini, 31 Brookridge, thanked the Council, the Recreation and Parks Committee, Luke McCoy and BSC as this has been two years in the making. He got involved a few years ago to really try to rally the community and get everyone involved in the conversation and that happened on October 28, 2013. He noted that we have come a long way and there are still some open questions that need to be answered but the process is moving. He commented that from the steering committee, that the Recreation and Parks Committee put together which are volunteers/people from the community, who said we think something should happen, we should improve the athletic facilities that we have in Town, it is a very important part of the community, a very important part of the education that we provide our children whether they are first graders playing lacrosse for the first time or high school seniors winning a State championship in soccer. He thanked all of the effort that has gone in, all of the great ideas and encourage everybody here to spread the word, get people who are supportive of this idea, get people who are not supportive of this idea into the conversation because it is about building a stronger community and not just about a turf field at Thompson Road or Avon High School. He noted that there is great proof to that if you come to a spirit week event, a Friday night under the lights, and you get to see people

who have kids that have graduated that you do not get to see every day anymore and that whole community spirit is fantastic for the kids who are playing, fantastic for the grandparents, parents, and siblings who come out. He thinks that we need to move forward with this project in some form and his own personal hope and recommendation is that we do that quickly and with expediency, we answer the questions and move this to a vote/referendum. He noted that the people who have been involved in the design committee and those who have been involved in Avon Student Athlete Park (can be found on Facebook if you want information) would like to see this moved forward and we will turn out the vote, both positive and negative, but will make this a reality. A member of the public questioned who was on the Recreation and Parks Subcommittee. Ms. Checko responded with the names as follows: Peter Ponziani, Todd Donovan, Donald Droppo, and David Jadovich.

Sara Roberson, 24 Sudbury Way, commented that we have spent a lot of time on this project and one of the things that she is disappointed was not anywhere in this proposal tonight was the cons to the neighbors who will be impacted by those 100 foot lights. She is also disappointed that there was no discussion about the traffic study that we have talked about at the other session meeting. She is also disappointed about the \$900,000 that was never discussed from April 2015 to tonight and the first we heard about tonight regarding the shovel ready project. She noted that if you add the \$900,000 to the \$4.7 million you are over \$5 million again and it concerns her. She commented that earlier this year the project was at \$2.7 million and tonight we are up to \$2.8 million so for anyone that thinks those dollars are set in stone you are wrong; we have already had an increase of \$50,000 to \$100,000 from a June meeting to tonight. She directed to the Board of Finance, Board of Education, and Town Council, you went from \$2.8 million to \$4.7 million to now \$5.6 million. She commented that it is not that we do not love the Town, we do love the Town but we are your neighbors and to go to seven days a week play is tough no matter where you put it. She appreciates the extended play but you have to think about your neighbors too who will be impacted by that and asks the Boards to consider. She noted that you cannot buy out Sudbury Way because if you could you would have done it and yet we are your neighbors and your friends so do not be angry with us or upset, rather embrace us, we embrace you. She noted that we feel bad for the people on Thompson Road who might have this same impact but we love the community and there is a balance somewhere here, not seven days a week, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. or 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on a Sunday. Chairman Zacchio responded that the \$2.7 million is to produce the track and one field, what escalates that is if we choose to do more; you can do the track and one field at the High School for \$2.7 million, you can add stands and the press box for \$2.8 million, you can add the lights and the second field and that's how it begins to escalate. He noted that the dollars have not changed; it is the same presentation we had in June but what you are combining is the total project to do everything that could fit at the High School but may not be what we decide to do. He added that we presented everything it could do but we would govern that with policy because we understand that concern and would address how much it could be used, how many nights it could be used and talk about that intelligently with the Board of Education around a use policy that help satisfy your needs as well as the school's and Town's needs. He commented that it is not as big and brash as what we presented tonight; it is all in if you will. He added that we would have to go through a traffic study to ensure what happens and also looked at spirit week with sold out crowds especially during homecoming and personally walked around to count parking spots to see how many were left and we had some room and that traffic did not cause a problem as was checked with the Police Department, it is

the off time and not occurring when school is starting, and did not produce a problem for us but a traffic study would be included as we went down the path.

Susan Reboul, 23 Sudbury Way, commented that we already have people come down their street and having trouble getting in and out of their street and had an issue with one individual that was blocking the end of their road that when approached politely did not give an appropriate response back. She knows that there is a traffic study and then there is what we live and for everybody that is going to park at the High School there is always those exceptions that unfortunately are confrontational and combative and put our residents at risk. Chairman Zacchio responded that it sounds like there is a problem today and there are no additional fields. He added that she should have called the Police Department but we should be able to manage that. Mrs. Reboul responded that she did call the Police Department as well as noise and their response was that there was not much they could do and if they are concerned about it you better hope that there is not turf at the High School; it was a stunning response and very indicative of Ms. Roberson's feelings. Chairman Zacchio responded that the dispatcher is not aware of our program. He asked Mr. McCoy at some point to speak about the noise levels as Ms. Reboul brings up a good point; today we have those huge P.A. system and during our presentation you talked about ground up type speakers that do not project out a long way. He noted that there would need to be a policy around the noise.

John Carlson, 28 Sudbury Way, questioned how many parking spaces there are at the High School versus the 250 parking spaces at the Thompson Road property. He commented that in order to have an apples and apples comparison one of the premises of the Thompson Road property was parking. Chairman Zacchio responded there are approximately 450 parking spaces at the High School. He commented that it is hard for him to figure out whether to support this one way or the other as we do not have policies around this and somewhere there is a cost justification being done to say we do invest x dollars or do we not invest x dollars based around the number of programs that you can have. He noted that somewhere someone has to have a number of events they are going to have at either of these facilities; he does not know what that is and would like to see it and the only way you can intelligently make a decision as to whether you support something or not. He commented that you compared the \$2.8 million project at the High School to the approximate \$5 million property at Thompson Road and he questioned if that includes lights and everything. Mr. McCoy responded yes. Mr. Carlson commented that in order to do an apples and apples comparison you have to put those two things side by side. He added that if you are going to do such comparison what happens to the need for seven fields at Fisher Meadows if you do the Thompson Road property. He would like to have it all out there so you can look at it side by side. He continues to be very concerned when he sees justification or a presentation done that shows and Ms. Roberson commented on seven days a week and seven evenings a week. He noted that it may not be policy today but you have laid that out there as a possibility and every one of us has a right to be concerned. He commented that we put in a synthetic track a number of years ago and he asked how many times we have had to resurface it and at what costs; what is the frequency? Chairman Zacchio responded the track field went in around 1997, we have resurfaced it twice one of which was two years ago and we budgeted \$50,000 but ended up being \$38,000. Ms. Zirolli commented that the timing was pushed on that and it should have been done before. Chairman Zacchio commented that the base is starting to deteriorate so the paint job being put on top of it is not helping and now after two years the drainage issues caused the base to move. Mr. Carlson commented that before you do it again

and look at an apples and apples comparison you are now going to expand that field by between a quarter and a third and is going to add to maintenance costs and ovulate out there and he did not see that presented tonight. He commented that there was at least one expert that Mr. McCoy cited a report from who was employed by Shaw Industries at the time, he is not saying whether turf fields are safe or not, but let us be careful when we dispirit someone's reputation because that person was employed with someone who produces synthetic fields and you have to show both sides of these arguments. He noted that before he can support it or ask his neighbors to support it he needs to see what this true cost is in a side by side comparison and he would counsel the three Boards that are involved that this Town has made many great decisions, the acquisition of the Pine Grove property that sat idle for many years with the long term intention of building Pine Grove School is a great example of looking down the road. He noted that when we purchased the MH Rhodes property he thought it was a good example of looking down the road. He commented that we decided not to purchase the Sudbury Way property where he now lives was an example of a bad decision because it has continued to haunt us year after year and put us in a land lock situation there where the school still isn't going to have the right number of fields so he counsels the Boards to say what the right long term answer is. He noted that a lot of hard work has gone in by Mr. Ponziani and his Committee looking at the various options and does not think it is a simple solution and you need to look at all of that. He thanked the Town and the Committee for all of their work. Chairman Zacchio responded that apples to apples at MH Rhodes is \$5.024 million for one field with lighting and the bleachers all in and at the High School it is \$2.762 million for one field with lighting and the bleachers. He added that a lot of what Mr. Carlson said, who has insight from sitting in his seat and serving on the Town Council, the next steps in this process would very well be to decide a site and once decided the design and the numbers and planning and use policy become part of the decision making process that these Boards would use to determine how we move forward and whether it makes sense to move forward because we then have to make our reference to the Planning and Zoning Commission and start talking about what those use policies would be and that is what tonight is for, to collect that input so we assuredly go into process with what you are talking about on our minds. Mr. Carlson appreciates that.

Bill Reboul, 23 Sudbury Way, questioned that the \$5 million project at MH Rhodes includes two fields: one natural grass field and one synthetic field. Chairman Zacchio responded yes.

Alison Folkwein, 44 Buttonwood Hill Road, commented that in the spirit of this meeting and only reflecting on location that all of the talk about the turf fields and the pros and cons of crumb rubber she does not want to go into that. She commented that she really and truly believes that a year ago if you had asked her this question she would have said the Thompson Road project as it would be the best for the Town however since then she has changed her mind and truly believes that the Avon High School location is the better choice. She noted that her older son just graduated last year and has never seen so much community involvement and activity than she has in the last couple of years with her son playing football and there being spirit week and does not see how that would translate if we move those fields and activities a mile or so away. She appreciates that there are neighbors nearby that are concerned about noise, traffic, and people in the road that shouldn't be there however she also understands that you chose to buy a house near a school. She commented that when she moved here from Virginia in 2008 she had a list of things that she was not interested in with a house – she did not want to live on a double yellow line road which means more traffic, or next to a hospital because there will be a lot of noise and

activity, or next to a school even though she has three kids who would probably enjoy walking across the street to go to school, but she had reasons for not wanting to be there and all of those forced her to buy her house on Buttonwood Hill which is up and away. She noted that you cannot buy a house next to a high school and think that nothing will ever happen here; that is not the case with schools, businesses, or with life. She added that these are things that we need to consider, think about, and she really believes in the Avon High School location.

Mike Foley, 71 Far Hills Drive, commented on the cost of the project and one of the points raised that was important to him was the cost of the fields on a per use basis shows that the artificial turf fields are less expensive. He added that Avon Lacrosse is a 501c3 and is involved as a Board member and they have 300 Avon children in their program and spend thousands of dollars every year in their program to rent fields from other towns and other organizations like Avon Old Farms School because we cannot get our kids on the fields early enough in the season to start practice and puts us at a disadvantage with other towns. He noted that another benefit to this proposal is that it gives us field space for Lacrosse and ultimately save their constituencies money because we are passing those costs on as a non-profit. He added that their biggest fundraiser is the Avon Falcon Fest and have been limited by the number of fields they can have for it which raises thousands of dollars for their program and if they had more fields they could raise more money. He commented that with artificial turf long term operating costs on a per use basis should be considered and would further skew it in the direction of artificial turf.

Terri Ziemnicki, 2 Halwood Drive, Granby, commented that she grew up in Avon and lived here most of her life and is a 1981 graduate of Avon High School. She noted that in 1996 she moved to Granby. She has been the Avon Field Hockey coach for the past thirty-one years and would like to speak on behalf of a user of these facilities that we are proposing. She added that just like in the classroom you would want to get new computers, new text books, it is time for this Town to get turf, our athletes and coaches need turf. She noted that there are so many schools around us in this State and we are behind the times and we would do a great service to our teams, athletes, and coaches if we continue to just have only grass fields for us to play on. She added that she is in favor of having it stay at the High School for all of the reasons that she mentioned but in part of the costs she does not think that anything has been said about the busing. She commented that if we have to practice at Thompson Road property it would be a busing nightmare for the coaches and athletes and she takes great pride with her team being scholar athletes and one great thing about being at the High School is every day after school players go to extra help and her concern is that if the fields are at Thompson Road how are her athletes going to make up a test or see a teacher, and then take a bus to get over to practice. She reiterates to her athletes that academics is number one, but to get a full high school experience the high school athletics plays such a major part of that and being able to balance it. She commented that for Field Hockey and ongoing for years their field is never ready at the beginning of the season; we have to practice on the track because their grass is never ready and needs to be re-sodded over the summer or it has rained or the mower has to be dropped over a few weeks and she does not have a playing field until one to two weeks into the season and is really hard with fifty-three girls and three teams with one field to make it work. She noted that at times they get part of the football field for their freshman team but grass gives them a lot of limitations; it is a struggle to get our grass at a height of 1 to 1.5" which is in the rule book and that is a safety issue. She commented on injuries on a field of grass that gets wet or is raised make a big difference in the game. She added that with mist or a slight rain their games get

cancelled and becomes a nightmare for our Athletic Director for both schools to reschedule the game. She noted that this year we had home field advantage for the tournament and we had to cancel our game because it was raining and the next day our field was nowhere near dry so we had to play at Simsbury High School which took us out of our home field advantage and had to pay \$500 to rent the field. She added that they also have to go to Ethel Walker School and Canton High School and the only reason we have not been charged in Canton is that she is friends with the coaches and have done kind favors for us. She noted that she lives in Granby, they did it right and put in two beautiful fields and it works.

Michael Witzleb, 5 Sudbury Way, commented that clearly there is a need for upgrading the quality and quantity of the athletic infrastructure. He added that if you pursue athletic fields and turf fields you are looking at improving the quality and durability of the field but the critical need is the quantity of fields available and investment in the high school property, and obviously he has a bias tilt where he currently resides, does not address the quantity of fields at play. He noted that if you invest in the high school property you should also put an investment in Fisher Meadows and he would question any further investment knowing that the ability to maintain a quality grass field there is severely limited by the flooding conditions. He added that your quantity is not addressed by actually investing in the Avon High School property; if you actually look at the Thompson Road property you have the ability to increase quality and quantity. He commented that when he moved to Sudbury Way five years ago it was addressed that there should be an expectation knowing that you are going to hear football games, soccer games, baseball games and he views it as Americana, he loves that notion of Friday night or Saturday and hearing those games. He added that there is also a reasonable expectation that if we are looking at seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. we have increased that quite a bit, the traffic, the noise, the lights, and based on that it changes the feel on the vibe of the Town and when you consider the neighbors it is a very different environment than your Friday night or Saturday football games or Friday and Saturday afternoon practices. He commented that if you are looking at the quality and quantity he would look at the Thompson Road property at the most logical investment choice for the future. Chairman Zacchio responded that he guarantees that no one on either the Town Council or Board of Education is going to have anybody playing there 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. seven days a week and Mr. Witzleb's point is well taken and it absolutely within the use policy to make sure that those things work out no matter which site as each neighborhood would have the same concern.

Mary Deppe, 35 Westland Road, commented that for all of the people that are not thinking about the whole picture it is time to think about it and realize that the games have changed; the games that we played as kids, the games that our parents played as kids have all changed and our children and the children of Avon need turf to play and be successful and move forward. She added that we have so many kids in this community in all different sports – youth sports of lacrosse, field hockey, and soccer – that are willing and eager to go out there and play and we need to provide them with fields that they can play on. She noted that it is about time that we move forward and put turf in Avon wherever it ends up being but if you live on Thompson Road or Sudbury Way you chose to live in those areas where there was vacant land nearby or there was a school nearby and if those are the places where we need to put turf then we need to do it for the best of our community.

David Cappello, 81 Craigemore Circle, commented that when we put in the Rails to Trails meetings were packed, residents had the same concerns and now look at it how many years later and it is a huge success. Mr. Carlson commented that he has been in Town since 1986 and has supported the expansion of Avon High School in his backyard, voted for it over and over again, and not once tonight said he was against turf fields; he has only asked that a balanced argument be put forward when comparing sites and do the right long-term thing and if it involves three sites do it. He noted that when you talk about lights you are changing the way of light to the residents who have to look at them seven nights a week and that is his concern. Mr. Cappello commented that at the high school it could be a la carte and pick and choose what we want to do and at MH Rhodes property we were talking raw land, no a la carte, and have to do it from scratch. He noted that we are doing this for the students; we had Spirit Week this week and was a huge success this year. He added that it is important to keep the kids and games on campus and teachers can watch their students play; it would be tremendous in building a community/school spirit. He referred to University of Connecticut playing football at Rentschler Field and not on campus and not getting the student body behind the team.

Michael Koval, 11 Sudbury Way, commented that he has been a resident of Avon for 3 months and fully realized that there is a high school on one side of them and a Church on the other side and with that comes added traffic for both of those locations. He added that you have to consider with multiple nights a week, multiple activities trying to get the most use out of this high school plan he thinks it will significantly increase the amount of traffic. He noted that you have think about the noise pollution; for the current football games they are very loud and hopefully there is better technology but still there is going to be an add level of noise and light pollution. He noted that if you add on noise and light pollution it takes away property value for the neighboring residents. He noted that team spirit and a community feel is very important. He commented that he grew up in Texas where high school football is king and had football stadiums that rivaled UCONN's college stadium and a lot of those were offsite by a mile or two. He noted that we are a mile from the high school campus and he does not see that as being a big issue with offsite high school football fields. He added that community spirit is great regardless of having offsite stadiums. He commented that you have to consider the construction that would go into this and just having the water main installed along West Avon Road created so much noise and traffic pollution that he is envisioning all of the construction that would go into this and is even more of a disruption to their daily lives. He noted that those things need to be taken into consideration as well. He added that if you look at the two plans being proposed he thinks big picture the offsite plan looks so much better, more of a complete athletic facility, and forward thinking as to what will be needed in the future it seems like more of a logical plan as well versus cramming everything into an existing sub-part area where it does not quite seem to fit.

A member of the public questioned on average how many nights per week these other towns surrounding us use the lights. Chairman Zacchio responded that we do not know an average but what is in the presentation utilizes it at its maximum use and a policy would fall short of that. He would expect and have not had a conversation about it yet amongst the Boards that typical weeknights we do not have night games now and do not expect that we have them in the future, maybe once or twice a week for Friday or Saturday night games and by mid-November those are done.

Peter Bourgoïn, 46 Tamara Circle, commented that he was in Simsbury for six years and in dealing with their turf and light situation he explained that until daylight savings came you have Friday night games and once daylight savings kicks in occasionally at 4:30 p.m. the teams would rotate to get in practice but very rarely unless you had a soccer home playoff game other than your five night games you rarely had another game and done by 5:30-6:00 p.m. Chairman Zacchio noted it would be governed by a use policy and would not allow for 7 nights a week.

Kathy Zirolli, Board of Education member, commented that as part of the development of any policy that we do through the School Board we always try to look at surrounding towns if they have information which they do and we will also utilize our services through the CT Association of Board of Education to find out more information as well.

Keshav Rao, 88 Thompson Road, commented that ultimately what we have to do is what is right for Avon High School students. He thinks having a field that is near the high school will promote more sports participation and more school spirit and overall will be better for the students and that is what counts and not what people on Thompson Road or Sudbury Way want.

Cathy Creasey, 23 Coldspring Road, commented that she grew up in Avon, graduated from Avon High School, and played field hockey. He asked Mr. Filon what percentage of the students participate in sports at the high school. Mr. Filon responded approximately 75-80%. Ms. Creasey commented that the lessons she learned on the field were equal to the lessons that she learned in the classroom, if not more; field hockey helped her get into college, she played four years in college, and has helped her get jobs because they saw she was a college athlete. She added that having a grass field is like antiquated technology and if you had that same learning equipment in the schools as you have for 75% of the students that are playing sports and learning huge life lessons in sports you would have parents up in arms. She noted that we have been so far behind all of these years and it affects not only the kids but also when it comes to tournament, especially for field hockey as it is a completely different game. She commented that when she went to college she almost had to relearn field hockey with a turf field. She added that it affects us every single year when we get into the State tournament; we get up to the semi-finals and play a team that has played on turf five days a week and we cannot compete and that is unfair to every single one of those girls out there.

Jason Armistead, 5 Red Mountain Road, commented that over many years Avon Town Council has led the residents to where we are today; we did not have a master plan back then that allowed us to get to where we want to be now. He added that at the high school site we waste the ability to fit anything surrounding it and that started many years ago when the high school was planned. He commented that he is from Australia and the school that he went to was fantastic and would leave every school he has ever seen in this State to shame with a big size swimming pool next door, eight tennis courts, two full size indoor basketball courts, field hockey facilities, football, cross country track, walking, roller skating, squash, ten-pin bowling, it was all there, it was planned. He questioned what we have in this Town, something that was not planned well enough and now we are trying to compensate for it. He feels that any of the solutions present problems and he feels for the people of Sudbury Way and for the field hockey girls. He commented that if varsity soccer plays at the High School where is JV playing and they cannot move around very easily and it affects the boys and girls and how we work that is a challenge. He questioned what do we do with the people and chairs on a turf field for graduation, can it be

done? He questioned what happens to the throwing sports, where do they go, how does it impact other sports? He thinks we need a better plan. He commented that Thompson Brook and Pine Grove are two wonderful brand new schools but does not believe that the transport options are optimal. He concluded that the Town got let down a long time ago to get us to where we are today and let us hope that whatever we decide does not let the Town down again in the future. Ms. Ziemnicki responded about the graduation and at Granby in the first year that they had the turf field they were worried about the same thing and the second year they researched it and this past spring graduation was on the turf field and it was great because they had the stands and there was room for parents so it can be done.

Tim Ponzani, 4 Saw Mill Lane, commented that one of the concerns he has with the Thompson Road property is that the project is not apples to apples as it does not include a track. He added that the track right now is close to disrepair; he walked it the other day and there is a frost heave, the surface that was put on two years ago is worn off because of the cleats. He noted that part of a whole project needs to look at total athletic facilities team by team and how we can best address that no matter where the location. He added that there is not one location that is going to fill all of our needs but we need to look at it appropriately for all of Avon athletics and as Mr. Filon said there are schools in the State that we are in a peer group that we are well behind in our athletic facilities. He noted that some of us that travel around with, for example the track team, we see the facilities and we are unfortunately woefully behind. Chairman Zacchio responded that this discussion is around a site for an all-purpose athletic turf field for games and practices and in conjunction with that we have a project that we have been anticipating for practice field expansion at Fisher Meadows which does not necessarily give us a quality field because of the flooding concerns and we also have if this is to go at the High School an idea of putting more grass fields at the Thompson Road property. He noted that we are considering a bigger look at the athletic field situation and what can be done; this is the king pin in terms of discussion of where that field might happen first and if it does we may look at an athletic package that takes care of these needs across the district versus doing it one at a time.

Maria Mascoli, 9 Tallwood Hollow, thanked the Boards for putting this meeting together and also David Magrini for his work over the last two year. She is here as a representative for the 75% of our student athletes at our High School and the main objective is to meet the needs of the High School and the recreation leagues as well. She noted that one of the major objectives is the number of fields or number of hours that our teams can compete and we have a deficiency there and trying to meet those needs. She strongly recommends the two field proposal at the High School as it addresses many of the needs, not only the number of hours that our teams can practice or compete on but if anybody has been to a Spirit Week the Booster Club sponsors it in early October, Monday through Friday, culminating with a homecoming game typically, and this year was probably our biggest Spirit Week. She noted that the Booster Club (a 501-3c) rents the lights for that week and pay over \$3,000 annually so this project would help them out tremendously. She noted that the crowds during this week is amazing and if we have this facility at the high school we will have this every week; it won't always be nighttime games but we will have the culture that we are trying to promote; we want our kids to stay after school and watch sports games. She noted that Avon is now in the new conference, the CCC, and we need to up the caliber if we are going to be competing on a level that we want to be competing on, not only in the classroom but also on our athletic fields. She concluded that we need to look at the High School proposal because she thinks it would best fit those needs.

Patty Grillo, 36 Old Kings Road, commented that she bought her house in 2004 and her property value has plummeted and like other towns we have great schools, a nice library, we have a safe Town, but if she was moving and had to pick a town with a daughter still in high school who plays sports, that is an element in looking at a town and that does to some degree impact our property values and making us a more competitive place in the Farmington Valley. She noted that it would make a positive impact with young families living here. She is an advocate for having the project at the High School because her nephew plays soccer at Granby and has been there for soccer games and it is amazing and wishes it could be Avon.

Bill Reboul, 23 Sudbury Way, commented that he grew up in northeastern Ohio where his high school stadium seated 15,000 people. He understands that when he moved into his home what they were moving into. He agrees that the Town should have bought Sudbury Way but they did not so now we have to deal with what we have to. He agreed that we should think and plan and make sure that we have a project well thought through before we execute. He noted that with regards to a buffer if you look through the plan there is \$150,000 for buffer on Thompson Road; there is more 100 yards between the lit field and Thompson Road. He added that if the project is put at the High School, which he is not advocating for, you are going to have to do something around the site work and the buffering. He commented that noise is a huge issue and the last Spirit Week was great and awesome until 9:00 p.m. when he was sitting in his living room listening to the football game with his front yard lit up from the lights. He commented that the light posts are the principal objection. He noted with regard to the Town's spirit that the games are Friday nights or Saturdays, people go home, they come back, they are already in their cards, and while it is an awesome thought we do need to be pragmatic about that. He raised a concern about notification and as this process has been going through the notification to the neighbors has been nothing short of miserable and a number of his neighbors are here because he dropped his letter in their mailbox about the meeting. He asked both Boards that if you are going to have a meeting to make sure that you are notifying all of the people who will be impacted. The Town Manager commented on the notification, in particular with Sudbury, and there is a notice requirement that many Planning and Zoning actions have and his request to the Engineering Department was to provide him with a list of addresses that correspondence as it was an action requiring such before Planning and Zoning so to his knowledge letters were sent to residents on Sudbury Way. He added that the notice of this meeting also went out in the community newsletter. Mr. Carlson commented that it was one side of the street that did not receive the letter. Chairman Zacchio responded that the letter should have gone out to all residents on Sudbury Way and he apologized. He added that if and when we move forward he guarantees that everyone on the street will get a notice from Planning and Zoning. Mr. Filon asked to have such correspondence sent to avonstudentathletepark@gmail.com where notifications are received all of the time.

Chairman Zacchio thanked everyone for their participation as it is important at this stage to get all of the feedback that we have received tonight. He added that the next steps are to take away different views from tonight, we will work with the Board of Education over the next few weeks and see if there is a site preference that we have and from there we decide how we move forward, if we move forward and we will continue to communicate and have open meeting. Thank you for coming out.

V. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Attest:

Ann L. Dearstyne, Town Clerk



Thompson Road Recreation Complex and Avon High School Synthetic Turf Field Feasibility Study

Town of Avon, CT

Joint Board Meeting

December 07, 2015



Thompson Road Recreation Complex



Scope of Services

Main Field

1. A Multi-Purpose All-Weather Turf Field Football
 - a) Soccer
 - b) Lacrosse (men's and women's)
 - c) Field Hockey
 - d) Community Sports and Youth Groups
2. Athletic Field Lighting
3. Field Utilities
4. Home and Away Bleachers with a Press Box
5. Scoreboard

Secondary Field

6. Natural Grass Multi-Purpose Practice Field (alternate for all-weather turf)

Passive & Active Recreation

7. Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation Around The Site
8. Pedestrian and Vehicular Lighting
9. Access To The Adjacent Trailhead and Bikeway
10. Concourse and Gathering Space With a Playscape If Possible



Scope of Services

Building Amenities

11. Public Restroom And Concession Facilities
12. Home and Away Locker Rooms
13. Ticket Booth
14. Storage (equal to or greater than what is currently onsite in the current storage building; salvage all or part of the current building is encouraged).

Site Amenities

15. All Appropriate Perimeter and Interior Fencing
16. Adequate Parking for Events (the school may be an option for overflow parking)
17. Site irrigation
18. An appropriate Thompson Road and Neighboring Property Buffer Zones. Buffering Must Be Aesthetically Pleasing.
19. Storage (equal to or greater than what is currently onsite in the current storage building; salvage all or part of the current building is encouraged).
20. ADA Compliance
21. Site Utilities



Site Master Plan



Site Rendering



Conceptual Cost Estimate-Soft Costs

CONCEPTUAL BUDGETARY DESIGN COSTS (SOFT COSTS)		BASE ITEMS	
1. Phase 1 - Pre-Referendum Services	lump sum		\$31,000.00
2. Phase 2 - Post Referendum Services (estimated)	lump sum		\$112,000.00
3. Town Bidding and Contract Expenses (estimated)	lump sum		\$10,000.00
4. Project Financing (estimated)	lump sum		\$60,000.00
Total			\$213,000.00



Conceptual Cost Estimate-Base Bid

CONCEPTUAL BUDGETARY CONSTRUCTION COSTS (HARD COSTS)		BASE ITEMS	
1. Site Preparation, Demolition, and Cut/Fill	lump sum		\$65,000.00
2. Site Drainage, Utilities, and Infrastructure	lump sum		\$185,000.00
3. Off-Site Sanitary Connection & Assessment Fee	lump sum		\$187,000.00
4. All-Weather Turf Multi-Sport Main Field (including maintenance equipment)	lump sum		\$895,000.00
5. Natural Grass Multi-Sport Secondary Field	lump sum		\$425,000.00
6. Sports Field Equipment (Game Field)	lump sum		\$25,000.00
7. Main Field Lighting	lump sum		\$235,000.00
8. Fencing and Gates	lump sum		\$125,000.00
9. Entrance Way and Walkways	lump sum		\$100,000.00
10. Parking and Drives	lump sum		\$375,000.00
11. Site Lighting and Amenities	lump sum		\$125,000.00
12. Scoreboard	lump sum		\$27,500.00
13. Landscaping and Buffers	lump sum		\$150,000.00
14. Passive Recreation Trail	lump sum		\$35,000.00
15. Home Bleachers, Press Box, and Sound System	lump sum		\$245,000.00
16. Visitor Bleachers	lump sum		\$68,750.00
17. Ticket Booth	lump sum		\$25,000.00
18. Building Under Bleachers (Team Rooms)	lump sum		\$409,024.00
19. Butler Building Renovation (Concessions & Public Restroom)	lump sum		\$455,176.00
20. Thompson Road Pedestrian Pathway	lump sum		\$45,000.00
21. Escalation, Contingency, and Allowances	lump sum		\$609,355.25
Total			\$4,811,805.25
Base Bid Project Total			\$5,024,805.25



Conceptual Cost Estimate-Alternates

CONCEPTUAL BUDGETARY CONSTRUCTION COSTS (HARD COSTS)		ADD/ALTERNATE ITEMS	
Alternates			
1. All-Weather Turf Multi-Sport Secondary Field (additional cost from #5)	lump sum		\$425,000.00
2. Sports Field Equipment (Secondary Field)	lump sum		\$25,000.00
3. Decorative Entrance Material Entrance Way and Walkways	lump sum		\$100,000.00
4. Additional Parking Landscaping and Green space	lump sum		\$65,000.00
5. Additional Site and Pathway Lighting and Amenities	lump sum		\$25,000.00
6. Playscape	lump sum		\$85,000.00
7. Additional Landscaping and Buffers	lump sum		\$75,000.00
8. Passive Recreation Trail Amenities	lump sum		\$15,000.00
9. Thompson Road Pedestrian Pathway Lighting	lump sum		\$50,000.00
10. Escalation, Contingency, and Allowances	lump sum		\$125,425.00
Alternates Total			\$990,425.00
Base Bid & Alternates Project Total			\$6,015,230.25

**Conceptual Cost Estimate is based on standard industry pricing and the Conceptual Design scope of work. It will continue to be refined into an Estimate of Probable Construction Costs as the project design develops in further detail.*



Thompson Road Recreation Complex

PROS

- Additional Fields (with lighting)
- Allows for other fields to rest
- Formalize/ additional parking
- Concession/ storage building
- Closer to High School than Fisher Meadows
- Less prone to flooding than Fisher Meadow
- Connection to Rails to Trails
- Nature trail
- Playscape

CONS

- New sewer line required
- Additional fields to maintain
- Sidewalks to school
- Parking for large events
- Absence of utilities
- Potential for increased traffic
- Significant earthwork
- Wetlands adjacent to project area
- Zone change required



Avon High School



Existing Conditions



Scope of Services

A. Expansion of Field in Current Location

1. Effect on Baseball to the East
2. Move Inner Lanes of Track to the Outside
3. Move Bleachers to the East Site of the Field
4. Accommodate Future Sports Field Lighting
5. New Press Box

B. Multi-Purpose Artificial Field within the Existing Track

1. Will the Existing Track Support a Soccer Field?
2. Move Bleachers to the East Site of the Field
3. Accommodate Future Sports Field Lighting
4. New Press Box

C. Multi-Purpose Artificial Field Located on the Current Field Hockey Field

1. Will the Existing Field Support a Soccer Field?
2. Accommodate Future Sports Field Lighting
3. Bleachers and Press Box



Site Master Plan – Concept Plan A



Concept Plan A



Conceptual Cost Estimate – Soft Costs

CONCEPTUAL BUDGETARY DESIGN COSTS (SOFT COSTS)			BASE ITEMS
1. Phase 1 - Pre-Referendum Services	lump sum		\$9,500.00
2. Phase 2 - Post Referendum Services (estimated)	lump sum		\$112,000.00
3. Town Bidding and Contract Expenses (estimated)	lump sum		\$10,000.00
4. Project Financing (estimated)	lump sum		\$55,000.00
Soft Costs Total			\$186,500.00



Conceptual Cost Estimate – Base Bid

CONCEPTUAL BUDGETARY CONSTRUCTION COSTS (HARD COSTS)			BASE ITEMS	
Base Project Scope	1. Site Preparation		lump sum	\$50,000.00
	2. Site Drainage Improvements (provided by Town Engineering Department)		lump sum	\$25,000.00
	3. New All-Weather Main Multi-Use Turf Field (including maintenance equipment)		lump sum	\$917,500.00
	4. Sports Field Equipment (compatible for all-weather turf)		lump sum	\$25,000.00
	5. New 8-Lane Track		lump sum	\$435,000.00
	6. Track & Field Events (Long/Triple Jump, Pole Vault, High Jump, & Shot Put)		lump sum	\$100,000.00
	7. Site Improvements (walkways, retaining walls, and landscape buffers)		lump sum	\$150,000.00
8. Home Bleachers & Press Box (750 Seats)		lump sum	\$225,000.00	
9. Visitor Bleachers (250 Seats)		lump sum	\$62,500.00	
10. Main Field Lighting		lump sum	\$350,000.00	
11.Escalation, Contingency, and Allowances (15%)		lump sum	\$351,000.00	
Hard Costs Total				\$2,691,000.00
Base Bid Project Total				\$2,877,500.00



Conceptual Cost Estimate – Alternates

CONCEPTUAL BUDGETARY CONSTRUCTION COSTS (HARD COSTS)			ADD/ALTERNATE ITEMS	
	Alternates			
	1. New All-Weather Secondary Turf Field (Field Hockey)	lump sum		\$656,500.00
	2. Secondary Field Lighting	lump sum		\$350,000.00
	3. Storage Building	lump sum		\$35,000.00
	4. Escalation, Contingency, and Allowances (15%)	lump sum		\$156,225.00
Alternates Total				\$1,197,725.00
Base Bid & Alternates Project Total				\$4,075,225.00

*Conceptual Cost Estimate is based on standard industry pricing and the Schematic Design scope of work. It will continue to be refined into an Estimate of Probable Construction Costs as the project design develops in further detail.

*We have made certain assumptions about the existing conditions and design of certain components of the project that may have an impact to the overall project cost.

* We have assumed that the existing topsoil is suitable for reuse with only minor modifications.



Lifecycle Cost Analysis

Expense	Natural Grass Field (Conventional)	Natural Grass Field (Organic)	All-Weather Turf Field
Initial Costs			
Field Base and Drainage Construction Costs	\$275,000	\$275,000	\$350,000
Surfacing Construction Costs	\$135,000	\$165,000	\$475,000
Maintenance Equipment Cost	\$0	\$0	\$25,000
Total Initial Cost	\$410,000	\$440,000	\$850,000
Annual Costs			
Maintenance Cost	\$24,500	\$35,000	\$4,500
Water (Irrigation) and Repairs Cost	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$0
Athletic Field Painting	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$500
Total Annual Cost	\$39,500	\$50,000	\$5,000
Total Cost Over 15 Years Lifespan	\$592,500	\$750,000	\$75,000
Surfacing Replacement Costs (over 15 years)			
Decompact, Airate, and Re-Sod (4 times)	\$115,000	\$140,000	\$0
New All-Weather Surface	\$0	\$0	\$450,000
Total Replacement Costs	\$115,000	\$140,000	\$450,000
Total Lifecycle Cost (over a 15 year period)	\$1,117,500	\$1,330,000	\$1,375,000
Total Cost Per Year	\$74,500	\$88,667	\$91,667
Number of Available Field Hours Per Year	300	300	800
Number of Events/Practices Available Per Year (assumed 3 hour per event)	100	100	266.67
Average Cost Per Event	\$745	\$887	\$344



Maintenance

▪ Weekly

1. Review and Sweeping/Raking of Infill at High Use Areas
< 1 Hour

▪ Monthly

1. Static/Drag Behind Brush Grooming
< 4 Hours

▪ Spring & Fall

1. Drag Behind Sweeping
2. Tines Grooming
3. Seam Review
< 8 Hours



▪ Maintenance Training



Benefits of Synthetic Turf Fields

Benefits of Synthetic Turf Fields for the Avon High School Athletic Program



Benefits of Synthetic Turf Fields

- **Provides athletic teams a more efficient game and practice space.**
- **Minimizes game and practice cancellations due to inclement weather.**
- **Reduces the amount of use to our other natural grass fields.**
 - Allows for the natural grass fields to have periods of rest
- **Reduced maintenance allows facilities crew more time to tend to natural grass fields.**



Benefits of Synthetic Turf Fields

- **Provides a consistent and uniform playing surface no matter how much it is used.**
- **Ability to have more athletic events on school grounds and not spread out all over town.**
 - We want the students to come out and support their peers. It's a lot easier to walk out of the building at AHS and sit in the bleachers than it is to get a ride to Fisher meadows or Buckingham
 - The more we can do to keep our athletic teams on campus, the more student involvement we can have.



Usage and Oversight

- **The Board of Education Facilities Department is in charge of field maintenance. There may be times that the Department of Public Works would perform maintenance duties in conjunction with the Facilities Department, but that would be minimal.**
- **BOE and Town of Avon have policies, procedures and ordinances in place that guide how Town facilities and grounds are used by the community.**
- **There is a long standing agreement between BOE and Recreation, that Recreation manages the scheduling of most of the community's use of BOE fields between 5:30 and 9:00 pm and on weekends. School athletics have priority at all the town and school fields they play on.**



Usage and Oversight

- *Avon Public Schools Policy No: 7020: Use of School Facilities, provides guidelines with categories and fee structures.*
- *When youth sports leagues apply for use of BOE fields, through the Recreation Department, we also look at Town of Avon Code, Section 41-26, permit applications and use.*
- *Through the application process, the intensity of use at the site is determined.*
- *The school approves the use based on availability and conflicts such as concerts or conferences. We may also approve with conditions, such as custodian, police officer or parking management plan. These would be paid by the user.*



Usage and Oversight

- *We are recommending fees related to the use of:*
 - *Athletic lighting (controlled remotely by staff)*
 - *P.A. system use (plus a custodian)*
 - *Press box use (plus a custodian)*
- *League use managed by Recreation carries a \$5 per person, per season Facility Maintenance fee. This fee covers costs of portable lavatories at the fields and our administrative costs.*
- *If a sports league wishes the school open for lavatories, there would be custodial fees incurred. This type of request must be done directly through the school.*



Current Community Sports

Day(s)	Times	No. of uses	Estimated Attendees per:
Mon-Fri Spring: Fall:	5:30pm-8:00pm 5:30pm-6:30pm	2 - practices	40
Sat Spring: Fall:	8:00am-8:00pm 8:00am-5:00pm	1 make up	75
Sun Spring: Fall:	11:00am-8:00pm 11:00am-5:00pm	1 make up	75



Projected Community Sports

Day(s)	Times	No. of uses	Estimated Attendees per:
Mon-Fri	5:30pm-9:00pm	4; running 2 practices ½ field	40 Practice 150 Game
Sat	8:00am-8:00pm	6-7 games	25 Practice 150 Game
Sun	11:00am-8:00pm	5-6 games	25 Practice 150 Game



Benefits to Community Use

- Schedule different sports back to back
- Different sports can run ½ field practices at the same time
- One sport can practice after another by changing out equipment.
- Fewer rain outs
- Less damage to Fisher Meadows
- In the fall, lights will extend the playable hours during week nights from 7.5 playable hours to 17.5 playable hours per week.
- A 12 week season goes from 84 playable hours to 210 playable hours on one field.



Thank You!

