

MCPB

Item No: 19
July 27, 2006

July 18, 2006

To: Montgomery County Planning Board

Via: Mary R. Bradford, Director
Montgomery County Department of Parks
John E. Hench, Ph.D., Supervisor, Park Planning and Resource Analysis
Countywide Planning Division

From: Mark S. Wallis, Senior Park Planner, Park Planning and Resource Analysis
Countywide Planning Division. 301-650-4389

Subject: FY 07-12 CIP SYNTHETIC TURF CANDIDATE FIELD SITE SELECTION

Staff Recommendations

This memorandum provides the Planning Board with two staff recommendations. The first recommendation involves selecting the first site for a synthetic turf field. The second recommendation involves a proposed timeframe and process for evaluating existing high school fields for synthetic turf per County Council language in the adopted (May 21, 2006) Ballfield Initiatives Project Description Form (PDF) - **Attachment 1**.

Recommendation #1:

The Synthetic Turf Site Selection Committee recommends Fairland Recreational Park – Soccer Field #5 as the site for the first synthetic turf project for funding in FY08.

Recommendation #2:

The Department of Parks recommends deferring a decision on the second site for the synthetic turf project in FY08 pending analysis of high school fields as per language in the County Council's approved Ballfields Initiative PDF. Staff proposes to return to the Board during the autumn of 2006 following completion of the site evaluation and community participation process for the high school sites. Given the short amount of time between receiving the list of candidate high schools (i.e., the letter was received June 26, 2006) and the present, staff could not carryout a comprehensive, complete, and transparent community participation process.

Evaluating each high school site and subsequently analyzing how specifically each high school candidate site would alleviate community use field shortages will be integral to the rating and recommendation for the second site. Staff intends to include Blair and Blake High Schools along with other high school sites proposed by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), and be brought back for consideration this fall.

Recommendation #1 - Background

The following objectives were incorporated into the initial planning process for the installation of a synthetic turf field:

- Research several jurisdictions and learn from their experiences;
- Select a site where the first project will be easy to implement; and
- For the first project, select a site where staff must be able to track the usage, maintenance, costs and customer benefits, and report the results back to the Planning board and County Council.

Members of the Synthetic Turf Site Selection Committee believe that the learning experience of the first synthetic turf project will contribute greatly to the success of future efforts.

The Department of Parks' Synthetic Turf Site Selection Committee included:

Brent Conner – Athletic Field Coordinator, Park Director's Office
Andrew Frank – Engineer, Park Development Division;
Marc Lilley - CIP and Maintenance Administrator, Montgomery County Department of Recreation;
Sherry Martin - Sports Programs, Montgomery County Department of Recreation;
Bob Nechanicky - Sports Programs, Montgomery County Department of Recreation;
Butch Payton - Project Manager, Park Development Division;
Doug Redmond - Principal Natural Resource Specialist, Countywide Planning Division;
Denise Reid-Bourne - Park Permits Supervisor, Park Director's Office;
Mark Wallis – Senior Park Planner, Countywide Planning Division; and
Mary Ellen Venzke – CIP Manager, Park Development Division.

The Committee's work coordinating meetings, establishing rating criteria, going to site visits, and community outreach was carried out over a 3-month period.

The five candidate fields considered by the Department of Parks' Synthetic Turf Site Selection Committee were:

- Blair High School Stadium Field;
- Blake High School Track Field;
- Fairland Recreational Park – Soccer Field #5;
- Martin Luther King Recreational Park – Football Field #4;
- Ridge Road Recreational Park – Soccer/Football Field #4.

Blair High School and Blake High School were included in the initial analysis along with the three parks because M-NCPPC has Use and Maintenance Agreements with MCPS that allow limited community use of athletic fields at these sites. These candidate fields for possible synthetic turf installation are shown in **Attachment 2**.

Community Outreach Update

On February 23, 2006, staff presented the Synthetic Turf Candidate Field Site Selection Process and Criteria, Public Outreach Strategy to the Planning Board for review and comment. The Planning Board suggested a consult with Alexandra Teaff, Manager of Multi-Cultural Outreach.

Based on this consultation, the following enhancements were made to staff's proposed outreach strategy:

A third public meeting was held in conjunction with the Silver Spring Recreation Advisory Board at the Long Branch Community Center rather than Parkside Headquarters; Spanish translators were arranged through the Community Relations and Media Outreach Office;

Via direct mail, meeting notices to be sent to all adult park Soccer permit holders for calendar year 2005 and all park youth permit holders for Fall 2005;

Press releases to be prepared in English and Spanish by the Community Relations Office; and Meetings were noticed in local newspapers

The community outreach process included three public meetings:

- Tuesday, March 14, 2006 from 7 – 9 p.m. at the Fairland Community Center, Burtonsville;
- Wednesday, March 15, 2006 from 7 – 9 p.m. at the Up-county Regional Services Center, Germantown; and
- Wednesday, April 12, 2006 from 7 – 9 p.m. at the Long Branch Community Center.

Each meeting was held in conjunction with the Recreation Advisory Board responsible for the area where a candidate field was identified.

What problem are we trying to solve?

The Synthetic Turf Site Selection Committee started with the following principles to guide the selection process before examining each individual site and developing the evaluation criteria details.

- Numerous other jurisdictions have installed synthetic fields and M-NCPPC should learn from whatever knowledge and experiences others provide.
- Each candidate field is currently open and some closure time may need to be planned unless a guarantee is proffered that construction could commence and be completed during the winter.
- Installing a rectangular synthetic turf field should increase the number of game opportunities and decrease the documented shortage. It is estimated that a synthetic turf field is worth the equivalent of 2.5 grass fields.
- The first field selected must allow staff to easily track the usage, maintenance costs and customer benefits, and report the results back to the Planning Board

and the County Council. Any selected field must have a major role in solving documented field shortages with “optimal programming” to ensure consistent availability for community use.

Evaluation Process and Rating Criteria

The Committee developed an Evaluation Process and Rating Criteria to both analyze each candidate field individually and compare and contrast all candidate fields collectively. The evaluation criteria are intended as a guideline to: direct the analysis to the most important issues; identify information gaps to be filled; and support objective decision-making. Rating criteria considered the most critical were given a higher weight. As was expected, different candidate fields scored higher on some categories when compared to others. Park staff believes it is important to understand and document the evaluation process (and associated rating criteria) in order to understand how the final recommendation was determined and ensure a sense of fairness and objectivity regarding the overall effort.

The Evaluation Criteria are:

- Environmental Impact
- Neighborhood Impact
- Size of Field
- Existing Conditions to Generate Natural Turf
- Dependable Regular Availability
- Geographic Areas with Identified Field Shortages

A detailed explanation of the criteria is as follows.

Environmental Impact

Facilities Outside the Environmental Buffers; Ease of Constructing Storm Water Management (SWM) Facilities - a 1.5 X WEIGHTED CATEGORY; and SWM Construction Costs

Proper planning for any potential construction project starts with the identification, location and mapping of the environmentally sensitive areas for both the field and stormwater management facilities. For all the candidate fields, the existing and potential stormwater management areas are outside the environmentally sensitive areas.

The biggest cost variable is stormwater management (SWM). Complicated SWM issues could delay the implementation timetable, increase the costs, and complicate the scope of construction. Sites that require under-ground SWM facilities (*i.e.*, constrained school sites) are harder to implement and costlier to construct and are therefore rated lower than park sites which generally can accommodate aboveground SWM facilities.

Neighborhood Impact

Distance from Center of Field to Nearest House, and Parking Availability Ratio.

Any synthetic field will be more heavily used than the grass field predecessor and increased use has an impact on neighborhoods. Neighborhood impact is defined as the

possibility of noise and parking spilling off site. Using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and aerial photography, each candidate field was measured from the field center to the nearest house. The field center furthest from the nearest house rated the highest number of points in the category.

Also using GIS technology, the number of parking spaces was counted and the number of major competing facilities captured to derive the number of parking spaces per major facility. Those sites where there was less competition for parking from other major facilities was rated the highest number of points.

Size of Field

Field Presently or Potentially Will Accommodate Multiple Sports including Youth and Adult Teams

To maximize the return on the synthetic turf investment, candidate fields must either currently or potentially have space to accommodate multiple rectangular sports for both adult and youth. All candidate fields meet the basic requirement. Four of the candidate fields do not need size augmentation. One candidate field (Martin Luther King) can be easily expanded to the required dimensions.

Existing Conditions to Generate Natural Turf

Irrigation Available, Soil Conditions with Higher Propensity to Generate Natural Turf

Fields that have irrigation systems and or possess suitable soils have a better chance of growing natural turf. Alternatively, those sites that do not have irrigation and have poor soil have little chance of growing natural turf. Two candidate field sites currently have irrigation systems designed to give natural turf (and park maintenance crews) a "fighting" chance. Those fields without irrigation rated higher than those with irrigation.

Dependable Regular Community Availability

Field Available for Un-inhibited, Consistent Community Use; DOUBLE WEIGHT CATEGORY

One of the major tenants of proposing synthetic turf is the innate ability of such turf to provide additional game opportunities to the general public -- and in doing so, reduce field shortages. To reduce field shortages and to "optimally program" a synthetic turf field, those candidate sites where the priority user is the general public rate higher than when the general public is NOT the priority user. Competition from numerous men's and women's rectangular varsity and junior varsity interscholastic sports vying for the same geographic footprint will provide less time for the general public. The high demand outdoor scholastic spring and fall sports seasons generally coincide with the high demand community use spring and fall seasons.

Geographic Areas with Identified Rectangular Field Shortage

Area with Identified Rectangular Field Shortages; DOUBLE WEIGHT CATEGORY

The source for guidance in the Geographic Areas with Identified Field Shortages category is the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (M-NCPPC, 2005). This publication documents areas of future field shortages by field type to the year 2020 by Community Based Team Area. Areas with higher documented field shortages (more than ten) rank higher than those areas that have a lower number of field shortages (less than ten). The I-270 Corridor and the Silver Spring Team Areas received the maximum number of points.

Recreation Department's Analysis

Observations and opinions of staff from the Montgomery County Recreation Department was used to sanity check the outcome of the evaluation process and ranking outcome. The Montgomery County Recreation Department has 135 to 145 adult soccer teams that participate in both the spring and fall seasons. Each season, teams are asked if they would rather play on fields at parks in the general area of Fairland Recreational Park and Martin Luther King Recreational Park (*i.e.*, the down-county area) or at parks in the general area of Ridge Road Recreational Park (*i.e.*, the up-county area). Approximately 80% request the down-county locations. With regard to football, Recreation Department staff estimate that 70% of the teams are from down-county area with the remaining 30% from up-county. Current field usage data also indicates that more rectangular athletic fields are generally requested and used down-county than up-county. However, this fact can be sometimes skewed due to annual schedules for field renovation. Further, based on the addresses of recreational teams on permit requests, more teams come from the down-county than the up-county. One other general observation is that up-county fields are generally in better condition -- perhaps due to less "un-permitted" use. These observations support selection of a down-county site for synthetic turf.

Individual Site Considerations and Related Analysis In Ranked Order

Fairland Recreational Park Soccer Field #5

Fairland Recreational Park Soccer field #5 scored the highest number of points in the rating scheme. The field and the existing stormwater management pond are out of the environmentally sensitive areas. The existing stormwater management pond can be easily augmented with no relocation of existing recreation facilities. The expense of augmenting the pond is low compared to the other sites. The center of the candidate field is the second closest to the nearest house. The parking availability ratio per major facility is average for similar park fields. The size of the field will accommodate multiple sports for both youth and adults. Fairland does not have an irrigation system. As a park field, uninhibited community use and priority use by the general public is top priority. The field located in eastern Montgomery County. This area of the County will have a 4.8 rectangular field shortage by the Year 2020.

Fairland Recreational Park soccer Field #5 is the best overall candidate for the first general public synthetic turf field. It ranked high in nearly every category. The only

exception is Neighborhood Impact as measured by candidate field to the closest to the nearest house. The chance of growing grass without extraordinary measures is very low. The number of renovations and time closures attests to such. It is recommended as the number one choice for the first synthetic turf site.

Martin Luther King Football Field #4

Martin Luther King Recreational Park Football Field #4 scored the second highest number of points in the rating scheme. The field is out of the environmentally sensitive areas. A stormwater management pond is needed, as none currently exists. There is space outside the environmentally sensitive areas for such a pond and no recreation facility relocation is necessary. The expense of constructing a new facility is lower than other sites and relatively easy given the accessibility. The center of the candidate field to the nearest house is the closest of any site. The parking availability ratio per major facility is the highest for any site. The size of the field will accommodate only youth football at present but the field can be easily expanded. There is no irrigation system. As a park field, uninhibited community use and priority use by the general public is top priority. The field located in eastern Montgomery County. This area of the County will have a 4.8 rectangular field shortage by the Year 2020.

Martin Luther King Football Field #4 is an interesting case. The field was built in the 1970's and its infrastructure is old. It is in the stage of its lifecycle to consider complimentary upgrades and modernizations. The stormwater management, lights and bleachers need updating. The field is only wide enough for football and is only permitted in the fall in order to preserve the grass. More upfront planning is needed at this site due to upgrading the lights that are nearly 25 years old, upgrading stormwater management and augmenting the field size. By modernizing the park with new state of the art infrastructure, installing synthetic turf, augmenting the size and permitting the field year round, this field would have the biggest impact in supplying new field time of any candidate field. However, the complexity and design lead time necessary to do the other park augmentation improvements does not allow this site to challenge Fairland as the recommended pilot site.

Ridge Road Recreational Park Football/Soccer Field #3

Ridge Road Recreational Park Football/Soccer Field #4 scored the third highest number of points in the rating scheme. The field and the existing stormwater management pond are out of the environmentally sensitive areas. The stormwater management pond will need some augmentation that may require the relocation of the existing Dog Exercise Area (DEA). While not technically a challenge, relocating the DEA to another site (assuming there is concurrence to do so) will take extra time and planning. The distance from the center of the fields to the nearest house is the third closest of the candidate sites. Parking availability ratio was average for a park site. The current field size will accommodate multiple sports and users. There is currently an irrigation system. As a park field, uninhibited community use and priority use by the general public is top priority. The field located in the I-270 Corridor of Montgomery County. This area of the County will have a 19.4 rectangular field shortage by the Year 2020.

Ridge Road is another interesting case study. The park was opened in 2002 with state of the art irrigation, parking capacity, and field lighting. Due to the “newness” of the park, the argument can be made that the existing investment should age some before putting another one-half million in the park for an upgraded field surface. With an irrigation system, there is a fighting chance to keep some natural grass. Relocating the DEA either within or outside Ridge Road will take some extra planning. Some additional time should also be planned for optimal bleacher placement and sizing. It the above listed reasons that do not allow Ridge Road Recreational Park to challenge Fairland as the recommended first site.

Blair High School Stadium Field

Montgomery Blair High School Stadium field scored the fourth highest points in the rating scheme. The field and the existing stormwater management facilities are out of the environmentally sensitive areas. The stormwater management considerations are extremely complex and expensive. Augmenting the school's storm water management system to accommodate synthetic turf would require under grounding, as schools generally do not accept above ground ponds. Even if the policy were relaxed, there is no place on the site to locate a pond. Retrofitting as tight a site as Blair High School would require a stormwater management infrastructure that is very costly, challenging and with complexities hard to judge without extensive study and the possibility of closing facilities during construction. The site rated very low on stormwater management implementation and cost issues rating criteria. The distance from the center of the fields to the nearest house is the farthest of the candidate sites. The parking availability ratio is average. The current field size will accommodate multiple sports and users. There is currently an irrigation system. As a school field, priority use is school activities and interscholastic sports. The field is located within the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Area of Montgomery County. This area of the County will have a shortage of 10.8 rectangular fields by the year 2020.

Blake High School Track Field

The field and the existing stormwater management facilities are out of the environmentally sensitive areas. Augmenting the school's stormwater management system to accommodate synthetic turf would require an underground facility, as schools generally do not accept above ground ponds. There is more physical space at Blake as compared to Blair to accomplish an under-ground system and not interfere with existing facilities. The distance from the center of the fields to the nearest house was the second farthest of the candidate sites. The parking availability ratio was average. The current field size will accommodate multiple sports and users. There is no irrigation system. As a school field, priority use is school activities and interscholastic sports. The field located in eastern Montgomery County. This area of the County will have a shortage of 4.8 rectangular fields by the Year 2020.

Athletic directors in charge of resource allocation decide which teams and sports use which field. This allocation of high school sport types and field assignments may not match up well with community needs and field assignments. In the case of Blake High School, the track field is used for Field Hockey that requires specific grass condition and

height specifications that are critical to the sport's success. Community use demand is for adult soccer that can leave a field in less than desirable condition for field hockey. The current arrangement is not working for either party unless the field is consistently renovated with new sod at considerable expense.

Conclusions, Ratings, and Final Recommendation for the First Site

Attachment 3 shows the rating criteria with point values, raw scores, weights, weighted scores, and total points of each candidate field.

Fairland Recreational Park ranked number one with 102 points. Environmental conditions, stormwater management considerations, and overall lower construction costs rated the field very high. With no irrigation, generally poor soil conditions and numerous closures to renovate the field, natural grass will not succeed unless the facility use is restricted. As a park field, uninhibited community use within established operating hours will provide the full benefit to the general public. It makes an ideal first field for synthetic turf to allow staff to track the usage, maintenance costs and customer benefits, and report the results back to the Planning Board and the County Council.

Martin Luther King rated second with a total of 99 points. That field will require more upfront planning, as the facility needs more end-of-lifecycle investments for more than field surface. Changing the field from accommodating only fall football to accommodating year round multiple sports, will have the biggest impact of supplying more field time than the other fields. It is geographically close to Silver Spring and could help with field shortages there as well as in Eastern Montgomery County.

Ridge Road Recreational Park rated third with a total of 95 points. Prior planning will be needed for possible relocation of the Dog Exercise Area and optimally planning bleacher placement. As the park was opened in 2002, there should be some consideration of letting the investment mature more before investing field conversion dollars. There is an irrigation system that does provide some potential to keep natural grass.

Park staff believes that schools fields will never provide the amount of community use time that a park field will. School activities and interscholastic sports have priority use, which is justified by the fact that school fields are primarily intended for school activities and athletics. Competition from numerous men's and women's rectangular varsity and junior varsity interscholastic sports vying for the same geographic footprint will provide less time for the general public. Grass fields provide a certain ceiling on the amount of interscholastic use a field can withstand. Putting in synthetic turf removes the ceiling and more school teams will rush to fill the void. High demand outdoor scholastic spring and fall sports seasons generally coincide with the high demand community use spring and fall seasons. By in large, the athletic directors at each high school currently decide which sports teams use high school fields. It is for these reasons that a solid, well written community use, operating and maintenance agreement be put in place before a synthetic turf field is established at a high school site.

Recommendation #2 - Background

On May 21, 2006, the Montgomery County Council approved the following text in the Ballfields Initiatives PDF: *"This project funds design and construction of two synthetic turf fields; one to be completed in FY08 and the second to be completed in FY10. The Planning Board will select sites after an evaluation of selected park and high school sites. Montgomery County Public Schools will be asked to identify high school sites to be evaluated for consideration against site selection criteria including identified field needs in the adjacent geographic area, field size and capacity, availability of community use, existence or potential for supporting infrastructure such as parking, lighting, restrooms, spectator seating, stormwater management; capability to secure field; impact on adjacent community, environmental impact, and condition of existing field."*

In a memorandum dated June 1, 2006 (**Attachment 4**), Council member Steven A. Silverman asked Director of Parks Mary Bradford to consider high school fields -- in addition to Blair High School and Blake High School -- for synthetic turf. Accordingly, the Department of Parks sent a letter to MCPS on June 6, 2006 (**Attachment 5**) asking *"whether you (i.e., MCPS) would like high schools other than Blair or Blake considered in the site selection process at this time."* Director of Parks Bradford also noted in her letter to Dr. Jerry D. Weast that the site selection criteria presented in the Council's revised text of the Ballfields Initiatives PDF should be used in site selection process and that MCPS should let her know the appropriate MCPS staff to work with for field evaluation. Near the end of her letter, Director of Parks Bradford wrote *"The Planning Board will approve final site selection for synthetic turf and has made it known in prior deliberations that increased game time for community use will be a primary factor in site selection."*

On June 16, 2006, Director of Parks Bradford responded to Councilmember Silverman's memorandum dated June 1, 2006. Therein (**Attachment 6**), she assured the Councilmember that the Department of Parks *"will seriously consider any high school field where the MCPS can commit to allowing community use during periods that the school does not use the field. Projected and current field shortages in the local community will be a major factor in the site selection process."*

On June 20, 2006 Richard G. Hawes, Director, Department of Facilities Management, responded to Director of Parks Bradford on behalf of MCPS (**Attachment 7**). Therein, Director Hawes listed the following five high school fields (in addition to Blair and Blake) that were recommended by MCPS athletic staff as potential candidates for synthetic turf:

1. Bethesda Chevy-Chase High School
2. Walter Johnson High School
3. Rockville High School
4. Wheaton High School
5. John F. Kennedy High School.

MCPS's additional five candidate sites are shown on **Attachment 2**.

In his letter, Director Hawes notes "these schools meet the majority of criteria" referenced in Director Bradford's letter. Director Hawes also offered generic comments on lighting, hours of operation, parking, spectator seating, and restrooms. He also included a general statement on the concept of community use. However, there was no mention of community involvement at this early point in MCPS's decision-making process. Director Hawes identified Dr. William Beattie, Director, Systemwide Athletics, and Mr. James Song, Director, Division of Construction as MCPS staff that would work with the Department of Parks on the site selection analysis.

Staff intends to use the following framework for evaluating high school fields for synthetic turf:

1. Augment the existing Synthetic Turf Site Selection Committee with staff from MCPS and the Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF).
2. Develop a comprehensive list of candidate high school fields for synthetic turf.
3. Discuss, analyze, and document how high school fields with synthetic turf would help alleviate athletic field shortages in the adjacent geographic area. Incorporate the outcome of this process in a site selection criterion.
4. Discuss and amend site selection criteria as necessary. Apply criteria to candidate high school fields and develop field rankings.
5. Solicit input to the site selection process from adjacent communities, user groups, and the Recreational Advisory Boards.
6. Finalize field rankings.
7. Negotiate a Community Use, Maintenance and Operation Agreement as part of the site selection process.
8. Return to the Planning Board in the autumn of 2006 with a staff recommendation for a possible synthetic turf project at a high school.

Staff intends to include Blair and Blake High Schools in the evaluation process along with other high school sites proposed by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) (**see Attachment 7**), and be brought back for consideration this fall.

Given the short time-frame between receipt of Director Hawes letter and the current date, the absence of a detailed site selection and community outreach process, and the uncertainty of how much community-use time will actually be available at each high school, park staff plan to return to the Planning Board in the autumn of 2006 with a recommendation on the second candidate site for synthetic turf. Park staff also believes that a draft community-use agreement for high school sites -- prepared jointly by staff in the Department of Parks and MCPS, with input from Community Use of Public Facilities -- should be part of the Board's future deliberations and decision-making.

Attachment 1

Ballfield Initiatives -- No. 008720

ADOPTED

Category: M-NCPPC
 Agency: M-NCPPC
 Planning Area: Countywide
 Relocation Impact: None

Date Last Modified:
 Previous PDF Page Number:
 Required Adequate Public Facility:

May 21, 2006
 23-19 (04 App)
 NO

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY05	Est. FY06	Total 6 Years	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	Beyond 8 Years
Planning, Design and Supervision	766	0	178	583	112	112	112	112	70	70	0
Land											
Site Improvements and Utilities	7,252	0	800	5,452	1,238	1,238	1,238	1,238	750	750	0
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	8,018	0	978	7,040	1,350	1,350	1,350	1,350	820	820	0

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

PAYGO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G.O. Bonds	7,588	0	548	7,040	1,350	1,350	1,350	1,350	820	820	0
Current Revenue:											
General	430	0	430	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (\$000)

Maintenance				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Energy				261	11	14	59	59	59	59	0
Program Staff				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Program Other				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offset Revenue				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Impact				261	11	14	59	59	59	59	0
Workyears				0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

DESCRIPTION

This project addresses countywide ballfield needs by funding ballfield improvements on parkland, school sites, and other public sites or private properties, e.g. utility company rights-of-way. Improvements may include, but are not limited to, ballfield lighting, turf and infield renovations, synthetic turf applications, or new partnership initiatives. M-NCPPC Improvements on properties other than parkland shall be made pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding which details the responsibilities of all parties. Generally, ballfields to be constructed as part of new park construction or reconstruction will be shown in the individual new park construction or reconstruction PDFs. The Planning Board shall select sites appropriate for these improvements.

JUSTIFICATION

Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (PROS): A Local Land Preservation and Recreation Plan, approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board in July, 1998, and 1997 surveys of Montgomery County users of parks and recreation facilities identified a serious shortage of ballfields throughout the County. The Ballfield Work Group Reports, Phases 1 and 2, 1999.

Plans and Studies

The Department has completed an inventory of 233 school sites in Montgomery County and continues to evaluate these sites to determine their suitability for renovation as part of this program.

Cost Change

Increase due to the addition of FY11 and FY12 to this ongoing project, and to additional funding for infrastructure maintenance and ballfield initiatives from Proposed FY06 Operating Budget.

STATUS

Ongoing. In FY06, \$683,000 increase due to Infrastructure Task Force (\$217,000 GO Bonds) and transfer from Proposed FY06 Operating Budget (\$466,000 GO Bonds).

OTHER

This project funds design and construction of two synthetic turf fields; one to be completed in FY06 and the second to be completed in FY10. The Planning Board will select sites after an evaluation of selected park and high school sites. Montgomery County Public Schools will be asked to identify high school sites to be evaluated for consideration against site selection criteria including identified field needs in the adjacent geographic area, field size and capacity, availability for community use, existence or potential for supporting infrastructure such as parking, lighting, restrooms, spectator seating, stormwater management, capability to secure field, impact on adjacent community, environmental impact, and condition of existing field.

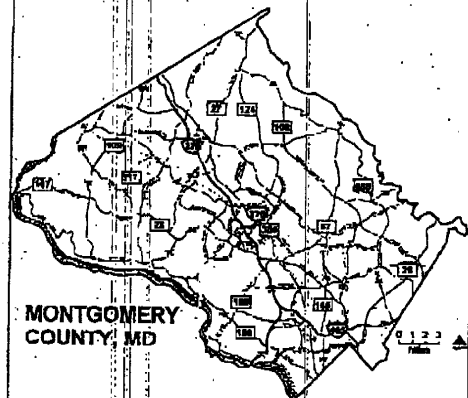
APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA

Date First Appropriation	FY99	(\$000)
Initial Cost Estimate		3,250
First Cost Estimate		
Current Scope	FY99	3,250
Last FY's Cost Estimate		5,692
Present Cost Estimate		8,018
Appropriation Request	FY07	0
Appropriation Req. Est.	FY08	1,350
Supplemental		
Appropriation Request	FY06	0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		2,328
Expenditures/		
Encumbrances		39
Unencumbered Balance		2,289
Partial Closeout Thru	FY04	2,186
New Partial Closeout	FY05	383
Total Partial Closeout		2,569

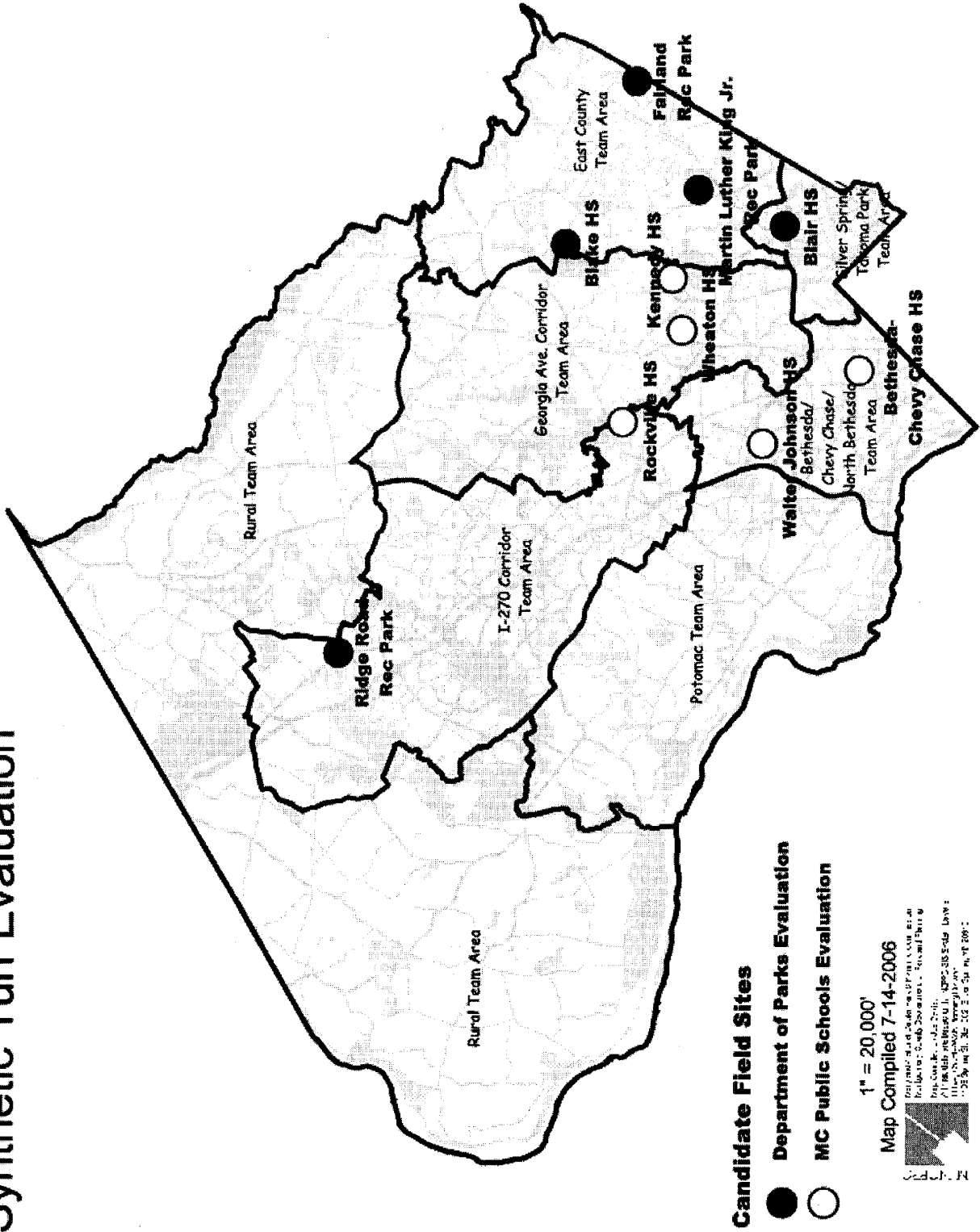
COORDINATION

PLAR: M-NCPPC Non-Local Parks PDF 968755
 PLAR: M-NCPPC Local Parks PDF 967754
 Individual PDFs which fund planning, design and/or construction of new or reconstructed ballfields.
 Montgomery County Public Schools
 Community Use of Public Facilities

MAP



Synthetic Turf Evaluation



Artificial Turf Candidate Site Evaluation Criteria		Candidate Sites for Consideration Raw Scores by Criteria				Candidate Sites for Consideration Final Weighted Scores						
5/15/2006		Blair High School	Blake High School	Fairland Recreational Park	Martin Luther King Recreational Park	Ridge Road Recreational Park	Criteria Weight	Blair High School	Blake High School	Fairland Recreational Park	Martin Luther King Recreational Park	Ridge Road Recreational Park
I. Environmental Impact												
A. Field Outside Environmentally Sensitive Area												
Yes = 10 Points												
No = 0 Points												
B. Ease of Implementing Stormwater Management												
Hardest Site = 0 Points												
2nd Hardest Site = 2 Points												
3rd Hardest Site = 4 Points												
4th Hardest Site = 6 Points												
Easiest Site = 10 points												
C. Storm Water Management Design and Construction Costs												
\$75,000 to \$175,000 = 10												
\$175,000+ = 0												
II. Impact on Neighborhoods												
A. Distance from Center of Field to Nearest House												
Closest Candidate Field to Nearest House = 0 points												
2nd Closest = 2 points												
3rd Closest = 4 Points												
4th Closest = 6 points												
5th Closest (or furthest away) = 10 points												
B. Public Off Street Parking Availability Ratio Per Facility												
100+ Parking Spaces Per Major Facility = 10 Points												
50 - 100 Parking Spaces Per Major Facility = 5 points												
Less than 50 Parking Spaces Per Major Facility = 0 Points												

	Candidate Sites for Consideration Raw Scores by Criteria				Criteria Weight	Candidate Sites for Consideration Final Weighted Scores				
	Blair High School	Blake High School	Fairland Recreational Park	Martin Luther King Recreational Park		Ridge Road Recreational Park	Blair High School	Blake High School	Fairland Recreational Park	Martin Luther King Recreational Park
III. Size of Field										
A. Field Will / Potentially Accommodate Multiple Sports	10	10	10	10	1	10	10	10	10	10
Yes = 10 Points										
No = 0 Points										
B. Field Will / Potentially Accommodate Adults and Youths										
Yes = 10 Points	10	10	10	10	1	10	10	10	10	10
No = 0 Points										
IV. Existing Conditions to Generate Natural Turf										
A. Field has Irrigation Available	0	10	10	10	1	0	10	10	10	0
Yes = 0 Points										
No = 10 Points										
B. Field has Closest Existing Optimal Soil Attributes to Grow Grass										
Best Soil = 0 points					1	0	0	0	0	0
2nd Best Soil = 2 points										
3rd Best Soil = 4 Points										
4th Best Soil = 6 points										
Worst Soil = 10 points										
V. Dependable, Regular Availability										
A. Field Available for Uninhibited Community Use	0	0	10	10	2	0	0	20	20	20
Yes = 10 Points										
No = 0 Points										
VI. Geographic Area with Identified Field Shortages*										
A. Adult Rectangular Fields Shortages by the Year 2020	10	5	5	5	2	20	10	10	10	20
10+ Rectangular Field Shortage by the Year 2020 = 10 Points										
1-9 Rectangular Field Shortage by the Year 2020 = 5 Points										
0 Rectangular Field Shortage by the Year 2020 = 0 points										
*Identified in the 2005 LPRP By Community Based Team Area for the year 2020										
TOTAL POINTS						65	64	102	99	95



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND


Received
JUN 06 2006
Director of Parks

STEVEN A. SILVERMAN
COUNCILMEMBER

MEMORANDUM

June 1, 2006

TO: Mary Bradford, Director of Parks
Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning

FROM: Steven A. Silverman, Councilmember 

SUBJECT: Synthetic Turf Field Feasibility Study

Montgomery County is privileged to have a world-class park system that offers residents a wide-range of recreational opportunities. This is due in no small part to the commitment and vision of the staff at the Park and Planning Commission. A great example of this is the synthetic turf field initiative, which represents an innovative way to address the high-demand of ballfield usage that the County is experiencing. I am excited about this project and want to refine the details of the feasibility study as the initiative moves forward.

I know that when the study was designed, the Parks Department only considered Park fields and the two school fields maintained by Parks as candidate sites. During the Council's review of MNCPPC's budget, I asked that the Department staff also consider high school ballfields where there was a field shortage in the community. While I appreciate the rationale behind MNCPPC's original criteria, I want to ensure that options are on the table at this point that are in areas with the most serious shortages. I wanted to confirm this request to you and I would also like to know what the expected timeframe is for the conclusion of the study.

Cc: Councilmembers

F:\Silverman\Chris\Schunk\MNCPPC\Synthetic Turf Field Initiative.doc

100 MARYLAND AVENUE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850 • 240/777-7960, TTY 240/777-7914
E-MAIL: COUNCILMEMBER.SILVERMAN@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV
WWW.MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV/COUNCIL

 PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

June 6, 2006

Dr. Jerry D. Weast
Superintendent of Schools
Montgomery County Public Schools
Carver Educational Services Center
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 122
Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Synthetic Turf Athletic Fields

Dear Dr. Weast:

The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, Montgomery County Department of Parks, has funding in its FY 2007- 2012 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to install synthetic turf on two athletic fields. The Department began a site selection process this year that focused on several park sites and two school sites that met initial selection criteria. The two school sites, Montgomery Blair High School and James Hubert Blake High School, were included as potential sites because the Commission has use and maintenance agreements with MCPS that allow community use of athletic fields at those schools when MCPS does not use the fields. At Blair, we are looking at the stadium field, and at Blake we are looking at the track field.

The community outreach portion of our site selection process prompted considerable public interest, including communication from many supporters of installation of synthetic turf at high schools that the Commission was not considering because we do not have an active role in management of those schools' athletic fields. Supporters of synthetic turf at several high school locations questioned their exclusion from our initial consideration, and made their views known to the Montgomery County Council. During recent Council review of the Parks CIP, the Council discussed synthetic turf athletic fields and approved the following text in the "Ballfield Initiatives" capital project that funds the synthetic turf fields:

"This project funds design and construction of two synthetic turf fields; one to be completed in FY08 and the second to be completed in FY10. The Planning Board will select sites after an evaluation of selected park and high school sites. Montgomery County Public Schools will be asked to identify high school sites to be evaluated for

consideration against site selection criteria including identified field needs in the adjacent geographic area, field size and capacity, availability for community use, existence or potential for supporting infrastructure such as parking, lighting, restrooms, spectator seating, stormwater management; capability to secure field; impact on adjacent community, environmental impact, and condition of existing field."

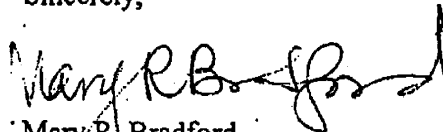
The purpose of this letter is to request your response as to whether you would like high school fields other than Blair or Blake considered in our site selection process at this time. If so, the criteria listed above should be used to select the appropriate schools. If you favor us looking at other high school fields, please identify them and let me know the appropriate MCPS staff to work with for field evaluation.

In order to meet our schedule for construction of the first field in FY 2008, the Parks Department should make a recommendation regarding site selection to the Planning Board before their summer recess in August. Therefore, we request that you let us know by June 30, 2006, if you desire to have other MCPS sites considered in the evaluation and, if so, which ones should be evaluated. The Planning Board will approve final site selection for synthetic turf and has made it known in prior deliberations that increased game time for community use will be a primary factor in site selection.

We are aware that your staff is beginning to consider an initiative regarding synthetic turf fields at MCPS sites. Since we have been researching synthetic turf for over a year, please let us know if we can assist your efforts in any way. We have compiled cost/benefit data that provides a compelling argument for synthetic turf.

I appreciate your consideration of this matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Mary R. Bradford
Director of Parks

MRB:MFR

Attachment 6

M-NCPPC

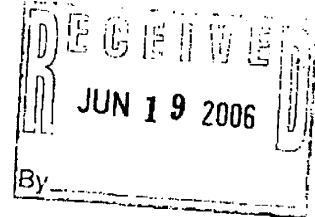


MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

June 16, 2006



MEMORANDUM

TO: Steven A. Silverman, Councilmember
FROM: Mary R. Bradford, Director of Parks *Mary*
SUBJECT: Synthetic Turf Site Selection

Thank you for your memo of June 1, 2006, expressing support for our synthetic turf initiative. It is through the Council's support of the Parks CIP that we have funding to build the first public synthetic turf field in the County. Last night, the Planning Board endorsed funding of a second field using our Program Open Space allocation, to be reviewed as a supplemental appropriation request by the Council shortly. We believe installation of synthetic turf will play an important role in our efforts to close the gap between demand for quality athletic fields and our ability to deliver them.

In response to your inquiry about high schools and the time frame for our study, attached is a letter I recently sent to Dr. Weast of Montgomery County Public Schools asking him to identify high schools that MCPS would like us to evaluate, in addition to Blair and Blake. This was sent in response to your personal request during our recent meeting with the Council.

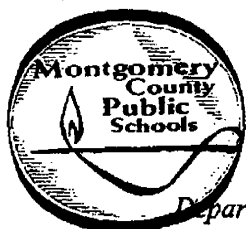
I asked for a response from Dr. Weast by June 30, 2006, so that we can package a recommendation to the Planning Board in July before they break. As soon as we have the sites selected, the design and construction phase of this important project can begin. I can assure you that we will seriously consider any high school field where MCPS can commit to allowing community use during periods that the school does not use the field. Projected and current field shortages in the local community will be a major factor in the site selection process.

Please call me if I can shed any additional light on this issue. Thank you, again, for your continued interest in this initiative and for your support.

MRB:MFR

Attachment: June 6, letter to J. Weast

Attachment 7



850 Hungerford Drive * Rockville, Maryland * 20850-1747

Telephone (301) 279-3425

Department of Facilities Management, 7361 Calhoun Place, Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20855

FAX -301-279-3737

June 20, 2006

Received

JW 26 2006

Director of Parks

Ms. Mary R. Bradford
Director of Parks
Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning
9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

Dear Ms. Bradford:

This is in response to your letter dated June 6, 2006, to Dr. Jerry Weast, regarding Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) sites that are potential candidates for synthetic turf as part of the "Ballfield Initiative" funded in the Capital Budget.

In addition to Montgomery Blair and James Hubert Blake high schools, which were mentioned in your letter, our athletics staff suggests you consider the stadium fields at Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Walter Johnson, Rockville, Wheaton, and John F. Kennedy high schools. These schools meet the majority of criteria referenced in your letter.

High school stadiums offer your program an extremely cost-effective and mutually beneficial alternative for synthetic turf. Specifically, most high school stadiums are lighted, extending the hours in which fields can be utilized, and all offer ample parking, spectator seating, and restrooms.

The large majority of our high school athletic practices end at 5 p.m. There are only approximately 40-45 dates annually when a high school would extend its field use beyond 5 p.m. High schools also have the flexibility to devise athletic schedules that only would require school use of the stadium for a few Saturdays throughout the school year. This would leave the artificial turf field open for community users during the large majority of the year after 5 p.m., on most Saturdays, and all Sundays.

Thank you for soliciting our input on this initiative, and we look forward to working with you on the final selection evaluation. Dr. William Beattie, director, Systemwide Athletics, and Mr. James Song, director, Division of Construction, are the MCPS personnel who will work with you on the selection analysis. Mr. Beattie and Mr. Song can be reached at 301-279-3144, and 301-548-7490, respectively.

Sincerely,

Richard G. Hawes, Director
Department of Facilities Management

RGH:jlc

Copy to: Dr. Weast, Mr. Bowers, Dr. Beattie, Mr. Song