

Objection to the Proposed Artificial Fields at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School in Oak Bluffs

George Crawford <gc@cda-mv.com>

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To: Oak Bluffs Planning Board <planningboard@oakbluffsma.gov>

Dear Oak Bluffs Planning Board Members:

I am against the installation of the proposed plastic or any artificial playing fields at the Regional High School.

My objection to the installation of the artificial playing fields is based on the potential release of PFAS and other potentially harmful micro-contaminants and chemicals into the Island's aquifer, even if monitored, any detection of contaminants is too late; the degradation to the environment at large by eliminating a source of carbon sequestration, albeit small; the inability of the artificial playing field industry to demonstrate safe and effective recycling programs of their products, and on the grounds of the cost and ethical issues - if the fields are installed, the expense of their removal at the end of their life and moving them off-island, making them another communities environmental problem.

Environmental and health issues aside, the question we should be asking is why are these fields needed at all by a small regional high school? The cost of installing and maintaining artificial fields is out of scale to their intended purpose and use of our Regional High School. Natural grass fields are more in scale and in keeping with the size and purposed of the Regional High School and the intended purpose of any public high school athletic program. The cost of installing and maintaining these artificial fields would be better utilized upgrading and properly maintaining the existing grass fields. There is also the consideration that the expense of installing these artificial fields would be better utilized in upgrading and maintaining, or replacing, the existing high school building which is badly in need of maintenance at best, or replacing a dangerous, failed building jeopardizing the health and safety of our high school students, staff, and teachers, at worst.

Thank you for considering my objections and perspectives on the installation of artificial playing fields at the high school.

Sincerely,

George Crawford
Oak Bluffs Resident