

Oak Bluffs Planning Board

From: Stefan Knight <stefan@vineyardpilates.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 5:29 PM
To: elvin@mvcommission.org; Oak Bluffs Planning Board
Subject: Regarding Artificial Turf.

Regarding Artificial Turf.

Respectfully, I graduated in 1990 and I can tell you that the fields were in really poor shape then...that was 30+ years ago.

The people who want grass are Not to blame for the condition of the fields. Someone Is to blame and its not the grass side of this conversation.

No one is saying that exercise isn't critical to or children's wellbeing...in fact quite the contrary. I personally believe that exercise and movement is THE most important thing to teach our children. So, please don't bring that into the conversation as if that is what we are discussing.

I am advocating that we fix the fields in a way that is financially responsible, respectful of the environment, matches the rest of the Islands aesthetic, isn't toxic and doesn't increase injury. Grass is at least half as expensive as turf. If turf was cheaper by half id would likely just say go for it but, its not. Grass would work. The High School is relying on the opinion of the salesman for turf fields, Mr. Huntress and not any disinterested third parties. Many, if not most, schools that are more heavily trafficked than ours have grass and some even have switched from turf back to grass...why would they go through all that trouble and expense? Because they didn't like it. It was expensive and IT WAS NOT WHAT IT WAS MARKETED TO BE. Its not cheap, long lasting or easy to maintain.

Every fish in the ocean has plastic in its flesh. Every single one, no matter where on earth you go...especially the deepest reaches of the ocean. These are hormone and physiology disrupting chemicals associated with obesity, early onset diabetes, Autism, ADHD and other mood disorders, cancer, heart disease, insulin resistance (which 1 in 3 of our children already have) and many more.

Turf has to drain somewhere and the particles and cleaning chemicals WILL go directly into the water supply. All that material is going to end up in a hole in the earth for longer than humans have roamed the earth.

You might say well what about drinking from plastic water bottles, using detergents like Tide, driving in cars and sitting on couches with flame retardants in their fabrics? Yes, all of these things are detrimental to human health. The science is there and the statistics are startling. Some of these things are more difficult to avoid than others.

There needs to be a line drawn in the sand about how abusive we are being toward our environment.

This is like climate change. Its real and the only solution is to change our behavior. No one is setting the big examples.

Europe, the whole collection of countries, agreed to ban plastic bags, straws and other single use plastic items. I can only imagine that was not an easy decision yet, they did it.

Our children will see this decision and model it for the rest of their lives. We are either going to model being mindful stewards of our internal and external ecology or we are going to model the idea that the shinny new field is more important regardless of the environmental, human health or financial price. They will repeat this over and over again like the adults before us have done. Enough. Please.

We can always Turf the field later. Try grass, it will be paid for by the field fund. If it doesn't work after a reasonable amount of time...turf it.

93% of the water supply on earth contains plastics.

Every single fish on the planet is contaminated with plastics.

The normal rate of species extinction is 6-10 species per year, we are over to 1000 right now.

Glyphosate is present in every single lactating mothers breast milk.

We hear so much about Global Climate Change but, what is less appreciated is the rate and depth to which we are filling the ground and water sources with plastics, pharmaceuticals and chemicals and toxic agents that are disastrous to human physiology.

Since 1970, human activity has killed off 70% of the living creatures on this planet. 70%! There are 70% fewer mammals. 70% fewer fish. 70% fewer bugs and birds. Our ecology IS collapsing and its is our life choices that is causing it. Im not taking about climate change. Through it does include acidification of the oceans and rain.

Ive heard the argument that "our kids deserve a new field". Our white kids, living on Martha's Vineyard don't "deserve" to have THIS field. We owe it to each other to make the sacrifice of not having a plastic field. We need to set an example of minimizing our environmental footprint.

These plastic field materials will never be recycled. Ever.

There are an astonishing number environmental and financial unknowns and mistruths that come alone with the artificial tuff project. The High school knows what it wants and is unwilling to look at the situation objectively rather it is looking for information that supports its position and is denying facts that are not supportive of its position.

Best of Health, Stefan

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