

Turf installation at the MVRHS

Nelia Decker <nelia.decker@gmail.com>

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To: Oak Bluffs Planning Board <planningboard@oakbluffsma.gov>; Lorna Welch <lwelch@oakbluffsma.gov>

Cc: Chris and Nelia Decker <nelia.decker@gmail.com>

Dear Ms Welch and Mr Hopkins,

Thank you for taking the environmental and health concerns re: turf and it's proposed installation seriously. It is an issue that affects the entire Island given our shared water source and the avowed intention by many Island Boards to limit plastic use.

We are writing to express my concerns with the MVC's recent vote to approve the installation of a synthetic turf field at the High School. I believe that grass is the best choice for the Island and our athletes.

We agree with Ben Robinson and Jeff Agnoli's points in Lucas Thor's recent article in the MV Times which have been reinforced by my own reading...no need to restate them here. Clearly the Island could and should be a leader in limiting the use of plastic on such a large scale: plastic that most likely will shed PFAs into the Island aquifer, plastic that has not been proven absolutely safe for athletes to use and plastic that we still do not know with certainty can be recycled.

"If there's a potential for risk, just don't do it"

Kyla Bennett from PEER (Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility) Science Policy Director. Quoted from an article <https://theintercept.com/2019/10/08/pfas-chemicals-artificial-turf-soccer/> which we hope you will read.

We know we could elaborate but we think you have heard equally from both sides on this issue by now. You are in the position to make a choice that will have a huge impact on our island, now and in setting a precedent. The danger to our drinking water and this fragile Island environment, along with more plastic for the world to have to deal with somewhere down the line does not justify turf installation. If the environmental impact was out of the equation, everyone would be in favor of a uniform surface for our Island athletes.

We trust you will make the best decision for our Island and understanding how we act now will affect more than just the Vineyard.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nelia and Chris Decker