

## Opposed to plastic grass

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

To the Oak Bluffs Planning Board,

I would like to express my philosophical opposition to the proposed plastic sports field at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School. Please....please be more thoughtful than the MV Commisioners, there is so much at stake here. I am shocked and saddened the project has proceeded this far. I do not believe the MVC properly considered the total environmental impact, nor was the vote a true representation of the values of the majority of islanders.

Converting a natural grass field to a plastic one will pollute our sole source aquifer, endanger the users of the field, contribute to global warming and flooding, harm wildlife, create toxic trash, be a fire hazard, degrade our rural character, etc. And it sends the wrong message to our youth.

We can and should inspire youth and encourage all island residents to observe support and revere nature, not pollute and destroy life. Supporting nature is no longer a luxury, not even a choice. Wildfires are raging, mega storms are ravaging communities, and the food production systems are collapsing. In the past 40 years, the total wildlife population on the the planet has declined by more than 50%! Human life span is decreasing, chronic disease is rapidly rising, and we have lost our collective resilience to threats like viruses. We as a species are heading for extinction, as a result of our individual choices of indulgence, short term thinking, and policies that favor profit over greater good. We not only need to support nature, but we need nature to support us. We need to change our policies and lifestyles immediately and allow nature to recover, as it can, if we give it a chance. This needed radical shift will be giving ourselves a chance for survival.

And while we are still here on this beautiful planet, what kind of culture do we want to be? Do we really need to dominate nature with plastic fake grass, for the purpose of training domination over each other with aggressive sports? Our cultural inability to coexist in peace with nature, and coexist in peace with each other, is at the heart of all the troubles in the world. Are we teaching that nature is expendable for our entertainment? That we should expect to get whatever we want, regardless of the impact? Are we fostering skills to train for war? What is the true total cost of protecting our privileged lifestyles and preferences?

There are better solutions. Real grass supports ecological life, both above and below the soil surface. Real grass cleans water. Real grass cools and cleans air. Real grass is beautiful. Real grass connects us to the web of life and even to our own souls.

Why not put resources into creating various other opportunities for youth, more positive and peaceful opportunities, that don't "require" plastic fake grass? This project is a predictable widespread disaster. With your courageous leadership, we can still turn this around. Let's make our island community part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Thank you for your deep consideration,  
Wendy Forest