

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

## ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

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ZBA 2008-14

Petition of Town of Wellesley, School Committee,  
Sprague Fields Task Force  
Sprague Fields – 401 School Street

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Petition of the TOWN OF WELLESLEY, SCHOOL COMMITTEE, SPRAGUE FIELDS TASK FORCE requesting Site Plan Approval pursuant to the provisions of Section XVIA and Section XXV for redevelopment of 25.75 acres of open space at Sprague Fields for five full-size, multi-use rectangular fields, two of which are proposed to be synthetic turf fields, at 401 SCHOOL STREET, in a 10,000 square foot Single Residence District.

On February 8, 2008 the Petitioner filed a request for a hearing before this Authority, and thereafter, due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Presenting the case at the hearing was Chris Guiffre, 22 Auburn Road, who said that he is a School Committee member and has been the Chairman of the Sprague Fields Task Force (SFTF) for the past year. He said that present with him were Thomas Henaghen, Gale Associates, Stephen Fader, Town Engineer, Thomas Brown, representing the abutters and a member of SFTF, William Charlton, Chairman, Board of Public Works, and Michael Pakstis, Director, Department of Public Works (DPW).

Mr. Guiffre said that a number of issues raised at the 2007 Annual Town Meeting have been resolved. He said that the proposal before the Board has unanimous recommendation from the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Guiffre distributed a list of the SFTF members. He said that members are representatives from a broad group of constituents.

Mr. Guiffre said a listening hearing was held in June, 2007 for the Sprague abutters and parents. The SFTF held its first meeting in September, 2007. A Public Meeting was held in January, 2008 to present SFTF ideas and to get feedback. Mr. Guiffre said that many members of the Sprague community and abutters are supportive of the present proposal.

Thomas Henaghen described the existing conditions at the site. He said that 18 acres of the 25 acre site will be developed. He said that the fields are used primarily in the Spring and Fall.

Mr. Henaghen said that the plan is construct five rectangular fields, as well as two full-sized baseball diamonds and a softball diamond.

Mr. Henaghen displayed the remediation area. He said that the area had been used as a landfill. He said that a portion of the field is currently not used due to safety issues.

Mr. Pakstis said that the area has not been used as a landfill since the 1940's or 1950's. Mr. Henaghen said that Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) ordered remediation of the site to be completed by June, 2009.

Mr. Henaghen said that there will be one natural field and one synthetic field in the remediation area. He said that a decision was made to keep the synthetic field one field away from the school since the area closest to the school is used for recess.

Mr. Henaghen said that the topsoil will be removed in the remediation area. The soil will be screened on-site. The screened materials will be disposed of at a landfill off-site. The screened topsoil will be reused on-site.

Mr. Henaghen said that once the topsoil has been stripped off, the area will be graded to 18 inches below the proposed finished grade. He said that a geotextile fabric will be laid down as a physical barrier to the landfill material. On the synthetic field, the geotextile fabric will be covered with six inches of select material, 12 inches of granular material, and then covered with the synthetic turf carpet. He said that six inches of select material, six inches of drainage material, and six inches of topsoil will be used on the natural field.

Mr. Henaghen said that two inches of sod will be laid on top of the six inches of topsoil on the natural field. He said that if any of the irrigation piping in the remediation area needs to be lower than 18 inches, any excavated materials will be disposed of off-site.

Mr. Henaghen said there will be two inches of infill on top of the synthetic carpet between the tufted fibers. He said that there will be a highly pervious carpet on top of a porous stone base. He said that synthetic fields typically drain vertically and not off of the top.

The Board asked if a remediation plan has been filed. Mr. Henaghen said that he submitted the March 1, 2007 letter, addressed to the Executive Director of the Town of Wellesley, that discussed the history of working with the licensed site professional to come up with acceptable options for the remediation area.

Mr. Henaghen said that comments from the Board of Health will be incorporated into the remediation plan and construction documents. He said that there is a narrative in the notes sheet that describes the process. The Board said that final comments and approval from the Board of Health should be incorporated into a final set of remediation plans and be submitted to the Zoning Board.

Mr. Henaghen said that the level of use at the site warranted construction of the second synthetic field. He said that synthetic fields do not need to rest and can be used continuously, which will take demand off of the natural turf fields. He said that this part of the plan is more to meet the needs of the town rather than the remediation order.

Mr. Henaghen said that the second synthetic field was located so that it did not share an outfield with one of the baseball fields. He said that putting rectangular fields overlapped with the outfields was the most efficient use of space. He said that the existing baseball diamond will get a facelift. He said that there will be a minor modification to the existing road that comes down the hill to accommodate a full-sized 90 foot diamond.

Mr. Henaghen said that a minor realignment of the driveway that serves as the dropoff/pickup lane for Sprague students and the driveway into the maintenance garage allowed for construction of a softball field. He said that, in response to DPW comments, they would look at rotating the field slightly away from the road. The Board said that sliding synthetic field #2 over would create more room to rotate the softball field.

Mr. Henaghen said that the turf product has been created specifically for this project. He said that there is an eight year warranty on the synthetic turf.

The Board said that there was a conflict on the existing field with foul balls and cars parking along the road.

The Board said that sod should be extended beyond the foul line of the existing baseball field to provide a safety zone. Mr. Henaghen said that they will be providing a runout area between the fields for a safe transition.

The Board said that the Town will have to monitor the grade because there is potential for settlement.

Mr. Henaghen said that the neighbors had expressed the desire to maintain the open feeling of the complex. He said that they requested that there be no fencing or screening. He said that the plan is to maintain the existing grade as much as possible.

The Board asked how the synthetic fields will be protected against vandalism by vehicles. Mr. Henaghen said that there will be limited vehicle access to the field. He said that vehicles would do more damage to the natural turf.

Mr. Henaghen said that a single piece of equipment will be needed to maintain the synthetic turf. That piece of equipment will be included in the procurement order with the carpet. The natural fields will be maintained as they always have been by DPW.

The Board said that the infield shown on Plan C1.06 was incorrectly labeled as sod. Mr. Henaghen said that the infield will be skinned.

Mr. Henaghen said that they have tried to simplify the drainage system since the proposal was first submitted. He said that the goal is to keep water off of the fields. He said that there is a main gravity feed drain line that goes through the site and connects to storm sewers that are off-site.

Mr. Henaghen said that there will be no increase in peak runoff due to the use of high quality turf with a proper under drainage system. He said that synthetic turf drains vertically which increases the time of concentration and delays peak flow.

The Board confirmed that all of the natural turf on the site will be replaced and that there will be under drain material throughout the site.

Mr. Henaghen said that due to the variability of the soils on the site, a conservative approach was used for calculating drainage. Mr. Henaghen said that the calculations will be submitted to the Board.

Mr. Henaghen displayed on the plans where the new drains will be located.

Mr. Henaghen said that Sprague School had asked for additional playground space and that it be handicapped accessible from the driveway. He said that the area was raised up to make it flush with the driveway in front of Sprague. He said that they will utilize two existing drains.

Mr. Henaghen described the drainage pattern.

Mr. Henaghen said that there is a stockpile of old materials behind the field house on the existing conditions plan. He said that pile will be removed. A new enhanced kindergarten meadow will be installed with a handicapped sidewalk around it to allow access for all children.

The Board confirmed that there is no lighting in the plan. Mr. Guiffre said that the SFTF is recommending that no permanent structures such as fences, scoreboards or lights be allowed as a condition of the Site Plan Approval. He said that there will be some temporary structures that are listed in the Master Plan.

Mr. Henaghen said that no security lights are proposed around the field house. He said that existing light poles along the driveway will be relocated.

Mr. Henaghen said that there will be backstops on the baseball fields and fencing will go down to first base only, in compliance with the neighbors' wishes to keep the open look.

Mr. Fader said that the plan is to have construction begin as soon as school is over this year and to have the synthetic turf fields completed before school opens again in the Fall. Mr. Henaghen said that the heavy equipment work should be completed by that time.

Mr. Henaghen said that the primary construction access will be the main Sprague School Street entrance only.

Mr. Henaghen said that a construction vehicle wash down facility will be added, if necessary. He said that individual contractors may be asked to submit construction mitigation plans that describe where the workers will park, where materials will be laid down and stockpiled. He said that the plan is to have parking on the site. The Board said that a Construction Management Plan should be submitted that will become a condition for approval.

The Board asked about emergency vehicle access. Mr. Fader said that initially there was a five or six foot path that hooked up with the parking lot on Donizetti Street. He said that Chief Rooney indicated that he would like to have that widened. The proposed access will be 12 feet wide. Mr. Henaghen said that Captain Marchetti has seen the revised plans and has given approval. Mr. Henaghen said that there are gates in place to prevent any unauthorized vehicle access. Mr. Pakstis said that the Fire and Police Departments have keys to the gates.

Mr. Henaghen said that the proposed rain gauge is programmable to prevent overwatering. The Board confirmed that town water will be used. Mr. Fader that there had been some issues with the existing watering system at one time but the rain gauge should address any future issues.

Mr. Henaghen said that landscaping materials will only be at the back of the retaining wall.

Mr. Guiffre discussed neighbors' concerns. He said that the neighbors did not want the existing open green park space to change. Many neighbors were concerned about the SPR crumb. He said that thermo plastic elastomers, TPE, which is more commonly used in Europe will be used instead. Some of the neighbors were concerned about parking. He said that crunch time is Monday through Friday when the school vans park at the lot. The Task Force is working with the School Department to see if the buses can be moved to some other place, which will result in an increase of 12 spaces in the existing lot.

Mr. Brown said that two of his neighbors were concerned about drainage. He said that neighbors were concerned that there be no lighting of night games, no fences, no permanent scoreboards or stands. Mr. Guiffre said that the Task Force will submit a list of neighbors' concerns.

Mr. Guiffre said that there was concern about trash on the fields. He said that additional trash cans are being proposed.

Mr. Guiffre said that originally the football field was field #3. That was moved to field #2 due to neighbors' concerns. He said that the Task Force looked into removable goal posts for the south end of the field. The goal posts will be taken down after Thanksgiving. Mr. Brown said that only JV and the Middle School football teams play at Sprague fields.

Mr. Brown said that the neighbors do not anticipate any problems with dog walkers using the fields. He said that many people use the outfield near the apartments. The Board said that some of the parks in town have the dispensers for owners to clean up after their dogs. Mr. Guiffre said that the School Committee has not heard any complaints of dog droppings at the Sprague fields.

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Mr. Guiffre said that there will be no permanent netting. He said that there will be temporary netting in two places. Mr. Henaghen said that set up of the netting will be handled by the user groups.

Mr. Guiffre said that there will not be any increase in use at any one time. There will be more activity when fields #1 and 2 come back online. The seasons will be longer because rainouts and puddles will not be an issue.

The Board said that the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) commented on the use of pesticides. Mr. Pakstis said that the only application of pesticides that DPW uses is on poison ivy in very limited applications. He said that they are treated on a case-by-case basis. He said that pesticides are not used on a regular basis.

Mr. Brown said that he had sent an email to the abutters along with the plans. He said that an abutter who lives on Stearns Road behind the maintenance building had a concern with the drainage. Mr. Guiffre said that the abutters are in contact with their abutter representatives on a regular basis.

The Board asked if the site is used for medi-vac. Mr. Pakstis said that Chief Rooney reviewed the plans and said that they meet the needs for medi-vac.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing to April 3, 2008.

### **April 3, 2008**

Presenting the case at the hearing was Thomas Henaghen, Gale Associates. Also present were William Charlton, Chairman, Board of Public Works, Michael Pakstis, Director, Department of Public Works (DPW), Stephen Fader, Town Engineer, Chris Guiffre, School Committee and Sprague Fields Task Force (SFTF), and Thomas Brown, Sprague Fields Task Force.

Mr. Henaghen described changes that were made to the plans since the last public hearing. He said that the drainage was simplified. He said that the existing system is more than adequate for the project.

Mr. Henaghen said that the grade was modified around the upper baseball field to keep some of the drainage off of the infield.

Mr. Henaghen said that a retaining wall was added in response to a request from DPW. The proposed wall will match the existing wall. Trees will be at the back of the wall for screening.

Mr. Henaghen said the limit of sod discussed at the last public hearing is changed. He said that jagged edges will not be an issue because the entire area will be re-sodded.

Mr. Henaghen said that they were not able to shift the softball field.

Mr. Henaghen said that the Kindergarten Meadow was relocated to allow for a handicapped accessible sidewalk that will go around it.

Mr. Henaghen said that they softened the edge to improve the turning radius around the field building. He said that the Fire Department was satisfied with the change.

Mr. Henaghen distributed Existing Conditions and Demolition Plan, C1.03 and Layout & Materials Plan, C1.05, dated 3/27/08, revised 4/2/08.

The Board said that Mr. Saraceno's letter of April 2, 2008 contained language that the Sprague Fields Task Force requested be included as a condition of the decision. Mr. Guiffre said that language contained all of the abutters' requests. The Board read the list of abutters' requests. Mr. Brown said that the language is consistent with the neighbors' requests.

Mr. Henaghen said that the construction plans for drainage shown on plan C1.09 will be submitted with the correct information.

Mr. Henaghen said that their intent with the design of the fields was that there will be less water going to the catch basins on the neighbors' properties. Mr. Pakstis said that has been no history of problems at that location.

The Board said that a couple of minor corrections should be made to the Development Prospectus. Section VI D, Environmental Impact, 213 acre feet is listed as the current volume of runoff. That should be 2.13 acre feet. Under Section VI B. it was stated that there would be no increase in impervious area. The attachment to the Development Prospectus states that there will be a 4% increase in impervious surface.

The Board said that Construction Management Plan, CM-1 was submitted. A narrative plan should also be submitted that includes information about hours of construction, activities, staged use of the fields, wheel washing and truck routes. Mr. Henaghen said that some of the information is on the Notes Plan.

Mr. Henaghen said that the work schedule will be Monday through Friday, and Saturday with special permission. He said that truck access to the site will be from School Street, accessed from Route 9.

Mr. Fader said that the typical construction schedule will be Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or 5 p.m. He said that they may occasionally need an extra hour at the end of the day. He said that there is no anticipated Saturday or Sunday work.

Mr. Henaghen said that it is anticipated that work will begin as soon as school gets out for the summer. Mr. Pakstis said that he is working with Bella Wong, School Superintendent, to begin work earlier.

Mr. Henaghen said that the work should take approximately 16 weeks and be completed by the end of October. He said that the major work will be completed before school opens in the fall. He said that the first three fields have an earlier completion date.

Mr. Pakstis said that there was a representative of Little League as well as Softball on the Task Force.

Mr. Henaghen said that work areas will be secured.

Mr. Pakstis said that a Phasing of Construction schedule will be submitted.

The Board said that a detailed Construction Management Plan should be submitted. The plan should spell out the phasing, with the goal of ensuring that the three fields nearest the school are completed and safe for children to use by the opening of school in the fall, and that the remainder of the site be managed and fenced to restrict access by children.

The Board said that a contact person should be listed in the Construction Management Plan. Mr. Pakstis said that Gale Associates will be providing construction management services and DPW will be overseeing the project.

The Board said that construction vehicle wheel washing will be a requirement.

The Board said that the Traffic Management Plan should list the access route from Route 9 to School Street.

Mr. Henaghen said that the existing lightpoles will be relocated. He said that they are no more than 12 feet high and that there will be no light spillover.

Mr. Henaghen said that there is an existing fountain that will remain.

Mr. Henaghen submitted specifications for synthetic turf. He said that the TPE will be tan colored. He said that the lighter color will help to reduce heat.

The Board asked if the details on the irrigation system had been provided. Mr. Henaghen said that they are working through the design with DPW and will get final approval when the plans are complete. Mr. Pakstis said that they will check to see that materials are compatible with what the town currently uses.

The Board said that NRC had commented on pesticides use. Mr. Pakstis said that pesticides are prohibited on school properties. The Board said that will be a condition of the decision.

The Board asked if there is an Operations and Maintenance Plan. There is one new catch basin that has traps in it proposed. Mr. Fader said that the town has a contractor who goes around once a year to clean out all of the oil/water separators. He said that the new catch basin will be added to the list.

Mr. Henaghen said that the Operations and Maintenance Plan for the fields will involve the piece of equipment that is required for the synthetic fields.

### **Submittals from the Petitioner**

- Memorandum to Zoning Board of Appeals, Site & Project Description, dated 2/6/08, prepared by Thomas M. Henaghen, P.E., Gale Associates, Inc.
- Locus Map, Sprague Field Complex, dated 1/14/08, prepared by Gale Associates, Inc.
- Sprague School Fields, Spring Layout, Fall Layout, prepared for Recreation Department by Network & Information Systems GIS
- Site Plan Approval Review – Plans and Submittal Checklist
- Development Prospectus
- Memorandum to Executive Director, Sprague Fields Complex, dated 3/1/07, prepared by William J. Seymour, Gale Associates, Inc.
- Memorandum to Zoning Board of Appeals, Sprague Fields Redevelopment, dated 3/19/08, prepared by Thomas M. Henaghen, P.E., Gale Associates, Inc.
- Memorandum to Engineering Division, dated 3/19/08, prepared by Thomas M. Henaghen, P.E., Gale Associates, Inc.
- Stormwater Analysis, dated 3/19/08, prepared by Bentley Systems, Inc.
- SFTF – Membership
- Synthetic Field Surfacing Section 02532, dated 3/21/08, prepared by Gale Associates, Inc.
- Regulatory Affairs & Product Safety Polymer, dated 2/16/06, prepared by DSM
- Product Data Sheet Terra XPS, prepared by DSM Sarlink
- Material Safety Data Sheet Terra XPS, prepared by DSM

On March 18, 2008, the Natural Resources Commission and its Wetlands Protection Committee reviewed the petition and made the following recommendations:

1. It is strongly recommended that as much pervious pavement be required as is practicable in order to provide for adequate on-site recharge and infiltration and to remove pollutants before entering the groundwater. There are many such options available on the market at reasonable costs and they include concrete, asphalt, pavers and grid systems filled with grass or gravel.
2. The NRC has taken a strong position against the use of pesticides, herbicides and synthetic fertilizers in order to protect the Town's drinking water supply and natural resources. Although state law prohibits the use of pesticides on school land unless notification is made to all users, the NRC recommends that you consider imposing this prohibition on the Sprague Fields as an additional protection.

On February 25, 2008, the Planning Board reviewed the petition and supported granting Site Plan Approval.

On March 17, 2008, the Wellesley Fire Department approved the application for the proposed project.

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On April 2, 2008, George Saraceno, Senior Civil Engineer, Town of Wellesley, stated that the plans provided by Gale Associates, Inc. have adequately addressed the comments of the DPW and those communicated by the Zoning Board of Appeals at the March 20, 2008 public hearing.

Sprague Fields Task Force (SFTF) has requested that the following language be included as a condition of the ZBA's decision for this project. The purpose of this request is to reassure the abutters to Sprague Fields that no additional components may be added to the Master Plan without further approval of the ZBA.

"No improvements, including but not limited to, lights, fences, scoreboards, permanent fixtures and spectator stands, not shown on the Sprague Field Master Plan may be made without obtaining the Zoning Board of Appeals' further approval."

The Board found that the proposed Major Construction Project that consists of redevelopment of 18 acres of open space at Sprague Fields for five full-size, multi-use rectangular fields, two of which are proposed to be synthetic turf fields, is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Bylaw, subject to conditions listed below, in conjunction with the Site Plan Approval, and voted unanimously to grant Site Plan Approval.

The Board's approval of the Site Plan for the Project is premised on the Petitioner's and Project's compliance with the following conditions (the "Conditions"). All requirements imposed by the Conditions or this Site Plan Approval shall be applicable to the entity responsible for the administration of the Project regardless of whether the condition specifically identifies the Petitioner, the responsible entity, or no entity as having responsibility for a particular condition. By accepting this Site Plan Approval, the Petitioner agrees to the terms, covenants, conditions, and agreements contained herein.

### **CONDITIONS**

- A narrative Construction Management Plan shall be submitted showing that access to the site will be from Route 9 to School Street and only through the northwest entrance from the parking lot.
- The Construction Management Plan shall contain elements indicating that the intent is to have the three fields closest to the school ready to use by the opening of school in 2008 and that the remaining areas shall be secured.
- The Construction Management Plan shall include a schedule for heavy equipment use on the site.
- The Construction Management Plan narrative shall include details for dust control.
- Construction workers shall park on the site.
- There shall be a wheel and truck washing station on the site.
- Truck idling shall be in accordance with State Law.

- The Contractor shall provide temporary bathroom facilities on the site.
- Hours of operation shall be Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, with permission. Hours shall be 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. when working on the synthetic turf fields.
- The Sprague Fields Task Force's conditions shall be incorporated in this decision.
- The NRC condition prohibiting pesticide, herbicide or synthetic fertilizer use shall be incorporated in this decision.
- Final comments and approval from the Board of Health shall be incorporated into a final set of remediation plans and shall be submitted.
- As-graded plans shall be submitted.
- A final plan shall be submitted.

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APPEALS FROM THIS DECISION,  
IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT  
TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A,  
SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED  
WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE  
OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN THE  
OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.

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Cynthia S. Hibbard, Acting Chairman

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David G. Sheffield

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Robert W. Levy

cc: Planning Board  
Inspector of Buildings  
lrm