

January 10, 2021

Martha's Vineyard Commission
PO Box 1447
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

Re: MVRHS Artificial Turf Athletic Fields

Dear Commissioners,

Plastic Free MV (PFMV) is a group concerned about plastic waste in our community. In the last few years, we successfully passed a bylaw banning the sales and distribution of plastic water and soda bottles under 34oz in four of the six island towns. A small group of young students worked tirelessly for years to pass this bylaw, because they know and understand the dangers of plastic on their environment.

As the leader of this group of students, I am compelled to write in opposition of the artificial (plastic) turf field proposed for installation at MVRHS.

I have read letters to the MVC (in opposition and pro-turf) and I am deeply concerned that a decision is going to be made that does not honor our Earth. I have read letters from other groups regarding the risk of a plastic turf field on the aquifer, on oysters, on ponds, on the forest....it's even a fire hazard. There is an overwhelming abundance of scientific evidence that says an artificial turf is the wrong answer.

We know the dangers of microplastics, we know that something has to be done to turn this around. Last year I attended the WHOI conference on microplastics and was shocked to find out how little we have this problem under control, and how much worse it is going to get. It will take billions just in cleaning up the ocean. Wouldn't that money be better spent on education? This "throw-away" society needs to change. An artificial turf is a poisonous band-aid on a much larger problem.

I don't understand how some can focus on 'athletic children' and the possible benefits to their sports careers, while entirely disregarding the science behind this decision. I understand that a turf field "looks good." In my opinion a natural grass playing field is even more beautiful, and more importantly - it does no harm. In fact it is much better for **all living things**.

Isn't it time we thought of the greater good, including the many non-human species that will be affected by this, and not just the good of only a few?

Sincerely,

Annemarie Ralph
Plastic Free MV
www.plasticfreemv.com