

From: kristin pucino
Date: January 11, 2021 at 4:57:35 PM EST
To: Adam Turner <turner@mvcommission.org>
Subject: Vineyard Sports Complex

To whom it may concern:

My name is Kristin Pucino Gibson. I have been a resident of MV for over seven years now. For the last 5 seasons I have been heavily involved in the MV Football/Cheerleading programs. I was the Parent Coordinator for the Mariners Junior High football program for 4 seasons and I have been the Executive Secretary for the MV Touchdown Club since March 2018.

My son has played football since the 7th grade and he is currently a Senior in high school. He has been on the Lacrosse and Track teams as well. I have spent countless hours at the football field as well as the High School track, so I would think it is safe to say I have some first hand experience when it comes to the condition of our Athletic fields.

In the early fall of 2016 the JH foot all team had started off with some conditioning at the Track field. It is there that my son received an Achilles injury from twisting his ankle in one of the large holes in the field. From that injury he ended up on the sidelines, with crutches and in a boot for weeks, half the season to be exact. Eventually our practices moved to the HS football field/back field (behind the visitor bleachers). I was at almost every single practice watching the kids from beginning to end. It was there that we almost had to call 911 as one of our kids had a severe asthma attack from all the dirt and dust being kicked up just from simple warm up exercises! The fields have simply not gotten ANY better since. As you walk through the football field you are constantly trying to dodge droppings from the geese and the divots in the field, not to mention the swamp like conditions after the rain and the swarms of gnats!! Not only are the fields a mess in every sense of the word, but the track is on the verge of being condemned. **Condemned!** As a parent, booster club executive officer, and resident of Martha's Vineyard I am embarrassed that this debate has gone on for as long as it has, without a viable solution. We owe our children the opportunity to play on SAFE fields! All these different sports are more than just teams. They are families. These kids are doing more than just playing a game, they are learning respect, loyalty, and the definition of camaraderie. Most of all, sports keep the kids busy. Which gives them less time to get into other things...How can we continuously ask these kids to keep showing up when the fields we are providing are in such awful shape and unsafe. What about the kids that are counting on Athletic Scholarships to help further their learning? Do you think we are being fair to them when they are competing with all these other teams who are so familiarized with turf? I have traveled to more games than I can count and I can honestly say that the list of teams we have played against whom have turf far outweighs the ones that do not. We are not even giving our kids a chance. To put it bluntly, our fields are deplorable and we are not doing our jobs. I truly believe we have exhausted all other options. The natural fields are not meant to withstand the amount of traffic we have. They just aren't. We need a change and we desperately need it now....

I fully support building a sports complex with Synthetic Turf as I truly believe is safest for our kids. As parents, we always want the best for our kids, now lets trying acting like it. Pride aside. It has been proven that what we have been doing in the past is clearly not working...Let's work together and fix this once and for all. Our kids are worth it.

Best Regards,

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