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To: Alex Elvin, Lucy Morrison, the Oak Bluffs Planning Board

To whom it may concern,

The matter of the installation of the artificial turf field in Oak Bluffs is at last brought to the MVC, and I think it is extremely important to not allow this to pass without deep consideration and reflection about our priorities as a community. I write this letter from approximately a mile away from the high school, and want to voice my deep concern about this proposed project. I am an educator on the island, and have a history of working in the aquaculture field. It is very well known (with plenty of scientific evidence) that the particles of a plastic turf field will leech into the surrounding environment, through the soil, into the water source. This not only puts the environment at risk of pollution, including the flora and fauna that depends upon it, but also impacts our ground water, which then spreads much beyond the location of the Oak Bluffs high school. And eventually these particles will make their way into our drinking water, and to our bloodstream.

Passing this project, would be a very short-term benefit based decision. And as a former high school athlete, having played varsity soccer—I can attest that athletes can very well train and excel at a sport without a turf field. And not to mention, high school sports play an important role during our high school years and possibly college years, but most people will not continue down this path of sports beyond college. Furthermore, playing on a grass field is safer, and reduces the heat that will be trapped with a turf field. And who doesn't enjoy the simple joy of playing on a natural grass field, it is a part of the experience, with no need for all this artificial development.

As a team that holds the responsibility of serving the community, you answer this question: What is more important, community and environmental health in the long-term or a better sports field for the short-term, serving only a small and select group of people for a short-period of time (a point that could be disputed) Please, take into consideration the health of our community at large. If this gets passed, the impacts on the environment and on human health eventually, will not be reversible.

Sincerely,  
Sonja Josephson  
4 Pond View Circle,  
Oak Bluffs, MA