

TO: Adam Turner, Martha's Vineyard Commission
FROM: John Abrams, West Tisbury
DATE: October 19, 2020
RE: MVRHS New Athletic Facilities

I have struggled with the issue of plastic fields vs grass fields. It's strange to me that I have had this internal struggle at all. Environmentally and financially, plastic fields appear to be a disaster. There's just no reasonable way to conclude that plastic would be preferable, at least in those terms.

The reason I have struggled is that two of my grandchildren, Silas, 16, and Axel, 14, regularly play on those fields. Wouldn't it be good if they had a more reliable surface to play on, one that is less susceptible to the vagaries of weather and is easier to maintain? It took me awhile (probably longer than it should have) to decide that for me the answer is emphatically No. They should have topnotch, impeccably maintained fields to play on that are not a threat to their health, and ours, and that are not irresponsibly expensive.

And, perhaps most importantly, in a world struggling to contend with immense environmental problems, what message would I be sending to Silas and Axel if I supported plastic fields? This is their world to grow up in, and due to us it's already in pretty rough shape in many ways. It's our absolute responsibility to protect, preserve, and restore it as best we can.

Let's make beautiful grass fields and care for them in the best possible way.

Thank you for listening - and sorry to burden you with my personal internal struggle.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Abrams', with a large, stylized initial 'J' and 'A'.

John Abrams