

RE: Marblehead Case Study / Martha's Vineyard

Massey, Rachel I <Rachel_Massey@uml.edu>

Fri 1/8/2021 4:17 PM

To: Alex Elvin <elvin@mvcommission.org>; Lucy Morrison <morrison@mvcommission.org>;

Cc: Pollard, Lindsey D <Lindsey_Pollard@uml.edu>; Rebekah Thomson (rebekahjthomson@gmail.com) <rebekahjthomson@gmail.com>; planningboard@oakbluffsma.gov <planningboard@oakbluffsma.gov>;

Hi Rebekah, Alex, and Lucy,

Thanks for your message. I'm happy to hear that our case study has been useful! We developed this and other case studies with the goal of helping communities learn from one another and to share best practices related to grass athletic fields. Lindsey and I looked over the comments earlier this week, and we can share a few quick thoughts based on reading through them.

We see that one of the documents you shared includes a detailed review of each of the fields we highlighted in the case study. For one field, the reviewer noted an additional 200 hours that we hadn't identified in our interviews with Marblehead athletic personnel. This is useful new information. The reviewer also noted that the Marblehead fields are smaller than those under discussion in Martha's Vineyard. For our case studies we simply describe existing fields, and we don't select for specific sizes, but it seems reasonable that a larger field could support more usage.

The review notes that the Marblehead fields are used for a range of ages and activity types. High school and adult sports are only one of activities that occur on the fields. However, it would not be accurate to conclude that the fields described in this case study would not be able to support additional high school and adult sports. The existing activities don't represent the maximum that the space can sustain, but simply represent what is currently being done. As you know, and as noted in the Q&A document, heavier athletic use can be supported through good field design and increased maintenance.

In the Q&A document, the reviewer notes that we included estimates for informal use in addition to practice and play for organized sports. The reviewer has not chosen to include informal use in their own estimates. We agree that either approach is reasonable; for the purposes of our case study, it was important to capture as accurately as possible all the activities occurring on the field. To the extent that informal use is not built into the plans for a proposed future athletic facility, the community may wish to determine whether informal use will be permitted, or whether informal activities will be moved to other locations or discontinued. Our understanding from interviews is that informal use is sometimes limited on play surfaces that are locked and/or require permission for use.

The Q&A document includes a note about the use of a 23% intensity factor. The commenter also appears to have multiplied by a range of intensity factors depending on the sport, including doubling the hours in some cases. In our case studies we have chosen not to use intensity adjustments, preferring instead to provide detailed information on the sports and ages of the players, so that communities can make their own informed decisions about applicability to their needs. If you wish, you can

multiply the hours in our case study by whatever intensity factor you consider relevant for a given sport, and in this way, make our figures commensurable with those provided by the commenter.

We see that the commenter shows each varsity and JV team playing 6 days per week, and has assumed that each activity (practice and games) lasts 2.5 hours. For our case study, we used the specific number of hours provided to us per game or practice, so our Marblehead case study provides a somewhat greater level of detail. In our case study, you can see the age, sport, and amount of time, and whether each activity is a game or a practice. This is a small difference in approach and may not be particularly important.

The commenter makes the helpful point that calculating use hours is just one measure of success for an athletic facility. There are many other variables to consider when understanding how an athletic field can meet the needs of users, including those mentioned by the reviewer. This is a principle we've emphasized in our case studies: by analyzing these variables and creating a maintenance plan focused on building soil and grass health, natural grass fields can meet the needs of sports leagues and other users. The hours presented in the Marblehead case study, and our other case studies, don't reflect the maximum usable time for these athletic fields, but instead provide a snapshot of how a community is working to provide a protective play environment without the need for potentially hazardous pesticides or materials.

I hope these notes are useful. Thanks again for letting us know our case study has been useful for you. Please feel free to reach out to us if you need any more information about our work.

All the best,

Rachel and Lindsey

-----Original Message-----

From: Rebekah Thomson <rebekahjthomson@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 8:58 PM

To: Massey, Rachel I <Rachel_Massey@uml.edu>; Pollard, Lindsey D <Lindsey_Pollard@uml.edu>

Cc: Alex Elvin <elvin@mvcommission.org>; Lucy Morrison <morrison@mvcommission.org>; planningboard@oakbluffsma.gov

Subject: Marblehead Case Study / Martha's Vineyard

Hi Rachel and Lindsey,

Happy New Year!

I'm reaching out to let you know that the case study TURI did on Marblehead has been useful in the conversation about playing field surfaces here on MV. Folks at the Martha's Vineyard Commission brought the case study to the attention of the applicant, the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS), to serve as a comparison.

Chris Huntress, the engineer hired by MVRHS, recently submitted the following response to the case study. He also addresses the case study on Question #16 in the

HAI-MVRHS-MVC Staff Q&A doc. Both documents are attached below. I thought you would like to see his feedback and would be interested to hear your thoughts.

I'm cc-ing Alex Elvin and Lucy Morrison from the Commission, who are helping to compile all the application information, as well as the Oak Bluffs Planning Board, who also review the proposal.

My very best,
Rebekah Thomson