

Date: January 5, 2007



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Andy Livingstone Playfield

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the artificial fields at Andy Livingstone Park be replaced with an infill type artificial surface.*
- B. THAT staff be instructed to identify a source of funding to proceed with this project.*

POLICY

The Board approves the park development, capital funding and major replacement projects.

BACKGROUND

In 1995 artificial turf was installed on the two playfields and baseball diamond at Andy Livingstone Park. The installation was undertaken by the developer, as part of a park service agreement reached with the City of Vancouver in the context of the International Village rezoning.

The fields are built on contaminated soil, which is encapsulated by a polyurethane liner 1 metre below the field surface. The principal contaminants are heavy metals, remnants of industrial activity in the area. Embedded in the contaminated soils are wood wastes, which have been decomposing slowly, releasing methane gas and creating differential settlement on the site. The differential settlement pattern is accentuated by some remaining building foundations.

During the period 1996 to 2004 the field was regularly surveyed and over that period depressions of up to 5.0 centimeters were recorded. The plan on Appendix I shows the contour pattern in 2004.

The differential settlement combined with faster than anticipated wear and tear on the field has created unsatisfactory playing conditions.

DISCUSSION

Technical Solutions

In 2006 the Board retained Levelton (Geotechnical Engineers), and Athletica Sport and Recreation Design Inc. consultants to examine the situation and make recommendations for a future course of action.

The consultants concluded that differential settlement will continue for an indefinite period of time. Because of the contaminants, removal of the underlying soil is cost prohibitive and is not an option. The consultants were asked to examine a natural grass option, as well as various forms of artificial turf options.

The grass option would cost in the order of \$900,000. Depressions in the grass surface could be refilled with soil on an as needed basis and the surface would be maintained over time as a relative flat surface. The disadvantages of this approach would be a loss of playing hours, relative to artificial turf, and the virtual redundancy of the field light system.

An artificial field solution with the long synthetic infill pile, would cost about \$1,500,000. It would offer some resiliency to differential settlement, but it would be unrealistic to expect a flat surface to the exacting standards normally associated with this type of field over the field's lifespan.

Accepting a slightly lower standard would enable the preservation of playing hours at this location and continue utilization of the lighting system. An artificial lighted field is an accepted use in this highly urban community and would be difficult to replace elsewhere.

The adoption of long infill pile has implications for the future use of this site. Long infill pile is favored by soccer but not by field hockey. A short pile would be favored by field hockey but the settling of the land would impact their sport more than soccer. The short pile would also offer less resilience to the settlement. The site would get greater use with the long pile.

Over the past few years field hockey use has already been relocated from this site because of the poor surface quality, but in the longer term an additional short infill pile surface, like Eric Hamber, would likely be required in an inventory to provide greater flexibility for accommodating field hockey.

Financial Options

The park is located in an area which is not eligible for citywide DCL funding. That leaves capital, user fees, and/or other developer contributions as potential funding sources. The playfield replacement reserve which is funded by user fees generated at Point Grey, Eric Hamber and Andy Livingstone, has a current balance of \$425,000.

Other funding sources would most likely have to come from developer related contributions such as Community Amenity Contributions. There is a fair amount of development in the vicinity of the site anticipated over the next several years, which may create an opportunity.

Another possibility is funding potentially generated by a payment in lieu of developing a satellite community centre in the adjacent Firenze complex. Under an agreement, the developer had a choice of building a community centre or providing the city with a payment in lieu. The developer has indicated he does not wish to proceed with the community facility and staff are in the process of determining an appropriate payment for City Council's approval for use of the funds were they to be required.

SUMMARY

This matter was reported to the Planning Committee of September 19, 2006, and staff at that time concluded that the continuation of an artificial field solution on this site would be important in the Board's quest to increase the provision of artificial playing fields.

Prepared by:

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