

-January 17, 2008

A Regular Session of the Allendale Planning Board was held in the Municipal Building on January 17, 2008. The meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Mr. Quinn, Chairman. Mr. Quinn announced that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act had been met by the required postings and notice to publication.

On roll call Mr. Quinn, Mr. Barra, Mr. Bernstein, Mr. Fliegel, Mr. Gravina, Mr. Herndon, Mr. Sirico, Mr. Tatosiasn and Mr. Yevchak were present. Mr. Dunn was also present.

Mr. Herndon moved, seconded by Mr. Yevchak to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Tatosian, Mr. Bernstein and Mr. Barra abstained. The remainder of the members voted in favor.

Election of Officers and Appointment of Professionals

Mr. Quinn announced that the proposed slate of officers is the continuing slate from last year. Mr. Quinn has volunteered to remain the Chairman, Mr. Tatosian the Vice Chairman and Mr. Sirico the Secretary. Mr. Herndon moved, seconded by Mr. Gravina to maintain the present slate of officers. On voice vote, all members voted in favor.

Mr. Quinn announced that there would be a discussion of the appointment of professionals when the Planning Board has a retreat on the evening of January 29th.

Extension of Time – Final Approval of Minor Subdivision – Hildebrandt

Block 1407, Lots 8 and 8.01

Mr. Gary Zalarick was present representing the applicant.

Mr. Zalarick stated that this Board heard an application for a minor subdivision on June 21, 2007. A resolution was adopted concerning this matter on July 19, 2007. The resolution that was adopted was conditioned upon County approval. The application was submitted to the County and two requested revisions were received back from them. Those revisions were returned back to the County. The time to file the deed and plat will expire on January 29, 2008 and Mr. Zalarick doesn't want the approval of the subdivision to expire. He is asking the Board to offer a one year extension of time.

Mr. Zalarick reviewed the events that have caused the delay. Mr. Yakimik said he is presently working with the applicant's surveyor and they are actively perfecting the subdivision at this time and the issue is moving toward resolution. Mr. Yakimik said once he is satisfied with the language in the deed and the descriptions, he will forward it to the Chairman for his signature. Mr. Yakimik stated that the escrow is current on this matter.

Mr. Dunn read a resolution for the extension into the record. A copy of the resolution is attached to the permanent record.

Mr. Fliegel moved, seconded by Mr. Sirico to approve the resolution as read by Mr. Dunn.

On roll call Mr. Barra, Mr. Bernstein, Mr. Fliegel, Mr. Gravina, Mr. Herndon, Mr. Quinn, Mr. Sirico, Mr. Tatosian and Mr. Yevchak voted in favor.

Northern Highland Regional High School Field Improvements Block 201, Lot 8

Mr. Barra recused himself for reasons noted at previous meetings. Mr. Gravina did the same. Mr. Dunn also recused himself because his daughter is a teacher at Northern Highlands High School. All three gentlemen stepped down from the dais.

Mr. Robert Maloof was present to serve as the Board's Attorney this evening. Mr. Maloof stated that the Mayor and Council adopted a resolution on December 27, 2007 with regard to a Soil Movement Application from Northern Highlands Board of Education. After excavation of the field, the high school intends to construct a synthetic turf football field and a long triple jump athletic facility. In addition, 1910 cubic yards of soil will be imported. The Mayor and Council resolved that the soil application would be approved subject to all conditions set forth in a letter by the Municipal Engineer dated December 21, 2007. The resolution included the need for the posting of escrow for continuing engineering inspections, and referral to the Allendale Planning Board for review. An additional condition is that after the above conditions are satisfactorily met, the Municipal Engineer will certify compliance to the Governing Body and construction may commence.

The Board has convened this evening with the intent of meeting for the purpose of review.

Mr. Quinn asked Mr. Maloof to explain why the Board is reviewing this issue. Mr. Maloof responded that the statute says, "Whenever the Planning Board shall have adopted any portion of the Master Plan, the Governing Body or other public agency having jurisdiction over the subject matter, before taking action necessitating the expenditure of public funds, incidental to the location, character or extent of such project, shall refer the action involving such specific project to the Planning Board for review and recommendation in conjunction with such Master Plan and shall not act thereon without such recommendation or until 45 days have elapsed after such reference without receiving such recommendation. This requirement shall apply to action by a housing, parking, highway, special district or other authority, redevelopment agency, school board, or other similar public agency, state, county or municipal."

Subsection B of the same statute says the Planning Board shall review and issue findings of any long range facilities plan submitted to the Board pursuant to the "education, facilities, construction, planning use act for the purpose of review to the extent that the long range facilities plan is informed by and consistent with the land use plan element and the housing element contained within the municipal Master Plan and such other

elements that the Planning Board deems necessary to determine whether the respective sites for school facilities contained in the long range facilities plan promote more effective and efficient coordination of school construction with the development efforts of the municipality. The Planning Board shall devote at least one full meeting of the Board to presentation and review of the long range facilities plan after adoption of a resolution setting forth its findings."

Mr. Maloof said the municipality will not be able to apply its site plan standards to this application. If issues such as drainage and landscaping have an impact, those items can be part of a recommendation made to the State. No site plan considerations can be imposed, however.

Mr. Rob Simon was present representing Mr. Hans Heilinger and Mr. Robinson of Allendale. He stated that he intends to raise issues this evening regarding the Board's ability to hear this application. He will raise a number of jurisdictional issues and will ask if they should be addressed later or not at all.

Mr. Simon said that the Planning Board should address and consider any requests that are made regarding jurisdiction.

Mr. Quinn responded that Mr. Simon was not present at the Monday night Work Session and he was a little perplexed about his "eleventh hour" attempt to stop this hearing.

Mr. Simon said he was only retained over the weekend. On Wednesday, an appeal was submitted regarding proceeding with this matter before the Board this evening. He is asking for the Board of Adjustment to render a determination because quasi legal matters are to be decided by the Board of Adjustment, not the Planning Board. This Board is obligated to await a determination by the Board of Adjustment.

A capital review project is deemed to be a public hearing, and all documents pertaining to that hearing must be on file for public inspection at least ten days prior to the hearing. In this case they were not. In addition Mr. Maloof directed the applicant to publish a notice ten days before the hearing. In this case notice was not provided to the public in a timely fashion and there were other defects in it also including what the purpose of the hearing is.

Under the Allendale ordinance the Borough Clerk is the Administrative Officer of the Planning Board. No formal application was filed with the Municipal Clerk of this municipality. Irrespective of the language that was accurately read earlier by Mr. Maloof, the Borough Clerk should be directing this issue under the guidance of the Mayor and Council or should have scheduled this matter for a hearing. Allendale's Zoning Ordinance states that this application should be scheduled for full site plan review. At the end of the day the Mayor and Council are not in the position to refer this matter to the Planning Board. The Board of Education should refer this matter to the Planning Board. The 45 day time period begins when this happens.

The Board of Education was represented by Mr. Jamie Plosia. Mr. Plosia said earlier today he received a fax request for a stay. The intent of the stay is for a challenge of an enforcement officer's action and that challenge is made to the Board of Adjustment. It does not apply to a Mayor and Council action. Mr. Plosia said the stay doesn't apply and the statute doesn't apply.

Mr. Maloof responded that he had spent time on this issue and reviewing the appeal filed by Mr. Simon's office. He does not believe that Section 75 of the Statute relates to the action of the Municipal Body, but only to the actions of a municipal officer. If Mr. Simon wishes to challenge the determination he has 45 days to file a prerogative writ case in the Superior Court. However Mr. Maloof does not think the Board of Adjustment has the authority to overturn a Mayor and Council's decision. Mr. Maloof said the Board should proceed on the merits of the matter.

Mr. Maloof said no public notice is required. He felt the Board of Education should address letters to the surrounding neighbors within 200 feet. That was done in a way that was above and beyond what is required.

Mr. Quinn said it was the Board's wish to proceed with this matter.

Mr. Kevin Boswell of Boswell Engineering was sworn.

Mr. Boswell said the application involves the removal of the interior of the rubberized track area, the removal of the natural turf area and related asphalt surfaces for track events. There will be the reconstruction of the same with an artificial turf surface of 86,000 square feet and paved areas within the same areas that are under $\frac{1}{4}$ of one acre, and the relocation of a triple jump to just outside of the existing track area.

An application was submitted on behalf of the Board of Education for a soil removal permit for removal of 2800 cubic yards of material in an area that is approximately one foot thick. This is being replaced with four, six-inch diameter perforated pipes to be laid in a herringbone system of 1 inch high by 12 inch wide drains to be laid down in a gravel bed that is eight inches thick. The thought is that the void within the stone and within the pipes will act as a detention system underneath the ground in order to capture all the water. The pipes will then allow the water to bleed into the existing piping system at a controlled rate that will meet the new storm water requirements for two, ten and one hundred year storms.

These calculations were reviewed by the Municipal Engineer and all but one concern was resolved. They are confident that the drainage system will function as intended. The Municipal Engineer has asked for verification that there is no seasonal high ground water within two feet of the final surface. That will be verified in a report back to the Municipal Engineer.

As part of the soil removal permit the school has asked for permission to use it as "top dressing" to help grade out irregularities in the baseball field.

Mr. Tatosian asked if the existing soils have been tested and graded. Mr. Boswell said they have not been tested at the present time but it will be done as a matter of procedure. The Municipal Engineer has required that any soil coming to the site will be tested.

Mr. Yakimik told the Planning Board he has asked for a soil log to classify the soil to ensure there is sandy loam soil for proper percolation.

Mr. Boswell stated that in lay terms, the drainage system will work more efficiently than what is there right now and will reduce storm water runoff by twenty to thirty percent. There is virtually no possibility of water backing up downstream. In a very large storm in which everything failed, water would back up on the field.

The material that has been selected for use is a synthetic turf that will rest on top of eight inches of clean stone. It is state-of-the-art material and has an eight year warranty. There are many different locations that have similar installations as to what is being proposed. The material is the most widely used application in this area. It is state-of-the-art because it has a rigid vein in it that allows it to stand up on its own without much brushing. The consensus is it will probably last from fifty to one hundred percent longer than the prior technologies.

The test pits that were dug in December were located in the end zones. The new test sites will be located in different areas. That location has a history of having a good drainage system.

The longest lasting artificial turf field in the local area is at Bergen Catholic High School. It has been in place for thirteen years. Mr. Boswell testified that the school has done nothing to the field over the years except to replace small portions of the turf. It is the same type of synthetic turf as what will be installed at Northern Highlands, but what will be installed at Northern Highlands is a better material.

Mr. Boswell said his firm will make intermittent inspections and make whatever certifications are necessary to ensure that the project complies with the approved plans and specifications.

Mr. Boswell added that recent articles have raised concerns over health issues with regard to the rubber infields and what happens at certain temperatures. A lot of those articles have been generated by natural turf growers. No entity has determined that these fields are harmful to anyone's health. Steven's Tech and Rutgers University have built these fields. There is nothing to indicate that these fields are not safe.

Mr. Herndon asked what happens to the water once it is collected on the turf field. Mr. Boswell said the water currently goes out via the existing pipe that exits the site and works its way down Hillside Avenue via the brook. Now the flow of water will be restricted before it goes into the existing piping system. When a drainage system is designed, an overflow is included in case an obstruction should occur. In this case, if

there is a 100 year storm that overflows the drainage system, the water will back up on the field and stay on the field. The field could not be used during a 100 year storm because it would be several inches deep in water. The runoff for a 100 year storm would be approximately 8 cubic feet per second.

Mr. Yevchak asked what the procedure is if the artificial turf field gets damaged. Mr. Boswell said sections can be cut out and re-sewn in. As long as the original installers are called in to make repairs, it doesn't void the warranty.

Mr. Boswell noted that the area of the proposed field will be slightly less than what is there now. The actual playing surface and the size of the field won't change, however.

Mr. Quinn asked how the soil that is removed from the field will be maintained. There is concern by members of the Board that children must be protected from this pile of soil. Mr. Boswell said there will be a silt fence around it in keeping with the direction of the Bergen County Soil Conservation District.

Mr. Boswell said if the turf is touched, it has the consistency of freshly cut grass. There is a two inch mat of cryogenic rubber that holds the material vertically in place with a half inch fitting on top.

Mr. Yakimik addressed the Board. He said he had reviewed all the drainage and soil movement aspects of the project. He has copied the Board on his correspondence to Mr. Boswell. Hydrologists have looked at the calculations and they agree with what Mr. Boswell is saying this evening.

There is one element that he still needs to be satisfied with however, and that is the soil condition. Through the test pits and the submission of a soil log, there will be verifications and a recommendation will be made. Soil conditions must be suitable for the type of retention and percolation system that is being proposed.

Mr. Yakimik said he had no questions for Mr. Boswell. The drainage, engineering and soil movement aspects of the presentation made this evening by Mr. Boswell have been satisfactory.

Mr. Yakimik offered to report to the Planning Board about how this application relates to the Master Plan when the opportunity arises. Aspects of this issue were reported at the Monday night Work Session. The application does meet all the storm water management requirements of Allendale's Code.

Mr. Plosia had no additional comments.

Mr. Yakimik said he had two reports this evening. One was written to the Allendale Mayor and Council as a follow-up to the soil movement and drainage aspects of this application. This report brings the application up-to-date before the Mayor and Council. A resolution was passed by the Mayor and Council with regard to a soil movement

application on December 27, 2007. There were conditions that needed to be met by Northern Highlands. Revised plans have been received from Northern Highlands and additional escrow has been posted by them. As mentioned previously, there is still one item that has yet to be resolved. It concerns the applicant providing soil logs and a certification regarding a seasonal high water table for the two test pits that are proposed by the applicant. Those will be provided to Mr. Yakimik with the certification that the soil conditions are favorable for the proposed construction. After that, experts from Mr. Yakimik's office will go to the field to verify the results that have been given to them.

Mr. Yakimik said it was the decision of the Mayor and Council that the applicant was requested to post a performance guarantee with the Borough Treasurer to ensure compliance with the Allendale Borough Council during construction. Mrs. Favata called Mr. Yakimik earlier today to let him know that the guarantee had been posted.

Mr. Yakimik offered to answer any questions from the Board regarding drainage.

Mr. Quinn asked for confirmation that the school will allow Mr. Yakimik to make observations in the field.

Mr. Yakimik said that was correct and if he sees that the test pits are not favorable he will recommend a stop work order be issued until the item is resolved. Mr. Yakimik will closely supervise the situation.

Mr. Fliegel asked if the new test pits will be different from the ones that were made in December.

Mr. Yakimik said his original intention was to use the same test pits, but new test pits will be dug for his certification.

Mr. Yakimik presented a report to the Board of the items that were discussed at the Monday night Work Session.

Mr. Yakimik reviewed the documents that were turned in to the Planning Board secretary on January 5, 2008. The documents included the New Jersey Department of Education submittal package, a transmittal letter to the Bergen County Superintendent at the Department of Education, and extracts from minutes of a meeting of the Northern Highlands Board of Education on November 26, 2007 which outline aspects of the project. On January 9, 2008 Mr. Yakimik received plans which consisted of seven sheets from Boswell Engineering dated December 27, 2007. Those are the same plans that are before the Planning Board this evening.

Mr. Yakimik said that when the word "application" appears in his report, it is meant to refer to the matter at hand and in no way is it intended to make the matter a legal application.

The applicant proposes to replace an existing grass surface football field with an impervious, synthetic turf surface. Two semi-circular surfaces at the end of each field will be replaced with an impervious asphalt surface. Other installations include a long, triple jump runway for track and field events and promotional signs. The following comments were offered for the Board's consideration:

1. The Board should seek recommendations from the Borough Planner.
2. The Engineering review of the Master Plan includes several potential items which are related to Engineering review.
 - A. There is an issue concerning institutional uses within residential zones and the difficulty of accommodating those uses without reducing the quality of life for the residents. Mr. Yakimik asked if the project will result in increased intensity of the institutional use, going from a natural field to a synthetic field. Relatively long maintenance periods that would occur for a grass field will no longer be there. Therefore the field could be available for more events than before.
 - B. With regard to buffers, should the Board determine that the project will result in a more intensive use, the Master Plan speaks about the use of buffers to mitigate intensity. The Engineer's site visit to the location did not consider the adequacy of existing buffers. If the Board determines that adequate buffers are an issue, the plans would need to be revised to address that issue.
 - C. Potential of increased traffic. Should the Board determine that the project will result in a more intensive use, there may be an adverse effect on traffic. One goal of the Master Plan is to minimize traffic congestion through discouraging developments that will exacerbate existing traffic congestion. This determination is highly subjective and there is no way to assess a definitive increase through increased seating or constructing an additional field. It is possible that one event will be beginning when another is concluding due to a decrease in required maintenance. If this is determined to be an issue to the Board, a traffic impact report should be provided.
 - D. Another goal of the Master Plan is to minimize the environmental impact of development, particularly in flood hazard areas. The Mayor and Council reviewed this matter and rendered a favorable decision in their Resolution 07-231.
 - E. Another issue is signs. Several promotional signs will be installed by the applicant. It is recommended that the applicant apply to the Construction Code Official. Also the signs should be faced away or be hidden by a visual buffer as determined by the Board.
 - F. Since there was no formal application or process with regard to this application that required the applicant to post Engineering escrow, it is asked that additional escrow be posted in the amount of \$1200.

Mr. Fliegel asked Mr. Maloof if the Board is present to review the compliance of this application with the Master Plan. Mr. Maloof stated that was the reason.

Mr. Snieckus, Professional Planner with Burgess Associates and Planner for the Municipality and the Planning Board addressed the Board.

He concurred with the earlier discussion that this is a Section 31 review for improvements to the field. There is an issue of whether there is application involves an expansion of the field and how it relates to the Master Plan.

Mr. Snieckus said he reviewed relevant issues with the Master Plan. He recognizes the goals and objectives of the Master Plan that are relative to this application. One specific goal of the Master Plan is to provide adequate space for a variety of active, passive and recreational uses. Promoting improvements that provide access to open spaces is included in that section.

There is a section of the Land Use Plan that addresses certain public institutional uses that have been permitted in residential zones in the community. This site is located in the AAA residential zone. Its public use is consistent with the Land Use Plan in designation and use. Mr. Snieckus continued to say that such public institutional uses must be properly monitored and appropriately addressed when they are sited in residential neighborhoods. This is relevant to new facilities in existing residential neighborhoods. This is an existing facility so issues of buffering for instance, would be relevant to new facilities or increased intensity of use.

Mr. Snieckus asked if the improvement to the field will increase the intensity of the use itself. He questioned whether there will be an expansion of the stadium, stands or seating proposed as a result of the changes.

Mr. Snieckus noted that there is a management issue with regard to traffic, and whether there will be appropriate staging between events. He asked if the school anticipates greater overlap of uses in the utilization of the parking lot or access to the parking areas in the school facility.

Mr. Snieckus said that on the surface, a grass surface compared to an artificial surface does not rise to a level of greater intensity of use with the exception of the management of the facility.

In addition to these aspects of the Master Plan, there are also recommendations for the Land Use Plan of the Municipality. The Land Use Plan also recommends a public use district to recognize the existing public and recreational uses within specified locations, including this site.

The Open Space element has also been examined. It talks about the upgrading and rehabilitation of existing fields. It is recommended that upgrading take place on existing facilities to enhance utilization by the community at large.

The Open Space Plan also talks about the Northern Highlands field as being a multi-use field. It contemplates multiple uses and increased uses that may occur as a result of the artificial turf. Mr. Snieckus commented that because artificial turf will be used, pesticides and fertilizers will be eliminated from this portion of the town.

Mr. Fliegel commented that the Board must assume that there will be increased usage of the field. He asked if there is any way to tell if there will be additional usage of the campus in general.

Mr. Snieckus responded that he doesn't think there will be a greater impact unless the events are stacked very closely so that there won't be time for traffic to dissipate from one event before it reoccurs for the next one.

Mr. Maloof asked if this particular project is consistent with the Master Plan overall. Mr. Snieckus said it is consistent and several goals and objectives are being furthered.

Mr. Fliegel asked if there will be any additional need for storage of equipment due to the changes in field.

Mr. Bob Williams, the Athletic Director and Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds was sworn. Mr. Williams said there are no plans for increased storage, construction or changes except for inside the existing track.

Mr. Williams was asked about whether there would be any change in intensity of activities for the field.

Mr. Williams responded that there are state guidelines and rules that must be followed. There will be the same amount of games, the same amount of practices and the same amount of use.

Mr. Maloof asked if it is the intention of the Board of Education to let other groups use the field.

Mr. Williams responded that the only change in use that is anticipated would be the rescheduling of a game on this field that could not be played its originally scheduled field due to inclement weather. Soccer, lacrosse, field hockey and other sports are currently played on this field and it is used for winter and spring track.

Mr. Maloof asked if there are any long range plans for lights on the fields. Mr. Plosia responded that the most recent long range plan does not contain such a plan. The plan is approved for five years but it may be amended annually.

Mr. Maloof asked if the Planning Board can assume it will not hear about lights for five years. The response was that lights are not part of this project. Mr. Maloof asked if there is a present intention to install lights. Mr. Plosia said there is no present intention to put lights on the field.

Mr. Yevchak asked if there are any plans to expand the seating in the stadium or parking at the high school. Mr. Plosia said there are no plans for such an expansion.

Mr. Plosia noted that temporary lights have been used in the past.

Mr. Quinn mentioned that the Master Plan talks about buffers. He asked if there is a plan to buffer the neighbors from the field.

Mr. Plosia responded that because there is a different playing surface on the field doesn't provide a greater or lesser necessity for a buffer. It is something that will be considered, however.

Mr. Quinn mentioned that one possible use for the stockpile of dirt might be for a buffer for the neighbors. He added that it would be a use that would fit with the Master Plan.

Mr. Quinn informed the public it has been a policy of the Board to stop their meetings at 11 p.m.

Mr. Simon asked if the Board would be allowing members of the public to cross examine the witnesses regarding this application. The 45 day review period runs from the day the Board of Education files its request for capital review. He has not seen a document that requests the Planning Board undertake this review.

Mr. Quinn said it is the intent of the Board to provide cross examination.

Mr. Plosia objected to cross examination because this evening is not an application for a use variance. This is an informational hearing that will allow the Board to make a review and recommendation.

Mr. Quinn said that the term "cross examination" may have been too strong. He changed the term to "question" the witnesses.

Mr. Plosia said that the questions should be directed to the Chair. If the Chair wants those questions answered they may be directed to the individuals who are present.

Mr. Maloof said the statute doesn't give much guidance as to how the hearing should be conducted.

Mr. Simon said NJSA 40:55D-10 under "Hearings", reads that anything this Planning Board does also applies to a capital review project. There are procedures in the Allendale Ordinance regarding how to handle public hearings.

Mr. Simon said he reserved the right to cross examine all witnesses, but he would call his professional planner at this time.

Mr. Maloof said the right of cross examination is for applications for development which this application is not. He asked Mr. Simon to bring up his witness.

Mr. Simon called Mr. Richard Preiss to testify.

Mr. Preiss was sworn. He is a Licensed Planner in the State of New Jersey. He is the Principal and Vice President of Philips, Preiss, Shapiro Associates, a Planning and Real Estate Consulting Firm. Mr. Preiss was accepted as an expert witness by the Chair and the Board.

Mr. Preiss said he had reviewed this project as well as the 2005 Master Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, the site and research on the use and impact of turf fields.

Mr. Preiss stated he reviewed the Engineer's report and Mr. Snieckus' testimony. He agrees that the Board is reviewing the consistency of the application with the Master Plan. He also agrees that there are references in the Master Plan which call for reviewing the intensity and nature of public agencies plans on the residential neighborhoods of which they are a part.

The first goal of the Master Plan is to preserve and enhance the suburban character of existing residential neighborhoods by limiting the scale, nature and location of non-residential uses on the neighborhood. He also noted the buffer requirements that are mentioned between more intensive uses and one and two family residential uses. A third goal of the Master Plan is to limit traffic congestion. He believes that such impact should be taken into account. The school is in the AAA zone which is the lowest intensity family zone in the Borough and is surrounded on three sides by residential uses.

The Master Plan mentions the increased difficulty of accommodating non-residential uses in residential areas if they are small in scale, are buffered and will not cause a substantial detriment to the neighborhood.

Mr. Preiss said the addition of the turf surface to the field does not only involve the resurfacing of the field. It is to allow for a much more intensive use at this location. A lot of the activity in other parts of the school will be transferred to this particular location.

The advantage of this use being on a large tract of land is negated by the following things:

- The proximity of the field to single family properties.
- This field is the closest one to adjacent residential properties.
- Accessory structures are even closer to the homes with no buffer being provided.
- Access to the field is provided by a service road that goes between two homes.

The Board has to consider that there is the potential for a substantial impact.

Mr. Maloof asked for recommendations to lessen impact.

Mr. Preiss said that the earlier statement that the addition of the artificial turf surface will not enhance the use of the field has not been proven to be the case in other schools. For example in two instances where baseline studies were done before artificial turf fields and after, there was an increased use ranging from doubling to five fold use.

Mr. Preiss said he couldn't answer Mr. Maloof's question until the applicant establishes a baseline of the present use. Mr. Preiss said if the use is not planned to increase he would ask for a condition stating as much to be put in place by the applicant. Mr. Maloof responded that the Board could not impose conditions. In the absence of that being a possibility, Mr. Preiss asked for limitations to be placed on the field and for the use of the field to be monitored.

With regard to buffering, Mr. Preiss said it was not unreasonable for some kind of buffer to be established between the residences and this facility. Mr. Preiss said he didn't have enough information to make reasonable recommendations. There should be traffic impact studies and information regarding additional events and information showing that the fields will not be used by outside groups.

Mr. Yevchak asked Mr. Preiss if it is his contention that the changing of the surface is itself an increase and a detriment to the community.

Mr. Preiss said since the fields don't have to rest and they can be used right after it rains, the fields can accommodate other leagues and summer camps. If the analysis of a grass field and a turf field are looked at, a turf field's intensity increases between 200% and 500%.

Mr. Preiss said this use is contemplated by the Master Plan but he is asking for the Board to consider the increased impact of the field on the surrounding neighbors.

Mr. Maloof asked for Mr. Preiss' recommendation with regard to buffering.

Mr. Preiss said some type of vegetation or fencing should appear on the property line adjacent to the residential use. In this situation a buffer of at least ten feet should be established. He suggested utilizing the soil on the property would be reasonable. The vegetation that exists now is not adequate for the type of activities that will be present. When the turf is put on the field it will have more intensive use. It is also likely that the traffic will increase in terms of the baseline.

Mr. Fliegel said the use at the present time is extensive. The existing formal recreation should not only be considered but the existing informal use.

Mr. Preiss said the use is consistent with the Master Plan and the applicant is entitled to come forward with the application. He is asking that the increased intensity also be considered so the impact on the neighbors won't be extensive. A baseline should be established to tract the intensity of use, a traffic analysis should be conducted and a buffer should be installed.

Mr. Maloof asked if Mr. Preiss has ever testified on behalf of an artificial turf field.

Mr. Preiss said he had not, but he had prepared Master Plans where this type of recommendation has been considered.

Mr. Preiss said he is not present to oppose the installation of the field, but his clients want to be protected from the ramifications of the increased use of the field.

Mr. Maloof asked if Mr. Preiss agreed that the Board could only make recommendations on this matter. Mr. Preiss said he agreed.

Ms. Jackie McSwiggan of 70 Greenway in Allendale told the Board that the only major attendance at the school will be for varsity football games. Other games are minimally attended. She said she is nervous as a parent and a town person that the town will start dictating what fields will be used, how many games there will be and how many practices there will be. She is concerned that members of the public want a commitment for a certain plan from the Administration.

Mr. Mecca of 32 Sawyer Court commended the Board for listening. He said it would be a sorry state of affairs that a facility scheduled for improvement could be prevented for obscure reasons. He asked if air quality studies have been done to determine if the artificial turf is safe for the children. His second concern is if runoff from the field will affect the wells. Unless there is a strong reason for the project not to go forward, it should go forward.

Mr. Yakimik said he was not qualified to answer the questions about air quality and wells. The matter was referred to the Allendale Health Department and they referred the matter to the Bergen County Health Department. They stated that the results are inconclusive with regard to health risks.

Mr. Chris Covello of 11 East Elbrook Drive said he bought a house near a football field and he was aware of that when he bought. He has concerns about this project, however. The amount of information coming out about this issue with regard to health issues is tremendous. All sources say that synthetic fields include hazardous materials and toxins that are linked to health problems. He is concerned about the amount of due diligence that has been done with regard to this issue.

Mr. Maloof said the Planning Board has limited jurisdiction and it cannot speak to this issue.

Mr. Covello said a bill has been introduced by Assemblyman Stephen Englebright of New York who has asked for a moratorium on new synthetic turf installations pending a review of health implications and impacts. It about to be recommended to the Health Committee of New York State. Mr. Covello read an excerpt about the uses of artificial turf. He recommended to wait and see what happens in New York State with regard to

the possible health effects of artificial turf. With respect to the communication from the Bergen County Department of Health Services, their statement was that they could not make a recommendation. Copies of the environmental reports and the proposed bill were distributed to the Board.

Mr. MacLachlan said he had several areas to raise. He added that objectors should be allowed to cross examine/question witnesses.

Mr. MacLachlan asked Mr. Boswell if he agrees that the organics that have been shown to leach from the rubber artificial turf field qualify as "sediment" and as solid and floatable materials.

Mr. Boswell said the only sediment that would be generated pursuant to the NJ State Storm Water Quality Regulatory Requirements would be from the paved portion of the project.

Mr. MacLachlan asked if Mr. Boswell agrees that chemicals have been shown to leach from the rubber material which have been characterized as carcinogens by the International Agency for Cancer Research.

Mr. Boswell said the regulatory procedures that are currently in place allow for such fields countywide and statewide.

Mr. MacLachlan asked if Mr. Boswell is aware that carcinogens are leached from the rubber material.

The comment was made that this is an issue for the Board of Education but not an issue to be considered for part of Land Use issues or Master Plan issues.

Mr. MacLachlan asked if Mr. Boswell has taken into account where the storm water that comes off of this field goes. He asked specifically if runoff goes into the Crestwood Lake area.

Mr. Yakimik said the runoff goes toward Valentine Brook which is not a part of Crestwood Lake.

Mr. MacLachlan asked if Mr. Boswell determined the amount of dust that is generated from the rubber field. He asked if any sediment produced from the rubber been taken into account with regard to its movement from the site of origin by air, water or gravity.

Mr. Boswell declined to answer. Mr. Yakimik said he did not know of any studies being done on this issue/

Mr. MacLachlan stated that for at least a year the adjacent residents have gone to many Board meetings where there have been representations of increased use of the fields. There has been representation that the band will be practicing on the turf field. They do

not practice there now. The purpose of putting in the artificial turf field is so there can be increased use. He suggested people read the materials that have been distributed around town. To hear that there will not be increased use runs counter to what is being said.

Mr. MacLachlan said the suggestion to evaluate the current use is a good one so it can be determined if the use will be increased. He commented that the entire project has been sold to sports teams at feeder schools telling them that they will be able to send their children to play on this field. Mr. MacLachlan produced a letter from Mr. Bill Strasser that states the objective of the sports association is to provide a better and safer field for all students. It will be at the sole discretion of the Board of Education to permit sending district community programs to utilize the facility. Mr. MacLachlan reiterated that the issue of increased use must be considered.

Mr. MacLachlan's recommendation is that the artificial turf field be permitted to be used consistent with what said tonight on the record by the applicant – with no increased use.

Mr. MacLachlan's second recommendation is for some of the excavated dirt be used to build a landscaped berm around the field for soundproofing.

Finally, Mr. MacLachlan said there is a potential health issue here. Children will be playing on this field, not professional athletes. The reality is there is credible testing to show dust containing carcinogens comes off the rubber pellets. Any mother knows this dust will come home with her children in their hair, socks and clothes. If this dust was being dumped elsewhere in Allendale it wouldn't be tolerated, but dust coming off of the football field within feet of our homes it is a good thing. He suggested that impartial testing be done so this field won't have to be removed once it is put in. He asked what would happen if a year from now there is increased disease and suddenly someone realizes the fields need to be removed. He asked who will pay for it.

Mr. MacLachlan concluded that he believes the Board has the power to recommend that testing be done to ensure the field is okay. He is also asking for sound diminishment, the berm and for the Board to seek agreement that the high school will live up to what they said tonight – no increased use.

Ms. Cindy Sherwood of 67 Nidd Court said she currently has a child who is a senior at Northern Highlands but who is not an athlete. Ms. Sherwood said she was dismayed to see that a few people might be able to stop something that is for the betterment of the community. Not only the athletes will benefit from this addition, but all of the students and the community itself. The soccer field is adjacent to the football field under discussion. She fails to see how playing an additional game on an adjacent field would make any difference in terms of intensity. Her daughter fell on a rut in the existing field and tore her ligaments and as a result won't be able to play soccer in college. The people who purchased houses by the school were aware of the presence of fields when they bought their homes. She thinks it is sad when people don't want to hear the sound of happy children.

Mrs. Heilinger of East Elbrook Drive bought her house twenty-five years ago when only Allendale and Upper Saddle River sent their children to the high school. When her son graduated in the 1990s, the senior class was 132 students. When the house was purchased there was a small high school band. Since then there has been a very successful high school band. The school is no longer like it used to be. Mrs. Heilinger is very concerned about the heat that will be generated in the summer from an artificial turf field. With regard to the usage of the field, it starts early on weekends and it is very loud.

When there were no additional comments from the public, the matter was returned to the Board.

Mr. Quinn asked Mr. Plosia when information was delivered to the Board regarding this matter. Mr. Plosia responded that it was January 4th.

Mr. Quinn stated that the Board will take some time to review the information that was presented this evening. The Board has 45 days in which to render a recommendation from the date the paperwork was delivered to the municipality. It is likely a special session will be called before next month's regularly scheduled meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Sirico, seconded by Mr. Herndon, the voted unanimously to adjourn at 11:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen McCarthy
Recording Secretary