

Bowen Island Municipality

Report

Date: November 27, 2008
To: Bryan Kirk, Chief Administrative Officer
From: Christine Walker, Community Services Manager
Subject: Synthetic Field Information Meeting Update

Background:

At the October 6, 2008 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council approved the following resolution:

It was Moved and Seconded

Whereas it has been identified that the recreational facilities on Bowen are insufficient to meet community needs, that a reserve fund has been established to address this deficit, and that a proposal for a synthetic turf field, partially funded by a provincial government grant, has been proposed by a recreation and community school stakeholders group as the best option to meet the need:

And whereas there has been public controversy regarding the synthetic turf field proposal, and a more thorough public process has been identified as necessary to engage the community in the choices around the synthetic turf field project;

And whereas Council has asked that one of the conditions for the project is that it be completed within the original budget;

Therefore be it resolved that Council directs staff to prepare for a public meeting in January 2009, which informs and engages the public regarding the recreational investment choice that is before Council;

And that to prepare for the meeting, staff compile a recommended short list of alternatives that meet the identified recreational needs and a review of the estimated costs and the benefits of the options. If an extension of the existing field into the community lands is involved, the review should include a cost estimate based on building a similar surface to the current one, and an assessment of the impact of the extension on the proposed Civic Facility and rezoning of the community lands;

And that staff inform Council periodically regarding the proposed approach for the public meeting and the progress in the preparation of the information that will be presented;

And that the budget for the public meeting be a maximum of \$2,000, so that external experts can attend and be available to answer questions as may be needed.

CARRIED

This report is provided to Council as a status of the planning for the Synthetic Field Public Information Meeting. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 17th, 2009 from 1:00-3:30 p.m. in the Bowen Island Community School Gymnasium. The Stakeholders Group and staff are still discussing the agenda; however, it has been agreed upon that the meeting will include a site walk-about, a presentation by

stakeholders and consultants, and a question answer period. Outlined below is the objective of the meeting, the approach, timeline and anticipated outcomes.

Objective:

To provide factual information regarding the Bowen Island School Community Connections program that gives the community a clear understanding of the process and rationale for the Synthetic Grass Field project.

Approach:

1. An objective approach giving the community basic and understandable information regarding the project.
2. Provide background information including history and rationale for the Synthetic Grass Field. This will include the following:
 - School Community Connections Program and process
 - Recreational space needs
 - Civic Facilities priorities
 - School District 45 partner and support
3. Provided funding information regarding Municipality’s contribution from Reserves.

Timeline:

November	December	January
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning meeting with Community Connections Steering Committee and Stakeholders Committee - Planning meeting with Senior staff - Discussion with Public Works and Finance regarding information required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information meeting for new Council regarding the project - Meet with SD45 representatives to update them on the status of the Public Information meeting and incorporate their involvement - First draft of information package circulated to staff and Jacqueline Massey for input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribution of information package to the public through mail-out, ad in Undercurrent, and on Municipal website - Public Information meeting (Open House/walk-about, presentation by stakeholders, question/answer period)

Anticipated Outcomes:

- That the community has a clear understanding of the project.
- That the community has an opportunity to ask questions and receive answers.
- That feedback received will enable Council to make a decision on whether to proceed with the project or not.

Information Package:

The information package that is being compiled for the mail-out includes a list of “Frequently Asked Questions”, with answers, and an invitation to the Public Information Meeting on January 17th. The questions have been identified by staff and the stakeholders group as the most common and misunderstood questions raised in the community in regards to the synthetic field project. The questions include:

1. What is the School Community Connections Program?
2. How did Bowen Island get involved?
3. Who was part of the process?
4. Why was the Synthetic Grass Field project chosen?

5. How can Bowen Island Municipality afford to spend money on this project when there are other priorities on the island that need attention (i.e. roads, affordable housing, etc.)?
6. Where does the reserve money come from and how long have we been contributing to the reserves?
7. Why not just fix the current field at BICS or build a new field somewhere else on the island?
8. Why not use the BICS gym in the winter months?
9. Why was the proposed site chosen?
10. What will the school do with the felled trees?
11. What about the suggested health risks related to an artificial turf field?
12. Can the project come in on budget?
13. Who will get to use this field?

This information sheet will also be available on the B.I.M. website and all advertising will include this link.

Advertising Timeline:

Week of January 5th – Information Package mail-out to all homes
 First ad in Undercurrent announcing the Public Information Meeting
 Banner ad on Bowen Island Forum
 Sandwich board on 4 corners
 Posted on B.I.M. website

Week of January 12th – Second ad in Undercurrent

Budget:

Advertising:	\$ 350 (mail-out, display ads in Undercurrent)
Printing/Photocopying	\$ 250 (all display materials for Information Meeting)
Consultants	\$1,100 (Catherine Berris, Catherine Eiswerth, and Florrie Levine present at the Public Information Meeting)
Miscellaneous	\$ 300 (may include additional consulting time for preparation of meeting)
Total:	\$2,000

West Vancouver Board of Education Update

There is an update to the joint meeting held with Council and the West Vancouver Board of Education on September 16, 2008, in regards to the proposal to look at relocating the synthetic grass field to the south end of the existing grass field at BICS and expanding the current grass field into Community Lands and build a regulation full- size grass field. School District staff were asked to look at this recommendation and report their comments back to the Board. On October 30, 2008 Mayor and Council received a letter from the Chairperson of the West Vancouver Board of Education stating that “The Board is very concerned that any adjustment to the current grass field would leave the school and the island community without a full size field for many years.” The letter also went on to say, “As a result, we urge Mayor and Council to proceed as quickly as possible with the construction of the new artificial turf field on the school site originally recommended by the Steering Committee.” The letter, in its entirety, is attached to this report as Appendix A.

CAO Comments:

The Public Information meeting scheduled for January 17 will be a complete review of the joint School Board and Municipal Council Synthetic Field project.