



City of Cambridge

CR # 4.

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 31, 1997

VICE MAYOR BORN

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to investigate and report the facts surrounding the complaint to the Police on Sunday, March 30, 1997 regarding soccer games on Russell Field without a field permit; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to instruct the police as to the procedure to follow when there are organized adult games without permits on fields in Cambridge.

In City Council March 31, 1997.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the "ATTEST:-" text.

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Criminal report #5

KB

Order : Investigate ~~how~~ why police did
and report the facts surrounding the 30
complaint to the police on Sunday, March 31, 1997
not ~~as~~ report end ~~Stacy~~

regarding soccer
games on Russell Field without
a field
no permit +

instruct the police to as to
the procedure to follow when
there are organized adult games
w/ no permit

228

City of Cambridge

The Public Service Committee conducted a public meeting on Wednesday, March 19, 1997 at four o'clock and fifty minutes p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber for the purpose of discussing the use of pesticides and the long range plans for playing fields in the city.

Present at the meeting were Vice Mayor Kathleen L. Born, Chair of the Committee; Councillor Henrietta Davis; Donna P. Lopez, Deputy City Clerk; Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager; Elizabeth Epstein, Deputy Director of Community Development; Kathleen Brown, Environmental Planner, Community Development Department; Paul Ryder, Recreation Director; Sam Lipson, Department of Public Health; Michael Nicoloro, Managing Director of the Water Department; Larry Acosta, City Arborist; Ralph Dunphy, Commissioner of Public Works; Steve White and Richard Medeiros, Public Works Department.

Vice Mayor Born opened the meeting by stating the committee would first discuss the Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM). She said that this plan came about last year after the planting season. This would be the first planting season that this plan will be in place, she said.

The committee heard from Kathleen Brown, Environmental Planner for the Community Development Department who stated that in the Spring of 1995 an evaluation was done on the maintenance practices of playing fields and playgrounds in the city. She stated that other communities were contacted about this issue. A report was submitted to the City Council in the Spring of 1996 recommending a pilot Integrated Pest Management program be introduced. This pilot program was withdrawn after public comment, she said. In July of 1996 a revised policy, was presented, she said. Ms. Brown outlined the pesticide policy, as attached, as follows:

- No pesticides, including fungicides, herbicides or insecticides, will be applied to passive parks or totlots as part of their regular maintenance. Vegetation in pesticide free parks that succumbs to an infestation will be removed or replaced.
- An IPM program will be used for the management of athletic fields to minimize the application of herbicides. Pesticide application will only be done on athletic fields as needed only after other management options have been exhausted. Limited application will be done in the Spring and in July. The applications will be done in the first week of April, and the first week in July and the area will be roped off for 72 hours.
- Fertilizers containing nutrients from at least 50% organic sources will be used on all facilities.
- Non-selective Herbicides, such as Roundup, will not be used on athletic fields with one exception, the vent trench at Danehy Park which will be treated with a non-selective herbicide several times per year. This is a DEP requirement, but the area is restricted and will be posted before and after the application.

- Insecticides will only be used if severe infestation causes safety problems, such as hornets nests, and posting will be done before and after the application. The area will also be roped off for 72 hours.
- No permits will be issued for the use of athletic fields for the first week of April, July and September. Fertilizer with weed control will be applied in April; fertilizer with broadleaf weed control may be applied in July; fertilizer and lime where needed will be applied in September. The fields treated with herbicides will be posted and roped off for 72 hours.
- Fifteen parks and fields will be assessed. Ms. Brown stated that the city is starting with the worst case scenario because the parks have not been treated with even fertilizer for two years. Contractors, she said, would be required to provide reports annually listing what compounds have been applied to the parks.

Ms. Brown stated that irrigation will be a priority in passive parks as needed. The city will have to have a higher tolerance for weeds, she said.

Vice Mayor Born asked Ms. Brown if, in passive parks and totlots, organic fertilizer would be used. Ms. Brown responded that fertilizer from 50% organic sources, meaning a urea-based, will be used, composted organic fertilizers will be introduced on some areas, but lack sufficient nutrients and pose an odor issue. Ms. Brown said that grubs will be dug up and the area may be reseeded or resodded.

Vice Mayor Born asked if on active playing fields IPM will be used. Mr. Rossi responded that IPM use is based on need from the assessment. Ms. Epstein stated that fields that are used for sports are less able to tolerate weeds. Assessment will be done then application will be done as needed and the area will be posted and roped off. No permits will be issued for active sports, she said. Ms. Brown stated that only fertilizer will only be applied in the fall.

Vice Mayor Born asked if the fields will be reviewed and their condition written down. Mr. Rossi responded in the affirmative. He gave an example of the condition of Hoyt field which was in good condition three years ago and today is in serious condition.

Vice Mayor Born asked for comments from the public regarding the use of pesticides at this time.

The committee heard from Clarinda Spinelli, 41 Bowdoin Street, representing the Friends of Raymond Park, who explained that there is a problem with the drainage in the park and asked if the problem could be addressed. Mr. Rossi responded that the drainage problem in the park was a large project and would be a good project to look into to overhaul the park.

Councillor Davis questioned the issue of irrigation. Ms. Epstein responded that irrigation is a high priority in our playing fields. Mr. Rossi stated that St. Peter's Field, Danehy Park, Russell Field and Tobin Field are irrigated and Sennott Park is irrigated but has problems. Vice Mayor Born asked if the Cambridge Common was irrigated. Mr. Rossi stated that it is not irrigated and it is a major problem and would cost \$175,000 to 200,000 to irrigate the Cambridge Common.

A question was asked by a resident if there was any soil sampling done at Russell Field. Ms. Epstein responded that there has been no sampling on this site, that photos showed clean sandy fill. She stated that in the upcoming budget a proposed capital allocation will be recommended to go forward with the testing. Mr. Rossi stated that a previous excavation of Russell Field revealed that the top soil looked clean. He further stated that Danehy Field is monitored, the reports DEP filed are available at the library. Ms. Epstein stated that the DEP does not feel there is need for testing to be done at Russell Field, but the city is planning to proceed.

The committee heard from Andrew Inglis, 381 Walden Street, Soccer Coach at CRLS, who asked if Danehy Park was watered daily. Mr. Paul Ryder, Director of Recreation, responded Danehy Park was watered at night. Mr. Inglis stated that under the IPM program less frequent watering is needed. Vice Mayor Born asked if the watering units at Danehy Park are on an automatic timer. Mr. Rossi stated that the automatic watering units are cost effective only in large, more advanced parks such as Danehy Park. Mr. Medeiros, Public Works Department, stated that the units have a rain starter device and can be turned off.

At this time, Vice Mayor Born concluded the meeting on the use of pesticides and proceeded with the issue of long range plans for the playing fields in the city. She stated that she had received complaints from residents about the fields being double scheduled and the use by outside people. Mr. Ryder said that the high school has priority for fields. He said that there are sixty-two Softball Teams, Little League and Babe Ruth Baseball Teams in the city. Cambridge companies are booked in the Cambridge Common, Gore Street, Lusitana and Raymond Street Parks.

Danehy Park is used for soccer; Lusitana and Glacken are used on Saturdays and Sundays for soccer. He stated that there is not much space available for open space. Mr. Rossi responded that the city tries to take out at least one field for rehabilitation.

Councillor Davis asked if the city had any plans to acquire more open space. Mr. Rossi responded that the city is always in the market for open space, but expenditures such as the water treatment plant have to take priority.

Councillor Davis asked if there were plans to acquire land around the Pacific area. Mr. Rossi responded that the city administration looks at the capital needs in the city. If there was a site that was extremely attractive and affordable to the city, the city would acquire the site.

The committee heard from Anne Strong, 44 Cottage Street, Cambridge Youth Soccer, CRLS, who asked if the city was doing any eminent domain taking. Mr. Rossi stated that if it were an advantage to the city, the city would acquire additional land. Mr. Ryder stated that the city is always looking for land especially if the land is adjacent to a school. Mr. Rossi stated that the city bought land from Harvard University to make a park for the Agassiz School.

Ms. Strong asked about the lot of land across from Washington Elms on Clark Street. Mr. Rossi responded that the lot is owned by a private developer.

The committee heard from Bruce E. Houghton, 107 Lakeview Avenue, Cambridge Youth Soccer, who suggested that the city should file a home rule petition to take over Magazine Beach. He said the park is uncontrollable and the MDC is unworkable. The MDC does not issue permits until May, he said. Mr. Rossi stated that the city would not get anywhere with a home rule petition. The city would like the MDC to lease the park to the city under an agreement in which the city will maintain it. Councillor Davis announced that the Friends of Magazine Beach would be conducting a community meeting on March 27, 1997 from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Morse School.

The committee heard from Shippen Page, 174 Lakeview Avenue, Cambridge Youth Soccer, who stated that the city has been good to youth soccer. He stated that there are 1100 kids signed up for the youth soccer and that he would like to increase the number.

Councillor Davis asked if the city could use MIT and Harvard University fields. Mr. Ryder responded that their students look to the city for the use of the city fields. They are under the same constraints as we are, he said. He further stated that the city does not issue permits to Harvard and MIT but does issue permits to Lesley College because they do not have any fields.

Ms. Clarinda Spinelli told the committee that the totlot at Raymond Park was unsafe because the entire park is used for baseball. Mr. Ryder responded that the North Cambridge Little League no longer uses Raymond Park but uses Samp Field instead. Ms. Spinelli stated that the neighborhood does not object to the playing of sports in Raymond Park, but to their frequency. She asked what the permit fees were used for. Mr. Ryder stated that they are used for special needs camp. Vice Mayor Born stated that the baseball diamond at Raymond Park is a problem. Mr. Ryder responded that every field is booked during the season.

Mr. Houghton stated that two soccer teams are scheduled at Raymond Park in the Fall and the Spring and the Pacific Street Park has three teams scheduled every day. Baseball games, he said, are a spread out proposition; soccer is not as intrusive. These parks are used for practice, not for games, he said. He further stated that the city needs to look at the growth of sports. There are 100 more children each year in Cambridge youth soccer. Mr. Houghton said that there are three teams, under ten years old, that practice at Tobin; Russell Field has four teams that use the field in the Spring after school until 6:00 p.m.; with four more teams coming on after these teams. The city is close to saying that it cannot offer teams any space, he said.

The committee heard from Donald Down, 187 Otis Street, East Cambridge Little League, who stated that there are 350 kids in the East Cambridge Little League and it is expanding. There are more kids getting involved with sports. He questioned where the City will put them. He asked the committee for the installation of lights at the fenced-in baseball diamond at Donnelly Field. Mr. Ryder stated that there is a \$2 million dollar bond for Donnelly Field and a \$1.4 million dollar bond for Russell Field for renovations to the fields. He further stated that when the fields are down, the teams are moved around.

Vice Mayor Born asked if the fields were intensively used in May. Mr. Ryder responded that the fields are used heavily in April, May, June and September. He stated that permits are given for Danehy Park in July and August. Due to funding by the state for the Danehy Park renovation, it is open to any resident in Massachusetts and currently is used to play frisbee. Vice Mayor Born asked what is the minimum space needed for youth soccer. Mr. Houghton responded 40' X 60' but that most areas are not this size. He said that Ahearn Field and Sacramento Field are fields used for the Under Eight Program. Pacific Park, he said, is 30 X 50. Mr. Houghton stated that unless new field space is found there is no place to put additional teams. Mr. Rossi stated that additional soccer field space will be available when Lusitana is finished. Mr. Houghton stated that Lusitana needs to be irrigated. Vice Mayor Born stated that access to Lusitana is dangerous. Mr. Houghton stated that the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department has been requested to install a light at this location.

Ms. Strong suggested that some of the parks should be closed for the summer in order to keep the field healthy. The fields, she said, should have only one game per day played on them. Mr. Rossi responded that St. Peter's Field has been ruined because of dogs. He said that in other communities, dogs are not allowed on public parks.

The committee heard from Bill Timmins, CRLS Football Coach, who stated that the switch to the use of the Cambridge Commons has saved time and money because bussing is not needed. However, he urged removal of the storm drain. Mr. Dunphy, Public Works Commissioner, stated that there are other ways to catch the water, the city could cover and grade the field. Mr. Timmins requested that a system be devised to get lines on the field. Mr. Rossi responded that the Cambridge Common could be color coded. Mr. Dunphy responded in the affirmative.

The committee heard from Sarah Nolan, 22 Blake Street, who requested that the city make the fields available to Womens' Rugby Teams.

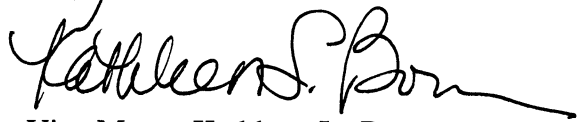
The committee heard from Ms. Stevenson, 89B Hampshire Street, who stated that her rugby team practices two nights a week for two hours per night and is looking for field space.

Mr. Ryder stated that the only lighted fields are Donnelly, St. Peter's and Hoyt and the lights are turned off at 10:30 p.m. These fields, he stated, are used 5 nights a week for double headers. He stated that the city's policy is that no rugby is allowed in Cambridge. Ms. Nolan asked why the city had this policy. Mr. Ryder responded that it damages the turf of the fields.

Councillor Davis stated that Magazine Beach is a mess because of the rugby that is played there.

The meeting adjourned at six o'clock and twenty minutes p.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen L. Born', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Vice Mayor Kathleen L. Born
Chair

City of Cambridge Pesticide Policy

1. No applications of pesticides (fungicide, herbicide or insecticide) will occur on turf at passive parks or totlots as part of regular maintenance. Pesticides will not be applied on vegetation in passive parks or totlots (except as described below) even in cases of infestation; turf in pesticide-free parks that succumbs to an infestation will be removed and replaced.
2. An Integrated Pest Management program will be introduced for management of athletic fields to minimize applications of herbicides and other maintenance practices will be modified to better achieve healthy and durable turf conditions. Pesticide applications on athletic fields will be done as needed only after other management options have been exhausted.
3. Fertilizers containing nutrients from at least 50% organic sources will be used on all facilities.
4. Non-selective herbicides, such as Roundup, will not be used on athletic areas (or on passive parks or totlots, see item #1). There is one exception to this: the vent trench in Danehy Park must be treated with a non-selective herbicide several times per year in order to keep the area clear for venting as required under state Department of Environmental Protection landfill closure requirements. Access to this area is restricted, however, and detailed signage will be posted before and after these applications.
5. Use of insecticides will be limited to injection treatment of trees and to severe infestations by insects that could cause safety concerns, such as hornets' nests. In such cases of insect infestations, posting will be done before and after applications and treated areas will be roped off for 72 hours.
6. No permits for use of athletic fields will be issued for the first week of April, the first week of July or the first weekend in September. On field areas, fertilizer with pre-emergent weed control (primarily for crabgrass) is to be applied in April. Fertilizer with broadleaf weed control may be applied in July, based on assessment of turf conditions. Fertilizer and lime, where needed, are to be applied in September (timed to avoid football practices). Access to these fields will be restricted by roping off the areas to avoid possible exposure of athletic field users for 72 hours after an application.

City of Cambridge Pesticide Policy

7. Signage to be posted before and after applications will include: date and time applied, what was applied and reason for applying it, applicator's name and affiliation, and pesticide license number, date when area will be accessible again, and who to contact with questions.
8. Installation of irrigation will be a priority for passive parks, where its use is feasible. This will contribute to turf quality for those areas on which herbicide use is prohibited.
9. Department of Public Works staff and contractors will be required to undergo training in IPM techniques. DPW contract specifications are being amended to reflect the new policy.
10. Soil samples will be taken from parks and athletic fields each fall to determine lime needs for the year as well as fertilizer needs for the coming year.
11. City contractors will be required to file a report with DPW each year listing all compounds applied and to supply copies of pesticide applicator licenses. These materials will be kept on file at DPW and made available to the public upon request.
12. Evaluation of park conditions will be undertaken after two years with an interim assessment completed in FY98, both of which will be provided to the City Council for consideration. An baseline assessment of a selection of representative parks is to be initiated in Spring 1997 and follow-up assessments will be done regularly.

It is significant to note that most of the above elements are already practiced at Danahy Park and the Fresh Pond Reservation, which make up a very large proportion of the City's open space. This program will be expanded to include the remaining City-owned open space in Cambridge.

Committee Report #4

S-186

A report was received from the Public Service Committee, for the purpose of discussing the use of pesticides and the long range plans for playing fields in the city.

In City Council March 31, 1997

*Report accepted &
placed in file*

Order adopted