

COLCHESTER RECREATION COMPLEX

OLD HEBRON ROAD & OLD HEBRON ROAD



Document map photos not to scale.

General

The Colchester Recreation Complex consists of two overall parcels of land totaling approximately 35 acres. The easterly portion of the park (18 acre +/-) was the original recreation area and an additional westerly portion (17.19 acres) was in the early 1990's. The facility is the primary active recreational area for the Town of Colchester. The facility has had master plans developed in 1989, 1997 and a possible relocation/construction of facilities plan in 2007. The development of the Recreation Complex has followed the 1997 plan in general concept however significant portions have not been constructed.

The 2007 Recreational Site Improvements Master Plan detailed significant construction of facilities in the landfill / transfer station area with cost estimates in that area totaling 9.6 million dollars. The conceptual design in that area did not depict accurate wetlands, ground water contaminate plume mapping from the two former landfills, or definitive sight line and road geometry issues on Windham Avenue and Old Amston Road. Other site locations were preliminarily evaluated; however their anticipated uses were altered or constructed (i.e. Bacon Academy Track only, Cody Camp Little League Field). Generally, the 2007 plan appears to be ignored; however there was some cost estimating done for extension of field lighting for additional fields at the current Recreation Complex that may be of use.

In regard to the 1997 Master Plan, there are two versions, the August 19, 1997 and the November 21, 1997 documents. The August document places emphasis on expansion of facilities and acquisition of adjacent parcels of land. Specifically to the east of the site, currently marked by N/F Baldi and residences on Old Hebron Road. The November document eliminates the acquisition portion of the plan and significant expansion of the facility. The major portions of the improvements conducted since that plan was developed are the construction of one additional Soccer Field (R-7), the upgrading to sport field lighting (R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-8), the Spray Park and associated changing room building. The installation of a small Skate Park, Walking Path and wood guard rails mark other smaller improvements listed within the plan that were completed. Irrigation systems are installed on Field R-8 and R-7 with the water source being the Fire Pond. The pump house at the Fire Pond must overcome 45 feet of head elevation in order to provide water to the farthest field.

The fields are listed and utilized as follows:

- R-1 – Little League Field – Lighted
- R-2 – Regulation High School Baseball Field - Lighted (used both by leagues and BOE JV team)
- R-3 – Regulation Men's and Women's Softball Field – Lighted
- R-4 – Limited Left Field Only and Practice Infield Field Softball
- R-5 – Softball Field- unfenced
- R-6 – Softball Field – unfenced
- R-7 – Soccer Field – Irrigated
- R-8 – Football Field- Lighted and Irrigated

Multi use of the fields also occurs dependent upon the primary season as follows

- R-2 – Youth soccer in fall -2 practice fields outlined in the outfield
- R-3 – Youth soccer in fall – 1 practice field outlined in the outfield
- R-5 – Soccer Field in fall – Lacrosse in spring if available-Outlined in outfield and excess space
- R-6 – Soccer Field in fall – Outlined in outfield and excess space
- R-7 – Lacrosse in spring – Football Practice if available
- R-8 – Lacrosse in spring

Tennis Courts (3) – League and individual play – lighted

Basketball Court – Individual play- lighted.

Horse shoe pits (6) – Individual play.

Additionally Soccer and Lacrosse and Little League activities occur at BOE facilities (Jackter & Johnson) and Cody Camp Field, with additional softball activities occurring at Bacon Academy if available, daylight permitting. These are endorsed adult and youth leagues. Addition Recreation Program Flag Football (Mens) has also been successfully initiated, however a permanent location has yet to be resolved. Each spring an annual Multi-town Lacrosse Cavalcade occurs (60 plus teams -2 day event), the Town's 57 Fest, and in the late fall a newly developed Multi-town SoccerFest Tournament occurs (60 plus teams – 2

day event). The RecPlex is also the summer home of the Colchester Day Camp for approximately 100 plus children on a daily basis.

Field Scheduling Events are held three times a year at the Recreation Department to attempt to minimize conflicts. Reservation of the Pavilion area is also allowed for picnic type events of varying size.

The high rate of participation in recreation is due to the diligent work of the Endorsed Leagues, the Park and Recreation Commission and the Recreation Department. In 1997 it was not envisioned of the success of Lacrosse (both boys and girls) and Youth Soccer would consist of approximately 700 participants with recreational and travel teams. Between youth and adult events (practices and games), there are no growing seasons where a field can be rested from the continual use, such that the turf may re-establish itself. The Recreation Commission has wrangled with the issue however no systematic solution has been arrived at. Additionally due to the use of the same field by children and adults, there are limited chemical treatments (pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers) that may be used on the fields. Over seeding has been effective means in other locations for athletic field turf maintenance

Based upon a replacement construction cost of \$5.50 per sq.ft and land acquisition cost of \$10,000 per "dry" acre, the replacement value of the complex is approximately 8.7 million dollars.

Structures

The site contains three smaller masonry block single story buildings, a wood framed pavilion, and multiple wood sheds dugouts.

The first masonry building is the Maintenance Garage and Concession Stand with restrooms. The building was positioned prior to the expansion of facilities to the west and is located in the northeast portion of the site. The current configuration of the park places the concession stand away from most activities that occur within the complex. The restrooms utilize a septic system with a capacity that is often overloaded during major events at the complex, requiring emergency pump outs. The building concession stand is undersized for a wider range of prepared foods. The building is not finished space and limited in storage space, however it is structurally sound with the only known structural item being the replacement of the asphalt shingle roof. The covered storage are roof (soft cloth arch) is in need of replacement.

The second masonry building is the changing room/spray park control building. The building has rest rooms which are serviced by sanitary sewers via a small pump station. The building is newer and being more central to activities that currently occur within the complex, building's restrooms are the primary ones utilized. The building is in good shape with the primary issues being the result of vandalism or over use. Original asphalt shingle roofing is still within the lifespan of the initial 30 year period.

The third masonry building is the concession stand located at R-8. The building is utilized for concession sales, restrooms and storage. The building and roofing is also in good condition. Again, vandalism is the only recurring issue in regard to the structure.

Mechanical Systems

Only the first of the building listed has significant heating systems for a portion of the building. The unit is a propane forced hot air furnace that provides heat for the maintenance portion of the building only. The furnace and duct work is in good shape and is located in the common area of the work space.

Exterior Features.

The Recreation Complex consists of the fields listed above and associated asphalt parking located in three major lots. The total area of the parking pavement surface is 13,670 sq. yds. Generally the pavement is in fair to good condition. There are no vertical constraints and based upon use, a one inch overlay would be he required pavement treatment with line stripping required. The proposed overlay would be required in the 8 to 10 year out period.

The existing Spray Park is the Town's only summer water feature. The Spray Park is a water recycling - chlorination and pump system. The system is designed to be initially filled with water provided from the Town's Water supply, and then recycled with any water loss due to evaporation, being refilled by minimal recharges from the Town Water system. The park was installed with subsurface piping system that is more applicable to warmer climates (Sch 40 PVC). Previous metered loss of water for the summer determined that water use for the facility has been over one million gallons per the summer quarter. Based upon the design parameters, this represents multiple broken pipes / leaks within the subsurface piping. The sub-surface piping within the frost zone should have been Sch.80. PVC or C900 water piping and pressure tested prior to acceptance. Current Municipal Pool installations utilize these pipes as the minimum standard.

The northeastern portion of the Recreation Complex operates a "satellite" park with the only connectivity occurring through a 50 foot wide access way to the rear of the two homes on Old Hebron Road. The parking area servicing this area is informal gravel off street parking. The area contains the three tennis courts and the one basketball court. The tennis courts have been a continuing issue with the full depth cracking due to thermal expansion of the surface. There are no expansion joints in the entire 150 foot by 120 surface. There have been crack filling and patch resurfacing, however the level of the repair has not met the expectations of users of the courts. Dependent upon the work required, resurfacing a single court with no full depth pavement base can be conducted at a cost of \$8000 per court. Re-surfacing typically is a recurring cost ranging from every 4 to 8 years dependent upon conditions. Full depth installations range in the \$30,000 to \$45,000 per court.

The basketball court has the only two "hoops" within the complex. Their condition is fair to good and they are constructed in similar fashion to the tennis courts, however with less surface area, thermal cracking is less and the expectation level is less. If there is one short coming to the existing court it is the ability for others to practice if a 5 on 5 full court game is under way.

The pavilion area was identified as non ADA compliant if previous reports and studies, the work for compliance would involve the construction of hard surface access walk leading from the parking areas to the pavilion and the ramping of adjacent soils /or other surface to the concrete pad of the pavilion.

The recreational fields suffer from overuse as detailed above. For general use, the level of grass cover is adequate, however for intense use or "game field" quality turf managed expectations, the league expectations cannot be met with existing funding. If the fields as they exist are over seeded at a rate of 20 lbs per 1000 sq.ft., once per year, the amount of seed required would be 11,667 pounds with a cost of \$18,660. Currently, the applicable line item of the budget consists of \$15,600 but also includes amounts for topsoil, bark mulch, clay infield mix, and fertilizer for all town facilities and parks and other obligated areas. At times when the endorsed leagues have been made aware of the shortage of resources for the Recreation Complex, they have provided materials and/or labor required to address individual issues if they specifically benefited the direct user of the field. The system has worked well in most instances, and has caused damage in others to either equipment or turf. There is no formal agreement between the endorsed leagues and the Town for funding specific items.

Based upon current league configuration, participation rates and field use, the need exists to create more field space that may be used in order to either: 1) rotate field use to provide a growing season for turf re-establishment, or 2) create game field only and practice field locations. The most logical means without interruption or relocation of recreation use to a different location within town, is to acquire the property to the west of the Recreation Complex. (Labeled N/F Lejfer on mapping) Directly adjacent to R-6 and R-7, the center portion of the property can accommodate at least 3 practice fields (50 yds x 100 yds) and a full size soccer field (60 yds x 120 yds) and a multi-use 60' baseline/full size soccer field (Similar to existing R-6), and parking lot extension. This would allow game field use only to be conducted on R-7 and R-8 and a field rotation without impact to R1, R-3, R-5 and R-6. If acquisition is conducted, it should not be utilized for expansion of league activities, but to provide for sustainability of the facility.

Programmatic improvements have listed the installation of 2 sand volleyball courts, additional basketball court, and more central concession stand capable of providing prepared foods.

Known Maintenance/Repair Issues and Costs:

- 1) Spray Park Water – Leak Repair – Surface Membrane Replacement - \$15,000
- 2) Resurface Tennis Courts - \$30,000 w/ accessory repair.
- 3) Replacement of Storage Area cloth roof - \$8,000
- 4) Connection to Public Sewer Maintenance Building - \$25,000
- 5) Annual Over seeding program - additional \$12,000 (until restoration occurs)
- 6) Pavement Overlay – Striping - \$80,000 – (est. 8 years out)

Programmatic Enhancement

- 1) Sand Volleyball Court (2) - \$20,000
- 2) Basketball Court - \$45,000
- 3) Concession Stand – Pre-cast - \$35,000

Acquisition (Construction of Field Space only)

- 1) As outlined above- \$ 2.97 Million