Field Sustainability Task Force
Recommendations
Committee Members: R. Coyle, D. Mizla, J. McNair, A. Bisbikos, E. Kundahl and T. Loskant
Dept. Liaisons: J. Paggioli and C. Preston
(Updated 10/4/16)

Problem Statement: Colchester Parks and Recreation fields are in an unsustainable state. There is far too much traffic on existing fields. As a result, according to a survey and report by Jason Henderson and Julie Campbell, Professors at UCONN's Turf Management program, there is minimal turf grass cover in high traffic areas that become dormant due to moisture stress. The fields had high surface irregularities creating inconsistent playing surfaces. Irrigation is not available for 6 of the 8 fields. These issues are compounded by a lack of public funding approved by taxpayers to improve the fields.

- We have 8 Rec fields at Rec Plex and 1 field on the Town Green, 2 fields at JJIS, 1 field at WJJMS.
- They are used by over 1800 participants over the course of the year.
- They are used 7 days per week, and average 12 hours per day for 10 months of the year.

Mission Statement: To find solutions to maintain and improve field conditions and funding that supplement taxpayer dollars.

Short term Improvements:

- Manage the number of participants on the existing fields
- Increase professional development of staff to maintain the fields with existing resources
- Improve the irrigation system so that all fields have water
    o Setting up a fixed irrigation system
    o Setting up a mobile irrigation system

Long term improvements:

- Acquiring another 8-9 acres of land

Short term funding options:

- Maintain and improve current budget funding levels to maintain existing fields
- Grants
- State monies
- Major League Sports
- Sports Park Improvement Fund usage fees
- Local Business sponsorships

Long term funding: Bonding for land

Next steps for taking action:

- Review and feedback from the Park and Recreation Commission
- Review and feedback from Town Hall staff
- Review and feedback from the Board of Finance and Selectmen