

March 9, 2011

Dear Mayor Goldring, Burlington Councillors and Staff,

We understand that tonight's CSC meeting will include consideration of "Report recommending approval to retain Gateman Milloy Inc for the construction of Norton Community Park (Phase 1). ([PR-01-11](#))

As the report recommendation pertains to the installation of artificial turf, BurlingtonGreen thought it important to provide the following input.

You may recall a letter BurlingtonGreen forwarded to each of you on Jan 20, 2011 regarding the use of artificial turf in Burlington. (attached again for your convenience)

We have read the report PR-01-11 along with PR - 05-08 and offer the following comments and outstanding questions for your consideration:

Public engagement: Report PR-01-11 indicates " Development of the Norton Community Park design was undertaken over the last 18 months, with extensive consultation with the Roads and Parks Maintenance Department and with consideration of the design elements of the Alton Community Centre/High School/Library complex and...On March 8, 2010 the Norton Park Development (including the North Burlington Skate Park Concept) and Alton Community Centre/Library/School Design were presented to the public. Area residents were notified by: direct mail, advertisement in the Burlington Post, posting on the Burlington web page and emails to stakeholder groups. The meeting provided: construction plans, an overall plan of the Alton Development (i.e., the Community Centre/Library and Park), concept sketches of the North Burlington Skate Park and an open forum for residents questions. No issues arose from this open house. Feedback from this meeting related to the North Burlington Skate Park was considered and/or implemented into the final design.

BurlingtonGreen would like to know what information regarding the use of artificial turf was shared with the public and stakeholders as part of this consultation process. Given that artificial turf is such a significant component of the project, we would suggest it to be reasonable that information regarding key aspects of product selection (health and safety and environmental analysis as well as the extended playtime and financial picture) would be researched and conveyed to the people of Burlington.

The earlier Report PR-05-08 states: "there are three main measures that should be considered in the evaluation of an investment of an artificial turf field.

- increased usage and quality of fields
- revenue generation
- lower maintenance costs
- capital investment and long-term cost

It appears that product safety and an environmental analysis of artificial turf vs. natural turf have been overlooked in this report. We suggest that whenever a recommendation is made to "switch" to a petroleum based option, a comparative review should be provided.

The only reference on environmental matters includes: " *Since artificial turf does not require an irrigation system there is opportunity to save a significant amount of water. As a comparison, the irrigation of 2 sports fields at Orchard Community park uses approx 3,000 cubic meters of water per season. Other environmental considerations include no need for fertilizers and opportunity to recycle certain components of the artificial turf at time of renewal*".

We have three additional concerns:

1. The more current report indicates that: *"Additional matters that staff are unable to quantify at this time, include: Environmental transportation cost for product delivery in comparison to a natural field, Implication of disposal and after use after 10-12 year lifecycle (and the) amount of greenhouse gases released with artificial turf versus natural field "*

This suggests that contrary to the earlier report's assumption, there may not be an opportunity to recycle certain components of the turf at time of renewal. This is an important factor not only for this specific park application but also when we consider potential use of this project in other applications citywide. Where will all the "worn out" artificial turf waste go?

2. Is there information available to the public on where the recommended supplier's product is manufactured and on their production process?
3. As per our January 20, 2011 letter, does the City plan to include the use of artificial turf for residential and park use in the upcoming strategic plan process? Looking at habitat context, identifying which locations, if any in Burlington, can support product use and to what scale with respect to environmental considerations and impact on groundwater absorption issues should be addressed.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of our input and look forward to receiving a response to our inquiries on this matter.

Amy Schnurr
Executive Director
BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association
info@burlingtongreen.org
www.burlingtongreen.org
cell: 905-466-2171