

18:06:21 We're going to go over strategies to improve the field conditions and availability.

18:06:28 And we're going to listen to neighbors. We've already had some very helpful input that has come in through email.

18:06:39 Sorry.

18:06:40 We've also had some very good input that has come into us through emails, and through calls to the department. We're collecting all of the input, we do have an Email Setup specifically for all the athletic field improvements and we'll have that email

18:06:57 address available at the end of the presentation, you know if you think of something after this meeting that you'd like to share with us.

18:07:10 Okay, and so the fields committee as I mentioned, in our agenda is a subcommittee of the parks and recreation commission.

18:07:22 And they have been working for the past year and a half.

18:07:27 They've been convened to invest investigate the issues that our athletic field groups are having. And this includes the school athletics experience, as well as the other community wide sport groups who utilize our fields, we've been discussing the needs

18:07:47 of the athletic field user groups and taking that information, as we've moved forward with all of our plans. Some of our key findings from meeting with this group and analyzing what's going on is that our athletic athletic field conditions need improvement

18:08:06 to our grass fields. So a lot of the projects and strategies that you'll see us looking to implement will be to improve grass field condition, the field availability is also an issue so we have field over us and schedules that are very difficult to manage

18:08:25 to address the field, availability issue, we are working on adding fields to increase availability.

18:08:32 So those could be areas that aren't currently meeting the requirements to be used by the school athletics and support groups.

18:08:40 That would be available if they were brought to a more improved condition. We're looking at the potential to convert grass fields to turf artificial turf.

18:08:50 And we are also exploring ways to increase evening play availability, due to the school dismissal time change, which has certainly impacted us this past fall season.

18:09:07 So when we take a look at the field conditions. We have made some very good headway.

18:09:14 The mayor in this current budget year has increased the budget by 300,000.

18:09:20 So this has really been funds that are able to put towards improving the field conditions. And we've also been working on updating our fee schedule. This would be fees with all of the groups who utilize our athletic fields.

18:09:38 Second, we have been.

18:09:41 We have some many fields improvement design projects.

18:09:45 These will encompass about eight locations, and that's something that we've been working on. We have that design project underway.

18:09:54 These are the areas that will be looking to update fields in existing parks and open space areas. We will be looking at reconfiguring parks to fit more fields and minimize field overlap so that could be where we have a softball field or a baseball field

18:10:11 that the outfield is used for multi purpose for play, we want to minimize

those areas so that we can use all of the fields as much as possible, and also potential turf conversions of the grass fields.

18:10:27 And the third area that we are exploring is expanding hours of play with lights.

18:10:33 The categories that will be looking at there include replacing some existing light systems. This would be what we're looking at at our Albemarle fields that are already lit but need to be updated and upgraded with those systems reconfiguring

18:10:48 light system to increase the playing areas. So that would be looking at the field design and making sure that each of the field areas is separately lit and can be utilized.

18:11:00 Without those overlap use areas and assessing opportunities for new light systems.

18:11:09 Right, I'm going to turn it over to Toby now to talk about the school time change and impacts to the fields from that change.

18:11:21 Thanks to all that as you mentioned with the shift in start and end times for high schools, which was a very exciting development. this year, and going forward.

18:11:32 They're different. Beginning times for afternoon games and practices for our student athletes.

18:11:38 And you may or may not know, but a lot of the advocacy for later start times actually started at noon South with the South Council. We did a terrific job, pointing out the health and wellness benefits for our students at the high school level of later

18:11:52 start times.

18:11:54 They also come with leader in times we've made adjustments to the schedule to minimize impacts on end times but nonetheless as you can see here, significantly later athlete dismissal times on most days.

18:12:06 And we've pushed we've tried to squeeze the amount of time between dismissal and games, wherever possible to make maximize daylight hours, but given you know the distance that are we travel to some of our away games and those teams that come here for

18:12:20 our home games where we definitely run into issues with daylight hours in the evenings, particularly in the fall season which I'll talk about a little bit more in just a second but you can see here, the shift in the dismissal times for athletes and when

18:12:36 we're starting in any that our games and again practices are similarly impacted.

18:12:41 So if you switch to switching to the next slide just thinking about the, the breath and complexity of what hackathons does on a daily basis and, you know, in the fall.

18:12:52 There are 11 different teams that actually practice on our fields at noon south in the fall, thinking about the, the ninth grade teams as well the junior varsity and varsity teams at each level in each of the different soccer, soccer categories, as well

18:13:07 as our JV and varsity football teams, and then our field hockey teams as well. So it's a real, real Herculean effort on passport and working with our partners at the Parks and Rec and culture and others to make sure that there's adequate space for all

18:13:22 those teams to practice and many, many times I practices do have to be

teared, we have teams that traveled to away games on Sundays, but many days we're getting everybody there in the field.

18:13:32 So, particularly as we get later in the fall season the availability of daylight really limits what we're able to do and so the addition of the lights to not only the stadium but also potentially to the Brandeis road field is really a game

18:13:46 changer for ensuring continued access to the full athletic program for our student athletes and also, as we do push later with our high school games, it's going to allow us to continue to provide full access to the fields for community athletic programs

18:14:01 that typically come in after we're done.

18:14:04 So, just thinking a little bit more about that we can get switch one more slide ahead.

18:14:10 We've done some work with temporary lights in the past and they're a good solution. In the short term when we have a short periods of time, we've had.

18:14:23 Friday Night games on the lights individual weeks but really when you look at the bigger pattern of what we can accomplish with temporary lights it's not well aligned with the needs of either high school athletic programs, whereas I understand the community

18:14:33 athletic programs, certainly had issues with those lights in the past the cost.

18:14:39 The cost of those is significant over the longer period of time, such as the October November window that we're using them and this year, they come with lots of additional downsides, the noise pollution and taking the light pollution as well I think which

18:14:51 the diffusion of the light from those temporary lights is really not even close and I'm not an expert here others can speak to it to the really focused lights they were able to buy with permanent once the climate impact of fossil fuel consumption, as

18:15:07 well as just the safety of the temporary lights, they're not really well aligned with the permanent shift and starting at times that we've been able to implement this year and that will have going forward, we really know that adding those lights to the

18:15:20 fields to feel that South will have a good big impact for the high school and for others as well.

18:15:26 And the next slide really speaks to that I think why is, why is this the right space to add lighting at at the self High School.

18:15:35 We have that increased need for for lighted fields for sports both in the fall and to some extent in the spring as well the number of teams that I mentioned as well.

18:15:44 But all of our facilities are clustered up these fields, thinking about how we're able to provide support and access to athletes using the field, whether they be high school athletes, or youth athletes, the synthetic fields that are already there, allow

18:15:56 for maximize use of the fields without there being a negative impact on the quality of the turf. So that's really important, the athletic trainer the parking, all those pieces that come together with the high school signing of the light into these high

18:16:10 use fields will be able to be supported and have facilities for anyone who's using them particularly for our high school athletes but you know obviously

that benefit for the whole community as well and they're being used during the week.

18:16:22 So we feel really good about this as a proposal as a way to benefit both schools and community programs, and then pass it back to you there I think Nicole.

18:16:32 Great, thank you. Toby, get to the next slide.

18:16:37 All right, so I think for most certainly all of us on the panel here but I think MIT, probably for a lot of our audience members here tonight to everybody's familiar that last year we put the lights, the field lights on the stadium field itself and we've

18:16:54 had a year to have those lights in place and and see how those are working for both the support groups, as well as some used for the community groups, what we did when we took a look at the proposal to bring the field lights to this field was work together,

18:17:14 we had representatives from the city from the high school and school department as well as the neighbors, and we sat down together at a table, many times, and had conversations about what the perceived impacts would be.

18:17:30 It talked through how how this would affect our neighbors at these fields and this is certainly something that we would welcome at any field that we were going to be proposing lighting and would certainly be the case.

18:17:42 Taking a look at the other field at the, at the self complex, and so things topics that were covered as part of this agreement. Were hours of use for the lights, looking at noise and amplify music as part of the activity that would be going on on the

18:18:00 field.

18:18:01 Taking a look at the number of school games. This is something that the agreement that we put in place for the stadium field was actually put together before we knew about the school time change.

18:18:16 And so one of the things that we are running into.

18:18:19 As of this season is that there is a need for more time for school games because of those impacts that Toby just reviewed with us of the, of the school time change.

18:18:31 Other items that come up as part of the field us and we're important to the neighbors to have discussed we're also trash and parking. And so those are the types of things that we sat down together to work out, you know, what are the concerns, and how

18:18:49 would we be able to address some of those concerns and I think it was very successful outcome for that.

18:18:58 So, a little bit more. In general, the benefits of lights, you know, today, I believe it was dark, before 4:30pm So we certainly see in the fall season as the schools are just now starting their playoff season, Youth athletics deep seasons are still operating,

18:19:18 and certainly in the September October and November timeframe, we would see a significant increase in in play availability having lights on a field.

18:19:29 So, so looking at lights on fields. Most of the field needs are after school. So we really have this compressed amount of time during the peak sports seasons.

18:19:42 The new park spaces incredibly expensive and in the case of Newton it's really just not available to have a full size multipurpose fields you're looking at a minimum of two acres, plus parking so you're really looking for a three acre, or more size parcel.

18:20:01 And that's just very difficult to come by the maintenance piece for lighting systems we do have the upfront cost of installing the lights and investing in the system, but when we take a look at the cost to maintain building additional fields and the environmental

18:20:18 impacts of that.

18:20:20 It is minimal compared to adding, adding a life system into utilize our current fields, the way we have them configured the lighting up the turf fields, so why are artificial turf fields important.

18:20:35 They can really handle much more use, and this use can continue we don't have as many cancellations when there's rain events, even if it rains for several days in a row.

18:20:45 You'll often see the grass field stay closed after the rain has ended, but the grass fields don't have the same drainage systems and capability that are artificial turf fields do have, and taking a look at hours of use I'm certainly not suggesting that

18:21:02 we would like the field for every hour available to us with the light, but this will just give you an idea of the additional time of play that we're currently not having access to at all.

18:21:17 And certainly you know just want to highlight those those fall season.

18:21:22 months when it when it is really important and also in the spring on little bit of a different issue in the spring when everybody wants to get out on the fields, early and they're not quite ready yet.

18:21:34 And we do still need some afternoon and evening play.

18:21:39 So next we'll take a look at identifying the right, late solution.

18:21:45 This is really meant to, you know, speak to we took a look at you know what What don't we like about the temporary light systems and there's a lot not to like about those.

18:21:55 But identifying a right like solution is very important. It's important for us to look at the needs of the fields. So the goals would be to get the best light quality, quality, while minimizing a butter impacts.

18:22:10 So when we talk about light quality the uniformity would mean that we have similar amounts of light, no matter where you are on the field so we don't have really bright areas and areas where it's not as bright the light intensity is important, there is

18:22:27 late intensities that would be applicable to a high school game, and then there's a lower intensity that could be used for recreation play. So those are things that we want to be able to have available and to control how we're using those.

18:22:44 And of course light spillage. We don't want any of the lights village to be leaving our property and we want to minimize that as much as possible. So some of the variables we can control when we look at a light system solution, we can take a look at the

18:22:59 poll height, we can take a look at how the fixtures are shielded and would be downcast, which would minimize the spillage, and we can look at the control systems so how much intensity are we looking to get Do we have dimming capabilities available.

18:23:19 We can even look at zoning different systems within the lights to be on and off, depending on that different type of play or different level of play, that's going on at the on the field at any one time.

18:23:36 So what are the next steps. The next steps and what we'd like to start

here this evening and continue a conversation with is listening to our neighbors.

18:23:47 So we're, we're really hopeful that tonight we'll be able to hear from some of our neighbors and start to see, you know, if there are any concerns or questions that we can answer.

18:23:59 Happy, happy to do that here tonight and continue that conversation. We're going to be looking at the light data. And so we will be compiling that data and be able to share.

18:24:11 Very soon where the boundaries for late glare.

18:24:14 Where are the boundaries for late glare. What would the system installation look like details like that will be shared out with all of our community. And we of course want to work with our neighbors on how we can tailor this use.

18:24:28 So really discussing what the lights system can do and working on the agreement that would even take into account, other concerns that neighbors might want to have discussed so those would be our, our next steps.

18:24:46 I'm going to leave us on this slide, which I mentioned earlier, which is how to get in touch with us. So certainly anybody who doesn't want to speak tonight.

18:24:57 I know it's not everybody's cup of tea to speak at a meeting you can certainly use the chat but you can also email us anytime the athletics fields email is something that we're using for all of our field improvement projects.

18:25:13 We're collecting all of this information that comes in, and we will utilize this as we, you know, make decisions and try to design some of these areas.

18:25:25 And then of course, our parks website is the main page where we will be storing all of this information and.

18:25:33 Sorry, change. And we can.

18:25:37 We will have a copy of this video posted so if there's others that you know we're not able to make it tonight you can certainly access the information at any time on our website.

18:25:47 I'll, we'll leave it at that. And I'm not sure, I might stop sharing, I do have a copy of just an overhead of the field, if anybody would like us to bring that up during the conversation.

18:26:06 And of course, I think one of the larger details that we can look at again is, you know, the, the agreement that we put in place for the Southfield, we might want to talk about some details that are similar to this tonight.

18:26:19 So with that, I'm going to turn it over to anybody else on the panel first if if you'd like to add any comments or bring anything up at this point.

18:26:31 Okay.

18:26:33 Um, so I think what we can do, Robin, if you can help. Take a look at if we have anybody who has written in with the chat, we can read those in take questions.

18:26:48 And again, if you look at the controls at the bottom of your screen you'll be able to raise your virtual hand and Robin can bring you into be able to speak with us so appreciate everybody staying involved for the presentation and look forward to hearing

18:27:01 from everyone. Thank you.

18:27:04 Okay, Commissioner Justin track for has his hand raised.

18:27:10 I'm going to have him speak.

18:27:12 Hi Justin

18:27:17 was I really the first to raise my hand.

18:27:20 Click on that trigger.

18:27:25 One challenge I have with these meetings is I can't see anyone I do a lot of public speaking or have in the past and I find if I can't look people in the eye, gets hard for me so I apologize, I'm going to read from a script, I have written just to make

18:27:39 it easier on the group.

18:27:42 My name is Justin Traxler live at 36 meta comment road and Robin and I've lived in Newton for about 20 years, I've been involved with Newton girls soccer for eight as a coach.

18:27:53 And as the President of the organization I've been president out for five years.

18:27:59 I'm here in that capacity and I'm here to represent a program that's just involved many many thousands of our residents in the 40 years that we've operated, and we do this as a volunteer organization we have hundreds of hours of volunteer work, a week

18:28:18 in our programs. We are part of a community that believes strongly in the value of athletics, and we appreciate, not everyone shares this belief, but we're still optimistic you'll support us as members of our community.

18:28:32 We know you have concerns, we hope you'll keep an eye open mind on this project. What is beneficial for thousands of our residents can certainly be done in a way that's going to be best for Newton, on a whole Toby mentioned that pat manages 11 games and

18:28:50 practices every week and let me just give you a sense of the scale of these programs. We have hundreds of teams. They're all practicing weekly they're playing games every week.

18:29:02 We have dozens of games, every weekend and many throughout the week.

18:29:07 And so how bad is capacity. Well, the late dismissal put a lot of pressure on Newton youth programs, especially this fall soccer and tackle football. And what happened was we had to start reducing the time that we allotted for our players.

18:29:24 We had to give them shorter practices in some cases, we had to put three teams on a field in some cases, and that further exacerbates field quality problems so this was for the first time that I know of a contraction in the amount of service that we provide

18:29:41 to our residents through this program.

18:29:44 In conclusion, field access and capacity is part of this challenge, and we are hopeful that you will also see this is a big benefit for the youth athletic committee, and I thank you for your time tonight.

18:30:03 Thanks Justin.

18:30:08 Okay.

18:30:10 Let's see there is a question. Can you publicize a list of participants, which we can do, you can post it on the website.

18:30:21 And next question is is there a way to stop screen sharing and see everyone on zoom, more like a city council school committee meeting.

18:30:29 So tonight's presentation is set up as a webinar and so that would allow you to see the panelists who are up here who I introduced earlier so let me stop sharing.

18:30:44 That way you will see our full group here, and we would only if somebody raises their hand, we will bring you into the panel to have the discussion with us.

18:30:59 And,

18:30:59 but we don't you don't see the whole audience in the webinar.

18:31:03 However, we will make sure that we post all of the chat comments that come in and we will have the video available so that everybody will have access to the presentation and all the materials that were put together for tonight.

18:31:18 Um, next question. What nearby fields have you considered to add lights besides the field close to Brandeis rude.

18:31:27 So for light additions.

18:31:31 I believe that there are there's going to be looking at the North High School complex as well for light edition, and we will be looking at late improvements at forte Albemarle Luis, am I forgetting any.

18:31:56 No that's that's pretty much a we're focusing lighting on artificial turf, because it gives us the added use for it being artificial and then the lighting.

18:32:05 And we're focusing on fields that are already lit, for the most part so nearby fields, the closest lead field is noon Highlands playground. And then, you know, the stadium one and and bring back.

18:32:22 counselor Kayla's has his hand raised up.

18:32:26 And up. You just need to unmute Council. Okay, thank you so I asked about the. Can you hear me now.

18:32:32 Yes, about what other fields in Mike. My question was really intended to address okay well in that area. and I'm wondering why those aren't being considered.

18:32:42 The other thing that I just want to say is, you know, we've gone back and forth Miss banks and others on this type of meeting, and to have Justin Traxler speak.

18:32:55 I gotta say really reinforces what I feel the community that is here and probably attending which I can't see, which is really upsetting just illustrates that the administration isn't listening to about or input, input.

18:33:11 I mean, Justin, definitely has a point I understand that and I understand that we need lights, and we need, and I want more lights, but at the same point we have to listen to our butters and the way this is happening to have Justin speak, and not somebody

18:33:27 from the community speak, is just not right. So, my question is, is, is about the nearby fields, I'd like you to address that. The thing about Justin I can't fix, but I just wanted to express my, my real disappointment in this.

18:33:45 So, counselor, let me start with your second point First, I would say you know where we're working on Parks, Recreation and culture is working on implementing a series of improvements and solutions that we've, we've been discussing bringing forward for

18:34:01 field improvements.

18:34:03 really as we get into talking about a specific site.

18:34:09 That's when we have brought forward hosting a community meeting like this, we have you know made every effort to notify all of our neighbors to notify the, you know, city and school officials who would be involved, and it they are all public information

18:34:27 meetings, so you know we we have an interest in the athletic field improvements in general, from our Sport, Sport groups and from those community leaders who leave those programs.

18:34:42 So, you know, the community meeting is set up to be able to host, everyone. We, we don't we just kind of take the comments and the order they come in.

18:34:53 So, you know, there's no real preferential treatment or time given and



we've also been trying to have just as much time is needed to be able to hear from everyone so we want to allow everybody to be heard.

18:35:06 I think the second part of the question was looking at other fields, and you mentioned Oak Hill.

18:35:13 Oak Hill is one of the areas that we're looking at to make improvements to field so currently the Oak Hill fields are used. I believe some by the school for practices and less by the sport groups for practices as well but the condition has deteriorated

18:35:34 to a point where you know improvements are really needed and we believe that those could provide additional space for games and practices on a more quality field, we, you know, do anticipate having community input sessions for those fields as well.

18:35:57 Once we take a look at what the design improvements would be for that area.

18:36:07 Louise Do you want to add anything else for lo at this point. Commissioner I think you covered it all where we're assessing all comments that we received then once we have more community meetings and continue to listen to a butters, and others will just

18:36:20 continue working through the design and improvements in those areas.

18:36:30 Stephen feral has his hand up, Stephen just unmute, so you can speak.

18:36:39 Okay.

18:36:41 Yes.

18:36:42 Thank you, Commissioner I appreciate you recognize me.

18:36:46 I honestly don't know where to begin. I don't want to go on for a long time but I've been involved in the fields at noon south as you may recall them prior conversations.

18:36:54 For some 15 years.

18:36:57 We worked with Mayor David Cohen over a three year period to put the fields in the condition that they are in from virtually unplayable to to Multi Purpose fields into baseball field, baseball when stuff or softball field, which are natural dress as opposed

18:37:13 as opposed to the until synthetic turf on the multipurpose seals.

18:37:17 At that time, let me just say the American did indeed, listen to the community, it went on for three years.

18:37:26 And he agreed to all of our concerns.

18:37:34 And one of those concerns of that time was lights.

18:37:39 And there was an agreement that there would not be lights on the Newton South football field to administration's later.

18:37:47 The current mayor, basically told me in a meeting with a couple of other neighbors and the current at that time.

18:37:57 Director Parks and Recreation.

18:38:19 That above the room is that we are going to put in lights. There was no notice really there was no conversation, this was just a decision by the mayor.

18:38:13 Then you negotiated.

18:38:17 Not at a round table but by by telephone as I recall, because I've never seen your face.

18:38:23 Until very recently,

18:38:26 to when the decision was made to put the lights in how that was going to happen. And I will say that the agreement that we came up with has been pretty well adhere to.

18:38:38 That is to say the lights are the new direct lights, they do not spill far beyond the playing field, but they do spill beyond the playing field.

18:38:48 The hours have been okay.

18:38:51 The number of games however it continues to change and I understand that's in part because of the conditions of later starts and so forth.

18:39:00 The noise condition which was huge to us because of neighbors who have a real serious problem, one might say, a handicap. If that's I don't mean to use them properly tracer but with noise, and you agreed to no noise except for the national anthem and

18:39:18 any, any game.

18:39:21 any game. One time there was noise on the fields that I call it your office and you told me that if it wasn't the school game. I had to go to the police.

18:39:28 So we're still got issues here about noise trash is you know has continued to be an issue, even though it's getting a little bit better and parking has been handled well, my problem right now with this Commissioner, is that you're looking at Newton south,

18:39:42 and part of the frustration that many of us have is that we don't understand the plan that Parks and Recreation has for the entire city, and you are suggesting that one particular neighborhood that already has two lighted activity or major activity areas

18:40:01 is now going to sustain a third.

18:40:05 We think that is a bit of overlapping here.

18:40:09 It is not only are we being burdened with all of the concerns about late the rep and late play because of the school schedule and so forth. But we're the ones who are bearing the brunt of it, we don't see it happening anywhere else.

18:40:26 In fact, you could only mention or diamond if I think it's true spoke to that you could only mentioned two other fields that currently have lights throughout the entire city of Newton, and one that you're proposing to do at Newton North High School.

18:40:42 So, we have two fields already.

18:40:45 You have two fields that have bad lights, and one field that doesn't have any lights you built a brand new playing field.

18:40:56 Over got I'm totally blanking the name of it now, have you spent a lot of money on a comprehensive athletic facility over near the national numbers I apologize for not remembering the name.

18:41:08 I apologize for not remembering the name. Within the past two years and you put in a turf field, a natural grass field with lights in a community that twice with survey. Instead, it was perfectly fine, but lights up there, but you put in a field that

18:41:21 cannot be used as you're proposing to do here, a multi purpose. Multi Purpose field with turf, so they can be used all hours of the day and night in a community that was said it was okay to put up lights.

18:41:35 But the big thing for us here right now is that we have no idea what's your comprehensive plan is all we hear is it, you are once again want to take advantage of this particular neighborhood, do you want to do the field that have butts, neighbors, but

18:41:53 a maximum of 20 feet, those lights, no matter how they're adjusted are going to be cascading onto the backyards of these homes, many of which have small children in school, who are trying to have reasonable hours of dinners with their

parents and do their

18:42:10 homework, and you're saying outside them literally in their backyard, you're going to have more games until 930 at night.

18:42:20 And when are they supposed to study, pay attention to their parents and, you know, live their lives. They're also older students who live there, too.

18:42:31 But they're also older neighbors, and we listen, every Saturday and Sunday morning, the groups that come in from different parts of the city, and play in those fields starting at seven o'clock in the morning or 730 in the morning, as they make a lot of

18:42:45 noise, and that's still an hour with a lot of people who are elderly around here trying to sleep.

18:42:50 This is, this is an appropriate discussion at this moment because we don't know the plan.

18:42:59 It's true close to these homes, and we want to see what you're going to do throughout the rest of the city. You've inconvenience, this quiet neighborhood.

18:43:08 Too much already. And I don't think we should be bearing the burden of another field with lights. I'm sorry for the soccer. Look, I spent three years fighting to improve the playing field that difference out.

18:43:21 I believe in sports and so does my family is so to our neighbors. We think kids deserve the opportunity to play, you have the city has wasted as far as I know, 1520 years not fixing the fields behind old school.

18:43:39 They're a disgrace it's a huge tract of land. I'll bet that's close to the three acres or two acres it's your needs for another field. And you could have a lot of different fields over there.

18:43:47 But I would like to hear what your plan is throughout the city. And to think that we are going to sit back and allow you to like another field. And this particular neighborhood, simply is wrong.

18:44:01 And I hope, David I'm really appreciated that you're here and you spoke to this issue.

18:44:06 I wish, hoping there are other city councillors who are listening to this, but this is what's wrong with Parks and Recreation, there's no comprehensive plan, nobody in this city knows what you really are going to try to do.

18:44:18 And we don't know from the mayor, either what she's trying to do. So

18:44:24 give us a plan for the entire city. Don't even think about putting lights up in here until you've got that plan done. And if you need to do more space that do a plan, fast, you've got the resources to do it.

18:44:37 The mayor's got all this federal money she now wants to use to put lights up on this field, use that to do an extensive quick comprehensive plan of all playing fields in the city.

18:44:49 Do not, please do not put any lights, and this this complex of facilities anymore until we see the entire plan.

18:44:58 There's a lot of other things I'd like to say about everybody wasted a bunch of time. Thank you very much.

18:45:06 Steven so I'm going to share my screen again for a moment. And I'm going to bring back up our website, and just let everybody know that the website listed here is where we are posting all of the information about the city's plans about any specific sites

18:45:29 that are being considered for improvements. We're tracking all of the input and community meetings held and you can find all of that information by going to our website.

18:45:41 Also if you email to the athletic fields, email address, we will put you on our distribution list and keep you up to date on all of the projects that we're working on.

18:45:54 I do want to note that we do have lights on athletic facilities at several sites throughout the city. We have lights at forte at Albemarle at Highlands at North we are using temporary lights at Newton itself, we're using temporary lights.

18:46:14 And we also have tennis court complexes lit at both of the high school locations. So, we certainly are.

18:46:23 you know have a need for evening, recreation activity and for evening sport play.

18:46:29 And you know, we do have neighbors at all of the sites that we would be working with and and talking to and considering anything.

18:46:39 You know about field lighting.

18:46:43 Okay, there's a chat comment. If you've been investigating Brandeis field lights for 18 months, as stated here today. Why wasn't it in your strategic plan, and to where I disrespect the neighborhood by proceeding as if this were a done deal and amenable

18:46:58 to the neighborhood without even asking for input for 18 months.

18:47:03 Even today, none of you have asked to meet with us but you are for to meet and our request in the last few days.

18:47:12 So I think the question is about the timeline of the, of the project being considered. I would say that you know the past 18 months has been a time when we've worked with our fields committee to, you know, take it to consider what the needs are, what

18:47:33 the challenges are and put together some of these plans and proposals.

18:47:39 You know as far as the the field lights at this field. I think that the, you know, one thing that happened that we all have to realize happened is that we just went through the first fall season schedule under the new schedule since the school time change

18:48:00 has happened, and that has really changed how these athletic programs are being scheduled and run. And so that is when you know I would say this summer is when we really started to take a look at what the impact to the schedules would be, and really started

18:48:18 to see that there was much more of an acute need to look at evening, play in general I mean as far as plans we do have our capital plans are open space and recreation plan, and we utilize all of those resources and input as well as the input from our

18:48:38 fields committee to, to make some decisions on what types of improvements could could help our athletic field situation.

18:48:49 Currently, so I would say that to me when when the evening field play and and light availability, although I have to say when I, when I first started working here nearly two years ago, one of the first projects they worked on was the stadium.

18:49:04 light project, and I was certainly bringing up at that time that, you know, all of the artificial turf fields that we have at the high school complexes, don't have lights and that would, you know, is quite restrictive.

18:49:18 As far as being able to schedule all of the athletic needs that a community has. So,

18:49:26 Commissioner if, if I may also add expanding lights were part of the parks, the open space and recreation plan that was approved by the state and city

council and Brandeis road field was included as potential lighting expansion as well this new north.

18:49:49 So we've been we've been working or considering this site for for much longer than 18 months. At this point,

18:50:00 but back alley your body has to see Andres, I'm going to allow you to speak.

18:50:06 Please unmute you can speak. Thank you.

18:50:08 Good evening. So, I guess, if the primary purpose of these slides is to support the High School, which I can understand that. with time changes if they're impacted by this, and we need to come up with a solution, but I was looking at what your slides

18:50:23 you presented the one that says you have about 1000 you get about an extra thousand hours of use of the field with these lights out of those thousand hours over 400 of them are December through February, I doubted that is any athletic activities, especially

18:50:42 from high school in those hours.

18:50:45 So, so why put on lights, four times a day we're not going to be used at all.

18:50:53 So I don't know if the school wants to talk about any needs for winter sports.

18:51:00 You know, I, I certainly saw that during covert I think that was an unusual situation.

18:51:06 But there certainly could be the need for that and I think we have a strong need for the shoulder seasons, you know, specifically the late fall going into November.

18:51:17 The, the chart that was put together is really just to show you know how much late availability, that you know late system would add it. That's not to say that that is, you know, the use the actual use that we would have a need for, but I'll let our let

18:51:36 our school athletics talk if there's any specific needs to make reference to.

18:51:43 Thank you.

18:51:45 Good mission. The impact is on the shoulders seasons as you were saying.

18:51:53 At the end of the fall as, as we are right now going into the time savings and you know that's that's when the really situations that have been pressing the other end, the beginning of spring.

18:52:08 You know the last three winters. Have in mind in a way that we were able to start the season as required by their my on the third Monday March, with a late start understanding yesterday by the end of March, the beginning of the season will be impacted

18:52:29 by the latest missile in need of light.

18:52:33 This over the years was different, but they

18:52:38 also created a winter season for football which we never had before. And I really hope that we had turned the corner with a pandemic in this window doesn't require the same kind of activities.

18:52:54 But if it's the case, then it would be extremely impacted by the lack of sunlight if we need to be alone again.

18:53:04 Thank you.

18:53:05 I will very unusual. That is, you know, usually the case closed or news. The lights are between December and March, we don't we are no usually adores

whereas that as you saw last year we, we cannot love for what we don't know.

18:53:25 Right.

18:53:25 Thanks, Pat and I'll also just add that our youth groups do have permits that they will put in place for the winter season, and those are typically weather dependent.

18:53:38 I also think pat your point about the spring season is very important because the weather we have in New England here is very difficult to, you know, try to get out on the fields as early as everybody would like I think everybody would want to be out

18:53:53 playing March 1 and it's just not a realistic goal. So we certainly you know, kind of depend on on those times to, to have access to the fields. So that's just a little more information about winter use counselor, Kayla so you have your hand raised to

18:54:13 speak.

18:54:13 Just need to unmute.

18:54:16 Oh, I didn't realize that but, um, I guess I'll take an opportunity here.

18:54:23 Look,

18:54:26 I, I think Stephen Stephen of Pharaoh spoke really wonderfully.

18:54:31 In that he was very measured.

18:54:34 He talked about the background and he talked about his beliefs and about his working with the community.

18:54:40 You know I coach soccer for seven or eight years, the fields were in terrible shape. I coached baseball for eight years, I've been involved in the community.

18:54:51 But,

18:54:54 you know, and I'm having a hard time here because I don't know, I just am flabbergasted kind of at this at what we're seeing right now I mean to call this a community meeting is is a farce I mean we can't see people.

18:55:11 We don't know who's on here.

18:55:14 We don't know who who we're talking to and who's listening.

18:55:19 I believe in collaborative government that's why I'm serving as counselor here.

18:55:24 And I believe in working with the community both the community that benefits from something, because this is going to benefit a lot of people, but also those that are impacted negatively.

18:55:33 And I just am so disappointed in this approach right now it mean for Luis to say yeah we've been working at this for 18 months, or actually he said more than 18 months, but have not brought this to the community yet, and are only doing it now.

18:55:50 I mean, Barry deserves a better answer than yes we've been, we've been talking about it in the, in the, in the working group.

18:56:00 It's just, it's, it's not right.

18:56:02 You know you said that you've talked about proposals, but I'm seeing one option, lights, lights here. What are the other options.

18:56:11 What are the pros and cons.

18:56:13 I just feel that there's got to be more representation for this community.

18:56:20 And, you know, it's it's hard for me because I see the benefits to the greater the greater good here. But I also see that the way it's being approached is completely not.

18:56:33 It's just not looking at what's happening in this community and they're

trying to call out and ask for help, and they're just not getting it and that's what is frustrating me I just, I guess I don't have a question if I did it would be what are the other

18:56:46 proposals that you've considered. And why are those rejected whereas this one is moving forward.

18:56:58 Thanks counselor keyless Luis Do you want to just take us through what the other sites that were reviewing right now I don't think anything has been rejected at this point we are reviewing several different improvements at multiple sites.

18:57:21 And you know, we don't have any, any sites that we've not included at this point we certainly have put together, you know, which which ones we're going to start the conversation with and that's what would this is part of, but we do have several other

18:57:38 as well so Louise Do you want to just take everybody on this call through some of the other projects that we're taking a look at. Sure. Um, so we're looking at, you know, in the next five years, assessing the different design options and improvements

18:57:58 at a number of sites, the first floor being Albemarle McGrath at Warren house.

18:58:06 Brown Oak Hill, and Berta school, so both of the last two that I mentioned brown Oh killing birth school. Add essentially a net increase in our field, use.

18:58:21 You know we are at this point, collecting input.

18:58:25 This is what this meeting is about as well.

18:58:30 So we're, we're really open ears and trying to figure out what the best solutions for, for those sites are along with the two high schools.

18:58:42 But beyond that, we're also looking at Graceland for improvements as well as 40. So, those are sites that were both either on the open space or recreation plan, and the capital improvements plan for, for some time now.

18:59:01 So that's why we prioritize those.

18:59:06 In particular, as part of our master plan with the intent of continuing to assess our fields citywide

18:59:19 Barry Greenstein has his hand raised.

18:59:22 Just have to unmute speak.

18:59:27 I can hear me. Yes.

18:59:30 This is actually Joshua and freedom, I'm with Barry here.

18:59:36 I have a few things I want to say, and I hope you can allow a little bit of a back and forth with trying to this webinar wasn't really designed for in the same way that, you know, a traditional zoom session or, you know, a true Town Hall would would appropriate.

18:59:50 My first question is just to follow up on Louise thank you for your comments and I'm going to go Nicole asked you about alternative lighting sites so based on counselors Kaler since question.

19:00:02 And you mentioned that Oak Hill was one of them.

19:00:07 Did I hear that correctly.

19:00:10 We currently had up until last week when we held the first community meeting to discuss brown Oak Hill, we had not really considered that location as a site for lights.

19:00:28 But you're considering it now.

19:00:31 Well based on community input, there was a request to to look at that option.

19:00:37 Okay. And how are you considering winning that option versus letting

Brandeis field, how will you make that decision.

19:00:45 And who will make that.

19:00:48 So that decision, Commissioner, I would defer to you on that.

19:00:53 But pretty much the. So, if I if I may stay a step back, it's been proven through what we've seen that artificial turf fields are better candidates for lighting.

19:01:10 What we've learned from noon Highlands playground where we did natural turf, is that the extended.

19:01:18 Or if you will, overuse just really damages the turf.

19:01:23 So, it being lid, it's sort of a double edged sword when you have natural terms so we have found that artificial turf is really the best alternative to expand play while keeping a certain level of quality of the field and and I defer to the commissioner

19:01:42 on on decisions on whether that would be lit brown don't kill would be lit or not.

19:01:50 You go ahead.

19:01:51 Go ahead. So Barry just to try to answer your question about I think it's kind of a process question, you know, right now we're in the collection of community input and, you know, looking into questions that might come up on any of these sites.

19:02:09 The next step would be to consider designs for any of the sites that we have. Take a look at fields layouts lighting options amenities for the fields that each site and that would include, you know, trying to go through the input that's come in and see

19:02:26 which of those things would would make sense for the project, we would put those designs together and those would be reviewed through a public process with the parks and recreation commission.

19:02:37 So that's the commission that will, you know, take a look at each of these projects, different components of the projects.

19:02:46 We will give them updates as far as you know the process of collecting information input.

19:02:53 Taking a look at the needs of the sport groups who use the, the athletic fields and give all of that to them, they would have those meetings would all be public as well.

19:03:06 So that would also be another opportunity for the public to provide input at that point in the stage, and then eventually, they would be brought forward to the city for funding and and different projects may go through a different funding process from

19:03:22 that point.

19:03:24 I've heard that you want to buy these lights in the spring, it seems very surprising and disappointing to us in the neighborhood that you would want to do this on such short notice and try to you're seeing here that you want to have a dialogue, but you've

19:03:37 said also here that you've been planning this for 18 months. What was the reason I know the question was asked via text but it wasn't really answered why you haven't been in touch with the neighborhood until only in the last few weeks, and even in the

19:03:50 last few weeks so not requested any meetings with the neighborhood.

19:03:55 So, um, I, we have received some input over the last several weeks and we've we've been in communication.



19:04:03 I've already shared out some dates that I'm hoping we can meet with, with some of the neighbors, and do a site visit and have that conversation so we're certainly looking to move forward with that you know as far as the past 18 months I mean certainly

19:04:20 lights at the artificial turf field have been something that's been discussed by the community for quite some time it's on some of our planning documents.

19:04:31 As you know, something that should be considered. I think you know I've said that this really this This issue has come too much of a change over this past season, and that's really was due to the school time change, and really makes these fields function

19:04:52 very differently in the way that the athletic programs are able to access them so you know I think that I understand what you're saying that we would have liked to have, you know, a larger amount of time to deal with.

19:05:06 But I think that we can absolutely have these conversations and work through the details I think we have a very good template for doing so with what we've accomplished on the stadium field.

19:05:18 The stadium field, did not really solicit our input very well and in this particular case, you're saying that you're open to input but it's only at the request of the neighborhood in the last month there was no request before the mayor announced the project

19:05:32 and I think that's very hurtful and disappointing to the neighborhood.

19:05:36 I want to compliment concert Kayla's just for speaking up for the neighborhood and doing his job and representing us we were grateful for that. And that's exactly what what our country is based on is that kind of involvement.

19:05:50 You know, by the people, other people, by the people, for the people.

19:05:54 Community athletics it's important I've coached.

19:06:05 Little League for four years, love sports. We don't mind the the the noise during the daytime in the practice we share. You know common interests and bought our houses knowing that we live near some of these fields, and you know we're one community, but

19:06:14 this this approach I must say feels extremely cutthroat It feels like you know we've we've said in the last month, that there's no way that you can in an acceptable manner, light this field because it's too close to our homes, you would, if the lights.

19:06:32 You know this great technology down the street. It does cast light behind and beyond the poles for several hundred feet. You promise in writing. Two years ago at the parks parks hearing, not to light this field.

19:06:47 You also promised that the lights that you put it in down the street would not shine over a butters homes. If you light Brandeis field you if you've done your homework on the measurements you know that you will not only put very very bright lights on

19:07:01 top of our backyards and over our homes but in many cases over our roofs and over our whole properties and in spite of all this, you're still proceeding as with this meeting, suggesting that you're going to do it.

19:07:14 I find that very very cutthroat and the neighborhood is broadly opposed to this.

19:07:21 And we resent the approach. you know, we operate in a win win, kind of mentality, and we wish that that you and we hope that you open up your minds to and your processes to receiving input and to looking harder for solutions with us, that

are or proposing

19:07:39 them on your own, like these were your homes and your kids and your elderly parents whose lights, you know, brightly lit our homes and find a win win for the community and for the neighborhood permanent lights are not that solution.

19:07:57 Okay thanks Barry.

19:08:02 Hey, Justin Traxler has his hand raised.

19:08:20 Justin.

19:08:11 I just want to respond to one of the items that was brought up. I actually just sent Councillor Kayla's an email would welcome to meet with him for coffee because I think we have a lot we could discuss about the problem and some of the discussions have

19:08:30 I know there's been a challenge to put one together.

19:08:34 And I think we're trying to. We're trying to balance a little bit of being agile and hitting hard high ROI projects but I also appreciate. If we collectively think a comprehensive plan is going to make this part of a better decision support that completely.

19:08:50 Thanks.

19:08:53 Thanks Justin.

19:08:56 Okay, Stephen feral has his hand up, please unmute Stephen can speak.

19:09:00 Thank you very much again, I appreciate it.

19:09:03 Justin thank you for that support for a comprehensive plan.

19:09:09 None of this can be accomplished, until we understand what Newton is looking forward to in the next five to 10 years.

19:09:19 I find it fairly astounding Commissioner, that you didn't know anything about the change in school times until recently. They've been discussing that for years here and noon.

19:09:32 I knew about it.

19:09:34 We all knew that it is stunning that the mayor didn't have you speak with the school department, about this when they began to discuss it.

19:09:44 But anyway, that's one point. Secondly, the, the arrangement we reach that for the football field is simply not comparable to Brandeis sealed. It just isn't.

19:10:01 It's totally different as situation to the homes and the arbiters of that area.

19:10:08 Certainly, I am stunned to hear, Luis say that because somebody suggested that maybe you should put lights on the Oak Hill School, that that's under serious consideration.

19:10:21 Nobody that I know of has ever spoken about lifetime.

19:10:41 Okay. Well, we certainly recommend that you fix those fields, so that the hundreds of young people who play soccer every Saturday and Sunday and those fields can do it whenever they want to and not get muddied out by the condition those fields.

19:10:44 They are atrocious. Again, let me say take some of the federal money that you apparently have already budgeted to buy life, which again is stunning to me for Brandeis seal and put it into the restoration of those fields at Oak Hill, but also to have one

19:10:59 person or two people I don't know who the heck you spoke to his who suggested that we put lights on that.

19:11:05 You're not listening.

19:11:08 We already have lots of lights in this particular neighborhood, a comprehensive plan will show us how you are going to be distributing that, in fact,

discomfort around the city.

19:11:26 It is imperative that you not continue to put this, this burden on this particular neighborhood. We all love living here, we love the fact that their sports out of those fields that people use them all the time.

19:11:40 We wish they'd pick up after themselves. Was it Parks and Recreation would have something that would go clean up after them, which is another big thing, but two things that we want more lights and lights is already talking about why do these lights on

19:11:55 the football field, and the tennis Let's stay on until 10 o'clock at night, 930 on the football field when nobody's using them.

19:12:02 Why do they do that.

19:12:04 That's incredible. Thank you very much once again for listening.

19:12:08 Thanks, Steven.

19:12:17 Okay, they were some questions in the chat.

19:12:23 I'm going to improve the brown or kill fields were not install artificial turf.

19:12:27 And we did respond that that is under consideration.

19:12:38 See, and then why was not why wasn't turf installed at the highlands field.

19:12:46 I also answer that question, Robin, it was primarily because CPA funds, not being able or available for funding synthetic carpet and there just wasn't additional funding for that piece.

19:13:03 Barry Greenstein you have your hand raised.

19:13:06 Oh, just a quick follow up on that Louise.

19:13:08 When will you install to her from the highlands field clearly there's funding for that.

19:13:13 That is not something that we are looking to do at the Highlands, it would. Unfortunately, the, the way that artificial turf its installed and natural turf is installed along with all the drainage is very different.

19:13:33 So, it's unfortunate to say but that that was a missed opportunity for artificial turf. So you're saying it's in feasible to do it right now.

19:13:44 Yes, without ripping out a lot of money that the city spent on the that's the song. That's a sunk cost we don't care about money that's spent already, you're talking about spending a lot of money.

19:13:57 You know to renovate the turf fields here at Newton South at the stadium field and at the birdie and field was also in the plan that then they are not last month it was not part of the strategic plan that you had previously publicly announced, why not

19:14:11 use some of that money to put a turf field in over at Newton Highlands, where it's already lit and has is known to be accepted by the community as being let the noise concerns would be much more mitigated given the proximity to route nine.

19:14:25 You know all those homes are sandwiched in between all the butters are sandwich between route nine and the field.

19:14:30 Why wouldn't you consider that as an alternative to lighting Brandeis field.

19:14:34 It's only minutes from the high school, so it's easy for you know it's not the same as being at the high school but it's pretty darn close. And we all know that most of the need here is for community sports and it's more central location the Newton South

19:14:46 High School for the community sports.

19:14:50 All right, and thank you for that and I believe it's it's Josh not Barry speaking with correct this ok this is Josh speaking yes I'm here. Okay. Okay.

19:14:58 Thank you, Josh. Um, you know what one consideration that we have in set the, the artificial turf carpets, that we currently have. Are you know near or at end of life.

19:15:11 So there's kind of a balance between, you know, US needed to replace those. And going back to the Highlands and redoing that as artificial turf along that we have a few other sites that that have a lot of pressing needs as well.

19:15:32 on the other side of the city.

19:15:35 So we have a lot of things to that list I guess it just sounds like you're not paying attention to what Stephen was saying and what what Councillor Kayla is saying and into all of what we've been emailing with you about for the last month you're, you're

19:15:48 just proving that that you guys are not listening to us because the fact is is that that lights bring noise at night when it's quiet out and lights bring a lot of additional light pollution and the proximity here of 10 to 2030 feet from the field is not

19:16:05 the 200 to 600 feet that that we have at the stadium field.

19:16:09 I think it's a big mistake for you guys to not consider the Newton Highlands field for turf, to meet the needs that you're talking about in the community for evening lighting.

19:16:19 It just seems it seems, at the very least it seems insensitive.

19:16:24 I don't I can't understand it, honestly, you've tried to explain it to me and I don't hear a logical explanation.

19:16:32 I just want to keep this conversation positive, I think everybody on the panel here is here to listen and so you know I don't, saying that things are insensitive or not being even considered is, you know, I don't think a true representation of what's

19:16:49 happening right now, and I really just like to keep all the comments as positive as we can.

19:16:57 It's not a positive thing for our neighborhood, when, when we're telling you it's a problem and there's no responsible way to do it, and we have a meeting where we can't see everybody and we don't know who's president.

19:17:10 And, you know, and the plan is to proceed with lights here, and when you know Luis is saying that you're not considering putting turf into a field that could meet the needs just as well.

19:17:22 I don't think that's positive, I appreciate community sports that's positive but you know we feel like we're being kind of thrown under the bus here, to be honest.

19:17:32 It really feels that way and I've talked to a lot of the neighbors. People are disillusioned by the fact that the city told told this community that there would not be turf fields and then they said that there wouldn't be lights, two years ago you told

19:17:43 us there wouldn't be lights on Brandeis field and here we are with the total U turn.

19:17:48 So I appreciate your intent to be positive. I'm all for being positive, but there's not a lot that feels positive to our community right here, and the, the treatment and you know this planning for a year and a half, without any notice to us until October

19:18:01 4 in an email that was sent to the broader community before talking to us. And now, willing to meet with us but only other West doesn't feel positive.

19:18:13 Thank you for listening.

19:18:15 Thanks, Josh.

19:18:19 Steven Pharaoh, you had your hand raised. Please unmute.

19:18:23 I'm sorry I forgot to take it down.

19:18:26 Okay.

19:18:37 Okay this comment.

19:18:40 We have lots of other things that preclude changing the highlands field is not believable.

19:18:51 Thank you for that, for that comment, um, the only thing I can say is that we we own and manage nearly 600 acres that do need some help. So, you know, again, it's, it's a balancing act across different communities and neighborhoods and needs within the

19:19:13 both sports, and passive recreation community.

19:19:24 You don't see any other comments or hands raised at this time.

19:19:31 Okay so, um, I will close this out with saying that we did have a group of about 17 to maybe too low 20s, who attended our program tonight.

19:19:48 As we said earlier, we're going to make all the presentation materials available on our website and we will have the chat information and those who participated tonight will be listed on the website.

19:20:01 So, you know, we will do our best to make all of that information accessible for everybody.