



[Home](#) > [Wayland Town Crier](#) > [Local News](#) >  [RSS Feed](#)

 [E-mail article](#)

 [Graphic version](#)

 [Most popular](#)

Committee votes 5-2 to recommend

By **Katie Liesener**/ Staff Writer

Thursday, July 13, 2006 - Updated: **10:25 AM EST**

After declining to hear the proposal last month, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) voted 5-2 Tuesday night to recommend \$300,000 in Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for a \$1 million project to lay artificial turf on the main athletic playing field at the high school.

If the proposal passes environmental review by state and town officials, it will be submitted as a warrant article at the next Town Meeting, said Michael Patterson, committee chairman.

"We were thrilled, just thrilled," said Craig Foreman, president of the Wayland Boosters, which originally proposed the project and has been working on fund-raising. "The committee had lots of questions and came very prepared. We had the answers to all their questions. We appreciate the support they've shown for the project."

The Boosters plan to raise the other two-thirds of the project's \$1 million projected cost.

The Community Preservation Act allows a local tax surcharge of up to 3 percent that can be used for historical preservation, affordable housing and open space and recreational projects, and is matched with state funds. Wayland adopted a surcharge of 1.5 percent.

The turf proposal, jointly submitted by the Park & Recreation Department and the School Committee, calls for an athletic turf to replace the current grass field, which is limited to 25 uses in the fall and 25 uses in the spring because of its poor condition. The field is closed in the summer to allow the grass to regenerate.

An artificial turf would increase field usage from 150 hours a year to 2,900 hours, according to the project application submitted by town officials.

The application also says that because the artificial turf would cost \$500 a year to maintain, the new field would save the town between \$8,000 and \$12,000 a year. Those maintenance savings, plus new income from user fees, would offset the replacement cost for a new turf field after 10 to 12 years, estimated at between \$250,000 and \$300,000, according to the application.

"The overwhelming benefit to the town is that it provides recreational opportunities to a huge constituency," Foreman said. "Youth soccer, youth lacrosse, Pop Warner football, high school teams and adult teams will have access to the field they don't have now. This is creating a first-class playing surface for all athletes in town, not just the schools."

Last month, the Community Preservation Committee had declined to consider the proposal citing legal concerns after receiving two conflicting opinions on whether laying artificial turf would be in keeping with the law.

According to state regulations for Community Preservation Act projects, if the land in question is not acquired through the CPA (as in Wayland), CPA money can only be used for the acquisition, creation or preservation of recreational land, not for its rehabilitation or restoration.

The committee received two conflicting opinions on whether artificial turf met the "acquisition, creation or preservation" criteria. One opinion from a state Department of Revenue attorney called the project "maintenance" or "rehabilitation" of the field, and another from town counsel called it the "creation" of a new field.

"I voted against it because I'm concerned about the legalities of using CPA funds for this purpose," said Patterson, who was joined in voting against the recommendation by committee member Larry Stabile. "People have found a loophole in the law and they're using it as a way to spend CPA money on areas that, when the people voted on the act, they didn't have in mind."

Project proponents came to Tuesday's meeting with a new legal opinion given by Boston law firm Kopelman and Paige at the Board of Selectmen's request that called the turf project the "preservation" and perhaps also "creation" of recreational land.

The June 26 legal opinion said the project should be characterized as preservation because "the purpose for installing the synthetic turf is to protect the field from injury, harm or destruction where general use of the field for recreational purposes would destroy the field and render it unusable."

The opinion also says that the turf could be called the creation of a new field because "installation of synthetic turf at the field will create a multi-use recreational facility not previously existing in the town."

Patterson is unconvinced of both arguments.

Herald Interactive Tools

 [Recent articles](#)

 [E-mail article to a friend](#)

 [Graphic version](#)

 [Get RSS feed](#)

 [Search site](#)

 [Sign up for home delivery](#)

"They're removing one surface and putting another surface on. They're not creating land. It's a constrained football field. You know how much space you have. This project is not going to make it bigger or smaller," he said.




Patterson said he also does not believe the current sod field will be ultimately unusable unless artificial turf is laid.

Jerry Heller, another committee member who voted in favor of recommending the proposal, said although he felt the definition of preservation was still in question, he was impressed by the enthusiasm of town officials and residents who advocated for the turf.

"Taking into consideration the arguments of the citizens and the latest legal opinion, I think the committee did its job by informing the town of its risks," he said. "Once we were beyond legalities, we considered the substance of the request, which I think is very favorable and beneficial to the town."

 [E-mail article](#)  [Graphic version](#)  [Most popular](#)

Recent articles

-  [Teen takes theater by storm](#)
-  [Islamic Center, interfaith group respond to attacks in Lebanon](#)
-  [Anger over new landfill regulations](#)
-  [Wayland's very own Fear Factor](#)
-  [Weed whackers strike back in Wayland](#)

Today's most read Town Online articles Updated 5:30 AM ET

1. [Summer family fun: New England: Maine resort offers swashbuckling good time for young pirates](#)(7540)
2. [Tennis, anyone?](#)(1709)
3. [ARC markets future](#)(1571)
4. [Belmont Sports News](#)(1419)
5. [Back in business](#)(1364)

Search the site



Enterprise-level broadband service provided by [Expedient: America's Largest All-Ethernet Network](#)

Wireless broadband service provided by [Towerstream](#)

[[contact us](#)] :: [[print advertising](#)] :: [[online advertising](#)] :: [[Browser Upgrade](#)] :: [[Jobs](#)]

Order Home Delivery Online: [Weekly papers](#) [Daily papers](#) or call **1.800.982.4023**

© Copyright of GateHouse Media and Herald Interactive, Inc.

No portion of townonline.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)
bh.heraldinteractive.com: 0.088836:Thu, 13 Jul 2006 14:25:27 GMT