

Petition in OPPOSITION to the conversion of the NPCC field from Turf to Grass.

As a long time resident of Montgomery County (>30 years) and an avid soccer player and former coach with MSI, I am writing to you in **opposition** of the conversion of this artificial turf field to grass.

The cost of set up of an artificial turf may be higher but, over the expected 10-12 year life expectancy of that field, maintenance is minimal when compared to a grass field. Furthermore, we have seen and experienced a steady deterioration of ALL the grass fields (other than the Germantown soccerplex) in the county due to poor or total lack of maintenance on the part of the county beyond the simple mowing. When the county does decide to re-do/re-seed a field that field is then closed pushing all activities on already overused fields. Something unlikely to happen with a turf field as the turnover is a lot faster for replacement.

Some of the county and school fields are in such poor states that they are bald, eroded/sloped or have holes from neighborhood dogs digging holes. They are unfit for sports and some are downright dangerous. Case in point Ayrilawn Park field that has become bald in the middle, bumpy and is full of holes from all the neighbors bringing their dogs to play. We had one player tear his ACL planting his foot in a hole and turning his knee.

Since we play throughout winter, we are always struggling to find an open field. The few turf ones are solidly booked and taken over by area soccer clubs or inaccessible. With the loss of NPCC, we would lose one spot where we can have winter pickup games. County grass fields are closed from December through March.

The grass fields are also closed during and after rain even though we do play rain or shine if we can find a field.

Good grass field maintenance will be costly especially with the booming demand in the county. If not maintained regularly, the grass would become thread-bare and the field could become rutted.

As for alternatives, there are few indoor facilities at Gaithersburg, Boyds and Rockville. Solidly booked by clubs and competitions and expensive for recreational/occasional indoor players.

Northern Virginia has done a much better job in balancing turf vs grass but driving there every weekend during winter is a hassle and no guarantee of availability for non-Virginia residents. If anything, we need more artificial turf fields that are accessible to locals and

not reserved for clubs especially in the winter months where county fields are closed
December through March. Thank you.