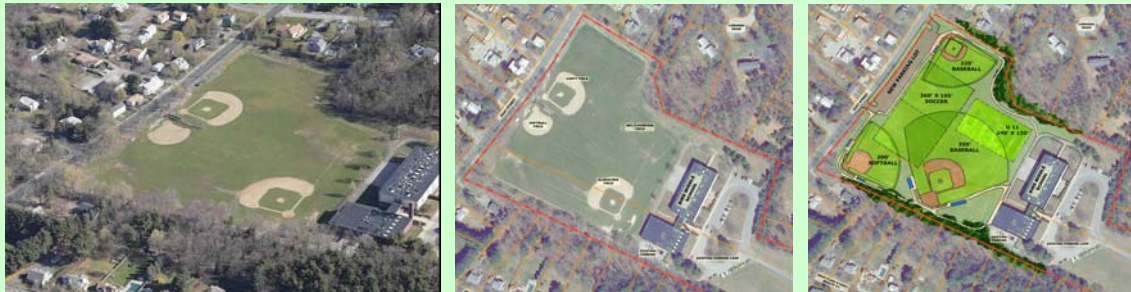




# Town of Walpole Massachusetts **ATHLETIC FIELDS MASTER PLAN 2008**



*Images of Study Properties*



**Weston & Sampson**  
When it's essential...it's Weston & Sampson.

# Town of Walpole Athletic Fields Master Plan

## 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page i
A. Executive Summary	Page ii
B. Priority Recommendations	Page iv
1. Acknowledgements	Page 1
2. Introduction	Page 2
Background	Page 4
Basic Goals and Objectives	Page 7
Informational Meetings and Public Comment	Page 8
3. Fields User Survey	Page 9
Summary of Respondent Comments	Page 10
4. Needs Assessment	Page 11
5. Site by Site Analysis & Recommendations	Page 16
Recommended Field Use Policy	Page 17
a. Bird Middle School	Page 20
b. Boyden School	Page 26
c. Johnson Middle School	Page 31
d. Morgan Field	Page 37
e. New Fisher School Field	Page 41
f. Old Fisher School Field	Page 44
g. Old Post Road School	Page 45
h. Stone Field	Page 49
i. Turco + Plimpton Fields	Page 54
6. Funding Opportunities	Page 61

## APPENDIX

Appendix A - Study Facilities  
Appendix B - Fields Use Matrix  
Concept Master Plans  
Parks and Recreation User Group Survey

## SECTION A Executive Summary

---

The study that follows provides a comprehensive analysis of all existing conditions and a series of recommendations for improving field facilities throughout the Town of Walpole system. We have looked specifically at the fields that are owned, operated and managed by the Town. The list of properties is as follows:

Bird Middle School	New Fisher School Field	Turco Upper Field
Boyden School	Old Fisher School Field	Turco Main
Johnson Middle School	Old Post Road School	Turco Lower Field
Morgan Field	Stone Field	Plimpton Fields

It is important to note that certain field playing venues were not analyzed, as they are operated and maintained by leagues or other private groups. Examples of these types of properties include Restaino Fields, Mylod Fields and the fields at the Agricultural School.

Work included the development of a field user survey and preparation of a needs assessment that was based on the results of the survey, but also based on our examination of the physical conditions of all fields and on information gathered during a series of meetings with key user groups and stakeholders. As work progressed, it became clear and obvious that:

- There are insufficient playing venues to meet the increasing demands of the Walpole community (in the past year, more than 4,000 participants and nearly 230 teams jockeyed for use of the properties listed above not including the three privately managed venues).
- Due to heavy and often excessive use during all seasons of the year and during all types of weather, turf conditions are stressed at many locations.
- Poor playing conditions can demoralize users and increase the risk of injury.
- Town maintenance operations staff, which is hampered by their small numbers and lack of materials and equipment, wages an uphill battle in an effort to maintain the best conditions possible.
- Despite the limitations above, quality turf conditions have been achieved at several playing venues, including most notably the Bird Middle School.
- The lack of a clear, concise and evenly enforced “Field Use Policy” places those responsible for field upkeep at a great disadvantage. Surrounding towns have long since adopted policies that have proven crucial to the maintenance of improved field/turf conditions by controlling use particularly during poor weather.
- Walpole must adopt such a policy so that appropriate controls govern the use of the fields and allows for improved playing conditions to be achieved. Of note, Little League and Youth Soccer officials are able to maintain higher quality playing conditions at their privately managed venues due to their abilities to control use, especially during poor weather.
- Walpole must look for opportunities to create new playing venues at existing properties. As an example, undeveloped lands at the Johnson Middle School and Old Post Road School are suitable for the development of new field footprints. Without new venues, improved playing conditions will never be attained.
- The Town must set aside funds to renovate existing facilities as new venues come on-line. Improvements can be accomplished through a traditional public design, bid and construct



process or through other creative means that have potential cost benefits. These other means are described elsewhere in the document.

- The Town must look to other, undeveloped public and private lands in order to develop playing venues, all in an effort to reduce the burden on existing facilities.
- The Town must aggressively pursue other traditional state and federal funding sources in order to reduce the financial burden on residents and to match local funding authorizations.

Surrounding towns have moved aggressively to expand their field-based playing venues due to dramatically increased rates of participation in traditional (baseball, football, soccer) and newly emerging (lacrosse, field hockey) sports and the ever-expanding participation rate of women and girls in general. And with 10 of 12 playing venues located at schoolyards, with their own unique programming requirements, it is critical that opportunities for new playing venues be explored now. Walpole sees the same expansion in the number of programs offered and the number of individuals participating. Recent improvements to Turco Main represent an important beginning, but conditions at other facilities are not likely to improve without recognizing the need to adopt many of the basic recommendations identified within this Executive Summary and throughout the master plan that follows.

We invite you to review the larger document that follows and to actively participate in an endeavor to provide improved field-based recreational and athletic opportunities to all residents of Walpole, but especially to the youth of the community.

**WALPOLE FIELD SUMMARY EQUATION  
HUGE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS + NOT ENOUGH  
PLAYING FIELD VENUES = POOR TO FAIR FIELD PLAYING  
CONDITIONS OVERALL**



## SECTION B Priority Recommendations

---

Priority recommendations are listed below. These recommendations have been identified in order to provide maximum short-term benefits and positive impacts to playing conditions at fields throughout the community. Priorities can be adjusted in order to match actual funding opportunities. Further, expanded descriptions of these recommendations and additional recommendations for all of the properties are contained in Section 5 of the master plan document.

### Priority Recommendations for Major Renovation Projects:

1. **Install Sports Field Lighting at Turco Main Field**
2. **Expand Field Limits and Install Synthetic Turf at Turco Upper Field**
3. **Renovate Stone Field and Install a Synthetic Turf System or Engineered Sand-based Soil Root Zone Mix and Natural Grass Field**
4. **Old Post Road School Field Expansion**
5. **Implement Johnson Middle School Fields Preferred Master Plan**
6. **Implement Bird Middle School Fields Preferred Master Plan**
7. **Implement Recommended Improvements at Morgan Field**

### The recommendations are further explained in the following narratives:

1. **Install Sports Field Lighting at Turco Main Field** Install lights at the Walpole High School Turco Main facility. The full value of this state-of-the-art multi-purpose field facility cannot be realized without the installation of lights. During middle to late fall, and early spring, darkness sets in early, thus limiting the use of this facility. With other field venues heavily burdened by over-use, it is critical to extend the playing time window at this facility in order to accommodate a wide range of athletic and sports programming needs. Establish a policy that defines the period of use during evening hours in a way that addresses the concerns of residential abutters.
2. **Expand Field Limits and Install Synthetic Turf at Turco Upper Field** Install an in-filled synthetic turf field at the Turco Upper playing venue and expand the playing surface area to accommodate additional athletic and sports programming needs. Historically, this field has been dedicated to field hockey and other limited activities. By converting to a synthetic surface, the number of activities and the period of use can be dramatically increased without the risk of deteriorated playing conditions.
3. **Renovate Stone Field and Install a Synthetic Turf System or Engineered Sand-based Soil Root Zone Mix and Natural Grass Field** The basic renovation program would involve the slight realignment and reconstruction of the softball/Little League field, minor reconfiguring of the adjacent Town Hall/Senior Center parking lot and reestablishment of a 180' x 330' multi-purpose field within the outfield areas. The field should be constructed using either an in-filled synthetic turf system or an engineered sand-based root zone mix. The renovations should also include sub-drainage systems, proper grading and new irrigation systems.

4. **Old Post Road School Field Expansion** At the Old Post Road School; develop a new, multi-purpose field within the existing woodland area. The multi-purpose field could accommodate a wide-range of youth sports activities (soccer, field hockey) and include an overlapping Little League infield if desired. In conjunction with this development, refurbish the existing Little League baseball diamond and field area.
5. **Implement Johnson Middle School Fields Preferred Master Plan** Develop a program to construct the proposed athletic fields as outlined in Section 5c of the Master Plan in the large wooded area located adjacent to and up gradient from the existing fields. The existing fields would be re-vegetated to allow for a buffer in the drinking water aquifer recharge area. It is worth the Town investigating the potential to designate this area as conservation land and then trading it for other less sensitive conservation lands elsewhere that are more suitable for the construction of athletic fields. The total area proposed to be re-vegetated is 5.5 acres. The development of new fields would allow for the stabilization of the area that was formerly mined and for the establishment of appropriate maintenance and operation protocols that will allow for dramatically improved playing conditions. The construction of new facilities (baseball field, softball field and multi-use fields) would provide the Town with the opportunity for a first class, major multi-field athletic complex that would help to relieve overuse pressures at other properties.
6. **Implement Bird Middle School Fields Preferred Master Plan** Reconfigure the fields at Bird Middle School in order to eliminate the current hazards caused by overlapping fields. The program outlined in the master plan would also provide new ancillary facilities to include dugouts, player's benches, backstops, protective fencing, and spectator seating. The proposed small parking area within the property off of East Street would allow for safe and convenient drop-off and pick-up. The plan also provides for the addition of ADA compliant pathways linking all facilities, to be shared by service vehicles and emergency vehicles.
7. **Implement Recommended Improvements at Morgan Field** The recommendations at Morgan Field include the refurbishment or replacement of all ancillary facilities and adjacent parking areas. These improvements would provide more generous foul territory, more comfortable spectator accommodations and improved parking circulation and capacity.

### **Priority List for Additional Small-scale and Near-term Capital Improvement Projects**

Weston & Sampson recommends that the Town identify several small renovation projects. Public Works and Parks and Recreation personnel should work together to create programs of small field restoration projects. As an example, important but limited improvements were undertaken at Morgan Field last fall by town forces. The results were excellent and the costs were limited. At other field locations, the town should perform similar work that might include limited re-grading, topdressing with loam, fertilizing and slice seeding, sodding or hydroseeding of turf areas. Each calendar year, the Public Works Department should request between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in the operating budget for this purpose. In addition to these initial efforts, each field should receive a minor rehabilitation or upgrade every ten to twelve years. A list of initial recommended small renovation project is listed below:

1. Implement the proposed enlargement of Fisher School Field to accommodate additional events. Install an irrigation as part of the field upgrading or under a separate effort as funding permits.
2. Renovate Boyden School Field, including installing irrigation.
3. Refurbish Plimpton Field.
4. Short-term turf repairs at Upper Turco Field.
5. Short-term turf improvement and installation of a phased irrigation system at Old Post Road School Field. This could serve as a phase 1 or initial effort for the larger field expansion program.
6. Complete ADA access, pathway improvements and spectator improvements at Lower Turco Field

### **Adopt a Field User Policy**

Weston & Sampson recommends that the Town draft and adopt a clear and concise Field User Policy and evenly administer the policy. At present, the Town has limited ability to close fields due to poor weather conditions or over scheduling. This is a critical tool that has allowed other area towns and other private groups in Walpole to protect capital improvements at field facilities and to achieve better playing conditions overall. (Please refer to the complete field user policy discussion contained in Section 5.)

### **Identify Town-owned Property that can be Designated for Athletic Field Use**

Identify other town owned or privately owned properties in Walpole that might be suitable for field development. It has been well documented throughout the master planning process that there is an insufficient quantity of playing fields to satisfy the needs of the public. A new complex, with 2-3 multi-use fields and a full-size baseball field would dramatically reduce the burden on current fields and yield better playing conditions overall. Ideally, a property that is 10-15 acres in size, generally flat and located within “upland” areas (limited or no wetlands) should be sought. Woodlands, pasture lands, former gravel quarries or other previously developed or disturbed properties should be considered.

### **Staffing and Maintenance of the Athletic Fields**

In addition to the recommendations described above, Weston & Sampson recommends that that the Town increase the field maintenance operation budget and associated staffing levels. From a maintenance staffing perspective, there has been a 33% reduction in the number of personnel dedicated to the upkeep of fields during the past two decades. During this time, maintenance responsibilities have expanded, sports program participation rates have skyrocketed and the expectations of all participants and organizers have increased dramatically. Combine staff losses with overuse of fields and the situation becomes untenable. The Town should assign six full-time staff personnel to maintain athletic fields. An additional two to three individuals could rotate on or off this crew and be generally available for the more demanding times of the year. During the annual budgeting process, W&S recommends that the Public Works Department request the additional funds to secure the additional manpower. Even if done incrementally, (say one additional position every two years for eight years) progress will be made in restoring the Town’s ability to maintain its fields at a higher level. The first hire should be a specialist that is a trained/educated turf

expert, as field maintenance and upkeep issues have become increasingly complex due to changing weather conditions, pests, turf diseases and sensitive watering and fertilization requirements.

Observations included in the Field User Survey forms indicate that the quality and appearance of turf at playing fields (both school sites and town park/playground) is quite variable. Survey respondents rated maintenance and overall turf conditions at some sites as good, while others were judged as fair or poor.

A major contributing factor at sites where turf conditions are fair to poor is a lack of on-site irrigation. The Bird Middle School turf, which appears lush and green well into the fall, has an extensive irrigation system that allows maintenance staff to attain a higher level of turf quality. Adequate watering allows the field turf to more easily repair itself after heavy use periods. Turf that is not irrigated is often in a stressed condition, is damaged more seriously and is difficult to restore. To achieve better playing conditions overall, it is essential that all town fields be outfitted with state-of-the-art, water conserving irrigation systems.

A question frequently asked is “how much play can a field withstand”? There is no definitive answer to that question because field wear is influenced by so many variables including the age of the participants and the types of activities that are being accommodated on the particular venue. Most communities try to keep fields open and accessible to the greatest extent possible and there is a constant struggle to allow for all desired uses. But schools and municipalities are facing increased liability regarding injuries to participants that can be linked to poorly designed, constructed, or maintained field facilities. If fields are excessively used and conditions deteriorate, then the likelihood of a player becoming injured increases. (Refer to Section 4 “Needs Assessment” for further discussion regarding field use.)

Some fields show evidence of poor grading overall, localized low areas or depressions, bare spots or other turf/playing surface problems that make normal play difficult, while other fields appear smooth, lush and green. In order to minimize adverse field conditions due to maintenance issues, we recommend that all fields be maintained to the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) and Turf Magazine industry standards listed below.

**Beginning of Season Conditions:** The Town should make every effort to begin each playing seasons with 100% turf coverage on the fields and well-groomed infields.

**Soil Testing:** Perform at least once every three to five years to determine nutrient deficiencies. This allows fertilization to be tailored to each field’s individual needs.

**Fertilization:** As a rule of thumb, fertilizers should be applied mid-spring, early June, mid September, late October, and mid to late December.

**Aeration:** Perform in late March to early April, after school is out in June, and in late August before fall school sports begin. Aeration reduces ground hardness and compaction of soil, allowing roots to breathe and grow more easily, and making turf more resilient for falling players.

**Mowing:** Perform weekly March through October and as needed from October to November. Turf maintenance professionals emphasize that mowing schedules should not be reduced when fields are resting or otherwise inactive, as regular mowing helps to ensure thick and vigorous turf growth.



**Irrigation:** 1 inch per week.

**Lime:** As needed to maintain a ph of 6.0-6.7

**Seeding:** Weather conditions make August to mid September the preferred time of year to seed field areas. The method of seeding (slice seeding, hand seeding, hydroseeding) can be determined to fit the condition and size of the field being restored.

**Field Lining:** Before each game or as otherwise needed.

**Baseball Infields:** Sand and calcinated clay should be worked into clay-skinned infields as required.

**Pest Control:** Any pest problems that are detected should be resolved using cultural practices. It is important to note that fields treated with pesticides must be taken out of play to avoid contact with players and children. This requires extra fields to accommodate relocated play.

**Excess Thatch Removal:** Performed in June when soil is dry.

**Rolling:** Perform three times per year when the ground is soft. This will help to keep playing surfaces from becoming inconsistent, uneven and lumpy, and improve player safety.

The standards need to be codified into a written plan to govern maintenance operations that all field maintenance personnel use and reference. The plan should be supported by sufficient labor savings equipment to allow implementation of all aspects of the plan.

Based on the above recommended maintenance requirements, a maintenance budget of \$250,000 to \$300,000 annually is recommended for the Town to properly maintain the athletic fields at an acceptable level. This breaks down to the following approximate amounts per field:

- 1 full size baseball field – \$32,000 per year
- 1 little league or softball field – \$20,500 per year
- 1 - 3 acre multi-purpose field – \$19,100 per year

The recommended field maintenance funding allocation represents a significant increase compared to the \$41,000 (approximate) in funding that was allocated for FY 2009. As well as an average of \$39,000 a year budgeted for the fields over the last six years. Again, during the annual budgeting process, it is recommended that the Public Works Department request additional funding. Even if done incrementally, (say \$50,000 to \$100,000 additional every year for three years) progress will be made in restoring the Town's ability to maintain its current fields.

## **SECTION 1** **Acknowledgements**

---

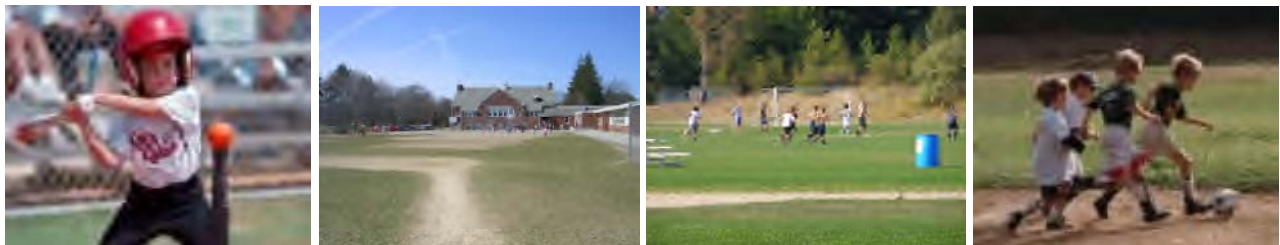
We gratefully acknowledge the many individuals from the Town Administration and from a variety of youth sports programs for their participation in every aspect of this master planning process. Their ability to understand Walpole’s most critical athletic facility and recreational needs, to create solutions that address those needs and to develop realistic strategies for implementing the actual improvements will help yield positive benefits to all future users as key parts of the Master Plan are implemented in future years.

Thanks in particular to James Johnson, Assistant Town Administrator; Robert E. O’Brien, Director of Public Works; Bob LeBlanc, Superintendent of Highways and Parks; Margaret E. Walker, Town Engineer; and Josh Cole, Recreation Director; for their assistance in providing key backup data and mapping for the individual properties and for their advice during the development of all aspects of this plan. Thanks to many other members of the Walpole sports community who filled out the user surveys in order to indicate their likes, dislikes and desires in regard to the past, present and future use of the various athletic facility properties. Thanks also to those sports organization members who came out for the open forums to express their concerns and to the many representatives of other Town departments (including the School Department) who provided advice and insight. The recommendations contained in this Master Plan document represent our best professional judgments and expertise tempered by the unique perspectives of each of the participants in the process.

Eugene R. Bolinger, RLA  
Vice President

Michael S. Moonan, RLA  
Project Manager

November 2008



## SECTION 2 Introduction

---

The Town of Walpole retained Weston & Sampson in early 2008 to complete this comprehensive Athletic Fields Master Plan. The Town of Walpole has funded the work in order to assess current field properties that provide critical outlets for athletic competition and enjoyment for all residents (youths and adults) of the community.

It is important to note that field recreation needs relate not just to the sports/athletic programs that make use of them, but also to less formal recreational pursuits by individuals not aligned with a specific organization, like the neighborhood kids who seek a pickup game of football, baseball, or soccer within a particular venue. In addition, we must consider that recreation is multi-generational and the final master plan will identify strategies for improving field opportunities for those of all ages.



*The image above identifies an aerial view of Bird Middle School. The vast majority of field playing venues that are controlled by the Town are located on school grounds, which typically receive extremely heavy use and the inevitable scheduling conflicts that occur between school athletic programs and town-based youth/recreational sports leagues.*

This master plan will serve as a guide for the future development of park and recreation properties, as well as a tool to secure funding from various private, Municipal, State and Federal sources.

The specific scope of work undertaken by Weston & Sampson included:

- Compilation of base maps and plans suitable for the development of all conceptual design plans for each of the properties being considered
- Record and report on all existing conditions at each property
- Identify safety issues and site limitations, constraints and opportunities for each property
- Formulation of a town-wide fields user survey to be made available to all key stakeholders
- Compile survey results and identify the most critical field needs
- Engage the Walpole sports community in a public dialogue to further establish and confirm needs, preferences and priorities in relation to the future renovation and restoration of each property
- Develop concept plans for each property prepared specifically in response to community needs and preferences, and ultimately to be endorsed by both community participants and the Town representatives in the form of a “preferred” plan for each property
- Establish budgets and phasing, funding and implementation strategies for all desired property enhancements
- Develop and reproduce the final, finished preferred master plan

During the past several months, representatives of Weston & Sampson have developed conceptual and final “preferred” master plans for each of the designated field facility properties. The master plans were generated in response to the needs of the Town as expressed by various user groups and others in the Town Administration who are responsible for the programming and maintenance of the various sites. The plans are also designed to respond to information gleaned from the Walpole Fields User Survey. At the outset of the process and in conjunction with the master planning work, Weston & Sampson representatives frequently toured the properties in order to assess the existing conditions of all field facilities, identifying current limitations, safety and maintenance issues and potential opportunities for providing improved facilities and improved user experience. Existing conditions assessments are included in the form of a series of photographs, plans and narrative descriptions contained later in this document.

The major points of the conceptual master plans for each property were presented on numerous occasions to key stakeholders during April, May and June 2008 and to the general public at Board of Selectman’s meeting held during **December 2008**.

In addition to identifying capital improvement priorities for each site, it is important to note that this fields master planning document also identifies important considerations pertaining to the establishment of a fields use policy. If adopted, this fields use policy will help to:

- Clearly articulate when fields are available for use and when they are closed due to inclement weather, the need to “rest” turf or for other maintenance or refurbishment efforts.
- Reduce the pressure on those making the decisions to close or delay opening a field by having clearly defined expectations and protocol.
- Improve conditions at each playing field venue by eliminating play during poor weather. Poor weather use of fields can destroy in moments what has taken months to prepare for use and enjoyment.



It was clear that the desire of all participants in this process was to enhance playing conditions for all sports groups and players at all locations so that competition could be held within venues that meet minimum organizational standards and that are safe, attractive and comfortable for both users and spectators. In short, there was a strong desire to establish field playing venues that the Town could take pride in. This report represents the culmination of the master planning process.

This report contains narrative and graphic depictions of the preferred master plans with descriptions of potential improvements, potential phasing scenarios and implementation strategies. In addition to identifying new and refurbished facilities that meet the needs of various programs and activities, there was an attempt to identify other important initiatives that might improve the overall performance of a property/facility including the promotion of environmental stewardship, improved parking, site access and circulation, and improved ancillary features and landscape qualities that establish the characteristics inherent to first-class park and athletic facility properties. Implementation of the improvements outlined in this master plan will require significant effort. The Funding Opportunities section of the report identifies potential granting agencies, non-profit entities and other sources of capital dollars or in-kind services that might help with refurbishment of one or more of the properties.

*It is important to note that a “master plan” is typically general and dynamic; and as such, the recommendations are not “cast in stone”. It is fully intended that, as particular projects are implemented, the actual scope of improvements contained in this report will again be validated or refined to meet actual field conditions through a continuing dialogue with stakeholders.*

## **Background**

---

The master plan focuses primarily on twelve public, Town-controlled and operated playing field venues located at nine properties (four of the field venues are located at the Walpole High School property). The properties are located geographically toward the center of Walpole, with virtually no playing fields within the far northern, eastern or western sections of Town and with only the Boyden School field located within the southern section of Town.



*Fields at the Aggie School (photo at left) are controlled independently and were not examined under this master planning effort while Town-controlled fields such as Lower Turco (photo at right) at the High School were fully considered.*

The master plan does not examine field properties that are privately operated and maintained by youth sports organizations including Restaino Fields (Walpole Little League), the Mylod Street Fields (Walpole Youth Soccer League) or Norfolk County Agricultural School fields.

The list of properties and summary of basic assets is included below.

### List of Parks and Recreation Committee Properties

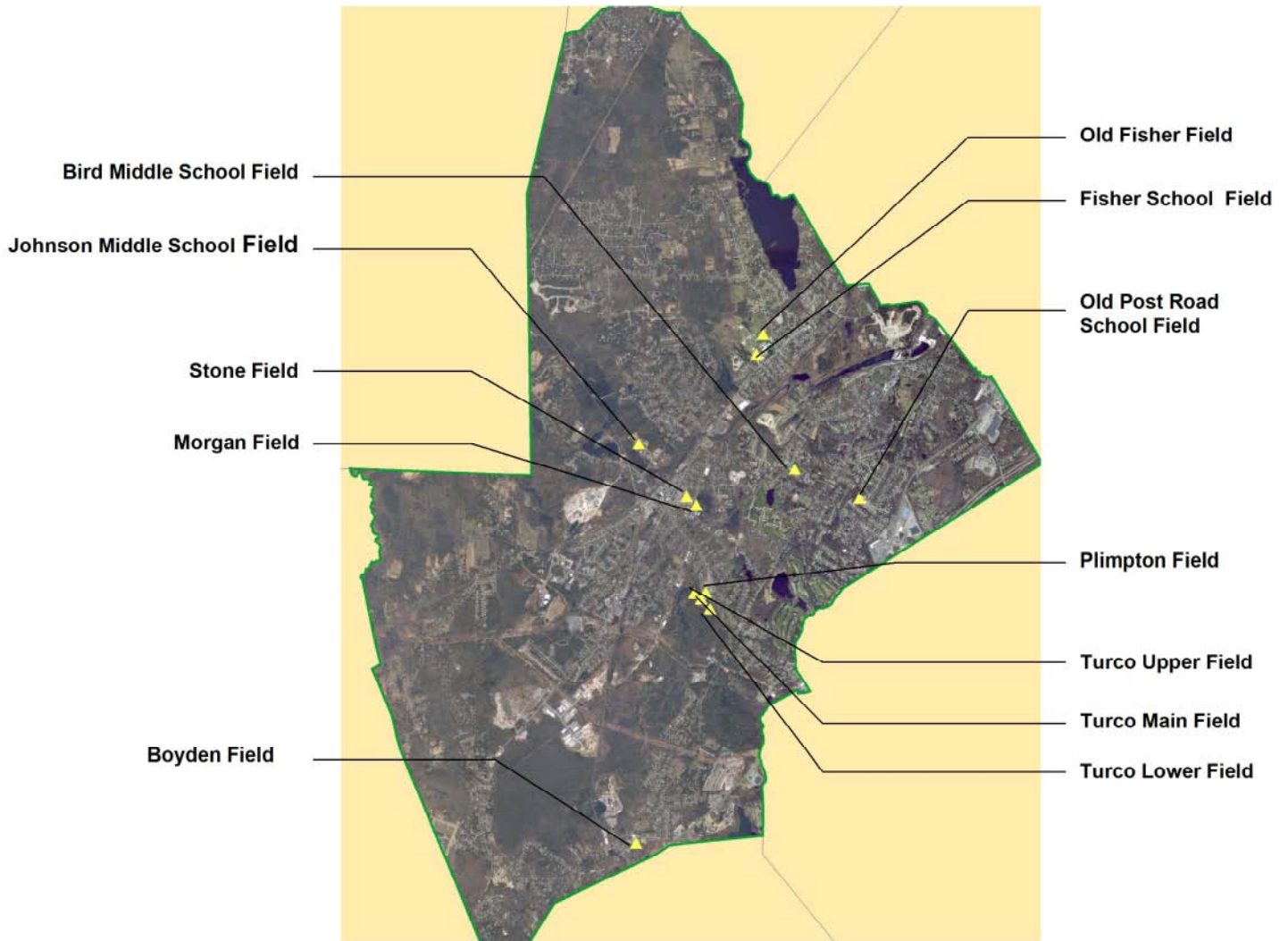
<b><i>Property</i></b>	<b><i>Address</i></b>	<b><i>Acres (*)</i></b>	<b><i>Description of Facilities</i></b>
<b><i>Bird Middle School</i></b>	Washington Street and East Street	7.6	Multi-use property, facility is part of Bird Middle School; irrigated fields including Babe Ruth/Legion, Little League, Softball and Soccer
<b><i>Boyden School</i></b>	Washington Street	.96	Multi-use property near wetland resource; includes children's playground mainly used for summer recreation programs
<b><i>Johnson Middle School</i></b>	Robbins Road	5.5	Multi-use property adjacent to resource area with severe DEP restrictions on fertilization and irrigation; adjacent to very steep slope subject to erosion, large unused wooded area to the North potential field development area.
<b><i>Morgan Field</i></b>	School Street	.80	Little League field across the street from Town Hall and next to Memorial Pond; small undefined field area adjacent to this field used for soccer practice
<b><i>New Fisher School</i></b>	Gould Street	.90	Multi-use property with fields adjacent to Street; includes basketball court and children's playground
<b><i>Old Fisher Field</i></b>	Main Street	.96	Small property adjacent to former Old Fisher School, neighboring the Aggie Farm
<b><i>Old Post Road School</i></b>	Old Post Road	1.5	Multi-use property including baseball, basketball, swings and children's playground; large wooded property to the west is unused
<b><i>Stone Field</i></b>	Stone Street	2.1	Multi-use property next to Town Hall and the Recreation Department Offices, main, central green space in Town
<b><i>Turco Upper (**)</i></b>	Common Street	1.7	Multi-use rectangular field primarily used for field hockey and girls lacrosse
<b><i>Turco Main (**)</i></b>	Common Street	4	Newly constructed, multi-use, synthetic turf field, with track facility and large bleachers
<b><i>Turco Lower (**)</i></b>	Common Street	2.9	Primarily a baseball and softball facility. Rectangular field at the center is used for football, lacrosse, soccer, etc.
<b><i>Plimpton (**)</i></b>	Common Street	.6	Softball facility at High School behind Old Plimpton School, currently in disturbed condition due to track/field construction

(\*) Area dedicated to fields, not total size of property

(\*\*) Facilities located at Walpole High School

In order to fully understand the field needs of the Walpole community it was important to recognize major properties that provide important field-based playing venues. While not specifically under control of the Town, and while not specifically examined under this master planning effort, other playing venues including Mylod Street Fields, Ellis Field and Restaino Little League Complex support a significant number of youth sports activities.

## Town of Walpole, Massachusetts



### Studied Recreation Facilities

*The image above identifies an aerial view of the Town of Walpole. The locations of the properties are indicated. Note that many of the facilities are clustered toward the central and eastern section of Town, with few facilities located toward the southeastern or northern parts.*

## **Basic Goals and Objectives**

---

The basic goals of the master planning process in relation to the properties referenced above included the following:

- Engaging representatives of field-based sports programs in an organized and thought provoking dialogue in order to develop a series of concepts for the appropriate refurbishment, redevelopment and/or expansion of all designated properties.
- Analyzing current Town sports programming offerings and participation, identify shortages and limitations, and develop a strategy for providing new and refurbished facilities in order to specifically meet the burgeoning needs of various user groups, leagues and activities.
- Providing universal, barrier-free access to all important facilities and features located within a given property. Improvements will provide new opportunities for all park patrons, especially for the disabled and elderly within the community.
- Proposing new amenities and facilities that are well-designed and self-sustainable; that are durable, long lasting, easily maintained with limited resources, economically feasible and that may be implemented by using a combination of capital improvement funds and in-kind/volunteer services and donations.
- Developing plans that provide upgraded ancillary facilities such as drives, parking areas, pedestrian connections to facilities within the property and appropriate linkages to adjacent facilities.
- In an era when our natural resources are becoming increasingly stretched and stressed, provide opportunities for implementing low impact development techniques, preservation and restoration of unique or important environmental features and enhanced stormwater management techniques that delivers rainfall runoff back to the earth beneath the various sites.



## Informational Meetings and Public Comment


The master planning process included a series of informational and public comment sessions, with primary meetings identified in the chart located below. (Refer to Appendix for all meeting Agendas.)

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Field Study Advisory Group</i>	Project kick-off meeting, outline scope of work, review project schedule requirements	January 2008
<i>Field Study Advisory Group</i>	Further outline of project schedule, review initial field reconnaissance findings	February 2008
<i>Sports League and Sports Organizations Stakeholders</i>	Review of initial mapping and field reconnaissance efforts, receipt of comments regarding limitations and opportunities at all playing venues	March 4, 2008
<i>Field Study Advisory Group</i>	Review of initial site concept plans	March 25, 2008
<i>Field Study Advisory Group</i>	Review of concept plans for individual sites, review of initial draft master planning documents.	May 15, 2008
<i>Field Study Advisory Group</i>	General review of DRAFT master plan document including all field concept plans...	June 12, 2008
<i>Meeting with Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Programming Staff</i>	Detailed review of DRAFT master plan document including all field concept plans...	June 23, 2008
<i>Sports League and Sports Organizations Stakeholders</i>	Detailed review of DRAFT master plan document including all field concept plans...	TBD
<i>Board of Selectmen</i>	Present Walpole Athletic Fields Master Plan and receive public comment	TBD

Meetings with the core Field Study Advisory Group were held at Town Hall, as were larger public meetings involving sports league stakeholders, elected officials and members of the general public. Large-scale colored plans and PowerPoint presentations were used to communicate master plan findings, recommendations and concept diagrams for each of the properties. Feedback from each meeting was generally constructive and positive with most participants expressing keen interest in achieving dramatic improvements to sports fields in order to provide enhanced conditions for all users.

## SECTION 3 Fields User Survey

A Fields User Survey was distributed to all major sports and athletic organizations and stakeholders. A copy of the survey is contained below. Representatives of the stakeholders groups responded and provided input on a variety of subjects that relate to overall playing fields conditions, user experience and safety and perceptions of need.



**Walpole Fields User Survey**

The Town of Walpole is completing a Fields Master Plan study in order to establish critical sports programming needs and strategies for potential future improvements to various field facilities as funding becomes available. The Master Plan will examine all existing field properties and focus on current conditions and limitations/constraints that impact the performance of these field facilities. The planning effort will identify opportunities for new facility improvements that might help better meet the increasing demands of the various programs that make use of the facilities. Since your organization relies heavily on these fields to support important program activities, your advice is being sought and would be of great assistance as we plan for improved use and enjoyment of all existing and potential new field facilities by all residents of the Walpole community.

The properties to be examined under this master planning initiative include *Burd Middle School, Boyden School Field, Fisher School, Johnson Middle School, Morgan Field, Old Fisher School Field, Old Post Road School, Plympton Field, Stone Field and the Turco Fields*. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated.

1. Name of Group or Individual and e-mail address/telephone: \_\_\_\_\_
2. List Field Facilities Used: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Describe Frequency of Field Use:
  - 1-2 times per year       1-2 times per month
  - 1-2 times per week       > 2 times per week
4. For Leagues and Other Groups, please complete the following and attach any pertinent information (Typical Schedule, List of Teams...):
  - Number of Teams making Use of the Facility: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Number of Players on a Typical Team: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Number of Games during a Typical Week: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Length of a Typical Season(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(Example April 15-June 15)
  - Special Events/Tournaments: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Describe the Subgroup of the Field Facilities that your organization or program makes use of: \_\_\_\_\_
6. How facility condition, facility design, facility availability, growth increases or problems: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Identify specific improvements that would improve your program or organization's condition regarding use of playing field facilities: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Describe other than field facilities that might help to improve your program and/or organization's condition regarding use of playing field facilities: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Describe any perceptions of safety/hazards of the property/playing field facility. Do you have maintenance, programming, scheduling, equipment, or other use or field facility concerns that you would like to discuss with the planning committee? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Other Comments or Notes: (Attach additional pages if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions related to this survey, please contact Mr. Jim Johnson, Walpole Assistant Town Administrator at (508) 660-7304 or e-mail Jim at: [jjohnson@walpole-ma.gov](mailto:jjohnson@walpole-ma.gov)

F:\Walpole MA\Recreation Master Plan 20080020\DRAFT USER SURVEY.doc

Below is a partial listing of the organizations that responded to the Fields Users Survey.

<b>List of Fields Users Survey Respondents</b>		
Youth Football	Senior Softball	School Phys Ed Programs
Youth Cheerleading	American Legion Baseball	Summer Recreation
Babe Ruth Baseball	Girls Youth Lacrosse	Little Sports
T-Ball Baseball	Boys Youth Lacrosse	Summer Academy
Pre-school Soccer	Youth Soccer	
Little Rebels	Walpole HS (Six Programs)	

## Summary of Respondent Comments

---

The respondents to the survey represented a broad cross-section of the sports field playing public and included the following major entities:

- Walpole High School Athletic Programs
- Walpole Schools Physical Education Programs
- Walpole Recreation Department Sports Programs
- Walpole Youth Sports Programs

Many general themes can be extracted from the nearly 25 Field Users Surveys that were returned as follows:

- There are insufficient playing field venues to accommodate the full extent of needed practices and games/matches.
- Field shortages particularly limit opportunities for various sports programs to hold practices and scrimmages.
- Turf conditions at many field venues have been described by many respondents as “poor, deplorable and not good”.
- Other field limitations described in the surveys include significant areas that are poorly graded, uneven and wet during certain times.
- Ancillary facilities (such as backstops, players benches and fencing) have also been noted to be in poor condition in certain locations.
- By far, Stone Field and Johnson Middle School were noted to be in the poorest condition overall.
- Stone Field, located near the geographical and institutional heart of Walpole is a much-loved facility. Based on the Field User Survey responses, an astonishing number of individuals (in excess of 1,500) make use of this facility during the three primary seasons of the year.
- In general, respondents spoke favorably about conditions at Bird Middle School, indicating that playing conditions are often excellent. In particular, the High School soccer coach spoke glowingly of this facility as a perfect venue for their events.
- Respondents expressed interest in gaining access to Turco Main (new synthetic turf system) to meet game scheduling needs and relieve the burden on other venues
- Many respondents expressed a desire to develop new playing field venues to reduce the burden on existing facilities. Sites that were mentioned include:

Allen Dam Property  
West Street Landfill  
Old Post Road School woodland area  
Front of Bird Middle School  
High School surrounding Upper Turco  
Adams Farm  
Lincoln Road Landfill  
Land across from Italian American Club

## SECTION 4 Needs Assessment

---

In order to assess the best use of each property, it was important to consider the most pressing needs of the entire Walpole community. This Needs Assessment represents a synthesis of the information obtained during the hosting of information meetings and of the data generated during the master planning process. In order to compile the array of needs, a variety of methods and tools were used including those summarized below:

- Fields User Surveys
- Information obtained at informational meetings
- Information obtained at meetings with all key stakeholder groups including schools, Recreation Department and all other sports groups and organizations
- Information and advice from the Town staff members including all key departments (Town Administrator's Office, Public Works and Engineering Departments, Recreation Department) as these individuals are charged with the maintenance and operation of all facilities.
- Other anecdotal data
- Analysis and inventory of existing facilities and conditions throughout the Walpole playing fields system
- Use of recognized parks and recreation related standards and requirements

In regard to the last two items, comprehensive inspections were conducted at each of the twelve playing field venues at nine properties in order to inventory the quantity of various facilities and to assess their conditions. The physical condition of a facility can often be a strong indicator of the degree of use or overuse, especially in a community like Walpole where significant resources are expended in an attempt to achieve quality playing conditions. Extensive wear and tear exhibited within a field always identifies a need, whether it is a need for additional fields to accommodate the sheer number of users, or the need for fields that are properly constructed and therefore able to be better maintained.



*Stone Field, much loved and much over-used to the point where maintaining quality playing conditions is impossible.*



In the end, the User Survey, information compiled during the informational meeting process, the inventory of current facilities and the analysis of existing conditions were most critical in determining the needs of the community. As many of the Town's playing field needs are met at dedicated school properties, the resulting Needs Assessment takes into account the inherent scheduling difficulties that occur when playing field venues must accommodate school related activities and events first and foremost while other Town youth sports league events must fill in around the school schedules. To this end, only Stone Field and Morgan Field are located outside the limits of a school property.

In addition, there is a general lack of dedicated rectangular-shaped fields (fields like Upper Turco and Turco Main) that are available for the exclusive use of football, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey and other similar athletic programs. As a result, the sports programs that require rectangular-shaped fields often make use of "multi-use" fields that physically overlap baseball, softball or Little League field venues. Under this scenario the overlapping nature of the field creates scheduling conflicts, creates physical conflicts if unlike activities are attempted at the same time, and ensures that facilities are in extremely high demand during all playing seasons. Maintaining turf under these conditions becomes a major challenge. Add into the equation the fact that many of these multi-use fields are also located within schoolyards and the inherent need to support heavy physical educational and recess uses and maintenance of turf of any quality becomes practically impossible to achieve.

It is also important to note that many respondents expressed an interest in the development or improvement of other ancillary facilities at the various playing field properties (support buildings, backstops, fencing lines, parking areas, sports lighting, irrigation, basketball courts, children's playground equipment...).

Other factors playing into the development of an appropriate recreation needs assessment for Walpole include the following:

***Current Trends-*** The popularity of certain recreational activities decreases and increases over time. For instance, lacrosse is experiencing incredible growth in many New England communities, including Walpole. Soccer continues to maintain great popularity with more than 1,000 participants.

American colleges, through their admissions policies, increasingly promote the need for well-rounded students that are immersed in both academics and extra curricular activities. This, in addition to a national movement toward improving "wellness" through better diets and activity has been cited as a possible contributor to the increase in athletic participation rates in many suburban towns, including Walpole.



*The Old Post Road School property contains undeveloped land that is suitable for potential field expansion pursuits.*

***Increasing Athletic Field Usage*** - Be it due to the increase in the popularity of athletics, enactment of Title 9 for women's sports, or Walpole's increased school age population or a combination of the three, the number of the users of the playing field venues is increasing. Specific participation rates for various sports leagues are included in the Appendix, but simply put, the numbers are have expanded dramatically. The construction of new venues has not kept pace with the increased participation rate. And with shrinking numbers of maintenance support staff it is easy to see why poor field conditions prevail at numerous locations.

***Field Use Analysis*** - Weston & Sampson concludes that the fields are used more than 200% of their safe use annually. This does not include outside regular events such as the Carnival, fireworks, rentals, passive recreation or other informal events that may occur. Refer to Appendix C for a detailed table of field usage. The following is a summary of the average study field use:

- The twelve study fields were used an estimated 5,150 hours for an average of 490 hours per field.
- More than 6,500 scheduled events occurred at the study fields for an average of 550 events per field during the season.
- Over 405,000 total annual "users" or an average of 33,800 annual "users" per field stepped foot on the study fields to participate in various sports activities or in recess and gym class activities at the school sites.

To provide a better understanding of the analysis and recommendations in this report, it is useful to compare the industry standard recommendations with the assumptions used in this report. The industry standards and report assumptions can generally be divided in two categories: “ideal utilization” and “realistic utilization” assumptions. The list below outlines some of the ideal recommendations of turf professionals (Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) and Turf Magazine, and various Universities) regarding the use and maintenance of the athletic fields.

- Make every effort to begin each season with 100% turf coverage.
- Industry field and turf professionals recommend limiting field event scheduling to 25 to 50 events (100 to 250 hours) of use per year. Natural turf areas become noticeably thin and bare beyond this limit and unable to recover.
- Each field should receive at least eight (8) weeks rest (no use at all) during the active growing season each year to allow the turf to rejuvenate prior to the next year’s use.
- Each field should receive one inch minimum of water, through rain or irrigation, each week, to maintain healthy and vigorous growth.
- Turf should receive the same level of industry recommended maintenance during active, inactive, and field rest periods.
- Each field should receive one (1) full year of rest with a full rejuvenation program every four (4) years to permit turf to be revitalized and to develop a sufficient “thatch” layer. Although seasonal thatch removal is a normal part of turf maintenance, athletic fields require a certain thickness of thatch to protect roots from players’ cleats, to maintain moisture, and to cushion players from injury.
- Football, soccer, and lacrosse tend to be more damaging to turf than other sports such as baseball and softball. Thus to prevent overuse of natural turf, a shared use field, i.e., soccer teams using baseball outfields, tends to be discouraged by field maintenance professionals.

While the above recommendations are “ideal utilization”, Weston & Sampson believes that it is unrealistic for most municipal recreation and maintenance departments to administer these “ideal” recommendations as a whole. Fiscal budget, personnel and facility supply limitations require a more “realistic utilization” of athletic fields. Listed below are industry standard recommendations for realistic utilization:

- Make every effort to begin each season with 100% turf coverage.
- Field scheduling should be limited to 75% to 90% of maximum capacity per week to allow sufficient rain date game replays; allowance for field, player, and equipment setup/takedown time; and some measure of in season field rest.
- Limit use of each sufficiently maintained natural turf field to 250 to 300 hours of use per season.
- Sufficient field quantities should exist to permit each field at least four (4) weeks rest (no use at all) during the active growing season each year to allow the turf to rejuvenate prior to the next year’s use.
- Fields that are not irrigated should be scheduled for minimal use during the summer season with play rotated frequently during the season to minimize turf damage, or provide on-site irrigation or watering systems for each town field. Exceptional damage occurs easily with use during hot and dry summer months.
- Maintain sufficient thatch levels and vigorous turf. All fields should receive the industry-recommended levels of maintenance throughout the spring and fall growing seasons.
- Play on multi-use fields should be routinely rotated, where possible, to minimize areas of turf damage and wear.

- Fields should be aerated and slice-seeded as necessary to ensure adequate root growth and turf coverage.

Given all of these factors, and as a result of the survey and master planning process, many basic needs have been identified, as summarized below:

<b>WALPOLE'S PLAYING FIELD NEEDS</b>
Better Field Conditions Needed Overall
More Playing Venues to Accommodate Usage
Fewer overlapping / Multi-use Fields
Opportunities to Rest Fields
Greater Access to Various Facilities
Improved Ancillary Facilities (Irrigation Systems, Bleachers, Backstops...)
Lighting to expand Period of Usage
More Funding for Basic Field Maintenance and Improvements
Increased Staffing Levels to Maintain Fields
New Capital Funding for Major Improvements at Field Properties

It is anticipated that the Town will require additional facilities in the future to meet the continued town-wide increase in sports activity participation rates. The “preferred” plans developed for each of the nine athletic field sites attempt to address the needs that are most pressing, most widely supported and most realistic given the nature of the properties that are available and given the fiscal realities of the community. However, since land is tight at all venues, there are limited realistic opportunities for field expansion at existing facilities, which will cause Walpole representatives to look to other potential open space properties in order to seriously address the poor playing conditions and lack of venues that characterize the system. There is also a need to limit the distance and amount of travel time for High School athletic programs. Relying on the refurbishment of existing facilities alone is risky, as capital investments may deteriorate rapidly unless the rates of use can be significantly curtailed at each playing venue.



## **SECTION 5**

# **SITE ANALYSIS, FIELD USE POLICY & RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

### **Site-by-Site Analysis**

Weston & Sampson (W&S) visited the sports field sites between January 2008 and June 2008 in order to complete an inventory and analysis of all relevant conditions. W&S identified issues and opportunities for improvement at each of the field sites. As the focus of our work was aimed at playing fields, we did not review other recreation elements that included courts, children's playgrounds and related amenities.

Based on these findings and Town input, we have developed a site analysis and existing conditions summary for each of the individual fields. Analysis covered field geometry and orientation, intensity of use, condition of turf and other surfaces, and types and condition of all ancillary features and facilities (backstops, benches, spectator seating, fencing etc.). In addition, topography, drainage, utilities and irrigation, pedestrian and vehicular access, circulation, ADA accessibility, parking, passive and active recreation uses, ecological factors, and other design elements were evaluated.

### **Base Mapping**

In order to present and describe the existing conditions of each site, W&S representatives with assistance from town staff members gathered available mapping and reports to support all plans and narratives. A variety of mapping sources were compiled for use in establishing a suitable base plan including the following:

- Aerial photography (numerous dates)
- Topographic and property line mapping related to certain sites
- Massachusetts (Mass) GIS mapping
- Town of Walpole GIS mapping
- Assessors Maps/Plot Plans
- Design Plans

Both Walpole and Commonwealth of Massachusetts GIS topographic mapping and corresponding aerial photography proved most useful and appropriate for the development of existing conditions plans and aerial photographs and proposed improvement plans. Although the mapping/aerial photography was considered adequate for the purposes of this master planning effort, it should be noted that new and more precise topographic, detail mapping and property line surveys may be required in order to develop final design and construction bid documents for the implementation of actual improvements at various properties.

W&S staff members undertook extensive field reconnaissance work in order to observe how properties are used, to better understand the physical characteristics of the land and to document the existing conditions of the natural and man-made features of each property.

Through this master planning effort Weston & Sampson representatives and Walpole Town officials were able to assess the Town of Walpole's major Town owned and maintained athletic facilities as a whole. This effort provided a unique opportunity to analyze the uses and activities throughout the Town and to develop a list of thoughtful and achievable enhancements at each of the facilities that will provide benefits to all members of the community.

## Field Use Policy

During the completion of the site analysis efforts at various field properties and in discussions with town staff members, it became apparent that Walpole has never established a field use policy. In recent years, many similar, nearby communities have adopted field use protocols in order to:



- Bring fair and equitable treatment to all user groups.
- Control use of fields during poor weather conditions (note that good field and turf conditions can be drastically deteriorated by a single use/event held during bad weather).
- Protect recent/future field improvements.
- Maintain better field conditions overall.
- Reduce pressure on, and help protect decision makers by adopting a clearly articulated and evenhanded use policy that is widely published and understood.

Officials in many communities were consulted in regard to their field use policy (including Westwood, Newton, Waltham, Needham, Framingham and Natick). Field use policies have become critical tools in establishing basic order and in protecting the significant investments that have been made at field complexes throughout the region. In fact, it is the desire to maintain superior playing conditions once major capital projects have been completed that has motivated many communities to establish use protocols.

- In Waltham, officials will not rush the opening of a new field facility until maximum grow-in (turf establishment) has been achieved. In this way, they are protecting their significant capital investments by preventing use until facilities can withstand play.
- In Needham, fields are often closed for short periods of time for minor renovation efforts (seasonal aeration and slice seeding operations). This inconveniences user groups, but the need to maintain good playing conditions takes precedent.
- Westwood and Needham officials all aggressively monitor field conditions and issue advisories to user groups as to field status. In Needham, a parent or player doesn't leave for an event without checking the field status on the Town's website or recorded information line. Coaches also alert parents and players through e-mail messages. During peak seasons, updates are issued on a daily basis (typically by 3:00 PM weekdays and early morning weekends). Needham recreation programming and public works staff collaborative to determine whether a field facility will be open for use.
- Waltham and Westwood hold violators of field policies responsible for damages to facilities.
- In many communities, fields that are plagued by heavy, wet soils that are slow to drain can be closed for several days until drier conditions allow for use without risk of excessively damaging the turf and underlying soil structure.

Excerpts from neighboring Westwood's "Guidelines for Use of Town and School Athletic Fields" are included below. The field use policy has become an essential tool in the programming, operation and maintenance of all field facilities and it helps officials to protect significant recent capital expenditures at various properties.



## **Town of Westwood Guidelines for Use of Town and School Athletic & Fields**

### **Cancellation Policy:**

Due to poor field conditions, potential hazards / unsafe conditions, and or inclement weather the Westwood Recreation Department and Westwood School Department reserves the right to deny an athletic activity or event from being held on a Town field. The two main purposes of this policy are to ensure the safety of participants and to prevent Town fields from getting abused and destroyed when the sod is vulnerable. Any Westwood School Administrator, Recreation official, Department of Public Works Official, Westwood Police Officer, or any other Town Official or designated person may deny use of a field and /or require an activity to stop.

Daily updates on fields, playable or closed [www.townhall.westwood.ma.us](http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us), go to Recreation Department, click on field status.

### **Conditions that require cancellation of an athletic or field activity:**

1. No field will open until the spring thaw is complete.
2. A field is automatically closed if standing water is evident.
3. Footing is unsure and slippery.
4. Ground is water logged and "squishy".
5. Grass can be pulled out of the ground easily.
6. Lightning
7. Severe weather storms
8. If concerned or in doubt about canceling, call the Recreation Department 461-0070 after 4:00 PM weekdays, or weekends after 7:00 AM.
9. League Officials make their decisions if weather / field conditions change after the initial cancellation (i.e. the sun comes out and dries the fields). They must use good judgment. If in doubt do not play or practice.
10. All League / Organization / Coach should "police" themselves, and report infractions to the Recreation & School Departments. The Recreation Department will contact League / Organization / Coach that have used fields improperly.

Use of a closed field, or one with standing water, jeopardizes the safety of all, in particular children. Future League / Organization / Coach use of Town fields will be in jeopardy if this happens. In addition, if the inappropriate use requires additional maintenance to restore the field to safe conditions, costs to repair will be charged to the League / Organization.

As Walpole considers making capital improvements to various playing field venues, it is critical to establish and adopt a field user policy to protect future improvements and to maintain desirable playing conditions. Even without new capital improvements, the policy is needed to help protect and improve current playing conditions at all playing venues. It takes considerable resources (Town funds for labor, materials, equipment etc.) to maintain fields at present. A field use policy would allow stakeholders to manage facilities better and to achieve better playing conditions as a result.

Basic steps related to establishment of a field use policy in Walpole may include the following:



- Designate the responsible party or parties who will implement and enforce the field use policy. In most communities this involves collaboration between those that offer programs (recreation departments) and those that maintain facilities (public works or parks departments). Two individuals working in concert can efficiently manage this effort.
  - Review other similar policies used in surrounding towns.
  - Meet with officials from nearby communities to determine strengths and weaknesses of their respective policies.
- Draft a field use policy that best meets the needs and desires that are unique to Walpole.
  - Review the draft policy with key constituents and stakeholders. Establish support and buy-in.
  - Adopt the policy.
  - Begin implementation of the policy. Widely circulate and publicize the policy.

### **Field Use Policy Recommendations**

It is important to note that the adoption of a clearly articulated, comprehensive field user policy in Walpole is not the sole avenue to better playing field conditions. As demonstrated throughout the master planning process, conditions will only improve by:

- Earmarking additional funds through the annual budgeting process for additional public works and parks maintenance staff hires, materials and equipment such that basic improvements can be undertaken without the need to go through a costly and cumbersome public bidding process.
- At field facilities that require major refurbishment efforts authorize capital expenditures to design, bid and construct the desired facilities. This might include the upgrading of existing facilities or the development of new facilities within undeveloped sections of existing field properties.
- It is evident that Walpole has a shortage of fields. The conflicts and pressures are documented throughout this study. It is critical to establish new playing venues at other Town-owned properties (developed or undeveloped) that are suitable for field development.

As old fields are refurbished and new fields are developed, the field user policy becomes a mechanism for protecting fields and to maintaining better playing conditions overall for all users.

More specific recommendations, on a site-by-site basis are included on the following pages.



# BIRD MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS

---

## Basic Site Description and Location

Bird Middle School is located just north of Route 27 at 625 Washington Street, with the athletic fields located between the back of the school and East Street. Bird Middle School has grades 6-8 with a student population of 460 students. The site is bordered by Grasshopper Lane and Lorusso Road residences (to the north) and by Route 27 (High Plain Street) and East Street residences to the south and west respectively. The athletic fields encompass approximately 7.6 acres. Described by many as the best overall complex in Walpole, the Bird Middle School Fields are highly sought after by user groups.

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

The field complex contains 2 full size baseball diamonds and one softball diamond located toward the perimeter of the site. The expansive outfields that form the approximate center of the complex allow for the marking out of rectangular shaped fields for a variety of activities (refer to the aerial images below).



## List of Playing Fields

- Eldracher Field- Full size 90' baseball
- Carty Field- Full size 90' baseball
- Softball Field- Full size 60' softball with skinned infield
- Multi-purpose Field - 240' x 150'
- Multi-purpose Field - 340' x 210'
- Multi-purpose Field - 340' x 200'

## Programmed Uses

- High School Varsity Baseball, Girl's Softball, Girls and Boys Soccer, Field Hockey, Lacrosse
- American Legion / Babe Ruth Baseball
- Walpole Youth Soccer
- Summer Recreation Programs
- Junior High School Gym/Recess
- Unsanctioned/informal uses by a variety of youth sports programs

## Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern

### Eldracher Field - Full Size 90' Baseball Diamond

Located immediately adjacent to the back of the school, Eldracher Field is the best full sized baseball diamond in Town, with excellent turf conditions prevailing throughout. The field has good orientation, meets all dimensional standards of a 90' baseball diamond and possesses sufficient foul territory on both sides of the field. To provide maximum flexibility, the field is absent of outfield fencing, which permits the marking out of rectangular fields across its outfield for other programmed uses. Primary issues of concern are summarized as follows:

- There are no formal dugouts areas and there is no protective fencing around player's bench areas or along foul territory area to protect players or spectators.
- Backstop fencing is in fair condition.
- There are no foul poles.
- Turf around player's benches is worn. (Note that Town forces have begun improving the turf in these areas.)
- Portions of the outfield overlap both the softball and Carty Field outfields creating safety issues at certain times and at other times limiting the number of events that can occur at once.
- The turf area in right field and left field is worn, due mainly to the layout of the rectilinear field that overlaps the outfield.



*Eldracher Field is the Town's premier baseball venue located to the back of Bird Middle School.*

Carty Field – Full Size 90' Baseball Diamond - Located in the northwestern corner of the property, despite its poor orientation, it is considered one of the premier fields in the Town, mainly due to the quality of the turf. Issues of concern and limitations include:

- Poor orientation creates safety issues for players during certain periods of time.
- There are no foul poles.
- The backstop and associated fencing along the player's benches and foul lines are in fair condition.
- The distance from home plate to the backstop is only 33 feet
- Foul balls interfere with the softball field.
- The right field overlaps left-center field of Eldracher Field making the programming of two baseball games at the same time difficult.



*Carty Field and the softball field are adversely impacted by their close proximity and poor orientation.*

Softball Field - Located in the southeastern corner of the facility, this 60' skinned infield diamond is heavily used and primary issues of concern include the following:

- Poor orientation creates safety issues for players during certain periods of time.
- Foul balls interfere with Carty Field along the third base side, despite 40' height netting intended to improve safety.

- Insufficient foul territory surrounding the infield creates safety concerns for players and spectators. Obstructions along the right field line create additional hazards to players (includes unchecked vegetation and equipment storage).
- The turf area in right field is worn as a result of heavily programmed, overlapping uses.
- The backstop and associated fencing along the player's benches and foul lines are in fair condition.
- The field has a small garage size shed for storage and two portable batting cages.

### **Other General Conditions / General Issues of Concern**

- To a large extent, turf conditions are very good due to exceptional maintenance practices and the adequacy of the irrigation system. However, worn turf areas are present in high use areas and with three season use, there is no opportunity to rest the fields.
- Unrestricted pedestrian movement impacts turf quality in various locations.
- Having multiple fields at a single site is advantageous from a staffing standpoint (trainers for instance can be at one site and not racing between multiple sites...), however the overlapping of fields creates conflict in play and safety concerns.
- There are no restroom facilities and the availability of school bathrooms is unpredictable.
- Spectator seating and amenities are completely lacking.
- There is no field use policy or restriction of use after a rain event or when wet conditions prevail.
- The field complex lacks adequate parking and access to and from events can be difficult and unsafe. Parking at the front of the school is remote and underused and residential abutters are impacted by the haphazard nature of parking by visitors to the site.
- There is no ADA access to the facilities and no formal handicapped viewing areas at any of the fields.

### **Photo Panels**

Following are images showing representative conditions at the Bird Middle School fields.



*A view of Eldracher Baseball Field with Bird Middle School to the right in the photograph. Note the worn areas around player's bench areas, the lack of protective fencing and spectator accommodations.*





*A view of Carty Field, Bird Middle School is to the back left and East Street to the right. Also shown at right is the limited extent of 90-degree (head-in) parking off of East Street.*



*A view of the softball field with Bird Middle School to the right in the photograph. Note the vegetated area and stored equipment along the foul line to the left.*



*Softball Field site conditions showing fenced in player's bench area, right field foul line, storage shed and spectator area, and home plate and backstop.*

## **Recommended Facility and Field Improvements**

The recommended master plan for the Bird Middle School property provides similar facilities (compared to existing) with the exception that one full-sized baseball field would be replaced with a Little League diamond in order to reduce space and programming conflicts, improve safety and achieve improved playing conditions overall. The construction of a new, full-sized baseball diamond at an alternative location is described later in this section. This new configuration would eliminate the current hazards caused by overlapping fields and would allow for establishment of a 360' x 195' multi-purpose field within the large, outfield area that is located between baseball and softball diamonds. In addition one or two 240' x 150' (U11 Soccer) can be laid out within the remaining outfield of a refurbished Eldracher Baseball Field.





*Image showing the preferred master plan for the Bird Middle School Property includes new field orientations, new amenities for players and spectators, new pathway systems and parking opportunities.*

## Recommendations Summary

- Re-constructed and re-oriented ball fields including a full-size 90' baseball diamond, regulation softball field and one Little League field with improved root zone growing media
- New 360' x 195' and 240' x 150' multi-purpose fields with an optional smaller field
- New ancillary facilities to include dugouts, player's benches, backstops, protective fencing, and spectator seating. Use of black vinyl clad fence as budgets permit for improved aesthetics.
- New, small parking area to be located within the property off of East Street with allowances for safe and convenient drop-off and pick-up.
- ADA compliant pathways linking all facilities, to be shared by service vehicles and emergency vehicles.
- The grading of the new fields would generally match existing conditions and ensure positive flow of stormwater to edges. Infields would be elevated slightly to direct stormwater to adjacent areas and subdrainage systems added as budgets permit to allow for quicker use of facilities after storm events.
- New or refurbished irrigation system for efficient, comprehensive watering of all turf areas.
- Consideration of a future park support building that would provide space for concessions, restrooms and storage.

- Upgrading of the East Street edge through the installation of new entrances with attractive signage, new native plantings and the removal of diseased, damaged or invasive plant species.

## Cost Considerations

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual property. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construct capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor for each year after 2008.

At Bird Middle School, the cost of improvements might vary dramatically based on the extent of actual field refurbishment efforts. A program that includes the complete stripping of soils, amending of soils to create improved growing media, installation of irrigation and subdrainage systems and extensive ancillary facilities (dugouts, backstops, spectator seating etc.) represents the highest level of refurbishment with the highest associated costs. A more modest field renovation project, that maintains large areas of turf and the prevailing grading of the site would have lower cost implications but may have maintenance and operation complications long-term. The program below represents a “middle of the road approach”.

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Major League Baseball Diamond-</b> New with 90’ basepaths, 350–400’ outfield dimensions	\$350,000	More limited renovation / refurbishment methodologies could be pursued at lower costs...
<b>Little League Baseball Diamond-</b> 60’ basepaths, 225’ outfield dimensions	\$200,000	Same as above
<b>Softball Diamond-</b> 60’ basepaths, skinned infield, 200’ outfield dimensions	\$200,000	Same as above
<b>Additional Turf Area-</b> remaining areas for multi-use field at center of complex	\$80,000	Same as above
<b>Parking Area-</b>	\$150,000	East Street parking area, development of other parking at front of school not included. Lower cost scenarios available if undertaken by Town forces or contractors
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities-</b>	\$20,000	Perimeter paths and connections to facilities
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	
<b>Park Support Building-</b>	N / A	Would help support all programming, but development likely only as a private venture
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost

# BOYDEN SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS

---

## Basic Site Description and Location

Boyden School is located at 1852 Washington Street in South Walpole. At close to an acre, the field area serves school gym classes and recesses, and summer recreational programs. The children of South Walpole have been educated on these grounds since 1855. Currently, the school enrolls approximately 460 students in grades K through 5. The field is bordered to the north and west by the school itself, and by wooded wetlands and a stream to the south and east. Approximately 100' away to the northeast is a municipal public outdoor swimming pool.

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

This facility consists of one 60' Little League baseball diamond with the outfield area available for the layout of one small rectangular field. Described as the second worst Little League field in Town, the field goes mainly un-used for formal Little League baseball play. The following descriptions and deficiencies are representative of both fields.



*A bird's eye view of the Boyden School property (photo at left) shows Washington Street and the municipal pool facility (bottom and top of photo respectively) and the field complex to the right (or south). Aerial view of the Boyden School property (photo at right) Washington Street is to the left side of the image and north is to the top of the view.*

## List of Playing Fields

- Little League Baseball Field
- Multi-purpose Field

## Programmed Uses

- Little League Baseball (limited use due to poor conditions)
- Youth Soccer
- Summer Recreation Programs
- Elementary School Gym/Recess



## Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern

### Little League Baseball Field/Multi-use Field

- The base-paths are sunken or concave in nature and the edges between the turf and infield are not uniform or flush
- The limits of the infield are poorly defined.
- The fencing is in very poor condition with sharp edges and protrusions, and gaps that create unsafe conditions for users and spectators.
- The concrete footings for fence posts have heaved creating trip/safety hazards.
- Poor orientation creates safety issues for players during certain periods of time.
- Field dimensions do not meet Little League standards (particularly the short left field)
- There is insufficient foul territory area down the left field line, with obstructions located within six feet of the foul line. There are no warning strips or tracks.
- The turf is in extremely poor condition. A “hardpan” dirt area in right field is caused by excessive use. Bare turf areas are abundant throughout with exposed rocks and depressions creating safety issues.
- Spectator seating options are limited by a lack of foul territory.
- There is no physical separation between the parking area and field, which creates further safety issues. Vehicles have been known to drive on to the field from time to time.
- There is no field use policy or restriction of use after a rain event or in wet conditions.
- The presence of an adjacent stream and wetlands will require the receipt of applicable permits for future improvements.
- Invasive, thorny brush surrounding the field constantly needs removal to minimize chance of player injury.

### Photo Panels

The following are images showing representative conditions at the Boyden Middle School fields.



*A view of the Little League field infield with its poorly defined limits and heavily compacted soils.*





*Photos of turf conditions showing “hardpan” conditions and bare spots*



*Backstops, player’s benches and field setbacks are substandard with few options for spectators to safely view a ballgame.*

## **Recommended Facility and Field Improvements**

A modest level of improvements could provide better opportunities for both school and Town programs and establish a playing venue that is safer for users and easier to maintain. This would include the installation of formalized pathways to provide access from various parking areas to the field facility, thus helping to reduce impacts to turf areas caused by uncontrolled foot traffic. The reworking of the adjacent parking area and service drive area would also allow for the slight expansion of the dedicated field and playground area without impacting the quantity of parking spaces or the ability to gain vehicular access to the school perimeter for service or emergency vehicles. With the very limited venue size, it is best to program the site for use by younger children, to reduce wear and tear and to help maintain improved turf conditions.



*The preferred master plan for Boyden school.*

## Recommendations Summary

### Field Area

- Upgrade the existing baseball field with improved infrastructure to include a renovated infield surface, engineered root zone mix throughout turf areas, irrigation and sub-drainage systems.
- The resulting field would have an approximately 150' outfield dimension. Due to dimensional restrictions and the close proximity to the school, primarily use should be by T-ball or 5-7 year old baseball with occasional practice for Little League teams.
- The improved facility would slightly reduce the burden at other Town controlled Little League fields (Stone & Morgan) that have larger dimensions for league play.
- A small part-time rectangular-shaped field would be laid out across the baseball outfield. This field could accommodate U9 soccer at 135' x 90' with the potential of stretching the field to U10 soccer at 180' x 120'. Two U7 fields can be laid out across a U9 field. The multi-use field could also be used for youth lacrosse and field hockey practice.
- ADA access is provided to the field and a connection path is added to the adjacent pool area. Establish optional loop path with connections to adjacent conservation areas.
- The grades of the renovated field would remain relatively the same, potentially elevating the infield slightly to allow for improved drainage.
- Establishment of a clear, concise field use policy would help protect the investments described above.

## Schoolyard Area

- Place a barrier at the edge of the asphalt between the basketball hoops/play area and the parking lot to prevent vehicles from entering the play area and field.
- The remaining triangular area (see diagram) would allow for expansion of the play area for the school. This area could have a resilient surface or play-style synthetic turf system. Synthetic turf systems for play areas are not as elaborate as athletic field turf systems. The incorporation of this remaining triangular area into the school play yard could also provide for a redesign of the entire school play yard, including the existing playground. Play structures could be incorporated within the area, creating a more integrated play environment.
- An outdoor classroom within the conservation area to include “education pods” could be constructed, providing an additional education tool for teachers at Boyden School.

## **Cost Considerations**

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual property. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construct capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor for each year after 2008.

At Boyden Elementary School, the cost of improvements might vary dramatically based on the extent of actual field/turf refurbishment efforts. A program that includes the complete stripping of soils, amending of soils to create improved growing media, installation of irrigation and subdrainage systems and extensive ancillary facilities (dugouts, backstops, spectator seating etc.) represents the highest level of refurbishment with the highest associated costs. A more modest field renovation project that maintains large areas of turf and the prevailing grading of the site would have lower cost implications. The program below represents a “middle of the road approach”.

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Little League Baseball Diamond-</b> 60' basepaths, 200-225' outfield dimensions	\$200,000	More limited renovation / refurbishment methodologies could be pursued at lower costs...
<b>Additional Turf Area-</b> remaining areas for multi-use field at center of complex	\$40,000	Same as above
<b>Parking Area-</b>	\$20,000	Refurbish adjacent parking area to allow for expansion of playground/field area
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities-</b>	\$12,000	Perimeter paths and connections to municipal pool and parking
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$272,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost



# JOHNSON MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS

---

## Basic Site Description and Location

Eleanor N. Johnson Middle School (JMS) is located at 111 Robbins Road just west of downtown Walpole. The athletic fields are located in the back of the school. A four court tennis facility is located between the school and the fields. The current athletic field area covers approximately 5.5 acres. There are also many acres of undeveloped land within the property, with potential for athletic field expansion. Gravel has been mined from this otherwise largely wooded area.

JMS is one of two middle schools in Walpole, with approximately 450 students attending grades 6-8. A Town water supply well, river and wetlands resource area are located to the southwest of the fields.



*The images above identify the basic locations of the two ball diamonds with overlapping multi-use fields sharing outfield space. Undeveloped sections of the property are shown to the top right and top left of the images respectively.*

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

The facility consists of two formal baseball diamonds and multi-purpose rectangular shaped fields that share the baseball outfields (refer to photo above). One or two large soccer fields can be laid out on the site. Layout of these fields will depend on orientation and the willingness to allow the field to overlap the baseball infields. The soccer fields can accommodate National Federation of High School (NFHS) requirements (dimensions of 360' x 225'). Since the soccer fields overlap both diamonds, it is difficult to program the two sports events at the same time.

## List of Playing Fields

- Baseball Field- Full size 90' basepaths
- Softball Field- Full size 60' with skinned infield
- Multi-purpose Field- 360' x 225'
- Multi-purpose Field- variable sizes available

## Programmed Uses



- High School varsity baseball
- Girl's softball
- Babe Ruth baseball
- Walpole Youth Soccer,
- Boy's and girl's High School soccer
- Girl's field hockey
- Boy's and girl's lacrosse
- Various summer programs
- The fields also host school gym classes and recesses

## **Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern**

### Full Size 90' Baseball Diamond

- Poor orientation creates safety issues for players during certain periods of time.
- The distance from home plate to the backstop is an acceptable baseball standard 50' and the field meets all dimensional standards of a 90' baseball diamond with adequate foul territory
- The outfield is not permanently fenced and the field has no foul poles. Fencing is not provided along foul territory.
- Backstop fencing is in poor condition; fencing around the player's benches is in fair condition.
- The turf is in extremely poor condition.

### Softball Field

- The softball field has good orientation.
- The infield meets all dimensional standards of a 60' softball diamond.
- There is not enough foul territory distance on either side of the field. The tree line encroaches on the left field foul territory area.
- Backstop fencing is in poor condition; fencing around the player's benches is in fair condition.
- There is no foul territory fencing.
- The turf is in extremely poor condition, at the player's benches turf areas are completely worn and compacted.

## **Other General Conditions / General Issues of Concern**

- Turf throughout the complex is very poor due to a lack of a water and fertilizer (the proximity to the Town drinking water supply well limits options in this regard). Soils are badly compacted. There is a terrible dust problem during dry periods of the season.
- Adequate parking is not available at this facility. A single paved parking area is provided off of Robbins Road adjacent to the fields. A larger parking area is available across Robbins Road, however it is remote and not convenient for patrons of the athletic fields.
- Player drop-off and pick-up is a problem with gridlock occurring during peak periods. The safety of pedestrians attempting to negotiate this area and other adjacent areas is compromised by serious infrastructure design deficiencies.
- Pedestrian connections and ADA compliant links to facilities are lacking, creating additional impacts on overall field conditions.
- The drainage within the fields is by sheet-flow with no formal drainage structures. Stormwater runs northeast to southwest toward the wetlands resource areas.
- There are no sports field lights at the facility.
- There are no restroom facilities and the use of school facilities is unpredictable.

## **Environmental Conditions/Restrictions and General Site and Safety Conditions**

There are severe environmental restrictions at the property due to the proximity to the water supply well. Much of the developed field areas are located within the aquifer recharge area for the well. This has historically limited the Town's ability to upgrade conditions at the property. The application of fertilizers, pesticides/herbicides is not permitted. There is a 400' buffer required around the well where no irrigation or fertilization of any kind can take place, including organic methods. The concept of "Field Turf" type systems were originally rejected due to perception that rubber pellets could compromise water quality characteristics with the recharge area.

The site is also surrounded by wetlands to the northeast and the southeast. DEP wetland regulation will apply and any renovations to the field would have to be permitted through the Conservation Commission.

**The primary safety concerns at this facility are due to the hard turf condition. Poor quality turf can lead to a variety of injuries. The parking conditions also pose a threat to user safety, especially during peak period of drop-off and pick-up.**

### Photo Panels

Following are images showing representative conditions at the fields.



*A view (above) of the softball diamond, prior to spring maintenance efforts. Skinned surfacing now covers the entire infield. Johnson Middle School is to the right. Views (two images below) of the baseball diamond with very poor turf conditions evident throughout.*





*Images above show the badly undersized, dead-end parking configuration located adjacent to the fields, the eroded slopes of an area that was previously mined and an upland area that would be far more suitable for the development of fields due to the proximity of the town drinking supply well.*

## **Recommended Facility and Field Improvements**

With the severe environmental restriction at the current facilities, the master plan calls for proposed athletic fields in the large wooded area located adjacent to and up gradient from the existing fields. The existing fields would be re-vegetated to allow for a buffer in the aquifer recharge area. It is worth investigating for the Town to designate this land as conservation land and trading it for other designated conservation land that might be more suitable for the construction of athletic fields. The total area proposed to be re-vegetated is 5.5 acres. The development of new fields would allow for the stabilization of the area that was formerly mined and for the establishment of appropriate maintenance and operation protocols that will allow for dramatically improved playing conditions.





*Image showing the preferred master plan for the Johnson Middle School Field property including new field locations and orientations, new pathway systems and potential parking lot improvements.*

## **Recommendations Summary**

- The construction of new facilities (baseball field, softball field and multi-use fields) would provide the Town with the opportunity for a first class, major multi-field athletic complex that would help to relieve overuse pressure at other properties.
- Within one contiguous open field, various configurations could accommodate different sports or activities depending on the season. This area could also be used as a large fair ground or tented area for community-wide events.
- Ballfield improvements include all ancillary facilities (bleachers, player’s dugouts, batting cages, backstops, foul poles and the like).
- New irrigation and subdrainage systems and engineered root-zone-mixes throughout turf areas would allow for the establishment and long-term maintenance of quality playing conditions.
- Grade new fields to take advantage of the existing terrain.
- Construct a new park support building to provide storage of equipment for athletic events, a potential concession area (with revenue potential) and a restroom facility for patrons.



- Establish new access drives and small-scale, destination specific parking areas to provide safe and convenient access to all amenities and opportunities for drop-off/pick-up. This will reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts; provide ADA access to the facilities.
- Determine desire for sports field lighting to determine related infrastructure needs in both the short and long-term.
- Pathway linkages would provide safe and convenient pedestrian access to all adjacent facilities. Establish linkages to adjacent nature trails (Base Circuit Trail).
- Establishment of a clear, concise field use policy would help protect the investments described above.

## Cost Considerations

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual property. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construct capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor after 2008.

At Johnson Middle School, the cost of improvements is significant as fields are being developed within previously undeveloped, but disturbed lands. High costs associated with the development of fields from scratch, new access drives and parking areas and the extensive earth moving and grading operations required to traverse the steep elevation changes make this an ambitious program that is likely to be accomplished only through a major capital project authorization. The costs indicated below include irrigation and subdrainage systems infrastructure to support maintenance and upkeep at the site and to ensure that suitable playing conditions can be maintained long after the initial capital expenditure has been made.

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Major League Baseball Diamond-</b> New with 90' basepaths, 350–400' outfield dimensions	\$400,000	Includes all ancillary facilities (bleachers, dugouts, fencing etc.)
<b>Softball Diamond-</b> 60' basepaths, skinned infield, 200' outfield dimensions	\$300,000	Same as above
<b>Additional Turf Area-</b> remaining areas for multi-use field at center of complex	\$400,000	
<b>Drive and Parking Area-</b>	\$800,000	Parking for 160+ cars
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities-</b>	\$120,000	Perimeter paths and connections to facilities
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$2,020,000</b>	
<b>Park Support Building-</b>	N / A	Would help support all programming, but with development likely as a private venture
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total Project cost

## Basic Site Description and Location

Located near downtown Walpole and across from Town Hall, Morgan Field is the premier Town-owned and maintained Little League Field. Situated within 8-acre Blackburn Memorial Park, the ballfield covers less than 1 acre. Located to the east of the field are woods, wetlands and Memorial Pond. A 50-car parking area sits immediately adjacent to the field to the south. The public swimming pool and a playground are located across the parking area. A second, smaller and poorly organized parking area is located adjacent to the field along School Street with parking for approximately 20 cars.

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

Morgan Field is the only athletic field at this site. The field has 60' basepaths and a recently expanded 180' outfield fence. The field has a turf infield with skinned base paths that is preferred for Little League play. The skinned infield, the infield turf and the turf adjacent to the infield is in excellent condition as a result of a spring 2008 refurbishment effort. There is also a small open area at the back (eastern edge) of the facility that is used for warm-ups and informal play.



## Programmed Uses

- Little League Baseball
- High School Freshman Softball

## Summary of Existing Conditions/Specific Issues of Concern

- The field orientation is close to the north-northeast alignment ideal for baseball play.
- The field is entirely contained with fencing (8' height along foul lines and 6' at outfield perimeter). Outfield fencing is new and in excellent condition. The remainder of the fencing is old and maintenance is constantly required to reattach fabric and remove hazardous protrusions.

- The field lacks warning tracks in certain areas.
- The distance from home plate to the backstop is five feet short of the recommended 25' for Little League play.
- Recessed dugouts exhibit drainage problems and are not ADA compliant.
- A small metal storage shed located along the third base line creates a hazard to players.
- Trees overhang the outfield fencing and interfere with fly balls.
- During certain summer periods, there is not enough parking to accommodate program participants. The parking area has one-way circulation with angled parking stalls, but contains inefficient and unused expanses of pavement.
- Frequent conflicts between pedestrians and drivers have been reported.
- Parking stalls immediately abut the right field ballfield fence, which eliminates any opportunity for spectator seating or pedestrian circulation.
- Foul balls careen into parking and spectator areas.
- The field is adjacent to Memorial Pond and associated stream/wetlands. The Conservation Commission has been reluctant to permit work within the Riverfront Protection Area (200' from stream edge) as past improvements have been considered.



## Photo Panels

Following images show representative conditions at Morgan Field.



*Photos left to right: There is no setback between field and parking. Turf conditions are very good overall and a storage box in left field foul territory creates a safety issue for players.*

## Recommended Facilities & Field Improvements

As all Morgan Field playing surfaces are in excellent condition, with a newly installed outfield perimeter fence, recommendations for this site include the refurbishment or replacement of all ancillary facilities and adjacent parking areas. These improvements would provide more generous foul territory, more comfortable spectator accommodations and improved parking circulation and capacity.

A proposal to add a small field and an access drive off of Stone Street was investigated as part of the master planning effort but deemed infeasible due to environmental restrictions.





*The preferred master plan for Morgan Field showing the reconfigured parking area, new gravel parking area to the back of the site and the increased green space between the parking lot and the field.*

## Recommendations Summary

- Refurbish, reconfigure and/or expand current parking areas to include one-way circulation, 45 degree angled parking and appropriate pedestrian pathways and connections.
- Install a new backstop with a Little League standard distance of 25' from home plate.
- Replace other deteriorated fence systems along the left field and right field edges.
- Construct new pedestrian and spectator amenities at the infield perimeter in areas recovered through the reconfiguring of the existing parking areas.



- Up-grade the recessed dugouts to correct poor drainage and allow for ADA compliance or convert to at-grade installations.
- Install a small gravel overflow parking area to the back of the site.
- Install new, attractive signage and enhance property edges and entrances consistent with the Town’s premier Little League playing venue.

### Cost Considerations

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual property. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construct capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor for each year after 2008.

At Morgan Field, the focus of improvements is on the establishment of improved spectator accommodations and on access and parking improvements that will establish a more efficient flow of traffic and better pedestrian safety. Improvements will build off of the excellent field/turf conditions that have been attained through the Town’s recent in-house refurbishment efforts.

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>New Ancillary Facilities at Infield Perimeter</b>	\$120,000	Includes new backstop, other fencing, dugout improvements, spectator seating, pedestrian pathways and zones etc.
<b>Parking Area (Existing)-</b>	\$80,000	Consider using Town forces and/or other Town contracts for asphalt pavement etc.
<b>Parking Area (New Gravel)</b>	\$50,000	Use Town forces to reduce costs
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost

# NEW FISHER SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS

---

## Basic Site Description and Location

New Fisher School is located at 65 Gould Street one block away from the Old Fisher School and the Bristol County Agricultural School. Fisher School is one of four elementary schools in Walpole. The school has over 470 students in grades K-5. The almost one acre field is situated at the front of the school along and parallel to Gould Street. A few residences along with the agricultural school property are located across Gould Street from the field. The school and the school parking areas sit to the east of the field and wetlands associated with Cobb's Pond are to the south and west. The field sits approximately 8' below Gould Street with a small slope between the street and the field. The slope is advantageous as spectators can sit on the slope to view events. Parking for the facility is provided at the school parking lot. There is sufficient parking and the parking lot is immediately adjacent to the field.

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

The single athletic field at Fischer School is rectangular-shaped and barely large enough to host U10 or U11 soccer. A small basketball court is tucked into the southern corner of the field. A 4' high chain-link fence separates the field from portions of the parking area and Gould Street. There are no formally programmed Town athletic events at this facility.



*Existing Conditions image and plan of the New Fisher School property. Gould Street is above the school in the images. North is to the top of the image.*

## List of Playing Fields

- One Multi-purpose Field 200' x 110'
- One Basketball Court

## Uses (Not Regularly Programmed, Informal Use Only)

- Walpole Youth Soccer
- Little League baseball practice
- Lacrosse, Soccer and other teams make use of the field for practice
- Elementary School Gym/Recess
- Soccer and Flag Football games during after school program

## Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern

- The turf at the field varies from good to poor condition depending on the intensity of use at that location. Poor turf tends to form the low-lying center of the field.
- The field is excessively pitched at about a 4% gradient away from Gould Street.
- At the southwestern portion of the field the grade forms a bowl condition where water collects after rain events.
- Turf areas are badly compacted, especially at the center.
- There is no physical separation between the parking area and field.
- There is no formal pathway system for patrons to access the field.
- The field is immediately adjacent to a stream and wooded bordering vegetative wetlands (BVW).



*A view of the field from the school parking area with the basketball court in the foreground.*

## Recommended Facility and Field Improvements

Recommendations include the relocating of the existing basketball court to just south of its current location. The additional area that is yielded from this move would allow for expansion of the small rectangular-shaped field. The expanded field could accommodate U10 soccer at 180' x 120' with the potential of stretching the field to U11 soccer at 240' x 150'. Two U9 fields can be laid out across a U11 field. The multi-use field could also be used for youth lacrosse and field hockey practice.

## Recommendations Summary

- Relocate the existing basketball court.
- Re-grade the field area to eliminate the steep cross-pitches and low water ponding areas.
- Expand the multi-purpose field to incorporate the basketball court area.
- Reconstruct the field with improved root zone growing media and new irrigation.
- New ancillary facilities to include player's benches, protective fencing, and spectator seating. Use of black vinyl clad fence as budgets permit for improved aesthetics.
- Establishment of a clear, concise field use policy would help protect the investments described above.
- Provide ADA access to the field.
- Place a barrier at the edge of the field and the parking lot, preventing vehicles from entering the field.



*The recommended master plan showing the expanded U11 field and the relocated basketball court*

## Cost Considerations

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual property. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construct capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor for each year after 2008.

At the New Fisher School, the cost of improvements is at the high end due to the extent of actual field/turf refurbishment efforts. The program includes the complete stripping of soils, amending of soils to create improved growing media, installation of irrigation and subdrainage systems and new ancillary facilities. The costs of the program below could be reduced through the strategic use of Town forces, materials and equipment and through the use of other Town contracts (annual contracts for asphalt paving for example).

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>New Basketball Court-</b> At new location allows for field expansion	\$50,000	Consider using Town forces and/or other Town contracts for asphalt pavement etc.
<b>Multi-purpose Field-</b> Refurbish entire open field area	\$250,000	Full refurbishment includes improved growing media, irrigation and subdrainage systems. Partial use of Town forces could reduce costs.
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities-</b>	\$20,000	Perimeter paths and connections to parking
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$320,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost



## OLD FISHER FIELD

---

### Basic Site Description and Location

Old Fisher Field is located at the site of the former Fisher School on Main Street. It has become known as “Old Fisher School” upon construction of the New Fisher School. The Field is approximately 1 acre in size. Programmed uses and activities include: Little League “Pee-Wee” games (coaches pitch) and softball.

### Facilities and Amenities Provided

The facility consists of a single Softball/Little League field.

### Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern

- The ballfield has poor orientation with home plate to pitchers mound alignment running primarily in a north-south direction. This orientation allows a lower southern sun to obstruct the batters vision.
- The infield is entirely skinned infield mix material, preferred for softball use, however not ideal for Little League baseball.
- The field meets all dimensional standards of a 60’ softball diamond, and there is plenty of foul territory distance on both sides of the field.
- There is protective fencing provided in front of each bench area but not along the foul territory areas.
- Field is relatively flat and does not seem to drain well.
- Parking is an issue at this property, with visitors to the site poorly directed or informed as to where to store their vehicles.

The nearby parking area serves the Old Fisher School, which is now an office building. Parking at this location is strictly restricted to building office uses. It is intended that patrons using the field must park in the Aggie parking area and walk to the field.



### Recommended Facility and Field Improvements

There is a concept in discussion that would swap (with the Aggie School) this property for another piece of land that would better accommodate desired field-based recreation programs. For this reason, no specific recommendations or associated cost considerations are set forth at this time.

# OLD POST ROAD SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS

---

## Basic Site Description and Location

Located at 99 Old Post Road in East Walpole, Old Post Road Elementary School has approximately 500 students in grades K-5. An athletic field is situated to the rear of the school building. The field is bordered by residences (southeast), a school playground area (northeast), woodlands (northwest) and several residential properties on Windsor Road and Ponderosa Lane (northeast). A new residential development and associated stormwater detention basin is being built just to the northeast of the school property. The athletic field encompasses approximately 1.4 acres. The adjacent woodlands encompass approximately 3.8 acres and provide an excellent opportunity for field expansion.

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

The softball/Little League field has poor orientation that allows a pitcher's vision to be obstructed by the setting western sun. The infield contains a skinned mix, which is preferred for softball play and somewhat acceptable, but not preferred, for Little League play. There is no room in the outfield for the layout of a multi-purpose field.



## List of Playing Fields

- Little League Baseball /Softball Field 60' basepaths

## Programmed Uses

- Little League Baseball
- Girls Softball
- Elementary School Gym/Recess

## Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern

- Infield and outfield dimensions meet standards for full-sized Little League and softball playing venues, however there is not enough foul territory and the space allotted for spectators is inadequate.

- Without warning tracks at fence lines or woodland edges, player's chasing down foul balls are at risk of injury from coming into contact with obstructions.
- Foul balls are frequently lost within adjacent woods and abutter yards.
- The turf is in extremely poor condition and badly compacted due to extremely heavy use. Expansive bare spots with exposed rocks and depressions in certain areas create hazards.
- A terrible dust problem exists during dry periods of the season, which causes the delay or postponement of games. Little League representatives rank this as the worst Little League field in the community.
- The backstop and the fencing at player's benches and along foul territory are in fair condition.
- The field pitches away from the school at about a 2% gradient. There are no stormwater structures within the field and higher grades within adjacent woodland areas cause water to back up around home plate and along the 3rd base line. Washouts are a problem during/after heavy rainstorms.
- There is no irrigation system.

## Photo Panels



*Intensive use adversely impacts turf quality throughout the field. Wooded areas along the left field side of the field provide an opportunity for expanding the field.*



## Recommended Facility and Field Improvements

The construction of two new softball/Little League fields and one overlapping multi-purpose field is recommended and would provide valuable new playing venues and help ease the burden on other field facilities in the town system. One softball/Little League field is shown in the same basic location, but shifted slightly to achieve an improved orientation and to provide increased foul territory and spectator seating options. The second ball field would be constructed in the wooded area behind the existing field. The existing school play area is unaffected by the recommended changes.



## Recommendations Summary

- Relocation and reconstruction of the Little League field to achieve an improved north/northeast orientation and construction of new ancillary facilities including backstop, fence lines, foul poles, player's benches and spectator bleachers.
- Construct a new Little League/softball field within the existing wooded area with new ancillary facilities including backstop, fence lines, foul poles, player's benches and spectator bleachers.
- Establish a rectangular shaped multi-use field (330' x 195'), a portion of which would overlap the Little League outfield(s).



- Construct fields with appropriate soil growing media, grading, stormwater and subdrainage systems and a new automated irrigation system. This would eliminate the current dust problem at the field.
- Install pedestrian pathways throughout the facility to provide ADA compliance and direct connections to all major park facilities with shared use by service and emergency vehicles.
- Consider construction of a future park support building that would accommodate concessions, equipment storage and restrooms.
- A short-term effort improvement at this property might include the installation of a phased irrigation system at the existing field in order to eliminate the current dust problem and to improve current turf conditions. This work could be viewed as a phase 1 program for the larger project described above.

## Cost Considerations

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual property. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construct capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor for each year after 2008.

At Old Post Road School, the cost of improvements is significant as one of the Little League fields is being developed within previously undeveloped, wooded lands and the other field is being relocated and reconstructed. High costs associated with the development of fields from scratch, make this an ambitious program that is likely to be accomplished only through a capital project authorization. The costs indicated below include irrigation and subdrainage systems to support maintenance and upkeep at the site and to ensure that suitable playing conditions can be maintained long after the initial capital expenditure has been made.

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>New Little League Baseball Diamond-</b> Refurbished 60' basepaths, 225' outfield dimensions	\$300,000	Within woodland area, look for inexpensive clearing options
<b>Reconstructed Little League Baseball Diamond-</b> 60' basepaths, 225' outfield dimensions	\$200,000	More limited renovation / refurbishment methodologies could be pursued at lower costs...
<b>Additional Turf Area-</b> remaining turf areas for multi-use field	\$40,000	
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities</b>	\$20,000	Perimeter paths and connections to facilities
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$560,000</b>	
<b>Park Support Building-</b>	N / A	Would help support all programming, but development likely only as a private venture
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost

## Basic Site Description and Location

Stone Field is located behind Town Hall at 30 Stone Street. The field size is approximately 2.1 acres. The field is surrounded on three sides by municipal parking areas. To the north of the fields runs Spring Brook that flows into Memorial Pond. With its downtown location, Stone Field has historically served as a focal point of community life and venue for important civic events and sports activities. The recreation office is located in Blackburn Hall, across the parking area to the south of the field.

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

Stone Field contains a shared Little League/softball field and space to layout various rectangular shaped, multi-purpose fields. The main multi-purpose field is 300' x 180', runs in a north-south direction, and overlaps the softball infield. A second, smaller rectangular field is marked out to the north, in close proximity to the brook. This field is used mostly for youth sports or practice. The softball/Little League field has fairly good orientation (north-south) and the entire infield contains skinned infield mixture, which is preferred for softball use and acceptable, but not preferred for Little League play. The field is also host to the spring carnival sponsored by American Legion baseball.



## List of Playing Fields

- Softball/Little League Baseball Field 60' basepaths
- Rectangular Multi-purpose fields (one 300' x 180' field overlapping infield and one smaller field)

## Programmed Uses

- Pop Warner Football
- Little League Baseball (includes T-ball)
- High School Lacrosse, Football Practice
- Senior Softball (Town Recreation League)
- Pre-school Soccer
- Various Town Recreation Programs
- Summer Carnival Sponsored by American Legion Baseball.

## Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern

### Softball/Little League Baseball Field

- The field meets all dimensional standards of a 60' softball diamond; however there is not enough foul territory distance on the right side of the field.
- The backstop and fencing at player's benches is in poor condition and in need of replacement.
- There are no warning tracks, which create hazards to players chasing foul balls.
- Outfield turf areas are in poor condition (due to extremely heavy use and play during wet/cold seasons), soils are badly compacted and large expanses of the field remains wet and muddy after a rain event due to poor grading and drainage.

### Rectangular Multi-purpose fields

- The large rectangular field is used for football, lacrosse etc., and is oriented generally north-south.
- The turf is in extremely poor condition. Bare spots and surface depressions are evident and soils are badly compacted. These conditions create safety issues for players.
- There is a terrible dust problem during dry periods.

### **Other General Conditions / General Issues of Concern**

- The field complex is very flat, with pitches of less than 1% in places. The field is very poorly draining with water impoundments apparent in places.
- The close proximity of parking around three sides of the field impact the quality and character of the space for players and spectators.
- There are no ADA compliant access points, pathways or seating areas within the complex.
- Canadian Geese are nuisance at the field and their droppings are hazardous to players.

### **Photo Panels**

Following are images showing representative conditions at Stone Field:



*Overall, Stone Field is a much-loved facility, but a challenge to maintain in good condition due to the extreme intensity of use and the limited opportunities to expand (Town Hall, the brook, and parking areas form the immediate perimeter of the field). In essence, the field is never rested and frequently used even in inclement weather conditions.*





*Backstops, player's benches and field setbacks are substandard with few options for spectators to safely view a ballgame.*



*Image showing poor drainage and water impoundment at left. A bird's eye image of the facility with the American Legion Carnival set up on the field. Note the location of the equipment compared to the wear areas shown in the image on the prior page.*

## **Recommended Facility and Field Improvements**

On the following page, two optional master plans identify the same basic renovation program that involves the slight realignment and reconstruction of the softball/Little League field, minor reconfiguring of the adjacent Town Hall/Senior Center parking lot and reestablishment of a 180' x 330' multi-purpose field within the outfield areas. Under any scenario, it will be impossible to attain more desirable playing conditions without the establishment of a clearly defined and fairly enforced fields use policy, which would help to reduce overall usage and eliminate play during poor weather conditions.





## Recommendations Summary

- Reconstruct the softball/Little League field slightly south of its current location (by reconfiguring the parking area) to allow for the establishment of a full-size, multi-purpose field without infield overlap. The realigned and expanded multi-use field (330' x 180') will be able to accommodate football, lacrosse and field hockey as well as several layouts for various youth soccer.
- Adjust the multi-use field alignment seasonally to allow heavy use zones to recover.
- Construct new ancillary facilities including bleachers, backstop (within expanded green space at reconfigured parking area perimeter), fenced in player's bench areas, foul poles and the like.
- If desired, a temporary fence can be installed around the outfield of the ballfield to provide the all-important home-run experience and help control use of the field during certain seasons.
- The field should be constructed using an engineered sand-based root zone mix, sub-drainage systems, proper grading and new irrigation systems.

The central location and abundant parking make Stone Field the ideal location in town for the American Legion Carnival, however the heavy equipment severely damages the turf at a time of year when it is difficult for turf to recover. Continued use of Stone Field for the annual spring carnival will result in continued poor field conditions. If the Carnival is to continue, measures should be undertaken in order to protect turf areas.

*A Guide to Synthetic and Natural Turfgrass for Sports Fields - Selection, Construction and Maintenance Considerations* by the Sports Turf Managers Association (ASTM) recommends the following:

*Care must be taken to protect each type of field surface. Typically, a sports turf manager will place a protective covering over the turf and will develop a plan to safeguard the turf during the event. Types of materials that should be considered to protect field surfaces for staging and roadways are:*

- *¾ inch plywood (may require two layers)*
- *Pre-manufactured road mat; and*
- *Geo-textile blanket.*

*Other materials are available for protection under the staging and for the seating areas. These products should be investigated to find the one that best suits the event situation. The use of these additional materials to host such events should be taken into consideration and incorporated into the overall cost to produce the event.*

The turf protection matting will help to distribute the weight of the equipment more evenly over the turf area. It will also help to defuse damage that otherwise would be caused by turning tires or equipment supports.

## Cost Considerations

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual property. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construction capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor for each year after 2008.

At Stone Field, the cost of improvements is at the high end due to the extent of actual field/turf refurbishment efforts. The program includes the complete stripping of soils, amending of soils to create improved growing media, installation of irrigation and subdrainage systems and new ancillary facilities. The costs of the program below could be reduced through the strategic use of Town forces, materials and equipment and through the use of other Town contracts (annual contracts for asphalt paving for example).

Improvements	Budget	Notes
<b>Reconstructed Little League Baseball Diamond-</b> 60' basepaths, 225' outfield dimensions	\$250,000	More limited renovation / refurbishment methodologies could be pursued at lower costs...
<b>Multi-use Field-</b> Refurbish remaining turf areas for multi-use field	\$50,000	
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities-</b>	\$50,000	Perimeter paths and connections to facilities, perimeter fence improvements
<b>Parking Area Refinements</b>	\$50,000	Use Town forces or other Town contracts for asphalt pavement work etc.
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost

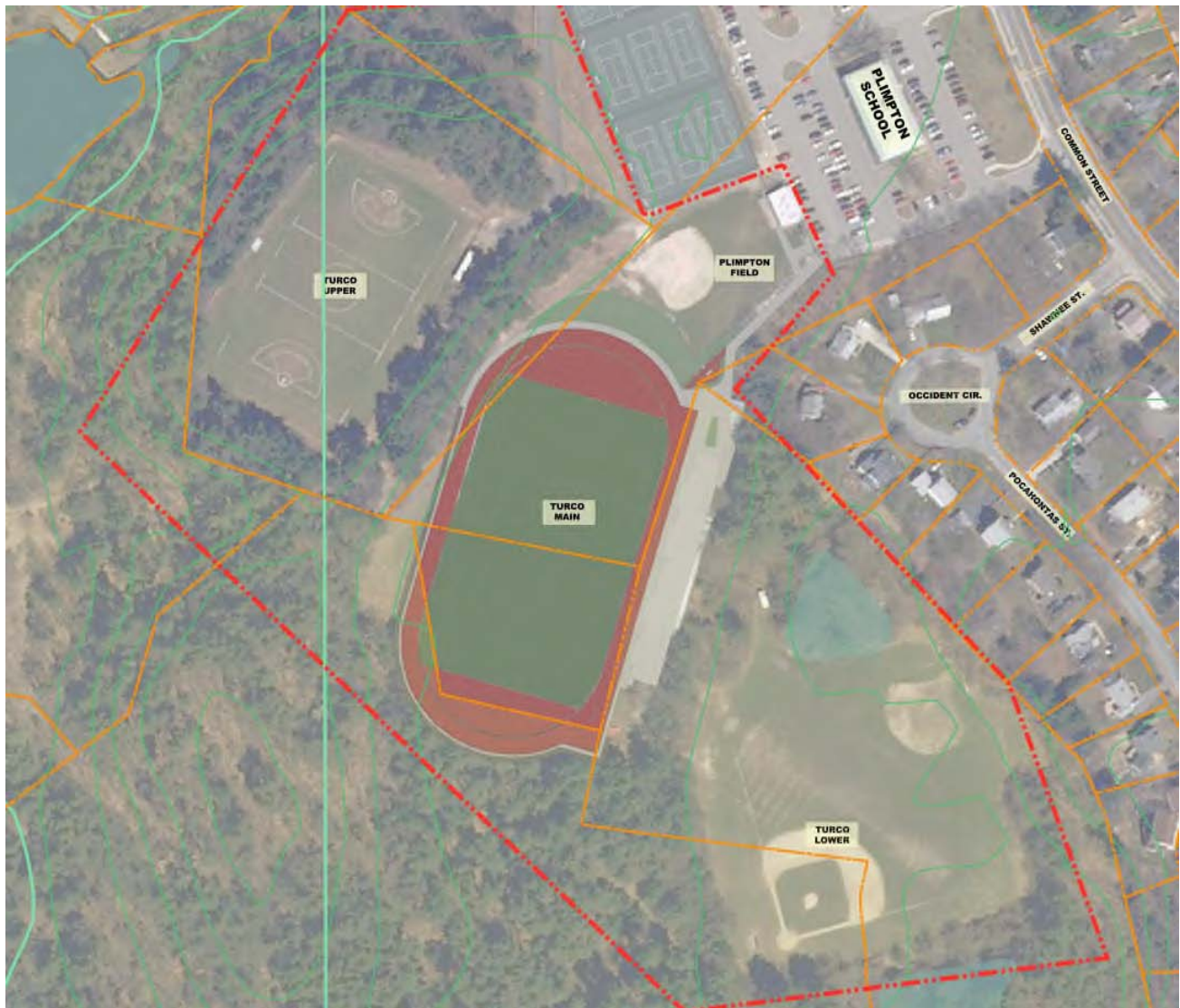
# TURCO + PLIMPTON FIELDS

## Basic Site Description and Location

The Turco Fields (Upper, Main and Lower) and Plimpton Field are all located at Walpole High School on Common Street. Totaling more than 11 acres, the fields support a wide range of high school and community athletic programs. The Town forest and other Town-owned properties form three sides of the property. Residential abutters are located to the west of the high school fields at Occident Circle, Shawnee Street and Pocahontas Street.

## Facilities and Amenities Provided

The school field complex contains four distinct facilities, Turco Upper Field, Turco Main Field, Turco Lower Field and Plimpton Field. The fields are separated by vegetation and steep changes in topography.



*The aerial image identifies the four basic playing venues located at Walpole High School. Note that Common Street is to the upper right side of the image and that the high school is to the top (but not shown). North is straight up.*





## List of Playing Fields

Turco Upper Field- Multi-purpose 300' x 180'

Turco Main Field- Multi-purpose synthetic turf field with 400 Meter running track

Plimpton Field- Softball/Little League- 60' base paths

Turco Lower Field- Baseball 90' basepaths, Softball Field 60' basepaths, shared multi-purpose field

## Programmed Uses

- High School Baseball, Girl's Softball, Girls and Boys Soccer, Field Hockey, Lacrosse, Football, Track and Field
- Pee Wee Little League (2<sup>nd</sup> most important venue) in Town.
- Boys and Girls Youth Lacrosse
- Youth Football and Cheerleading
- Other Community Uses

## Summary of Existing Conditions / Specific Issues of Concern

Turco Upper Field- This field consists of a single rectangular shaped field that is primarily used for girl's lacrosse, field hockey and boy's soccer. The field sits within a 2.5 acre open area, in which the actual fenced in field area takes up approximately 1.7 acres. The field has good orientation and is irrigated. Primary issues of concern are summarized as follows:

- The isolated location and lack of adjacent parking and drop-off/pick-up area creates access challenges particularly for the elderly and those with physical limitations.
- The field is irregularly graded with a drastic low area along the southern edge. This badly impacts all play but especially field hockey.
- Turf conditions deteriorate dramatically as the season progresses, by summer conditions are fair at best. Goal areas in particular become badly worn.
- The field is overused; with no options for rotating the alignment of play to reduce wear.





Turco Main Field – (this field was recently renovated with new synthetic turf and track surfaces)

- Final site restoration issues are being resolved.
- ADA compliance issues are also being resolved.
- Lighting is not installed or formally approved for the field, but it is seen as being essential in order to expand programming opportunities and reduce the burden on other facilities in Town.

Plimpton Field

- Used as staging area for the Turco Main project. Final restoration efforts are in planning.
- Turf quality of field impacted by unrestricted access from concession facility.
- Recently renovated concession/support building is in excellent condition.
- The field possesses a very short outfield (150' down the right field line and 180' down the left field line).



Turco Lower Field

- Major dust problem during dry period of the season. (Similar to Old Post Road School.) Games have to be stopped or postponed on especially dry and windy days.
- Fencing, benches and related appurtenances at both fields are in poor condition.
- There is little or no room to accommodate spectators and there are no bleachers at the facility.
- The field lacks an irrigation system
- Conservation Commission issues (proximity to wetland resources areas) have impacted Town's ability to upgrade certain field conditions.



**Recommended Facility and Field Improvements**

Major renovation efforts are recommended to all of the fields except Turco Main, which has just been renovated. But even at Turco Main, certain improvements are required to make the facility ADA compliant and to complete other planned/desired installations. There is a need to upgrade circulation amenities to provide safe, convenient and ADA compliant pathways connecting to all major facilities for pedestrians as well as maintenance, service and emergency vehicles. Even with massive grading efforts, it would be costly and environmentally challenging to add field to undeveloped areas surrounding Upper Turco Field. Previous planning efforts proposed to level the hill and expand facilities were not implemented.



## Recommendations Summary

### Turco Upper Field

The primary recommendation includes expanding the current field footprint by means of shifting the field slightly to the north to increase available width and allow for rotation of the playing area. This will allow worn/heavy use areas to recover.

- Better turf quality can be achieved by rotating the field and a slightly wider field would allow for additional programming of youth soccer activities, as soccer could be played both directions. Construct a small retaining wall on either side of the field to accomplish the expansion.
- Field marker pins could be placed in the field to help identify and delineate the various field layout options.

- Install an in-filled synthetic turf field system. If an in-filled turf system cannot be installed, the field should be reconstructed using an engineered sand based root zone mix or amended in place with sand additives and include subdrainage systems if warranted by soil characteristics.
- New grades would provide for the crowning of the field and establishment of goals at both ends of the field at identical elevations.
- Construct 3 or 4 handicapped parking spaces at the top of the service drive including a small turn around area for drop-off/pick-up of seniors and those with disabilities as well as sports equipment and game supplies.
- Construct a 6' wide, ADA compliant, perimeter loop path around the field to provide pedestrian connection to both sides of the field and to provide opportunities for walking, jogging etc. by those that may prefer this type of setting to the more formal 400m track.

#### Turco Main Field

- Provide improved accessibility to all amenities.
- Provide lighting for extended use of the field and track.

#### Plimpton Field

- Reconstruct the field to include appropriate growing media and new turf and infield areas.
- Install irrigation, subdrainage systems and drainage systems as needed to maintain good quality turf conditions over the long run.
- Install ancillary facilities including a new backstop, fencing, foul poles, player's benches, bleachers and other related amenities.

#### Turco Lower Field

- Refurbish fields at current locations including all turf and infield areas.
- Replace backstops, fence lines, player's benches, and establish new bleachers.
- Install new irrigation systems and subdrainage systems as soil conditions warrant.
- Field marker pins could be placed in the field to help identify and delineate the various multi-purpose field layout options.

#### General Recommendations

- Provide switch back pathways, not necessarily handicapped "ramps", but ADA compliant pathways that traverse the terrain between all facilities.
- Provide informational/directional signage to remote facilities for visitors and infrequent users.
- Provide small park support structures at key locations. The support structure would provide storage/restroom/concession (with revenue potential) spaces.
- Reinforce and improve connections to the adjacent Town Forest nature trails and to other undeveloped properties surrounding the fields.



## Cost Considerations

The following cost considerations and budget outlines relate to the basic scope of potential improvements that have been identified for the individual properties. It is important to note that the costs identified typically reflect a fairly comprehensive refurbishment effort to be accomplished through a traditional design, bid and construct capital project process. The costs could vary considerably based on the manner in which the improvements are grouped, the time that it takes to implement the full extent of improvements and the methodology selected for implementing the actual improvements. As with the plans themselves, the estimates are conceptual in nature and will require confirmation and refinement as actual improvements are contemplated. For projects that might not occur for many years, it will be critical to assign a 5% annual escalation factor for each year after 2008.

At Turco Upper Field, the cost of improvements might vary dramatically based on the extent of actual field refurbishment efforts. A program that includes the complete stripping of soils, amending of soils to create improved growing media, installation of irrigation and subdrainage systems and extensive ancillary facilities (players bench areas, spectator seating etc.) represents the highest level of refurbishment with the highest associated costs. A more modest field renovation project, that maintains large areas of turf and the prevailing grading of the site would have lower cost implications. The program below represents a “middle of the road approach”.

Improvements	Budget	Notes
<b>Reconstructed Multi-use Field-</b> Full reconstruction and expansion to allow for rotating heavy use zones	\$250,000	More limited renovation / refurbishment methodologies could be pursued at lower costs...
<b>Parking Area-</b> Small area with 2-3 spaces and associated service drive to also improve accessibility	\$100,000	Lower cost scenarios available if undertaken by Town forces or contractors
<b>Accessible Pathways Loop Path + Other Amenities-</b>	\$50,000	Perimeter paths and connections to facilities
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost

At Turco Lower Field, the cost of improvements will also vary dramatically based on the extent of actual field refurbishment efforts. A program that includes the complete stripping of soils, amending of soils to create improved growing media, installation of irrigation and subdrainage systems and extensive ancillary facilities (dugouts, backstops, spectator seating etc.) represents the highest level of refurbishment with the highest associated costs. A more modest field renovation project, that maintains large areas of turf and the prevailing grading of the site would have lower cost implications. The program below represents a “middle of the road approach”.

Improvements	Budget	Notes
<b>Major League Baseball Diamond-</b> New with 90' basepaths, 350–400' outfield dimensions	\$300,000	More limited renovation / refurbishment methodologies could be pursued at lower costs...



<b>Softball Diamond-</b> 60' basepaths, skinned infield, 200' outfield dimensions	\$250,000	Same as above
<b>Additional Turf Area-</b> remaining areas for multi-use field at center of complex	\$100,000	Same as above
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities-</b>	\$50,000	Perimeter paths and connections to facilities
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$700,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost

At Plimpton, the program includes the complete stripping of soils, amending of soils to create improved growing media, installation of irrigation and subdrainage systems and extensive ancillary facilities (dugouts, backstops, spectator seating etc.) and generally represents the highest level of refurbishment with the highest associated costs.

<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Little League Baseball Diamond-</b> 60' basepaths, 225' outfield dimensions	\$250,000	Same as above
<b>Accessible Pathways + Other Amenities-</b>	\$10,000	Perimeter paths and connections to facilities
<b>Subtotal Construction</b>	<b>\$260,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Design Fee</b>	10%	Approximate 10% of total projected Project cost

### **Funding Opportunities**

There are many potential sources of funding from both public and private entities that could help to pay for potential improvements to field sites in Walpole. Donations, both large and small, can be lumped together to create the financing needed to undertake meaningful improvements. The Town of Walpole will aggressively pursue a variety of funding and implementation strategies that could include:

- **Traditional Public Bidding-** Develop plans, specifications and estimates for the desired improvements, publicly advertise, receive bids and award a construction contract to the lowest qualified bidder. Projects typically range from small (say \$50,000 or so) to very large (many hundreds of thousands, or even millions of dollars).
  
- **In-house Services-** Implement improvements making use of Town labor forces, materials and equipment. This method is typically appropriate for projects that are limited in scope, such as the construction of a parking area, driveway or sidewalk, refurbishment of a baseball infield or sections of a soccer field (goal mouths, center field areas etc.). As funding, materials, equipment and human resources permit, other minor improvement efforts can be planned and undertaken. The removal of dead/diseased trees and the pruning of healthy trees around a field perimeter, the installation of player's benches, small bleacher systems, trash receptacles, limited fencing runs and signage are examples of the types of minor enhancements that can be provided using Town forces and materials.
  
- **Donations/Corporate Sponsorships/Community Build-** Implement improvements for projects through a variety of means that might include construction of a field or ancillary facility with funding generated through linkage or mitigation arrangements (often originating from the approval of a large in-town development). In certain cases, improvements can also be undertaken by contractors looking to donate services, equipment or materials.

### **Partnerships**

Partnerships can also play an important role in the overall plan to improve, manage and maintain park properties. As an example, there are many privately managed sports leagues in Walpole with impressive track records for supporting certain maintenance and capital improvement initiatives for numerous facilities. Towns are increasingly relying on public/private partnerships to create facilities and the desired playing conditions needed to support sports programming.

For initial consideration, a number of potential funding sources have been identified. Many of the governmental sources identified allocate millions of dollars per year for parks, open space and athletic facility improvement programs, but competition is intense. The actual improvements are then implemented through a public design, bid and construction process.

### **Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Division of Conservation Services (DCS)**

This state agency has funded hundreds of park, open space and recreation projects throughout Massachusetts over the past several decades. Each June or July, the agency receives applications from municipalities for improvements to parks, playgrounds and athletic facilities or for assistance in the acquisition of an open space property that helps support city or town open space and recreation goals. DCS administers several programs including the **Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities (P.A.R.C.)** program, which generally funds acquisitions of parkland, as well as construction of new parks and renovation of existing parks. Funds tend to be earmarked to communities with greater than 35,000 residents that have fewer outlets for recreation. Demographics play a role in the grant award process. Communities that are more urban in nature with high percentages of low-income residents tend to fare better in the decision-making process as compared to smaller communities with fewer low-income residents. For projects in smaller communities such as Walpole, a case must be made that the project for which funding is being sought is of a regional significance. The larger field complexes, with the ability to host regional events likely meet this criteria.

The **Local Acquisition for Natural Diversity (L.A.N.D.)** program typically allows conservation commissions to purchase properties to protect natural resources by eliminating threatened development on those properties. This program could be pursued in order to offset a potential field development project that might take place on land that is currently owned by the Town and suitable for this purpose.

DCS also receives Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds for distribution to communities that are considering park improvements or land acquisitions as described above. The allocation for Massachusetts for the upcoming year has not been determined, although the funds, when available, may be used to supplement both the P.A.R.C. AND L.A.N.D. programs.

### ***Community Preservation Act Funding***

A number of years ago the Massachusetts legislature passed the Community Preservation Act, which allows cities and towns to generate funds through an added property assessment for improvements related to affordable housing, historic preservation and certain types of park/open space acquisitions and enhancements. Funding generated locally is matched by an equal amount of state dollars. More than 100 communities have already adopted the legislation. If adopted in Walpole, this program could become an important source of local capital funding for the implementation of some of the recommended improvements identified in this master plan.





# APPENDIX

**APPENDIX A**  
**STUDY FACILITIES**  
**Town of Walpole - Athletic Fields Master Plan**

FIELD/FACILITY NAME	LOCATION/ADDRESS	TOTAL ACRES	AREA (IN ACRES) OF EXISTING ATHLETIC FIELDS	FIELDS IN USE	SUMMARY	DEFICIENCIES	RECOMMENDATIONS
BIRD MIDDLE SCHOOL	625 Washington Street (East Street)	7.6 Acres	7.6 Acres	2 - 90' Baseball Diamonds 1 Softball Field 2-3 Multi-purpose Fields	Multi-use property, facility is part of Bird Middle School; irrigated fields including Babe Ruth/Legion, Little League, Softball and Soccer	Overlapping fields, Lack of adequate parking and/or ADA accessibility, Poor softball field orientation, Lack of spectator areas or seating	Re-orient fields to eliminate overlap, Create parking area along East Street, Add ADA paths and spectator seating, Include ancillary facilities for patrons
BOYDEN SCHOOL	1852 Washington Street	.96 Acres	.96 Acres	1 Little League	Multi-use property near wetland resource; includes children's playground mainly used for summer rec programs	Little League field in poor conditions, Extremely poor turf conditions, No separation between parking area a field, Invasive brush is encroaching on the field	Re-furbish Little League Field, Re-configure remain Field and play area, Install barrier between parking and Field, Prune back brush and remove invasive plants
JOHNSON MIDDLE SCHOOL	111 Robbins Road	5.5 Acres	5.5 Acres	1 - 90' Baseball Diamond 1 Softball Diamond 2-3 Multi-	Multi-use 5.5 acre property adjacent to resource area with severe DEP restrictions on fertilization and irrigation; adjacent to very steep slope subject to erosion, large unused wooded area to the North potential field development area.	Very poor, hardpan, dusty turf conditions, Fencing and field amenities in poor condition, Lack of adequate parking and ADA accessibility, Environmental restrictions/Proximity to well	Relocate fields to upper wooded area of site, Re-vegetate existing Field area as well buffer, Install new access drive and parkin, Pathway linkages to Base Circuit Tral
MORGAN FIELD	School Street	8 Acres	.8 Acres	1 Little League Field	Little League field across the street from Town Hall and next to Memorial Pond; small undefined field area adjacent to this field used for soccer practice	Insufficient area and circulations for spectators, Dugouts are not ADA accesible and havedrainage issues, Some fencing is in need of replacement	Reconfigure parking area for spectator circulation, Replace dugouts and deteriorated fenc systems, Install small gravel parking at back of site
NEW FISHER SCHOOL	65 Gould Street	1.8 Acres	.9 Acres	1 Small Multi-purpose Field	Multi-use property with fields adjacent to Street; includes basketball court and children's playground	Field has grading issues causing some poor turf, Basketball court impeades larger field layout, Lack of ADA accesblity to Field, No barrier between parking and play area	Re-grade Field to allow for better play conditions, Relocate court to allow for larger Field area, Provide ADA Pathway and Install a barrier at parking
OLD FISHER FIELD	Main Street	.96 Acres	.96 Acres	1 Little League/Softball Field	Small property adjacent to former Old Fisher School, neighboring the Aggie Farm		
OLD POST ROAD SCHOOL	99 Old Post Road	1.8 Acres	1.5 Acres	1 Little League/Softball Field	Multi-use property including baseball, basketball, swings and children's playground; ample wooded property to the West is unused	Field is in poor condition, especially the turf, Grading pitches towards the infield, Field is lacking of foul territory space, Inadequate space for spectators	Reconfigure and regrade existing Field, Expand facility into wooded area, adding 1 little league field and shared multi-purpose field, Allow for adequate spectator space and amenities
STONE FIELD	30 Stone Street	2.1 Acres	2.1 Acres	1 Little League/Softball Field 2 Multi-purpose Fields	Multi-use property next to Town Hall and the Recreation Department Offices, main, central green space in Town	Extremely poor turf condition, Site is very flat, not allowing for impundment of water, Multi-purpose field overlaps softball infield	Reconfigure town hall parking to allow for: Reconfiguration and regrading of fields, Providing spectator and player areas and amenities, Longer Multi-purpose field
TURCO UPPER FIELD	275 Common Street (Walpole High School)	2.5 Acres	1.7 Acres	1 Field Hockey/Lacross Field	Multi-use rectangular field at High School, mainly used for Field Hockey and Girls Lacrosse	Isolated location and lack of adjacent H.C. Parking, Irregularly graded field, Deteriorated turf conditions as seasons progress, No options for rotation of field	Construct parking/drop-off area at top of hill, Install retaining wall to allow for larger field and field rotation, Re-grade field during the reconstruction
TURCO MAIN FIELD	275 Common Street (Walpole High School)	4 Acres	4 Acres	1 Synthetic Multi-purpose Field Track	Newly constructed, multi-use, synthetic turf field, with track facility and large bleachers at the High School.	ADA issues between facilities, Final site restoration issues being resolved, Litghting is not installed or approved for the field	Provide imporved accessibility to all amenities, Provide lighting for extended use of the field and track.
PLIMPTON FIELD	275 Common Street (Walpole High School)	.76 Acres	.6 Acres	1 Softball Field	Softball facility at High School behind Old Plimpton School, currently disturbed due to Track/Field construction	Used as staging area for the Turco Main project, Turf quality impacted by construction of Turco Main, Very short outfield	Reconstruct the field to include appropriate growing media and new turf and infield areas, Install ancillary facilities
TURCO LOWER FIELD	275 Common Street (Walpole High School)	3.75 Acres	2.9 Acres	1 - 90' Baseball Diamond 1 Softball Diamond	Primarily a baseball and softball facility located at the High School. Rectangular field at the center is used for football, lacrosse, soccer, etc.	Deteriorated turf conditions as seasons progress, Severe dust problem during dry periods, Appurtenances in poor condition, Little or no room to accommodate spectators	Reconstruct the field to include appropriate growing media and new turf and infield areas, Install ancillary facilities

**APPENDIX B**  
**FIELDS USE MATRIX**  
**Town of Walpole - Athletic Fields Master Plan**

Sport	Total number of users per year		Total # of Participants	# of Participants per Team/Class	# of Teams	# of Practices Per Team Per week	# of Games Per Team Per Week	Total # of Games Per Week	Total # of Practices Per Week	Total Per Week Scheduled Use	# of Weeks in Season	Total Seasonal Events	Time of Year	Fields used	Total Hours in a Week	Total Hours per Year	No. Fields	Hours per Year per Field
Walpole Babe Ruth Baseball	22,050	210 kids 5 times per week for 21 weeks	210	15	14	2	3	21	28	49	21	1029	Mar-Aug	All 90' Diamonds	70	1470	3	490
Walpole H.S. Baseball	3,900	60 kids 5 time per week for 13 weeks	60	20	3	3	2	6	9	15	13	195	Mar-June	Bird, Johnson & Turco	21	273	3	91
Walpole H. S. Boy's Varsity Lacrosse	4,095	63 kids 5 times per week for 13 weeks	63	21	3	3	2	3	9	12	13	156	Mar-June	Stone & Turco	15	195	2	98
Walpole H.S. Freshman Lacrosse	1,300	20 kids 5 times per week for 13 weeks	20	20	1	3	2	2	3	5	13	65	April - May	Stone & Turco	7	91	2	46
Walpole H.S. Softball	3,900	60 kids 5 time per week for 13 weeks	60	20	3	3	2	6	9	15	13	195	Mar-June	Bird, Johnson & Plimpton	21	273	3	91
Walpole H. S. Spring Track/Field	7,150	110 kids 5 times per week for 13 weeks	110	65 Boys 55 Girls	2	4	1	2	8	10	13	130	Mar-June	Turco	12	156	1	156
Walpole Little League	4,368	182 kids 3 times per week for 8 weeks	182	13	14	2	1	8	28	36	8	288	Apr-June	Post Road & Morgan	40	320	2	160
T-ball	4,784	598 kids 1 times per week for 8 weeks	598	13	46	0	1	23		23	8	184	Apr-June	Stone & Morgan	35	276	2	138
Walpole Girls Youth Lacrosse	7,200	180 kids 4 times per week for 10 weeks	180	20	9	2	2	9	18	27	10	270	Apr-June	JMS Upper and Lower Turco	36	360	3	120
Walpole Boys Youth Lacrosse	11,040	276 kids 4 times per week for 10 weeks	276	23	12	2	2	12	24	36	10	360	Apr-June	JMS Upper and Lower Turco	48	480	3	160
Little Sports	7,392	56 kids 4 times per week for 33 weeks	56	14	4	0	4	8	0	8	33	264	Apr-Nov	Stone Field	16	528	1	528
Senior Softball Team	144	12 kids 2 times per week for 6 weeks	12	12	1	1	1	1	1	2	6	12	May-June	Stone Field	3	18	1	18
American Legion Baseball	1,080	18 kids 5 times per week for 12 weeks	18	18	1	2	3	3	2	5	12	60	June-July	Bird - Eldracher	8	96	1	96
Summer Rec All Day 9-4	6,500	100 kids 5 times per week for 13 weeks	100			0	5			5	13	65	June-Aug	Boyden School	35	455	1	455
Little Rebels	2,400	60 kids 5 time per week for 8 weeks	60			0	5	0	0	0	8	0	June-Aug	Stone Field	20	160	1	160
Summer Academy	800	40 kids 4 time per week for 5 weeks	40						4	12	5	60	July	Bird MS	16	80	1	80
Summer Softball	14,400	300 kids 3 time per week for 8 weeks	300	13	23		3	35		35	8	276			69	552	4	138
Walpole H.S. Boy's Soccer	4,200	60 kids 5 time per week for 14 weeks	60	20	3	3	3	9	9	18	14	252	Aug-Nov	Upper Turco/Bird MS	27	378	2	189
Walpole H.S. Girl's Soccer	3,600	60 kids 5 times per week for 12 weeks	60	20	3	3	2	6	9	15	12	180	Aug-Nov	Bird & JMS	21	252	2	126
Walpole H.S. Football	9,425	145 kids 5 times per week for 13 weeks	145	68/41/30	3	4	1	3	12	15	13	195	Aug-Nov	Turco	18	234	3	78
Walpole Youth Football	18,144	252 kids 6 times per week for 12 weeks	252	36	7	5	1	4	35	39	12	462	Sept-Nov	Stone Field Turco Field	42	504	2	252
Walpole Youth Cheerleading	10,080	140 kids 6 times per week for 12 weeks	140	20	7	5	1	4	35	39	12	462	Sept-Nov	Stone Field Turco Field	42	504	3	168
Preschool Soccer	23,760	330 kids 2 times per week for 12 weeks	330	11	30	0	2	30	0	30	12	360	Sept-Nov	Stone & Morgan	60	720	2	360
Walpole Youth Soccer-Travel	18,144	504 kids 3 times per week for 12 weeks	504	18	28	2	1	14	56	70	12	840	Sept-Nov	Bird MS	84	1008	2	504
Walpole Youth Soccer-Intramurals	1,584	132 kids 1 time per week for 12 weeks	132	11	12	0	1	6	0	6	12	72	Sept-Nov	Bird MS	12	144	2	72
Walpole H.S. Field Hockey Outside regular events (Carnival, Fireworks, Rentals)	3,510	78 kids 5 time per week for 9 weeks	78	26	3	3	2	3	9	12	9	108	Sept-Oct & 1 week in summer	Upper Turco/Bird MS	15	135	2	68
<b>Recreation Totals:</b>	<b>194,950</b>		<b>4,046</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>6,540</b>					<b>12</b>	<b>4,841</b>

Note: JMS Johnson Middle School, MS - Middle School

**Athletic Field Average Hours of use per Season 403**  
**Recess/Gym Class for 5 Schools (Average Hours per Year per school): 90**  
**Estimated Average Hours of Use per Field per Year: 493**  
**Recommended Industry Standard Hours of Use (Max): 250**

GYM CLASS & RECESS	Total Number of users per year	Students per School	Number of uses per year	Hours per Year per School:
Bird	41,400	460	90	1 90
Boyden	41,400	460	90	1 90
Johnson Middle School	40,500	450	90	1 90
New Fisher	42,300	470	90	1 90
Old Post Road	45,000	500	90	1 90
<b>Total Gym and Recess:</b>	<b>210,600.000</b>	<b>2,340</b>		

**TOTAL NUMBER OF USERS**

<b>Total number of users per year, Recreation &amp; Recess:</b>	<b>405,550</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33,796</b>
---	----------------	-----------	---------------

(Total number of fields) (Average number of users per field per year)





*Bird Middle School Field - Existing Conditions Plan*

North May 2008





**LEGEND**

- River, Stream, Lake, or Pond
- Wetland Area
- Flood Area
- RIESP Certified Vernal Pools
- RIESP Estimated Habitat
- RIESP Priority Habitat
- Major Contour
- Minor Contour
- Lot Line Site Property
- Lot Line Adjacent Properties

*Bird Middle School Field - Initial Concept*

North November 2008





*Boyden School Field - Existing Conditions Plan*







*Boyden Elementary School Field - Initial Concept*

North November 2008











*Johnson Middle School Field - Initial Concept*

North May 2008





*Stone & Morgan Field - Existing Conditions Plan*

North May 2008







## Morgan Field - Initial Concept

Walpole Athletic Fields Master Plan - 2008



Weston & Sampson  
INCORPORATED





*New Fisher School Field - Existing Conditions Plan*







*New Fisher School Field - Initial Concept*

North May 2008





*Old fisher School Field - Existing Conditions Plan*

North May 2008





*Old Post Road School Field - Existing Conditions Plan*

North May 2008







Old Post Road School Field - Initial Concept







*Stone & Morgan Field - Existing Conditions Plan*

Walpole Athletic Fields Master Plan - 2008

North May 2008





Stone Field - Initial Concept Option 1

North November 2008





Stone Field - Initial Concept Option 2







*Turco Fields/Plimpton Field - Existing Conditions Plan*

North May 2008





*Plimpton School Field & Turco Fields - Initial Concept*

Walpole Athletic Fields Master Plan - 2008





## Walpole Fields User Survey

The Town of Walpole is completing a Fields Master Plan study in order to establish critical sports programming needs and strategies for potential future improvements to various field facilities as funding becomes available. The Master Plan will examine all existing field properties and focus on current conditions and limitations/constraints that impact the performance of these field facilities. The planning effort will identify opportunities for new facility improvements that might help better meet the increasing demands of the various programs that make use of the facilities. Since your organization relies heavily on these fields to support important program activities, your advice is being sought and would be of great assistance as we plan for improved use and enjoyment of all existing and potential new field facilities by all residents of the Walpole community.

The properties to be examined under this master planning initiative include *Bird Middle School, Boyden School Field, Fisher School, Johnson Middle School, Morgan Field, Old Fisher School Field, Old Post Road School, Plimpton Field, Stone Field* and the *Turco Fields*. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated.

1. Name of Group or Individual and e-mail address/telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. List Field Facilities Used: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Describe Frequency of Field Use:

1-2 times per year

1-2 times per month

1-2 times per week

> 2 times per week

4. For Leagues and Other Groups, please complete the following and attach any pertinent information (Typical Schedule, List of Teams...):

Number of Teams making Use of the Facility: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Players on a Typical Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Games during a Typical Week: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of a Typical Season(s): \_\_\_\_\_

(Example April 15-June 15)

Special Events/Tournaments: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Describe the Adequacy of the Field Facilities that your organization or program makes us of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Note facility conditions, facility design, facility availability, specific limitations or problems)

6. Identify specific improvements that would improve your program or organization's experience when making use of **Existing Field Facilities**: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Identify other **New Field Facilities** that might help to better meet the programming needs of your Organization and that you would like to see in Walpole: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Presently, we are looking at existing facilities at the properties listed on the first page. Do you have suggestions for other properties that might be considered in order to better meet the field based recreation needs of Walpole residents? (No idea is too silly...) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Other Comments or Notes: (Attach additional pages if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**If you have any questions related to this survey, please contact Mr. Jim Johnson, Walpole Assistant Town Administrator at (508) 660-7304 or e-mail Jim at:**

[jjohnson@walpole-ma.gov](mailto:jjohnson@walpole-ma.gov)





**Weston & Sampson**  
When it's essential...it's Weston & Sampson®