

From: [Kristen Connell](#)
To: [Community Preservation Committee](#)
Subject: Concerns re: ABRHS Lower Field Project
Date: Thursday, January 26, 2012 12:29:53 PM

Dear Community Preservation Committee members,

I would like to start by saying that I grew up in Acton, and participated in the AB athletics programs for many years. As an adult I moved back to Acton, in no small part, so that my children could be a part of the rich educational and athletic experience that Acton offers. I am a proud, voting citizen of our town, and have supported most of the wonderful improvements over the years including, but not limited to, the Library expansion and Leary Field.

I am disappointed that I cannot attend this evening's meeting to voice my concerns on the proposed ABRHS Lower Fields Project in person. In lieu of appearing at the meeting, I would very much appreciate you taking this email into consideration. Even though both of my children would be direct beneficiaries of this project, I have grave concerns about the fiscal viability, as well as the scope, of the proposed ABRHS Lower Fields Project.

Financial concerns - As I understand it, the project relies on CPA funds and a mixture of other debt and revenue sources. I feel the underlying fiscal assumptions to fund this project do not account for today's economic reality. The CPA funds are far from guaranteed funds. To have these funds be the basis of funding is unwise at best, catastrophic at worst. It is irresponsible to use uncertain future funds as the basis for any large scale project given the political and economic climate of fiscal conservatism. Further, the other debt and revenue project funding sources are, as far as I know, not "inked" deals. If any of these fall through, the Town of Acton could potentially be on the hook.

Project Scope –In the interest of full disclosure, my family is one of the direct beneficiaries. My son plays lacrosse, and my daughter soccer. That said, this project is not small in scale, and it benefits a very narrow population in Acton. In addition, we have already built and funded one turf field. It would be wonderful to see other interest groups in Acton, other than athletics, benefit if there are funds to be spent. For example a senior center / recreation facility (similar to Sudbury's) would benefit all citizens of Acton.

Please understand, I am not opposed to the project in general. It would be a nice addition. However, it is not a necessary addition at this time. I am concerned about the financial house of cards on which this project is being built. Indeed, a far more fiscally responsible and reasonable approach would be for the athletic organizations to raise the funds up front to build the turf fields. This approach would enable both economic viability of the project, as well as flexibility in the scope. Without having to undertake an enormous debt burden, the project would not have to add the ancillary buildings, parking, and lighting necessary to make it a rentable space to support the debt payments.

Our great nation is struggling with a debt burden we will be paying off for generations, I don't think anyone wishes the same fate for the Town of Acton. This is simply not the right time for a large, unfunded, project to be undertaken.

Best Regards,
Kristen Connell

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