

May 9, 2023

Dear Malden City Council Finance Committee Members,

The Friends of Roosevelt Park request the following to be answered before the finance committee votes on whether or not to recommend items 139 and items 140 pertaining to additional costs for the Roosevelt Park Project and the remediation of contaminated soil at the park.

1. What is the cost comparison for natural grass and artificial turf? Installation costs, maintenance costs and the cost to replace and dispose of artificial turf every 8-10 years.
2. Why hasn't an RFP been issued to determine the cost of natural grass field?
3. Why hadn't ARPA funding been designated for clean up of the contaminated soil?
4. What is the utilization and scheduling plan for this park and other parks across the City of Malden and Pine Banks?
5. Has the committee reached out to the Board of Health members? Making a decision on these funding items before the Board of Health has had time to review and deliberate on the health considerations surrounding artificial turf would not be prudent.

We are also troubled by the order on the agenda of the City Council which is meant to force a decision by the Finance Committee on the Roosevelt Park items. We believe the finance committee, acting as a financial oversight board, must maintain autonomy in order to carry out their fiduciary duty to act in the best interest of Malden residents and taxpayers. The finance committee is obligated to diligently review the details of all funding requests by asking questions, gathering information and retrieving data from various sources. The order and notice of intent to "discharge the finance committee" is, in our opinion, an overreach of government to disallow the process and it is an attempt to subdue the important work of the finance committee.

We requested, through FOIA, the RFP for a natural grass alternative for Roosevelt Park from OSPCD. The reply to the request was this:

Request Response

There are no records responsive to your request at this time.

Please review these case studies from UMASS TURI for natural grass playing fields costs to maintain and hours of use.

<https://www.turi.org/content/download/12156/190509/file/Natural+Grass+Playing+Field+Case+Study+Springfield+MA.+June+2019.pdf>

<https://www.turi.org/content/download/12705/198916/file/Natural+Grass+Playing+Field+Case+Study+Marblehead+MA+revised.Nov2020.pdf>

Additional information:

https://www.turi.org/Our_Work/Community/Athletic_Playing_Fields/Resources_Playing_Fields_and_Playgrounds#Artificial_turf_organic_grass

Sincerely yours,
Friends of Roosevelt Park Malden