



FRIENDS OF
ROOSEVELT
PARK
MALDEN

March 11, 2024

Mayor Gary Christenson
215 Pleasant Street, 4th Floor
Malden, Massachusetts 02148

Dear Mayor Christenson,

We are honored to present you with a letter written on our behalf by Climate Code Blue in support of our request to abandon the artificial turf plan at Roosevelt Park in exchange for a natural grass field option. The signatories on the attached letter include several world renowned health scientists and climate activists that represent the top tier of medical research both in Boston and throughout the international research community. We, the Friends of Roosevelt Park and Project Code Blue, respectfully petition the City of Malden to stop the City's plan to reconstruct the existing Roosevelt Park, abutting Salemwood School, with a plastic, artificial turf field, and to instead replace this field with a healthier, natural grass option.

- **Philip Landrigan, MD, MSc - Professor and Founding Director of Program for Global Public Health and the Common Good, Boston College**

"I am a pediatrician, public health physician and epidemiologist. My research uses the tools of epidemiology to elucidate connections between toxic chemicals and human health, especially the health of infants and children. I am particularly interested in understanding how toxic chemicals injure the developing brains and nervous systems of children and in translating this knowledge into public policy to protect health. I am a member of the National Institute of Medicine.

My early studies of lead poisoning conducted in collaboration with my colleague the late Herbert L. Needleman, MD demonstrated that lead is toxic to children even at very low levels and contributed to the US government's decision to remove lead from paint and gasoline, actions that reduced mean blood lead levels in the USA by more than 90%. A study I led in the 1990's at the National Academy of Sciences defined children's unique susceptibilities to pesticides and other toxic chemicals and catalyzed fundamental revamping of US pesticide policy. In New York City, where I worked for many years in the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, I was involved in the medical and epidemiologic follow-up of 20,000 9/11 rescue workers. Our studies of these men and women documented that more than 40% have persistent abnormalities of pulmonary function and that approximately 15% have mental health problems related to their service. From 2015 to 2017, I co-chaired the *Lancet* Commission on Pollution & Health, which reported that pollution causes 9 million deaths annually and is an existential threat to planetary health. To continue the work of the *Lancet* Commission on Pollution & Health, I am now directing the Global Public Health Program and Global Observatory on Planetary Health at Boston College." (<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/morrissey/departments/biology/people/faculty-directory/Phil-Landrigan.html>)

- **Regina LaRocque, MD, MPH - Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Deputy Editor, New England Journal of Medicine; Physician, Brigham and Women's Hospital:**

"Regina LaRocque, MD, MPH, FIDSA, is an infectious disease physician-researcher at Massachusetts General Hospital. She received her medical degree from Duke University School of Medicine and a Master's in Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health. She completed her training in internal medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital and her fellowship in infectious diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital. She conducts research on diarrheal diseases and travel medicine. She is on staff at the Massachusetts General Hospital Division of Infectious Diseases and is an Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical

School. She serves on the Massachusetts General Hospital Sustainability Committee.”
(<https://medsocietiesforclimatehealth.org/team/regina-larocque-md-mph-fidsa/>)

- **Caren Solomon, MD, MPH - Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Deputy Editor, New England Journal of Medicine; Physician, Brigham and Women's Hospital**

Dr. Caren Solomon is a deputy editor at the *New England Journal of Medicine*, an associate professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and a physician at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, where she maintains a part-time clinical practice at the Fish Center for Women’s Health. At the *Journal*, Dr. Solomon handles a series of review articles targeted to practicing physicians (‘Clinical Practice’), clinical cases (‘Clinical Problem Solving’ and ‘Interactive Medical Case’ series) and original articles; she also oversees manuscripts related to climate change, including serving as editor for an ongoing series, ‘Fossil -Fuel Pollution and Climate Change.’ Dr. Solomon lectures widely on scientific publications and on climate change and health. She graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Medical School and earned an MPH at the Harvard School of Public Health. (<https://salatainstitute.harvard.edu/people/caren-solomon/>)

- **Jim Recht, MD, Lecturer in Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School:**

“Jim has devoted his professional career to community psychiatry, in particular to co-occurring substance use and psychiatric disorders; race- and class-based health disparities; and the mental health consequences of climate change. He received his medical degree from University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in 1990 before moving to Boston for psychiatry residency training. He is a Lecturer on Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, where he has been a faculty member since 1996.”
(<https://www.doximity.com/pub/james-recht-md>)

Building a synthetic turf field in Roosevelt Park will exacerbate the local urban heat island effect, introduce PFAS and other harmful chemicals, and further expose children in grades k-8, plus abutting neighbors, to continual harmful contaminant exposure. Concerned residents demand that the Roosevelt Park project be stopped in its current form, and for the City to Malden to undertake and pay for a natural grass estimate from a certified local contractor with expertise in installing and maintaining natural grass athletic fields.

The Friends of Roosevelt Park are honored to have such distinguished scientific experts speak on our behalf, and to corroborate the data and information we have been sharing with the City since the inception of this project over a decade ago. We implore the City of Malden to listen to the Drs. Landrigan, LaRocque, Solomon, and Recht, literal experts in their fields in Boston and around the world, and halt this project for a healthier, natural grass option.

Sincerely,

Friends of Roosevelt Park Malden

cc: State Senator Jason Lewis, State Representative Steven Ultrino, State Representative Paul Donato, State Representative Kate Lipper-Garabedian, Malden City Council, Malden School Committee, Malden Board of Health Chair Scune Carrington, Malden DEI Coordinator Kashana Harling, Malden Public School Superintendent Ligia Noriega-Murphy, Salemwood School Principal Van Huynh, Malden OSPCD Director Debbie Burke, Malden OSPCD Deputy Director Alex Pratt