

October 18, 2022

Mr. Mayor and Members of the City Council,

On September 19, 2022 the Parks Commission voted to send the proposal to put artificial turf on Field 1 to the City Council for consideration. I voted for this measure. I feel it important however, for the council to have insight into the reasons for my vote and issues I have since found and believe are important for the Council to consider.

First, my understanding from the information provided to the Parks Commission is that Western Hills Little League is only willing to put money into artificial turf. Turf Grass is not something the league is willing to consider funding and the league did not do a cost analysis of installing turf grass.

Second, the maintenance of artificial turf according to Sean Kincaid with KMI Sports Construction, is low and doesn't require much water if any. In addition, maintenance is to be the responsibility of Western Hills Little League and drainage work during installation would allow the City to direct drainage in a way that will not contribute to the current drainage issues facing the City.

Third, the Commission was assured that Western Hills Little League did not want to propose artificial turf on any other fields and only on the infield of field 1.

These factors seemed to me to be a way to share maintenance of our fields with Western Hills Little League in a way that might afford the City a savings in water use and maintenance costs that would allow for more resources to be used to fix issues on the other park fields. This seemed important given the small budget the City has to maintain the park as a whole.

However, on Friday September 30<sup>th</sup>, an article was published that brought to the fore some questions regarding artificial turf. As I did more research, I realized I had not received enough information to justify the reasoning on which I based my vote.

To get more clear answers, I engaged Texas A&M's Turf Grass department. I am including attachments here that have been shared with me by this department thus far though, I am still awaiting information from the department on the costs of installing and maintaining the most economical turf grass vs artificial turf, as well as research on the effects of artificial turf on the soil underneath it and what it takes to restore soil to fertile conditions after artificial turf is removed. This would be important should the Council decide to put turf on the field and then later have it removed.

In addition, should the Council decide to put turf on Field 1, the research has shown there are ways to filter run off so that it has the least environmental impact. In my opinion, that would be an important factor to consider and to require.

Some of the articles attached address other environmental points regarding artificial turf. While these were not what initially started my query, I am including them because they are worthy of consideration.

Kind Regards,  
Victoria Johnson