



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF RYE

November 15, 2019

City of Rye  
City Hall  
1050 Boston Post Road  
Rye, NY 10580

RE: Nursery Field Update

Dear Residents,

In January of this year, a group of residents approached the City concerning the condition of recreation fields and the loss of playing time due to weather-related field conditions. They expressed interest in raising monies to pay for the cost of certain upgrades to the Nursery Field. As a result of these conversations, the City, at its own expense and direction, engaged Stantec to study Field Renovation Options for the Nursery Field. The City's purpose was to establish the viability and estimated cost of the potential field renovations. The initial report of May 20 is posted on the City's website.

Following a Council meeting discussion on July 17, the Council unanimously approved the transfer of \$90,000 from the General Fund to engage Stantec in further work. Stantec's scope of services included preparing a site plan for an artificial turf field and related environmental documents required by SEQRA. Stantec as the City's consultant would also be preparing forms and information to process the proposal through the public review and approval process. *Stantec was specifically not engaged to provide services related to the construction inspection of the field. That was considered premature.*

The potential donor group has determined that it will raise money only for an artificial turf field. The City believes the group made this determination based on the limited amount of playing time a grass field can tolerate and the slower recovery of grass fields from rain. The City, therefore, is focused exclusively on whether or not an artificial turf field should be located at Nursery Field.

At the October 16 Council meeting City staff was directed to hire a consulting firm to undertake a Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) study of the field. At the recommendation of senior City staff I authorized staff to engage Stantec for this purpose.

Following community discussion at the City Council meeting on November 6, staff was asked to put together a preliminary timeline and summary of key events in a process to review the proposed Nursery Field improvements. The preliminary schedule will be presented at the November 20 Council Meeting. That schedule will provide for the various regulatory reviews and other requirements, as well as time for community input and questions. It is expected that the proposed process will not start until January when the results of the H&H study, as well as Part I of the Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) and Concept Plans, are available.

For the Council discussion next week there will be several references made that I thought would be helpful to define and clarify here:

### **Stantec**

Stantec Inc. is an international design and consulting company. The Company provides services on projects around the world. The City of Rye has utilized Stantec for many years on a variety of projects. Stantec has been retained by the City for various studies related to the Nursery Field, including the H&H study. It is in no way paid for or affiliated with the donor group. Furthermore, it does not have any interest in turf companies, nor does it have any guaranteed role in the outcome of the studies being undertaken.

### **SEQR Process**

New York's State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) requires all state and local government agencies to consider environmental impacts equally with social and economic factors during discretionary decision-making. The City has designated itself as lead agency for the SEQR process.

### **Environmental Assessment Form (EAF)**

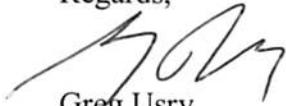
The DEC requires an applicant to complete an EAF to assist the lead agency in evaluating potential environmental impacts related to a proposed action. The EAF requires the lead agency to answer specific questions regarding a proposed action's impacts and whether they are small or relatively large. The EAF addresses a variety of potential environmental impacts ranging from transportation and noise concerns to flooding and archeologically sensitive areas. As a side note, it is important to correct a recent misstatement related to core samples taken during earlier analysis, near the Knapp House. The core samples taken were actually from the existing field, a previously disturbed area. The closest point to the Knapp House was on the marked baseline of the soccer field.

## Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study (H&H)

An H&H Study is the study of movement of water, including the volume and rate of flow as it moves through a watershed, basin, channel, or man-made structure. It does not cover any other items contained in the EAF. The H&H Study will be completed in time for the first scheduled meeting in January.

At the November 20 City Council meeting, City staff will be reviewing a proposed process for the Council to consider. *The schedule/timeline/key events is not based upon any scheduled build or completion date, but rather upon those items that will need to be reviewed in order to move forward (with Council action).* We continue to work through a thoughtful and comprehensive process for the entire community. There will be specific scheduled opportunities for questions and comments. For your information, I am attaching a draft of the schedule and key milestones here. This will be discussed on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

Regards,



Greg Usry  
Interim City Manager