

WOLTERS FIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL– 2009-10

The Wolters Field Light Advisory Committee met three times during the 2009-10 school year on the following dates: August 20, 2009, November 5, 2009, and May 6, 2010. The committee members include:

Brigid Ohlwein – Community Member
Kevin Fassett – Community Member
Ross Deutsch – Community Member
Scott Chukerman – Community Member
Judy Schmeuser – Community Member
Marjie Sandlow – District 113 Board Member
Mary Anderson – City of Highland Park Director of Public Works
Jim Kirsch – City of Highland Park Council Member
Barry Bolek – District 113 Assistant Superintendent of Finance
Paul Shafer – City of Highland Park Police Chief
Bobbie Monroe – Highland Park High School Athletic Director
Brad Swanson – Highland Park High School Principal

August 20, 2009 Meeting Synopsis

During the first meeting of the Advisory group in November, a review of the Fall Light Schedule was presented, with the spring dates to be added as schedules were confirmed.

The parking and drop-off plan was reviewed. The District reported that they would be again moving the busses from site this year, but assessing whether we would keep busses in the inner parking lot at Wolters next year in order to reduce costs and support a green initiative. The lot south of the baseball field will be used for VIP parking and the grassy area north of the baseball field will be used for general parking, along with the east driveway for visitor parking. Overflow parking will again be available at the Highland Park Country Club.

The Park Avenue drop off was also discussed. We will reverse traffic when parents drop off their students. Parents will enter the Administration Building Parking Lot and travel east on the driveway by the fuel pumps and exit through the center gate at Wolters Field. No traffic will enter through the center gates.

Neighbors raised concerns about security persons sitting at the barricades leaving their posts during the evening. The school will address the issue.

The District reviewed the field renovations in the area south of the stadium field. Neighbors expressed the lack of notification about the project and the fact that the heavy machinery was noisy in the morning. Concerns by neighbors also included the issue of whether school

insurance would cover any broken windows caused by fly balls hitting car or home windows. The District insurance would cover any damage caused by a school sponsored event.

Additional concerns/questions from the neighbors included:

- Gates on the east side of the field were locked, prohibiting neighbors to access the track from the east side. The District removed the locks.
- The neighbors requested that no hitting or throwing of balls take place in the fifteen foot easement between the fields and the fence on the east side.
- Concerns were raised over any extra traffic caused by the use of more fields at Wolters. The District has no current plans for additional lighting on the fields and no extra supervision will be provided for the additional spring contests.
- Concern was expressed that the excavation and laying of new drainage tile created a back-up of water in their neighborhood. The District shared that the new system drains all water to the west so that this could not be the cause of this concern.
- The District shared that no one should be in the construction zone because of the presence of holes dug for the construction.
- One neighbor stated that the lights on the field are a negative when considering property value in the neighborhood. This would be taken into account by an appraiser. It is a much easier thing to claim than to prove and would need a lot more data collection to support it as comment.
- Concern about make-up of the crowd on Friday nights was expressed – staff assured the residents that police are on duty during the football games.
- A need for better communication between District 113 and the neighbors was discussed. The email system will be used to better inform those in attendance.
- Better trash pick-up on daily basis was discussed and the District will follow-up.
- Lights on past 10:00pm (ordinance does read 10:30pm as curfew for lights out) was discussed. It is the District practice it to try for 10pm with the understanding that the official requirement is 10:30.

Barry Bolek stated that the School District wants to continue their effort to be a good neighbor.

November 5, 2009 Meeting Synopsis

The second meeting of the Advisory Group was held in November. The Fall Light Schedule was reviewed. Nine regular dates were used for the light schedule and one special occasion occurred when the lights were turned on for one hour.

Barry Bolek reported that the new locker room was completed and used for the fall sports seasons. Work progresses on the concession/transportation/public restrooms building. With a rainy fall, the grass planted in the south area of the complex is growing well. There is a possibility that one or all of the fields will be ready for play in the spring.

In the public comment time of the meeting, David Greenberg asked about the drainage situation in the backfield area. Mr. Bolek responded to all questions asked and informed everyone that the reason that the fields are not draining is due to the fact that Storm Water Management

guidelines are being followed that require hay bales in place to ensure that storm water pipes are not filled with construction materials. In the spring after final inspection, the hay will be removed and all drains should pull normal water rains away from the fields.

Mr. Greenberg also brought up the issue of sound levels on football game nights. Mr. Bolek informed that he would call Mr. Greenberg next week for further discussion on the sound matter.

May 6, 2010 Meeting Synopsis

During the May 6, 2010 meeting, a concern from a neighbor was addressed regarding the PA announcer being too loud at a boy's track meet on April 23, 2010. Mr. Bolek reported that the District is in compliance with the EPA as it relates to the current guidelines per the District's attorneys. The District has placed a permanent locked device on the cabinet so operators cannot self adjust the unit. Another issue related to the sound level is the band performing at HPHS home football games. Again, the District is in compliance with the EPA as it relates to the current guidelines per the District's attorneys. Half time shows do most of the performing facing west towards the crowd across the larger part of the property as well as into the bleachers to reduce outside noise.

Three different proposals, approved by the Advisory Committee, will be presented by the District to the City Council for action. 1.) We will seek to revise the parking situation on the east side of the field, by double parking cars, backing them in so they are headed west along the fence. We will work with Kevin Fasset, to assess this at the end of the season. 2.) We will seek permission to leave the busses in the lot on football home game nights, instead of moving them to the high school. This will save the District approximately \$1000 per game and will follow the Green Initiative supported by the District and the City. 3.) We will recommend that parking permits not be issued to any resident living east of Beverly Street. Neighbors on Centerfield Ct. report that there appears to be misuse of the permits that are issued.

It was noted that the drop-off plan worked well in the fall of 2009, so the District will continue that pattern in 2010.

An acknowledgement and thank you was given to Mary Anderson and the Public Works Department of Highland Park for their work in improving the lighting along Park Avenue. Sergeant O'Neill recommended that Mary oversee the placement of new signs on Park Avenue, directing traffic.

A barricade has been placed at the north end of Athletic Drive during the day when there are no contests occurring at Wolters Field to keep traffic from going farther south.

Discussion took place about the traffic flow on Centerfield Ct. when there are large crowds at the stadium. There are 22 children who live on the block, so there is potential for accidents when traffic is heavy. Mary Anderson explained the process whereby a citizen can request a "Children at Play" sign to be placed in a yard at the east end of the block.

The light schedule for the fall of 2010 will be posted in the next couple of weeks.

The 2009-10 meeting dates for the Wolters Field Advisory Group are:

Thursday, August 19, 2010 – 5:00PM

Thursday, November 4, 2010 – 5:00PM

Thursday, May 5, 2011 – 5:00PM