

Unadopted

MINUTES of the WOLTERS FIELD ADVISORY GROUP
Thursday, June 15, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 7:02, Co-Chair Michelle Holleman called the meeting to order.

Location: City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL

II. ROLL CALL of Advisory Group Members

Members Present: Julie Gordon, Michelle Holleman; Judith Magel Cohen, Mindy Deutsch, Joel Fontane, Michele Goldstein, John Helander, Scott Liberman, Jon Rowley

Members Absent: Eileen McMahon & Paul Shafer

Also Present: Dr. Christopher Dignam, District 113 Superintendent; Ron Kasbohm, District 113 Technology Director; Stacey Meyer, District 113 Board of Education, Adam Stolberg, Highland Park City Council; Erik Saari, Sound Consultant, Gale Cerabona

Neighborhood residents were also present.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 20, 2016 Motion and Second.

Ayes: Gordon, Holleman, Cohen, Deutsch, Fontane, Helander, Liberman, Rowley

Nays: None

Motion passes. Minutes approved.

IV. SCHEDULED BUSINESS

1. Introduction of New Co-Chairs

Stacey Meyer, District 113 Board of Education & Adam Stolberg, Highland Park City Council were announced as the new Co-Chairs

2. Brief Overview of the Responsibilities of the Wolters Field Advisory Group & Ordinance 81-13: Special Use Permit Details

Co-Chair Holleman stated that over the past two years, she and Co-Chair Gordon, focused on improving communications and processes, including ensuring timely and accurate minutes from the meetings, producing the annual report, increasing neighbor

communications, updating the district and city websites and creating an understandable and accessible summary of Ordinance 81-13.'s Co-Chair Gordon added that many improvements were made over the past two years, including: a) light shields, b) additional PA speaker controls, c) field level speakers for warm-up music, d) neighbors accommodation list, issues log, signage, etc. She stated that while there is more to consider, she is proud of what has been done.

Gordon read the role of the Advisory Group. Two documents were distributed: Highlights of Wolters Field Special Use Permit & Township High School District 113's Current Accommodations to Neighbors of Wolters Field.

3. Review of Neighbor Accommodations

Co-Chair Gordon shared that the sound study referenced sound issues; a challenge as the fields are in a residential area and creating a balance is always a challenge. From athletes' perspectives, the sound isn't loud enough. Comments from some neighbors is that the sound is too loud.

A sound consultant was hired by Dr. Dignam to review the system and determine what more can be done (helping with East noise spillovers).

4. Presentation of Sound Planning Associates' Study, with Discussion

Erik Saari, Sound Consultant, advised that adjustments were made last year. This year an acoustic measurement study occurred in March.

- Existing system was illustrated
- Three sound measurements were explained (96 to 83 to 74 decibels at various locations on the field and in the neighborhood).
- Spillage into neighborhood is more from the press box side (decibels in the 70s).
- Speaker options were shared
- One survey was conducted if a different loudspeaker facing West occurred (with two types of loudspeakers)
- Various technologies that have been used through the years were illustrated (Inverse Distance Law, etc.)
- Decibels at sound pressure level from various points on the field, neighbors' homes, etc. were identified

Mr. Saari stated the speakers oriented either way is 75 decibels in the neighborhood. If a barrier fence was added, the sound would be reduced by 6 decibels (based on data from the U.S. Government).

Members had questions about many sound positions. Mr. Saari stated that the only solution that yielded a noticeable reduction in sound would be the addition of a tall barrier wall (similar to what's alongside highways) on the East side of the field.

Member Helander asked if changing the speaker direction was considered. Mr. Saari stated that wouldn't mitigate the noise/sound issue.

Member Lieberman reminded events have been added. He asked about acoustic panels. Member Rowley stated one speaker was used and was audible in the neighbor's home. Mr. Saari stated sound cannot be blocked from the backs of speakers (to alleviate sound.)

Councilman Stolberg asked for sound similarities. Most sporting-event systems are in the 80-90 decibel range. Gun blast, jet engine, concerts, blow dryer sounds were compared. Co-Chair Holleman asked and Mr. Saari replied the levels are 60s-70s at neighbors' homes.

Co-Chair Gordon summarized that the loudest events happen 4-5 times per year. Member Liberman advised he is concerned with the other 30 events, not football games. Co-Chair Gordon reiterated the charge is to keep the sound amenable for the audience and athletes as well as mitigate sound for the neighbors.

An audience member stated this model is not accurate although he appreciates the work that has been done. He noted announcements are for the crowd (and should minimize sound in the field and neighbors' areas).

Co-Chair Gordon praised Mr. Saari for his hard work. She concurred this is a complex subject. Parents of athletes are very concerned with announcements. Dr. Dignam noted sometimes names of athletes cannot be heard.

Member Rowley reminded loudspeakers are used for football games, track meets. Other events (for athletes) are important as well (soccer, lacrosse, etc.).

Member Helander thanked Dr. Dignam for this study; however, he is frustrated at the delay in receiving the report. Dr. Dignam replied parameters of the study were settled in October, 2016 (this has not been going on for a year). Member Liberman stated he has small children and has to defend them. Member Deutsch stated there are similar sound levels everywhere.

Co-Chair Gordon summarized that a good-faith effort has been completed. welcome. She stated that if any neighbor felt that they had a viable solution to offer, that they should share this with the District for consideration.

Co-Chairs Gordon & Holleman thanked Mr. Saari for his presentation.

5. Update on Spring Activities

Member Rowley stated there were 4 twilight events in spring and 4 additional events (where Police Department assisted with parking), etc. Co-Chair Gordon thanked Member Rowley. He stated 2 complaints were received (regarding sound) from a track meet during a lacrosse game (sound and cheering).

6. Introduction of Issues Log

Co-Chair Gordon introduced Dr. Dignam who explained issues and concerns will be catalogued with data to share. Mr. Kasbohm noted the Wolters Field web site has a system to reply to emails and a ticketing system has been established so there is a log. Dr. Dignam stated tickets would show a response (open tickets resolved or unresolved issues).

Member Lieberman suggested emergency groups also (regarding emails).

It is recommended to call the Police Department if it's a true emergency (rather than send an email during the game).

7. Discussion of Neighbor Communications

Co-Chair Gordon stated communications continue to be improved with neighbors. An audience member asked about communications from the Police Department. Co-Chair Gordon stated that would typically happen when Chief Shafer is present.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting is to be determined.

VI. BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

An audience member thanked both Co-Chairs for their service. He stated he likes the definition/role of this Advisory Board. He would like the impact of the neighbors as a primary agenda item. He thanked the district for its help in mitigating sound. He acknowledged loud music has been reduced. He noted the 75 decibels pointed either way (for the neighborhood) violates EPA standards; this should be addressed.

Another audience member advised he submitted an email regarding bus noise. He shared everyday his family is impacted by school busses at 5:47 a.m.

Member Fontane noted the disturbance is known and indicated that he doesn't agree there is a safety issue related to sound levels in the neighborhood and referred to the National Institute of Occupational Safety (NIOS). He noted that sound levels higher than 80 dba effect hearing if they occur for a prolonged period of time, 24 hours.

Co-Chair Gordon reminded school buses are in the same space since 1960. She understands buses are parked away from the neighbors. The beep sound (of backing up) is at the lower
of

the two sound levels allowed by law. Audience member replied the revving is the issue. City Transportation Staff stated the new buses purchased (along with future purchases) are/will be a lot quieter.

Member Liberman suggested the drivers put the vehicle in drive rather than rev the motor. An audience member suggested electric busses.

An audience member thanked the entire Board. She stated her main issue is the safety of kids on the street (as cars speed down the road). She asked Member Rowley to review the rules. Member Goldstein stated she embraces the athletic events and hosts guests on Friday nights. She would like to help with safety and security and see traffic better controlled. Member Rowley stated the Dean's office manages that Staff. Co-Chair Gordon asked if there is a permit to access the street. Co-Chair Holleman asked if a sidewalk is warranted on Centerfield Court. The feedback is that patrons will walk in the street anyway. She will investigate same. It was noted the school district hires a police detail.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chair Gordon adjourned the meeting at 8:56 p.m. on a voice vote.