

Responses to Questions for Board of Park Commissioner Donna Kostka, 4/24/09

1. The first artificial turf installation in Seattle occurred in 1997 and was replaced in 2008. Installations also have occurred in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008, and 2009. Has any testing for hazardous byproducts of these fields been conducted to date? If so, could the board please see the results?

Response: No testing has been done to date. As any future testing is completed we will share those results.

2. Board members talked last night about how important it is to include the public in changes made to policy while a policy paper is being written. We spoke of it in relation to the shift toward Option 4B as a preferred option in the Golf Master Plan process. How will you let the public know that last night the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners was told new information that DPR plans to conduct testing?

Response: The revised policy proposal will be posted on the website, along with additional information about testing plans. This will be done at least one week prior to the public hearing.

3. Section 6.3 says testing should be done if funds are available. Would DPR consider deleting those words if funds are available? I feel that testing should be required, and if it is begun with standard protocols, it will need to be maintained for a period of time. Stopping testing would be a wasteful effort.

Response: Unfortunately, the testing really is dependent on funding. It would be inappropriate to commit to a testing protocol that we weren't able to implement due to funding. Including the, "if funds are available" language in the policy helps us be realistic with the public about possible limitations. You are correct that once we begin testing we need to follow through so it is not a wasted effort. That will be taken into consideration as we develop testing plans.

4. Section 6.6 says DPR should share information about health and safety guidelines with field users and neighbors. Has this ever been done to date?

Response: No. We will be developing a communication plan this summer to implement this section of the policy.

5. Section 6.7 says DPR will issue feedback requests to user groups? Has this ever been done to date?

Response: Not formally. We will be developing a process this summer for implementing this section of the policy.

6. Council Resolution 31073 passed on July 21, 2008 declared that the council would research artificial turf and alternatives. Because of this resolution, I am concerned that

DPR's draft policy says only in Section 5.1 that cost benefit analysis will be done for artificial turf and natural grass. The policy lacks any statement about DPR's commitment to consider alternatives to artificial turf. Would DPR be willing to add that language to section 5.2 as well?

Response: We could amend the language in 5.1 to say that "Planning and Development Division staff are responsible for ... completing cost benefit analysis of synthetic ~~versus~~, natural grass or other alternative fields surfaces."

7. When the Queen Ann artificial turf installation was replaced in 2008, what happened to the discarded artificial turf? Was it treated as hazardous waste or regular garbage? Was the same natural base usable for the 2nd installation, or did it have to be discarded as well?

Response: The surface materials were discarded to a land fill. It was treated as regular garbage, not hazardous waste. The base material was reused and did not have to be discarded.

8. Section 6.10 says DPR will consider replacement costs of artificial turf. Would DPR be willing to add language that includes its willingness to tally the volume that replacing artificial turf adds to Seattle's garbage load?

Response: We could amend the language in 6.10 to say, "When considering the cost of synthetic turf fields a life cycle cost, including replacement costs and disposal of surface materials will be considered."

9. I have seen a report by a New Haven, Connecticut non-profit group of independent scientists that claims lead, zinc, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, PAHs, Latex, and Phtalates have been found in some artificial turf products and these scientists feel there has been inadequate testing to date. Assurance that a product is "lead-free" is no assurance the product does not contain other materials. It was new information last night that the manufacturer of the product installed in Seattle's fields says it would be willing to replace a field if problems are discovered. Did I get that right? Would DPR be willing to put in its policy that in the future contracts with manufacturers of artificial turf installed in Seattle will be required to demonstrate the hazard free quality of their product by offering such replacement guarantees?

Response: You did get that right, FieldTurf Takett, the manufacturer of all our recent fields has committed to testing the fields and replacing those with levels of lead above the Consumer Products Safety Commissions (CPSC) standards. The proposed policy does say in 6.1 that "The Department will not purchase field products that contain hazardous levels of potentially toxic materials."

10. When I was on the staff of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, I led research on granulated forms of a pesticide. That experience showed me that the smaller the body

an animal has, the more severe are reactions to hazardous products. For example, sparrow size birds are much more at risk than mallard ducks if they mistake granules of various substances for seeds. Also, exposure can be more severe for animals that clean their feet by licking them. Artificial turf is known to contain granular shaped materials which can break down into dust over time. For this reason, I am concerned about the health and safety of animals that are smaller than children. Could you please describe research you have seen to date which provides information on product safety to fish and wildlife?

Response: We have not come across studies that provide information on product safety to fish and wildlife. If you find such studies we would certainly be interested in reviewing them.

DRAFT