

As Police Chief for the Town of Dartmouth, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to Tim Lancaster, Director of Parks & Recreation for the Town of Dartmouth for the productive and collaborative discussions we have had recently regarding the baseball fields currently located at the Gidley School, 1390 Tucker Road.

The proposed construction of new police station has raised concerns about the future of the fields. During the past several months, Mr. Lancaster and I have been exploring all our options surrounding the two fields.

One of the issues discussed by Mr. Lancaster & I is this year's baseball schedule and accessibility to the fields during the demolition of the Gidley School. We have attended meetings surrounding the demo with the contractor, SMI. We have been assured that, barring unforeseen circumstances, demolition of the school is expected to be completed by mid-May and there should be no disruption of the Little League Baseball season.

We also addressed the years to follow, which includes the 2018 season. The construction of the station would take place during the 2018 season. Both Mr. Lancaster and I see no reason nor have any issues having the ballfields remain at that location for the immediate future, but between relocating them to the home of the DYAA on Russells Mills Road to be the best option for both the Police Dept. and Park & Recreation Dept. Parents have also voiced having all the fields in a central location will help when siblings have practices and games at the same time.

This, along with other concerns voiced by the community has lead Mr. Lancaster and I to offer the following thoughts to the Select Board:

- The Gidley School Demolition Project has a town meeting approved budget of \$785,000.00. The project is only weeks away from completion and anticipated to be well under budget. The excess money set aside for the Gidley School project could be argued, and I do, that it could encompass the entire location, including the ball fields.

- Mr. Lancaster, along with Jim Vieira, a member of the Board of Directors for the DYAA, agrees that the t-ball field (the smaller of the two behind the Gidley School) could be relocated at a minimal cost at the Russells Mills Road location. The cost would be minimal because it would be on a flat piece of land and we believe because we have already been approached by many people, volunteers would do the work.

- The second field, a little league field, could also fit on the DYAA property alongside one of the existing fields. Mr. Vieira believes, and I agree, the field could be completed with the remaining money from the Gidley School demo as well.

In conclusion, I not only submit this letter to you as a proposal for the relocation of the two ball fields, but as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that on behalf of the Police Department those ball fields can remain at the Gidley School site, and we will work with Mr. Lancaster and The Park & Recreation Department to allow our kids to use the fields as long as he sees necessary.

Chief Robert W. Szala