

Recreation & Parks

April 7, 2026, 6:00 PM

Community Center

Reynolds Playground Presentation

Attendance: Karin Ernst, Shelly Bedrossian, Larry Simpson, Chris Kennedy, Rossana Ferrante
Meeting called to order at 6:02 PM.

History

- The Larz Anderson bequest was granted in 2018 for 2.2 M. The goal is to transform the present site into a safe and reliable ice rink, sports deck, community greenspace, and functional softball field.
- The bequest, currently worth 3.3 M, was intended (not binding) to go towards a public winter sports facility. It was also recommended that various sports and other functions be supported.
- The space will be a tier 1 facility with a dependable revenue stream to fund ongoing maintenance and replacement costs as equipment reaches its natural end of life.

Phase 1: Multi-Use Sports Deck

- Sports deck construction and chillers:
 - Current size is 170x70, which is 85% of a regulation game sheet. It will serve as a practice deck and not for regulation games.
 - Welcome area vs. locker rooms: the decision was made to focus on a roof with the possibility of adding lockers later.
 - Chilling system: air cooled, geothermal, split chilling
 - Air-cooled is the least expensive but too noisy. Lasts 10-15 years.
 - Geothermal will not work on the site.
 - The split system's equipment can go in the zamboni house, which will reduce noise. We will be opting for the split system.
- Noise reduction: the split system, 10' fence with Acoustiblock fabric lining to reduce by 10 dB. Beautification with Arborvitae will also reduce noise.
- Roof, support buildings, security:
 - Extended the roof to move the zamboni house, which allows the side to be enclosed.
 - Bathrooms: phase 1 will provide PortaJohns, phase 2 will include the construction of permanent bathrooms.
 - The boards and glass combo can be locked when not in use.
 - A company has volunteered to donate a four-camera cloud-based security system with a feed to R&P staff and the police, dependent upon power and internet access on site.
- Phase 1 timeline is 6 to 8 months.

Alternative Energy Solutions

- Solar viability: only one side of the roof faces south. There is an increase in cost to build the canopy to support solar in the future. Traditionally towns with their own light

departments don't do well on solar; Jon Blair will do ROI calculations on additional spend.

- Geothermal is not an option as a primary power source, but we are investigating the option of using it to melt the parking lot.

Energy Use Expectations

Variables: temperature, wind, roof, dashers, and how frequently the ice is cleaned.

Expected to use 200,000 kWh in an average 120-day season of 35 degrees every day.

Phase 2: Natural Grass Turf vs. Synthetic Turf, Softball Diamond

- Discussion of studies regarding safety of natural vs synthetic; a 2024 study from the EPA and CDC found rates of PAH concentrations after field activities the same between participants playing on natural grass and synthetic turf. (Synthetic Turf Field Recycled Tire Crumb Rubber Characterization Final Report)
- The industry has made advances in synthetic fiber durability and recyclability at its end of life.
- Alternate infills and new synthetic turf fibers can reduce surface temperature.
- Reduce injuries by installing appropriate sublayers.
- Seasonal operating expenses:
 - Natural grass: 52,680
 - Water budget 20-26 week season: 25,480
 - Manpower for weekly maintenance, lining, seasonal cleanups, aeration, etc: 27,200
 - Synthetic turf: 9187
 - Four man-hours per week for 26 weeks.

Phase 3: Neighborhood, roads, walkways, and beautification

- Increase parking from two to forty-one spaces.
- Green Street utility-only exit
 - We are investigating if it can be used for egress. It could also serve as a Medevac site, which would be an improvement over the current transfer station site.
- We are investigating the possibility of making Lime Street a public way to allow for town upkeep and the construction of sidewalks.
 - This would need to be voted on at town meeting in 2027.
- Redesign Winslow Square; DPW is supportive and has requested we submit a formal traffic safety evaluation so it can be prioritized on the Complete Streets list.
- The installation of memorial benches and tree program would add to area beautification.

Maintenance and Operations

- Most youth sports pay 100 to 312 hourly to private entities for field/ice space. The goal is to redirect those funds back into Marblehead.
- Break-even rental rates (more details on Shelly's slide deck):

- Ice rink: 216
 - Turf field: 120.79
 - Sports deck modular turf: 96.67
- Finances: Larry asked what would happen with surplus income. It would stay with Rec & Parks. Could it be used toward phase 2?

Public Comment

- Question about the roof material; would it increase the heat in the summer? We will look into this.
- Eleanor Reis, Rosie Ingalls, and Emmy Fox of Marblehead Youth Hockey spoke
 - They described their current practice schedule that makes for a long day when travelling. The construction of the Reynolds rink would allow them to get home earlier and eat dinner at a normal time.
- Calvin described that the current practice schedule makes it hard to do his homework.
- Question about having a water fountain on site; yes, there will be.
- Elizabeth Bedrosian spoke about older participants who have later practice times and don't get home until 10:30
- Marblehead Men's Softball League is in favor of the facility.
 - They would like to see phase 1 funded and happen as soon as possible.
 - They have concern about the field; phase 1 does not have an intact field.
 - They ask to see phase 1 with an overlay of the current field to see the impact. Is the parking lot necessary during phase 1? Putting off the parking lot would allow for the field to continue to be used. We will create an overlay.
- Foster Whelan encouraged the commission to vote in favor and support fun for town youth.
- Mike Calabrese of Marblehead Youth Hockey spoke in support of the rink and support staff. He described the difficulty of practicing at three different rinks and the associated travel times. The league is growing and the current model cannot support it.
- Adam Corbeil spoke in favor of the field and highlighted its ability to bring people together in town.
- Dennis Whelan of Marblehead Youth Lacrosse thanked Shelly for working with them on the project. They are in support of the turf as it would address field access issues. He also spoke about hockey's St. Lambert exchange and noted that the facility's construction would allow visitors from Quebec to engage more with our community.
- Patrick Noonan spoke to the field use for soccer in support of Phase 1.
- Emily Reis of Marblehead Youth Hockey spoke about the need for a practice space for the growing league.
- Eric Fazio spoke in support of the turf.

The next meeting will be on Friday, April 10th at 11:00 AM.

There will be another meeting on Tuesday, April 21st at 5:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 PM.

Minutes taken by Mary Herchenhahn