



Ottawa Catholic School Board  
Office of the Associate Director of Education  
570 West Hunt Club Road  
Nepean, Ontario K2G 3R4  
Phone: 613-224-2222 Ext. 2278  
Fax: 613-228-4158  
[ocsb.ca](http://ocsb.ca)

March 29, 2018

Ms. Joanne Lostracco  
124 Glenora Street  
Ottawa, ON  
K1S 1J3  
By email: [joanne\\_tina@hotmail.com](mailto:joanne_tina@hotmail.com)

Dear Ms. Lostracco,

Thank you for your presentation at the Board meeting Tuesday March 27<sup>th</sup>. Below please find a response to your inquiries on behalf of the Director of Education and the Board of Trustees. In addition to your formal presentation, there were other speakers from the community who provided their feedback to the Board. I have included a response to those questions that I'm able to answer at this time.

You pointed out that the field that Footy Sevens installed in the Peel District School Board is not the same as Immaculata H.S. as the homes are not in close proximity to the school. You also mentioned that the Hillcrest and Franco Cité fields do not have homes in close proximity to the school. Unfortunately, at Immaculata H.S. we do not have the luxury to use alternative field spaces since there is only one field and we have to work with what we have. There are other turf fields in the city of Ottawa with homes in close proximity to the field, including the new City of Ottawa field at the Minto complex on Cambrian and the turf field at the corner of Templeton and King Edward at the University of Ottawa.

I appreciate your comments regarding the history of the field and the access that was used by neighbours when the field was not in use by the school and when it was not booked by recreational groups for after school hour activities. The opportunity that has been presented to the Board will provide more access to the students of the school for both their physical education classes and their interscholastic sports activities. The longer season is not possible if we were to simply upgrade the natural grass field. The field will remain available for community use.

You mentioned that you have concerns with drainage, traffic, environment, and access to the field. In terms of drainage, an approved engineered drainage plan was reviewed by City of Ottawa staff so we are confident that the drainage will not be an issue with the enhancements to the field. As it is now, there will be no run-off from the field to neighbouring properties.

In terms of traffic, we believe that traffic will actually be mitigated by fencing off the field to the neighbouring streets. Access to the field will be from the school side and this will result in more users parking in the school parking lot and not on the neighbouring streets. While the Immaculata H.S. location does not enjoy the luxury of multiple fields, it does have a very large

parking lot, including space at the adjoining St. Nicholas Adult High School campus. Our School Board encourages active transportation or public transportation for access to all of our schools.

In terms of the environment and health impacts, the research summary that has already been cited in previous correspondence and the science do not support the speculation of negative environmental or health risks associated with a turf field.

Access to the field was an important component of your presentation and is the area that we feel dialogue can be constructive with creative solutions that will benefit the surrounding community. As part of our agreement with Footy Sevens, we will have a joint facilities management review team that meets quarterly or as needed. We anticipate the "season" will be mid-April to mid-October, depending on weather conditions. As has been noted in previous correspondence, this project does not include a dome. I would like to propose that the Old Ottawa East Community Association have an assigned representative to attend each of these meetings to participate in discussions on the topics of scheduling and community input on operational concerns. This would not preclude anyone in the community from calling the school principal with concerns or questions, but it would formalize a role for the community to support the responsible use of the field.

You asked for more details about our Board procurement policy related to the enhancements to the field. The enhancements to the field are part of a partnership with Footy Sevens; the Board is not purchasing the turf, the installation, the soccer nets, the fencing, the lights, or the maintenance equipment. For this reasons, the field does not come under our procurement practices as we are not purchasing these items. I can confirm that Footy Sevens does use their own procurement practices that include a competitive bid process in selecting their suppliers.

I'm not able to answer some of the questions regarding how long will the lights be on at night and on which days it will be used outside of school hours until we find out what the demand is from recreational groups in the community. I can confirm that lights will not be on when the field is not in use, and that for roughly half of the year the field is not in use at all due to weather conditions. As noted in previous correspondence, we did require that only state-of-the-art LED lights are used on this field and not stadium lights. The selected lights are only one-fifth of the levels of the lights currently used at the University of Ottawa turf stadium. The design of the lighting is to light the field without light spillage to neighbouring properties.

There was a question from another speaker about revenue and taxes and parking. I can confirm that the Board is not receiving any revenue from this project and we are not incurring any additional costs related to the turf field. The Board does not receive any revenue from the use of its sports fields by the community. The Board also does not receive any rent from our parking spaces even when community groups use our gyms or rent space for craft fairs, etc. Footy Sevens is paying all incremental costs associated with the field, maintenance, utilities and replacement as needed. Footy Sevens must also maintain a reserve fund to ensure that repairs or replacement can be done in a timely manner when needed.

The question of transfer of the lease to another party was raised. The licence cannot be transferred to another party without the written consent of the Board.

One speaker mentioned concerns about the smell of burning rubber from turf fields. Our discussions with Board staff that have recently installed turf fields have confirmed that there is no

burning smell associated with any of the new generation of turf fields. I have also confirmed that there was no smell associated with the recent installation of the turf field in Peel.

There was concern expressed that the field may be used for purposes other than intended. I can confirm that the licence is only for sports and recreation and that reasonable efforts will be used to minimize disturbances to local residents and will at all times meet the noise bylaws of the City of Ottawa. The main use of the field after school hours will be for Footy Seven's adult and youth recreational soccer programs.

A suggestion was made that the Board consider planting more trees between the property line of residents and the school. We are open to looking at the feasibility of adding more trees or shrubs either on Board property or on resident property if this does not impact the field and results in improved noise or privacy barriers for neighbouring residents.

In the ratepayer presentation, a resident asked for two hours per week of free access to the field. As has been shared, unused hours will be offered to the school at no charge. If the school does not have use for these hours, then some free access may be provided to the community. This will need to be coordinated once we know the bookings and will be discussed at the facility management meetings. In addition to these free hours, the track will normally be accessible to the community when the field is booked for field sports, and the track is available most mornings before the start of the school day for free community access. These hours will need to be coordinated and discussed as scheduling is confirmed.

You have asked for an opportunity to have dialogue on several of these issues and to see more drawings and hear more details. The Board was not in the position to provide specifics until the partner had selected the provider for the field turf and the lights, etc. I have confirmed with Footy Sevens that they will be able to have more details available within two weeks.

I have asked the school principal to book the school library for an information drop-in session on Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, between the hours of 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. Representatives from our Board's Planning and Facilities Department, the school principal, a representative from Footy Sevens and I will be present for that meeting. Footy Sevens will share available sketches and photos and will be able to answer technical questions regarding the selected turf, lights, etc. Input will be solicited on reasonable adjustments that can be made to the proposed fencing, community access, and the use of trees, etc. to mitigate impact on neighbouring properties. This will be an opportunity for any interested party to speak to any of those that have been involved, and an opportunity to have specific questions answered or to offer suggestions for consideration by the school, Board, and Footy Sevens.


The city councillor and neighbours were not involved in this process and nor were our school Board trustees as we viewed this as an operational matter related to converting a grass field to a turf field and we saw this as a positive enhancement to an existing land use for the Board and community users. Both the councillor and the trustee have pointed out the benefits and have shared with us the concerns raised.

We heard at the Board meeting from some neighbours that weren't pleased that they were not consulted. I can confirm that the negotiation with the partner included discussions to mitigate the impact on neighbours such as the selection of recreational sport field lighting that would not have light spillage onto other properties. Our primary responsibility is to our students and the school

but I can assure you that Footy Sevens and the Board are committed to the responsible use of the facility taking into account the impact on the nearby residents.

Moving forward we hope to work with the local community association to find creative solutions regarding access and to use the facility management meetings as opportunities for community concerns to be shared.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom D'Amico". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tom D'Amico  
Associate Director of Education

TD/ja

C.c.: Ottawa Catholic School Board Trustees  
City of Ottawa Councillor David Chernushenko  
Norma McDonald, Immaculata H.S. Principal  
Debbie Frendo, Superintendent of Schools