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| ITEM | 16 |
| MANAGER'S REPORT NO. | 45 |
| COUNCIL MEETING | 1979 06 25 |

Re: ARTIFICIAL TURF FOR SWANGARD STADIUM
LETTER FROM ALDERMAN D.A. LAWSON WHICH APPEARED ON THE
AGENDA FOR THE 1979 APRIL 23 MEETING OF COUNCIL (Item 4b)
(Item 18, Manager's Report No. 28, 1979 April 09)

At its meeting of 1979 April 23, Council received a letter from Alderman D.A. Lawson (Item 4b) regarding the condition of the turf at Swangard Stadium.

Arising out of Council's discussion of this subject, the following motion was adopted:

"THAT the Parks and Recreation Commission be asked to re-examine the use of artificial turf in Swangard Stadium and do cost benefit studies in this regard."

Following is the report of the Parks and Recreation Administrator in this connection.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Administrator be adopted.

* * * * *

1979 June 21

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER

FROM: ADMINISTRATOR, PARKS AND RECREATION

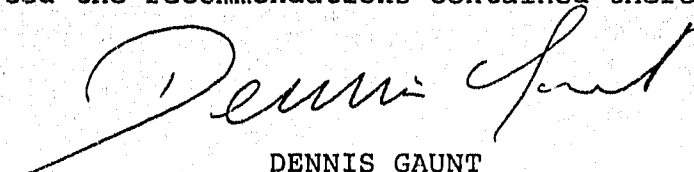
SUBJECT: ARTIFICIAL TURF FOR SWANGARD STADIUM

Recommendation:

1. That Council do not consider the installation of artificial turf at Swangard Stadium.

REPORT

Following a request from Council, the Parks and Recreation Commission directed staff to investigate the installation of artificial turf at Swangard Stadium. The attached report was received at the Commission meeting of 1979 June 20 and the Commission adopted the recommendations contained therein.


DENNIS GAUNT

AG/df
Attach.

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RE: ARTIFICIAL TURF FOR SWANGARD STADIUM - REQUEST OF COUNCIL

Under date of 1979 April 26, the Administrator received correspondence from the Deputy Municipal Clerk advising of a Council request as follows:

"THAT the Parks and Recreation Commission be asked to re-examine the use of artificial turf in Swangard Stadium and do cost benefit studies in this regard".

The following comments have been provided by the Sports Co-ordinator, Mr. Earl Erickson on this subject.

"Three main user groups have been consulted for their opinions regrading such an installation:-

Track and Field:

The British Columbia Track and Field Association has been striving to enhance the quality and status of the stadium to enable it to become the premier track and field facility in the province, as well as a nationally and internationally sanctioned facility.

The joint proposal to the Provincial Government by B.C.T. & F., and this department, was a step taken to upgrade the facility, mainly from a track and field perspective. At Empire Stadium, for example, artificial fields cannot be used for field events (hammer, discus, javelin, shot put). Installation of an artificial surface at Swangard virtually would eliminate participation from any track and field users.

Rugby:

As an enclosed spectator facility, Swangard is the only one in the Lower Mainland that can be utilized by rugby organizations for championships and international games. Artificial turf would eliminate all rugby play because of its hardness and ability to cause severe burns when fallen on.

Soccer:

This is the only group which could potentially gain because of the capability for large numbers of games on artificial turf. But even then there is serious debate regarding the greater potential for injury on an artificial surface. The hardness, increased traction and lack of 'give' leads to an increase in ankle and knee joint injuries.

In addition, the National Football Players' Association has recommended that there be a moratorium on the installation of artificial surfaces and that all such surfaces be removed from present stadiums within five years. They are very concerned about the injuries which are occurring.

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The astronomical costs for artificial turf make it unfeasible for a facility with a maximum capacity of 5,000 spectators. There would be no cost recovery for the capital expenditure. A rough estimate of 1.5 million dollars has been obtained which would include excavation, installation of asphalt and covering of artificial turf. Refined costs are not available without a consultant's analysis of the necessary requirements".

It is the opinion of our Operations staff that in the long run, there would be little saving in maintenance costs if we go from grass to artificial turf. The main ongoing costs are the regular sweeping of the turf and the squeegeeing of water from the surface after rain. This work can be expensive because part of it is labour intensive, particularly in areas of high rainfall. In addition, the squeegeeing of water often has to take place during games if rainfall occurs because otherwise the slippery nature of the field makes it extra dangerous. The probability is that the direct maintenance costs on the artificial turf surface would be less than the \$40,000. spent annually on the present field maintenance but to this must be added major repairs to portions of the artificial surface which seem to be occurring on most artificial fields at regular intervals of five or six years. These repairs, it would appear, often run into hundreds of thousands of dollars and therefore the net maintenance savings over several years operation would be negligible.

In view of this fact and the serious limitations of activity on an artificial surface, staff would recommend against any further consideration of artificial turf installation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT consideration of the installation of artificial turf at Swangard Stadium be dropped.
2. THAT the Commission so recommend to Council.