

ITEM	6
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	62
COUNCIL MEETING	1980 10 06

RE: LETTER FROM THE CITY OF VANCOUVER
453 WEST 12TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, B.C. V5Y 1V4
SWANGARD STADIUM - ARTIFICIAL TURF

The following report from the Parks and Recreation Administrator is in response to a letter from the City of Vancouver which appears on the agenda for the 1980 October 06 meeting of Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the recommendations as contained in the report from the Parks and Recreation Administrator be adopted; and
2. THAT a copy of this report be sent to the City of Vancouver, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1V4.

* * * * *

1980 September 30

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
FROM: PARKS & RECREATION ADMINISTRATOR
RE: SWANGARD STADIUM - ARTIFICIAL TURF

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council receive the attached report on the status of Swangard Stadium.
2. THAT no further consideration be given to the installation of artificial turf at Swangard Stadium.

SUMMARY

Vancouver City Council has asked Burnaby to conduct a study on the feasibility of installing artificial turf at Swangard Stadium. This question has previously been posed and the Parks & Recreation Commission was and still is opposed to the installation of artificial turf in this location.

REPORT

The Parks & Recreation Commission, at its meeting of 1980 October 01, received the attached report and adopted the three recommendations contained therein.


DENNIS GAUNT
Administrator

AG:cw

Attach.

cc: Director of Planning

RE: SWANGARD STADIUM - ARTIFICIAL TURF

Recommendations:

1. THAT the Commission receive this report as information on the status of Swangard Stadium.
2. THAT no further consideration be given to converting Swangard Stadium's turf field to artificial turf.
3. THAT the Commission so recommend to Council.

REPORT

The Vancouver City Council has asked Burnaby to conduct a study on the feasibility of installing artificial turf in Swangard Stadium - as per correspondence to Mayor D.M. Mercier from Vancouver City Clerk.

The question of converting to artificial turf in Swangard was posed in June, 1979. At that time, an assessment was made of the use of the stadium, the annual costs incurred and the advantages and disadvantages of installing artificial turf. As outlined in the attached Commission report Item 10, meeting 1979 June 20, there would be no cost saving and the flexibility of the stadium use would be greatly affected.

The range of uses would be changed, for example, sanctioned track and field meets could not be held, and rugby tournaments would be eliminated.

Burnaby, in co-operation with B.C. Track and Field and the Provincial Government, is currently upgrading the track and field components of the facility. This major \$336,900 renovation will establish Swangard as the only stadium in B.C. capable of accommodating sanctioned track and field meets. The installation of artificial turf would eliminate this determined function.

The use of Swangard Stadium has been assessed in respect to load-use capacities of the field. A realistic quota of sixteen field events per month has been established. Under these guidelines the field can be maintained to provide a quality playing surface at a reasonable maintenance cost. Extreme wet weather conditions would naturally result in shifts in the use patterns. The Commission report Item 11, 1979 June 20 as attached details the present use patterns.

The physical capabilities and flexibilities of Swangard Stadium are of primary importance to the many user groups. A change to artificial turf would seriously impede its broad facilitating functions.

ND:dm
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 regarding 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.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER CANNON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LAWSON:
"THAT the Commission approve the two recommendations."

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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ITEM 11
ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT NO. 13
COMMISSION MEETING 79 06 20

RE: USE OF SWANGARD STADIUM

Arising out of criticism of the condition of the Swangard Stadium playing field in the past season, the staff were asked to undertake a review of the intensity of use of the field to see if ways and means would be found of preserving a better playing surface.

The Sports Co-ordinator, Mr. Earl Erickson and the Superintendent Grounds, Mr. Walter Spelay have reviewed this matter at some length and report as follows.

"A review of activities during the period 1978 April 15 to 1979 April 15 shows -

Soccer	-	127 games
Rugby	-	10 games
Football	-	22 games
Track & Field	-	42 events
Miscellaneous	-	7 events

These totals (166) exceed the total of 161 field events indicated in the 1978 Annual Report because several youth soccer events held 7-8 games within one weekend. Track and field events mainly occur during April-June, football in the fall and soccer and rugby evenly split between the spring and the fall. The field was closed during July and August and from November 22 to February 25. The main deviation from the use pattern during the same period 1977-78 is that the number of soccer games at the senior level increased, and football games more than doubled. Senior soccer was unable to use Capilano (Bailey) Stadium in Vancouver because of its sole function as a baseball facility, thereby putting more use pressure on Swangard. Maintenance staff indicate that, due to the contact nature of football, it is more detrimental to the field than soccer.

After assessing the activity patterns and volume, several recommendations were developed. A reduction in the number of events is the only way to lessen damage to the field and therefore, certain restrictions would have to be invoked:-

1. The facility should not be used for regularly scheduled games for organizations such as Big 4 Football, Pacific Northwest Soccer and B.C. Senior Soccer. These organizations shall be limited to a greatly reduced number of games, allocation of which will be treated as second priority and fitted into empty spaces following allocation of junior games.
2. After any main event or weekend of events from which the field could sustain a certain level of damage (rugby, football, hammer, senior soccer) there shall be a 2-day field closure before the next event following rugby, football and hammer throw and a one day field closure following senior soccer.

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3. Use of the Stadium by professional teams shall be for special fund raising events only and subject at all times to the conditions outlined in 1 and 2 above.
 4. Activities should be restricted to a maximum of 16 field events per month as follows:
 - Soccer: Maximum 11 games per month, unless some of the games involve under 16 year-old players. In that case, 2 or 3 more games would be allowed. Only under-16 players would be allowed more than one game per day, i.e. Burnaby District Juvenile Soccer and the Sun Soccer Tournament.
 - Football: Maximum 3 games per month. No double-headers.
 - Rugby: Maximum of 2 games per month and restricted to special events such as international, interprovincia and championship final events. No double-headers.
 - Track & Field: No limit. If the hammer throw is part of the field events, it may reduce the total of 16 events per month, i.e. 1 hammer throw event reduces total to 15
- \$4,000.00 - \$6,000.00 reduction in revenue would result from such restrictions.
5. Field Closures: In effect July/August and December/January/ Track and field events would be periodically allowed during July and August. Events during November and February would be dependent on the weather and the resulting field condition.
 6. The allotment rental form for Swangard Stadium shall be changed to allow the Corporation the right to cancel any event on 8 hours notice as a result of bad weather or inferior field conditions the additional use of which could endanger the life of the field."

The Administrator concurs that the preceding six recommendations will help to alleviate the condition of overuse and resulting damage to the turf playing surface.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Commission adopt items 1 - 6 in this report to govern the use of the field at Swangard Stadium commencing 1979 September 01.
2. THAT the Commission so advise Council.