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TO: Steve Allen, Barbara Nolfi, John Ewing, Carolyn Hanson, Dave Hartnett (Burlington Parks & Recreation Commission)

FROM: Brendan Bush, Mary Cosgrove, Steve Taubman, Adam Quinn, Charles Chamberlain, Ben Eisenberg, Richard Witting (BTown Disc Golf Club)

DATE: April 28, 2009

RE: Disc Golf at Leddy Park

Introduction

It has now been almost one year since we, a group of local community residents, first started discussing the possibility of disc golf in Burlington with Bob Whelan from Parks & Recreation.

In order to demonstrate our commitment to this proposal and our community, we immediately formed the BTown Disc Golf Club as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We met with Bob, Wayne Gross, and Warren Spinner on several occasions to solidify and mutually agree upon our proposal.

We then went through the formal process of proposing this course to the Parks & Recreation Commission, including attending and making presentations at two successive Parks & Recreation Commission meetings, both of which were properly publicized ahead of time. After receiving formal approval from the Parks and Recreation Commission, we dedicated hours of volunteer labor assisting the City Arborist and the Parks and Recreation department to prepare the park for course play.

After approval was revoked and the Parks and Recreation department called for more community input, we continued to participate in two more public hearings. At the request of Parks and Recreation department, we held a four-hour disc golf demonstration in the woods at Leddy Park for neighbors to see how the game is played.

When the Parks and Recreation department decided to create a Disc Golf working group to make recommendations on the proposal, we continued to make ourselves available and assisted in the public process. Two members volunteered their time to provide technical assistance.

We stand behind our proposal and have continued to follow the directions set forth by the City and the Parks and Recreation department to get this project approved. We are eager to bring this process to a conclusion by gaining your final approval to install an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park.

Since the Parks & Recreation Commission has the authority within the City of Burlington to make decisions about uses of Burlington park lands, we hope that you will find our proposal and this memo to be a validation of your previous decision to approve disc golf in Leddy Park -- and that it will lead you to use this authority as a city-appointed commission to once again approve a course proposal.

Addressing community concerns

Disc golf is one of America's fastest growing sports, with over 3,000 courses nationwide in communities just like Burlington. However, there are still a lot of people who are unfamiliar with the sport. Most of the concerns raised by community members at the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings and the Working Group



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meetings are due in large part to misunderstandings about what disc golf is and how it is played. In this section, we will do our best to address these concerns.

Safety

Playing disc golf, like doing almost any activity (baseball, hockey, softball, lacrosse, soccer, tennis, squash, etc), comes with inherent risks. Every disc golfer knows to be aware of other players and non-players alike. A disc golf player does not throw a disc toward someone standing in front of them, just as a hockey player would not take a slap shot directly towards someone in the stands, just as a baseball player wouldn't throw a fastball directly at another player or an onlooker.

Every activity incurs some risk for both participants and bystanders. Leddy Park is currently full of these activities that range from foul balls, dogs on or off leash, flying pucks, kicked soccer balls, whacked tennis balls, crossing the bike path, to the simple act of walking in the woods and tripping on a root.

By its nature, disc golf is a safe sport that easily coexists with other activities. Here are some quotes from public officials in communities with 18-hole disc golf courses in multi-use recreational areas just like Leddy Park:

"To my knowledge, we have never had a report of any park user being injured or hit by a disk."

- Kathy Nygard, Secretary, King County (OR) Parks & Rec.

"There have been no injuries to anyone (golfer or non golfer) that I'm aware of."

- Alex Salazar, Parks Maint. Supervisor, Portland, OR

"Our Parks Safety Officer checked the City system and reports that there haven't been any claims for injuries or property damage in Mineral Springs Park where the disc golf course is."

- Laurie Dunlap, Superintendent's Office, Seattle Parks & Rec.

The very small number of incidents at the more than 3,000 courses nationwide has proven the safety of Disc Golf. Like any safe sport, examples can be cherry picked from a very small number of incidents to make it seem like disc golf is unsafe.

It is only fear of the unknown which is stopping opponents of disc golf from realizing that the risks associated with disc golf play are no smaller or greater than any of these other safe activities currently sponsored by the Parks and Recreation department in parks citywide.

Opponents of disc golf at Leddy Park have taken a "scatter pattern" study of disc golf throws and attempted to apply it to a map of Leddy Park, claiming that this shows that disc golf would not be safe in Leddy. However, the author of that study, Steve West, disagrees with their conclusions, stating:

"The data and graphs in my paper on Boy Scout skills were meant to be a tool to be used by other qualified disc golf course designers. Someone who does not have additional knowledge and experience could not be expected to use them properly.

While a ruler would be an appropriate tool for building a house, getting hold of a ruler does not make one a carpenter.



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The graphs are inappropriate for use in woods. Discs don't go as far in wooded areas. Not only because the trees block the flight, but also because players throw more carefully.

Even an experienced designer cannot use just maps to determine whether or not a course is safe. I suggest both sides agree to bring in a qualified designer from the Disc Golf Course Designers Group to take a look at the site and proposed design. If it is not safe, the designer will say so."

Environment

Some of those opposed to a disc golf course at Leddy Park frequently cite the letter and subsequent presentation by Mike Snyder, the Chittenden County Forester to help them make a case against our proposal.

However, most quotes and information being attributed to Mr. Snyder are being taken out of context. While Mr. Snyder has said that in his role as a forester, he would not recommend changing any forest ever, he also said that a disc golf course can co-exist with a healthy forest. **This quote from Mr. Snyder is clear, "My sense is that it would be possible to allow and manage such use and still maintain it in a forested setting...it would require ongoing monitoring and management of both the use and the resulting forest conditions."**

Mr. Snyder has also indicated that certain parts of the park might be better suited to disc golf than others, and we look forward to working in partnership with him, the city arborist, and a PDGA approved course designer to ensure that those areas of the park most vulnerable to environmental impact are monitored and maintained in such a way that both an 18-hole disc golf course and a healthy forest can exist at Leddy Park.

Our proposal would see to it that during times of the year when the woods at Leddy Park are most susceptible to damage, such as "mud season", the disc golf course could be closed. This is one of the ways negative impacts have been mitigated at courses all over the country including the course in Waterbury.

Mr. Snyder, during his presentation to the Working Group, stated that the soil types common throughout Leddy Park are "robust" and have a very low erosion hazard. It can also be noted that soil compaction that has occurred as a result of the already established walking trails in Leddy has not led to any tangible negative affect on the park's overall health. If the appropriate environmental authorities such as Mike Snyder find impact from increased foot traffic a concern which should be addressed, then we will follow their professional advice to prevent, control and manage any such issues.

Concerns are being passed around on Front Porch Forums across the city, insisting that concrete tee pads are being proposed. While some courses do have concrete tees, our plan is to work with the county forester, the city arborist, and a PDGA (professional disc golf association) approved course designer to figure out what type of tee pad would work best on a course at Leddy. We're confident that their combined expertise in forestry and course design will lead us to the most appropriate solution, whether it is natural tees, paving stones, crushed stone, concrete, or another more creative approach.

The Parks and Recreation Department and the BTown Disc Golf Club are dedicated to maintaining the health of Leddy Park. Since we began the process for this proposal, an additional community group, Friends of Leddy, has formed, and has stated a goal of maintaining the health of Leddy Park. We believe it is reasonable to assume that enough attention will be paid to the ongoing monitoring and maintenance in order to ensure both an enjoyable disc golf course and a healthy forest.



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Park Usage

In a letter sent to local businesses last year, the BTown Disc Golf Club wrote that up to 1,000 users per week might use a disc golf course in Leddy Park. The key word in that sentence is “might,” because there is no good way to know how many residents will actually use the course. The number was a guess of the park’s potential made by one of our members and the BDGC does not have an official estimate of possible course usage.

However, if we were to use that number and estimate that 1,000 users per week would enjoy a disc golf course at Leddy Park, then disc golf would easily be the park’s most popular activity. The addition of a very popular recreational activity would by definition be a success in improving the quality of Burlington Parks in general and Leddy Park specifically.

Further, 1,000 users per week would equal roughly 145 users per day – or 36 groups of four per day – spread out over 18 holes installed in a 75 acre park. **That is not an unreasonable number of people to be using one recreation area at Leddy Park, especially when spread out over the course of a full day.**

Finally, it is worth noting that the more people using the park and participating in legitimate recreational activities, the safer the park will be for everyone. Ultimately, an increase in park usage would indeed make Leddy safer for all park users. Our community parks are available for the community benefit, and any activity that offers family-friendly enjoyment for residents of our city should be vigorously pursued by the Parks & Recreation Department and Commission.

Access to Bathroom Facilities

The hours of access to the two public bathroom facilities at Leddy Park are adequate for the existing uses, and would be adequate for the additional use of disc golf. Disc golfers would use the proper restroom facilities no more or less than soccer players, lacrosse players, softball players, baseball players, beachgoers, or anyone else that uses Leddy Park.

Alcohol Use in Leddy Park

Alcohol is currently legal at Leddy Park, provided it is not in a glass container. Therefore, alcohol consumption by disc golfers should not be treated any differently than alcohol consumption by hockey parents, softball players, beachgoers, or anyone else who legally consumes alcohol at Leddy Park.

Multi-use vs. Single use

Disc golf successfully and safely coexists with a myriad of active and passive recreational activities in many of the 3,000+ courses nationwide.

Leddy Park sits on about 75 acres. Among the activities and uses currently offered at Leddy are baseball, ice hockey, softball, lacrosse, tennis, picnic areas, lakefront beach and miles of walking trails. Here are a few examples of Parks just like Leddy that contain an 18-hole disc golf course:

- In Edora Park (Fort Collins, CO), a 65 acre park, an 18-hole disc golf course coexists with a playground, multiple ball fields, a skating rink, tennis courts, walking trails, a swimming pool, etc. And the park is abutted on multiple sides by residential neighborhoods.
- In Sedgley Woods (Fairmount Park, PA), an 18-hole disc golf course was installed throughout densely wooded forest in 1978. The surrounding community has been so supportive that it has since expanded to 27 holes.

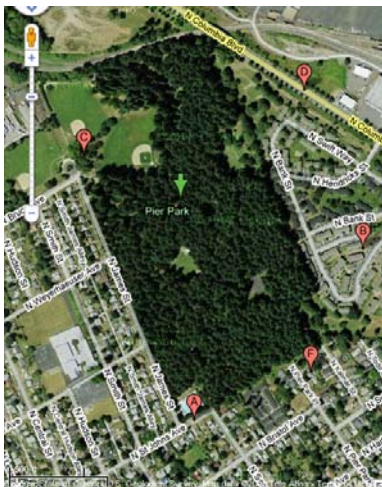


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- In NAD Park (Bremerton, WA), an 18-hole disc golf course was installed through 20 acres of old growth forest.
- In Pease Park (Austin, TX), a 42 acre park, an 18-hole disc golf course coexists with softball, a swimming pool, volleyball courts, three miles of walking trails, a playground, and a picnic area. This park is also surrounded on multiple sides by houses.
- In Pier Park (Portland, OR), an 87 acre park, a heavily wooded 18-hole disc golf course coexists with baseball, basketball, paved and unpaved walking paths, picnic areas, playground, skatepark, soccer field, softball field, tennis court and wading pool. Pier Park is surrounded on three sides by residential neighborhoods. The photos below are aerial views of Pier Park and Leddy Park. The similarities between the two parks are clear. It is easy to see hundreds of healthy green trees covering huge sections of both parks. What is hard to see is that amongst the vibrant, healthy green trees in the Pier Park photograph is a popular 18-hole disc golf course.

Pier Park (Portland, OR)



Leddy Park



Leddy Park – Classification, Zoning & Master Plan

Park Classification

Acquired in 1970, Leddy Park is the largest of Burlington’s city parks at 75 acres. According to the Burlington Parks & Recreation Department, **Leddy Park is classified as a “City Park,”** which “implies that Leddy contains features or attractions that are significant enough to be of interest to residents throughout the city as opposed to a smaller geographic area.”

Further, Leddy is listed in the Rules and Regulations for City Parks of the City’s Code of Ordinances as being “available for field sports, tennis, picnicking and aquatic events.”

Leddy Park is an evolving community park and has been improved in the past, at the discretion of the Parks & Recreation Commission, to meet the recreational needs of our Burlington community. What once housed a meat rendering plant that polluted beautiful Lake Champlain now has facilities to serve active sports such as tennis, basketball, baseball, soccer, lacrosse and softball as well as the ice arena and multiple parking lots.



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According to the Parks & Recreation Department, the question of whether any of the park areas should be made available for additional recreational activities is answered by the Parks and Recreation Commission “on a case-by-case basis when specific projects are proposed.”

It is our position that the Parks & Recreation Commission, acting fully within their powers as a city commission, made the right decision with their initial approval of an 18-hole course in Leddy Park, because it fits perfectly with the other active recreational opportunities already offered in the park.

Arms Grant Park

There exists within the City Parks System a classification of “Urban Wilds.” Urban Wilds are defined as “those lands that provide habitat for rare and endangered plant and animal communities, wetlands and other riparian systems, flood plain, unique geological and hydrological features, important wildlife habitat and travel corridors, areas important for scientific research and education, scenic vistas, trails, passive recreation, sustainable forest communities, and cultural features.”

Leddy Park is classified as a City Park, and not an Urban Wild.

Arms Grant Park is two blocks south of Leddy Park and provides city residents with a wonderful place for peaceful nature walks, away from all other recreational activities. Arms Grant Park is over 40 acres and classified as an “Urban Wild” Walking trails are the only amenity provided in this beautiful wooded setting. Furthermore, when connected to the Rock Point property, New North End residents enjoy an immense woodland area that stretches all from North Ave. to Lake Champlain. Burlington and especially New North End residents are fortunate to have the opportunity to enjoy an Urban Wild setting.

Leddy Park is an active recreation City Park, and the approval of an 18-hole disc golf course to be installed amongst the woods at Leddy fits perfectly with the city’s Code of Ordinances.

Park Zoning

Leddy Park is zoned as RCO – Recreation/Greenspace according to the official Burlington zoning map. **Unlike surrounding park areas such as Arms Grant Park, Ethan Allen Park, and the Intervale, Leddy is NOT zoned as conservation space.**

RCO – Recreation/Greenspace zoning, according to Article 4 of the Burlington Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, is intended “to provide a diversity of passive and active recreational opportunities and other urban green spaces that provide for public use and enjoyment. The District includes a wide spectrum of recreational opportunities including developed parks with active public-use facilities, undeveloped open areas, dog parks, community gardens, urban parks and pocket parks, playgrounds, transportation corridors, and cemeteries.”

According to the City of Burlington’s Department of Planning and Zoning, on a map dated October 31, 2008, **Leddy Park is NOT included in the Natural Resource Protection District, and is therefore NOT considered by the city to be wetland, natural area, floodway or floodplain.**

According to former Burlington Planning Commission Chair Peter Potts, “While Leddy does have important shoreline and forested areas, it [...] does not possess the same kind of critical and unique resource features of other areas...”



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Mr. Potts, in an email distributed to “Friends of Leddy Park,” (a group formed specifically to oppose a disc golf course in Leddy Park), also stated that “[t]he primary focus of the Open Space Protection Plan was to identify areas of significant open space and natural areas (as opposed to small pockets of green space and/or recreational areas) that may be threatened and in need of areas of the city with critical and unique resource features that were not already protected, and towards developing mechanisms to achieve that protection (i.e. the Conservation Legacy Program and Fund that resulted).”

The Open Space Protection Plan is “a far reaching strategy that will enable the City to pursue and implement its long-held goals for open space protection. The plan provides an over-arching vision for the future of Burlington’s landscape where natural areas, parklands, and greenbelts are physically integrated into the urban fabric to complement development with conservation – where natural and recreational systems play an essential role in enhancing environmental quality, economic prosperity, and quality of life”

According to the 2006 Burlington Municipal Development Plan, “Burlington’s ‘vision’ embraces two forms of open space that encompass the character of an urban place within a distinctively natural landscape – ‘Significant Natural Areas and Urban Greenspaces.’” **Leddy Park does not fall into either of these categories.**

The New North End holds the majority of Burlington’s park space. When considering a proposal such as ours, it is important to think about the greater good – the entire Burlington community as a whole – and not just the concerns of immediate neighbors who do not want more people using the park in their backyard.

The city of Burlington does have a plan for Leddy Park, and that plan is for Leddy Park to be available for active recreation for all Burlington residents. We feel that those calling for an additional master plan before course approval is granted are unhappy with the outcome of public process so far and are looking to stall this process in any way possible in hopes they can kill the proposal all together.

Working group recommendations

All seven members of the Parks and Recreation Commission-appointed Disc Golf Working Group recommend bringing a disc golf course to Burlington and 4 out of 7 support an 18-hole disc golf course at Leddy Park.

The Working Group voted on a number of sensible recommendations they would like to see followed if a course is installed. We are happy to continue to work with Parks & Recreation Department and any other parties in order to follow the spirit of these recommendations. Below are the recommendations that got majority support at the final working group meeting, with our comments afterwards in italics.

- Follow a clearly identified planning process, including details of who is participating in the process and who is making decisions, with a focus on being open, inclusive and transparent.

We look forward to working with the Parks & Recreation Commission and Department to come up with a tangible process for the installation of an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park in a timely and productive manner.

- Parks & Recreation should pursue disc golf in Burlington.



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We wholeheartedly agree, and after months of discussion with the Parks & Recreation Department and research into other areas in Burlington, we are confident that Leddy Park is the most appropriate venue for an 18-hole disc golf course in Burlington.

- Steps should be taken to mitigate soil compaction, if appropriate.

We look forward to working with the Parks & Recreation Department and any outside parties they deem necessary to develop an ongoing plan to mitigate environmental impacts that may occur from use of an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park.

- During mud season, the course should be closed or removed to lessen the environmental impact.

Just as with other courses in Vermont such as Center Chains in Waterbury Center, an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park would be closed during mud season. We are willing to work with the Parks & Recreation Department to ensure that park users respect this closing.

- An environmental assessment should be done to address the impact & management of a course with low impact in mind.

Mike Snyder, Chittenden County Forester, has agreed to make himself available for just this purpose should plans for the installation of an 18-hole disc golf course move forward. We look forward to working with Mr. Snyder.

- A memorandum of understanding between the city and the BTown Disc Golf Club should be implemented, with a fall-back in case BTown should disband.

We look forward to working with the Parks & Recreation Commission and Department to draw up a memorandum of understanding.

- A clear budget should be created, including projections of future costs to taxpayers.

BTown Disc Golf Club has already secured the majority of the funds necessary to install and 18-hole disc golf course, and look forward to working with the Parks & Recreation Commission and Department to draw up a budget and possible cost projections for the long term maintenance of a course. It should also be noted that the Parks & Recreation Department will be able to sell discs at Leddy Park's existing pro shop for additional revenue.

- Ensure course design is not in conflict with other park uses for safety's sake.

We have laid out our guidelines to address this issue and are open to any additional parameters laid out by the Parks and Recreation Commission and Department.

- Create an evaluation process for annual review of course.

We look forward to being a part of an evaluation process that will ensure the timely control and management of the course.



Support for the course

The BTown Disc Golf Club formed in the summer of 2008, in response to community interest in a local disc golf course. Many disc golfers from the Burlington area travel regularly to Waterbury to play, and through encounters on that course, conversations with friends and neighbors, and discussions with the Green Mountain Disc Golf Club, we decided that it was time to take the initiative to plan, design, raise money for, build, and help maintain a course in Burlington.

Support for a disc golf course in Leddy Park has grown as we have had the chance to talk to more Burlingtonians about our plan. Residents of all 7 city wards have spoken up and stated their support for an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park. It's not just disc golfers who support our plan – local business owners, mentors, school teachers, and many others have approached us to discuss the benefits of disc golf for the local economy, kids of all ages, and those with emotional, physical or intellectual disabilities. Among the supporters of an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park are lawyers, doctors, business owners, physical therapists, grandmothers, graphic designers, students, photographers, cooks, real estate agents, and men and women from all walks of life.

Over 400 Burlington residents have signed the petition in support of an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park as of April 28, 2009. Here are a few quotes from some of those supporters:

"As a business owner, I understand the importance of outdoor amenities that make our town special and attract people to live and travel here. Disc golf courses are fun, free for everybody, and encourage people to get outside. All you need to enjoy it is a pair of shoes and a frisbee."

- **Jon Adler**, Co-owner, Skinny Pancake & Union Street Media

"Disc Golf is a great, low pressure sport that allows people to get outside and enjoy our beautiful open spaces. I've found that this activity generally attracts socially responsible people: small sets of friends and/or family. What's best is that people can be at different ages and ability levels and still enjoy playing together. I hope the city approves adding disc golf to Leddy Park"

- **Kristin Miskavage**, Burlington resident

"As a resident of the New North End, and a staunch believer in the USE of city parks, I cannot think of a more appropriate use for the lands at Leddy Park...While I can understand the misgivings of abutting neighbors who worry about change, these misgivings seem guided by fear and misunderstanding rather than any true threat to their property or way of life. I am reminded of the uproar from neighbors of the Burlington Bike Path prior to its construction. I think it's pretty much unanimous that that project worked out well."

- **Scott Homsted**, Burlington resident

"I appreciate the idea that nature areas should be preserved and that there are many flora and fauna that live in these areas. At the same time, I think the "once the woodlands are gone, they are gone forever" statement is a bit drastic, especially related to the disc golf proposal. If you have wandered through some of the parks that line the waterfront, you will read some of the history of these parks and realize that the city has done a lot of good things to improve our recreation areas. [...] The "wilderness" is beautiful and I would defend it whole heartedly. But Leddy Park is not the wilderness and trying to compare it doesn't do either environment justice."

- **Eve Johnson**, Burlington resident

Below is a map of Burlington, with a mark for each city resident who has signed a petition in support of an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park (as of 4/28/2009). As it is plain to see, residents from all 7 wards of Burlington favor the addition of an 18-hole disc golf to the recreational offerings at Leddy Park.



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Opposition to the course

Some of the most vocal opposition to the disc golf proposal has been created by the spread of misinformation about the proposal and disc golf in general. Claims that we cut down 1.3 million dollars worth of trees during the preparation of the course last year are completely false, but this claim is regularly repeated to generate opposition. Neighbors have told Burlington residents that we will use 1,500 feet of concrete for tee pads, that we will clear cut Leddy "once the woodlands at Leddy are gone they will be gone forever", and that disc golf will interfere with all the other recreation at the park.

They have submitted doctored photographs with unrelated test results. They've falsely claimed that all the wildlife has already left the park. They've cited studies out of context and even resorted to personal attacks on the character of community members who disagree with them, all to give the impression that disc golf is a dangerous sport played by miscreants who are out to destroy the environment.

They have continued to spread this misinformation even after we have explained the actual proposal and refuted inaccurate information.

This exclusive group of Leddy Park neighbors, many of whom founded LeddyPark.org to fight the disc golf proposal, have coordinated a misinformation campaign. They intended to instill fear and disrupt progress, instead of attempting to participate in an open public process based on the truth. What may



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have started as a few genuinely concerned neighbors has evolved into a vicious attack group – marginalizing the sport of disc golf and the maligning the members of BDGC by claiming that we that “will destroy this valued New North End Natural Area.”

A leader of their group even sent an email to their supporters, asking for people who oppose disc golf at Leddy Park to dress in a disguise with “sunglasses” “collars up” to “spy” on BDGC meetings.

While the BTown Disc Golf Club has participated in all aspects of the public process that has gotten this proposal to where it is, we feel strongly that “Friends of Leddy Park” has done us all a disservice by introducing divisive rhetoric and attempting to undermine the legitimate decision-making process. It is impossible for the Parks and Recreation Commission to accurately judge the amount of real opposition to the proposal when so many community residents have been repeatedly been exposed to scare tactics and false claims.

It is our position that this process has been open to the public from the very first Parks & Recreation Commission meeting that we attended last August. The agenda was posted ahead of time for all to see and the meeting was attended by anyone who wished to hear about the proposal before the Commission moved on any form of approval.

It is our hope that as we move forward with this process and more of the community gets exposed to the truth about the proposal that the scare tactics and inflammatory rhetoric will calm down and heal. We want community members who have received the wrong information to see that we are offering worthwhile proposal to provide the residents of Burlington with an additional family-friendly activity at no cost to tax payers.

The truth is that disc golf is a safe, low-impact sport enjoyed in parks just like Leddy all over the country. We look forward to becoming additional stewards of the land that will be home to a public 18-hole disc golf course open to all Burlington area residents.

Benefits of disc golf

“The activity provides low cost recreation to the community while being low cost for installation and maintenance... As The Trumbull County Metroparks look into the tenth year of offering disc golf we have no regrets. Disc golf may be the best kept recreational secret.”

Bill Flynn
Commissioner, Trumbull County Metroparks

Positive change for under-utilized areas of Parks

Disc golf attracts positive and dedicated disc golf players and disc golf clubs that bring a beneficial element to the area. The players tend to take an active role in the course and the surrounding areas, making sure the course is in good shape and taken care of.

“We had a problem with vandalism in certain areas of the park, but after the disc golf course was built, the increased activity in the park really decreased vandalism”, states Rich Dippel, Director of Parks and Recreation for South St. Paul, Minnesota.



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Bob Downing, Portland Parks & Recreation District Manager, had this to say about the benefits of disc golf in his district:

"The positive change in the park brought about by disc golf has made a lot of people happy - neighbors, police, golfers, local businessmen, and parks workers. The old adage that positive use will displace a negative use seems to be much in evidence at Pier Park."

Burlington Parks & Recreation Department employees have acknowledged recent issues with homeless encampments and garbage disposal in many areas of Leddy Park. It is disingenuous of park neighbors to claim that these issues do not exist. Disc golf will bring a positive element to these under-utilized sections of the park, making Leddy Park safer and cleaner for everyone.

Inexpensive to install, maintain, and play

A professional quality 18-hole disc golf course can cost as little as \$5,000 to install. As the BTown Disc Golf Club has offered to raise the funds to cover the cost of course installation and coordinate volunteers to perform the installation labor, the cost to the city to install the course is very close to zero if any at all.

Disc golf baskets are made for permanent installation (though are removable), and are powder coated and galvanized for long lives. There would therefore be very little maintenance cost associated with upkeep of the baskets. BTown is willing to help coordinate maintenance, further reducing associated costs to taxpayers, if any exist at all.

To play disc golf, all you need is one disc, and at \$5-15 each, disc golf is accessible to families of all socioeconomic backgrounds. By choosing to install an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park, the Parks & Recreation Commission will be sending a clear message that Burlington is committed to providing a wide variety of recreational opportunities that can truly be enjoyed by everyone.

Community Health

The city of Burlington was recently granted the distinction of "America's Healthiest City." This is in large part due to Burlington residents' participation in outdoor recreational activities.

Disc golf provides a safe, low-impact exercise for people of all ages. Playing disc golf relies heavily on strategy and decision making, and is a great way to stimulate both the body and mind. Disc golf is a great activity for children of all ages, and encourages kids to get off the couch and get out to the woods to have some fun. BTown has been approached by several local teachers, counselors and mentors who are all excited about the prospect of a disc golf course to bring their students and clients to. Additionally, Mary Cosgrove, BTown Disc Golf Club Vice-Chair, has secured a pledge from Innova Discs to bring a free disc golf immersion program to a local elementary school once the course has been installed.

With the addition of an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park, Burlington would be offering a healthy outdoor activity for all residents, young and old.

Community Involvement, Accessibility

Disc golf is one of America's fastest growing sports. In the past 10 years, the number of courses in the U.S. has more than doubled. There is a very low barrier to entry for those who have never played before, and as a result, the disc golfing community is incredibly diverse.



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Offering a public 18-hole disc golf course in Burlington will provide city residents with an activity that can be played by *everyone*. No other recreational area in the city can provide the same all-encompassing offering. You don't need to be on a team to enjoy disc golf. You don't need to join a league. You don't need to take lessons. You don't need expensive equipment. You don't need a coach. You don't need a schedule. You don't need an opponent.

All you need to play disc golf is a way to get to the course and a \$5 disc. Being on the Burlington Bike Path and the North Avenue CCTA Bus line means that along with the multitude of parking available at Leddy Park for those with cars, people could easily get to the disc golf course on their bikes or via public transportation.

Economic Boost

Not only will nearby businesses like restaurants, cafes and gas stations in the New North End see a boost in business from disc golfers (just ask the Center Bakery in Waterbury), the Parks & Recreation Department will also be able to generate revenue by selling discs in the pro shop that already exists inside the skating arena at Leddy Park. Selling discs is very easy to start and can be very lucrative. If needed, the BDGC can assist in the setup of such a "pro-shop" within the existing store in the arena through our association with professional disc manufacturers.

Conclusion

Disc golf is a safe, family-friendly sport accessible to people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. An 18-hole disc golf course will be the perfect addition to Leddy Park, a City Park intended for active recreation. Leddy Park is accessible to Burlingtonians via the Burlington Bike Path, public transportation, and offers plenty of parking that can accommodate disc golfers in addition to current Leddy Park visitors.

Leddy Park is not only best equipped to handle additional park users with existing infrastructure such as public restrooms and an abundance of parking, but is also the most appropriately zoned area for a disc golf course in Burlington.

Concerns, questions and feedback from Burlington residents have been listened to, addressed and answered to the best extent possible. The small number of Leddy Park neighbors spreading misinformation and in some cases outright lies have mislead well-meaning community members and created false opposition out of those who might otherwise support the proposal once completed. The fears and exaggerations used against our proposal are much like statements made by opponents of the Burlington Bike Path or area dog parks that were made before those projects were approved – and just like them, these fears will be proven false again if you approve this course.

We are ready and willing to move forward with the process of completing what we began together last summer. We will design, install and manage, at our expense, an 18-hole disc golf course that amplifies the multi-recreational uses of Leddy Park. We will work in partnership with the appropriate authorities to ensure that an 18-hole disc golf course in Leddy Park remains low-impact to the surrounding wooded areas, and that potential impact is monitored and managed in a timely fashion.

We appreciate the time and energy spent on this proposal by Parks & Recreation Department employees Warren Spinner, Lisa Coven, Bob Whelan and Wayne Gross, among others, as well as the Parks & Recreation Commissioners and everyone who participated in the disc golf Working Group.



BURLINGTON DISC GOLF

active recreation :: environmental stewardship :: healthy community

We look forward to the day when a disc golf course in Leddy Park is appreciated by all as a valuable benefit to our community – just as the Burlington Bike Path and city dog parks evolved from divisive political arguments to some of the most enjoyed resources our wonderful city has to offer.

If you have any further questions or would like any more information, please do not hesitate to call or email:

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