



A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE SAFETY OF THE AMHERST PELHAM REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC COMPLEX

Council Sponsors: Councilors Miller, Bahl-Milne, and Hanneke

WHEREAS, the Amherst Town Council values students and student athletes tremendously and wants the Amherst Regional School community, and the greater Amherst community, to benefit from a safe track, usable athletic fields, and competitive athletic opportunities that promote student well-being and a sense of pride in our schools and community; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Amherst, through its Amherst Center Recreation Working Group, and the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District have been exploring options since 2016 to remedy the poor conditions and overuse of the High School Track and Field and make other positive changes to the athletic track and fields, and in 2019 the Working Group adopted an Athletic Facilities Strategic Plan to improve the Town's athletic facilities, address the overuse of the fields, make the facilities ADA accessibility, and make the track useable for MIAA track competitions; and

WHEREAS, the Amherst-Pelham Regional District, in considering the Strategic Plan and the need to address the poor conditions of the athletic track and fields, voted to approve the relocation of the track and installation of an artificial turf field, known as Option 3 in a cost-estimate report from Weston & Sampson dated February 11, 2022, with the goal of securing a percentage of funds for its construction by January 16, 2023; and

WHEREAS, artificial turf is the preferred option of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Superintendent, the High School Athletic Director, and members of the community, including student athletes and coaches; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Health and members of the public have expressed concern about the health and environmental safety of artificial turf, particularly with respect to per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a group of chemicals often referred to as "forever chemicals"; and

WHEREAS, the Amherst Town Council voted on December 5, 2022 to gift the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee \$900,000 to fund the relocation and reorientation of the track with the rehabilitation of the interior multi-use field, using either artificial turf or natural grass.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Amherst Town Council supports the current and future implementation of Athletic Facilities Strategic Plan to improve the Town's athletic facilities, address the overuse of the fields, make the facilities ADA accessible, and make the track useable for MIAA track competitions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Amherst Town Council supports the need to further investigate the impacts of PFAS in all consumer products in our community, continuing to learn about the impacts of newer materials of artificial turf in our community, and taking legislative action to address such impacts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Amherst Town Council shall cause a copy of this Resolution to be sent to Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Superintendent Michael Morris, the members of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee, and the Amherst Board of Health.

Voted this ___ day of December, 2022.

Lynn Griesemer, Town Council President