

September 19, 2018

Chris, Eric and Rural Subcommittee Members,

As comments regarding transparency have been raised by guest attendees at the last two ZOAG Rural Uses Subcommittee meetings (8/28/2018 and 9/12/2018), I am submitting my member comments from the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting in writing for the record.

As Staff is aware, I submitted a question and a request in an email dated 8/29/2018 (below). Because I'm aware Staff is very busy and must not have had time to respond, and I wanted to be prepared for the Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, I did some additional research to attempt to answer my questions.

As background, the owner/initiator of the Indoor Recreation Rural Use request, Evergreen Sportsplex, made the statement (according to my notes) at the ZOAG meeting held Nov. 8, 2017 that Loudoun was "short 126 outdoor fields, 86 indoor fields/courts." At the Aug. 28, 2018 meeting the same owner stated (per the meeting minutes) that "County short 55 to 80 fields, County short 120+/- indoor facilities," which was a direct flip flop of the information provided in 2017. Neither time was a source cited or included in minutes (that I could find), nor was a distribution of the deficits provided to ZOAG. In addition to the quantification discrepancy, the other primary justifications made by the commercial owner included (per my notes) were:

- "Need" for fields & indoor rec space in the West. Sportsplex use in rural is an "asset."
- Uses attract clients/tourists to come to sportsplex
- If County makes west residents drive to the east, will be on the road. Can't deny development to kids.
  - Rebuttal comment from MWC – LEAGUES determine location of team practice and games, not families or kids playing sports.

After checking the FY2019 County budget and CIP and finding no information, I reviewed the (online) Loudoun County Adopted Capital Needs Assessment (CNA) for 2021-2030. I tallied the outdoor field requirements stated and found there is (or will be) in the range of a 142 outdoor field deficit by 2030 (a 112 field deficit by 2021). However, the distribution of those deficit fields is in direct conflict with statements made at the Aug. 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. In fact, the CNA indicates the deficit distribution is 70% in the eastern sub-areas, 21% in Leesburg, 9% in West sub-areas (see summary chart below). This indicates that parks and fields are/will be mostly needed as public facilities in the east sub-areas. Adding the bulk of outdoor (or indoor) fields to the western sub-areas would not alleviate the deficits in the east; it would instead induce traffic from east to west (not west to east as claimed).

I was not able to locate a source for indoor recreation field/court deficits, so I decided to "phone a friend" for assistance. Steve Torpey returned my call and confirmed the outdoor field deficits I calculated were correct, and he indicated PRCS has no source for indoor field/court deficits (perhaps LCPS does).

My additional comments at the Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting included:

- Are Sportplex facilities really for county residents? Or "heads on beds"/TOT?
  - As a parent with two varsity athletes who played three indoor and outdoor sports, these facilities are primarily used for league tournaments, not for "pick up" sports games. This appears to agree with the [Visit Loudoun 2014 Indoor Sports Analysis](#).
  - Leagues will require sufficient volume of tournaments, and more often require hotels to be profitable (team leagues I've been a part of with my athletes don't use B&B's for tournament lodging).
- The REDC has already stated it disagrees with the Indoor Recreation Use in AR1/AR2, as it is not an Agricultural Use. Unlike an outdoor field that could possibly be tilled if the business model changes or fails, once an indoor recreation structure is built on Agricultural land, it can't go back to farming/Ag use.

Whether indoor recreation, sport shooting ranges or *bowling* – long-term profitability relies on population demand. A strong long-term business case matters, (not just initial zoning/location approval), and a failure would leave a large warehouse/building in prime rural economy agricultural land, (not an “asset”).

To ensure transparency for discussion of proposed uses, if ZOAG and/or Staff includes “market demand” for indoor recreation use justification, then ZOAG/Staff should do the same for other proposed non-Ag uses (i.e., outdoor sport shooting ranges.) Mr. Ruedisueli asked for market demand and how other neighboring counties have addressed outdoor sport shooting ranges at the June 13<sup>th</sup> ZOAG meeting. Can/will Staff respond with information provided by the initiator or other source for that proposed use?

Lastly, as an Advisory group, justification statements made by a requestor/initiator or other person should be verified by Staff to ensure neither ZOAG nor Staff inadvertently forwards false or faulty justification to the Board of Supervisors. It would be prudent for Staff and ZOAG to request the source of claims stated and share with ZOAG members. For claims that conflict with County documents or sources, Staff should consider removing or correcting meeting minutes as needed.

Thank you for your consideration,

Maura Walsh-Copeland  
 LCPCC Zoning Committee, Chair  
 & ZOAG member



	Park Type:	Regional	District	Community	Neighborhood	Rec Center	TOTAL	
<b>Sub-Areas</b>	<b># Fields:</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>			
<b>EAST*</b>								
<b>Parks</b>		1	2	6	14	0	23	63.9%
<b>Fields</b>		19	14	24	42	0	99	69.7%
<b>Acres</b>		200	398	444	406	0	1448	70.9%
<b>Leesburg</b>								
<b>Parks</b>		0	1	2	5	0	8	22.2%
<b>Fields</b>		0	7	8	15	0	30	21.1%
<b>acres</b>		0	199	148	145	0	492	24.1%
<b>WEST**</b>								
<b>Parks</b>		0	0	1	3	1	5	13.9%
<b>Fields</b>		0	0	4	9	0	13	9.2%
<b>Acres</b>		0	0	0	87	15	102	5.0%
<b>TOTALS</b>								
<b>Parks</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>	
<b>Fields</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>142</b>	
<b>Acres</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2042</b>	

Source: Adopted Capital Needs Assessment - 2021 - FY 2030, <https://www.loudoun.gov/can>

\* Ashburn, Dulles, Potomac, Sterling

\*\*Route 7 West, Southwest

From: **Maura Walsh-Copeland** <mwalshcopeland@gmail.com>  
Date: Wed, Aug 29, 2018 at 2:45 PM  
Subject: Re: Documentation and distribution of sport field needs  
To: Mark Depo <mark.depo@loudoun.gov>  
Cc: "[Christopher.Mohn@loudoun.gov](mailto:Christopher.Mohn@loudoun.gov) [Mark.Stultz@loudoun.gov](mailto:Mark.Stultz@loudoun.gov)

Mark D.,

As a follow up to the Rural Uses meeting yesterday, I actually had a question from last year for which I have not been able to obtain an answer.

Chris from Evergreen Sportsplex made the reference last year (according to my notes, at the Rural subcommittee meeting on Nov. 8, 2017) and yesterday that "Loudoun is short 126 outdoor fields and short 86 indoor fields/courts."

It was asked by a meeting guest yesterday where this "data" was retained, and the Staff response was that it was on the county website. After looking again on the ZOAG website, the only meeting summaries I could find posted are those of the full ZOAG, not subcommittee meetings or any related supporting documents.

So this brings me to a question and a request --

Question -- What can/will be done to provide/improve the transparency discussed at yesterday's meeting -- to include but not be limited to making subcommittee meeting summaries available, AND more timely posting of agendas (before meetings are held)?

and

Request -- Per Chris this morning, he believes you are in possession of the documentation from Evergreen supporting the statements made by the owner. In that case, I would like to obtain a copy of that source documentation. If it was included, I would also like the distribution quantities of outdoor/indoor fields and courts specified by general policy area. If this was not part of the Nov. 2017 documentation, then I'd like to know where/from whom this information can be obtained.

Can this be provided by the full ZOAG meeting next Wednesday?

Thanks,

Maura