

PUBLIC COMMENT FROM GREEN RIDGEWOOD Re: Schedler Property and Turf – April 12, 2023

David Refkin – 401 Wastena Terrace, Chair of Green Ridgewood

Green Ridgewood's mission is to assist the Village Council in long range planning concerning environmental issues, identify and anticipate environmental challenges and research and recommend sustainable solutions.

Tonight, we are fulfilling our mission as it relates to the Schedler property and the decision on whether to install an artificial turf field or a natural turf field. Since we last addressed the Council on March 30th, we have become aware of new research which we believe is critical for the Council to evaluate before a decision is made.

- Of utmost importance is the growing body of evidence that artificial turf has serious public health, safety and environmental problems. We know that PFAS is used in the manufacture of artificial turf and that PFAS can be inhaled. PFAS bioaccumulates in our bodies. Recently the US Environmental Protection Agency issued a directive. "Every level of government...needs to exercise increased and sustained leadership to accelerate progress to clean up PFAS contamination, and prevent new contamination."
- According to research conducted by Mount Sinai hospital, woman with higher levels of PFAS in their blood have a 40% lower chance of becoming pregnant. The study lead, Dr. Nathan Cohen, stated "Our study strongly implies that women who are planning pregnancy should be aware of the harmful effects of PFAS and take precautions to avoid exposure to this class of chemicals."
- An article published in *TIME* on April 7th, details legislation in 9 states prohibiting the sale or distribution of various products due to PFAS and other chemicals. In one example, a bill was passed unanimously by the Vermont State Senate that includes a **ban on artificial turf** and many other clothing products. Industry trade associations such as the Outdoor Industry Association and the American Apparel

and Footwear Association support the Vermont legislation. Yes, private industry is now supporting a PFAS ban.

And then there is crumb rubber used as a key element in the foundation of artificial turf.

- The New Jersey Institute of Technology completed a peer reviewed study entitled: "Health Impacts of artificial turf: Toxicity studies, challenges and future directions". The author, Dr. Genoa Warner states, "Recent chemical analyses of crumb rubber (which is notoriously toxic) and of other artificial turf components have identified hundreds of chemicals including carcinogens, neurotoxicants, and endocrine disrupting chemicals".

The emerging research, the recommendations from EPA, the nine states proposing a PFAS ban and serious fertility concerns are all sending a clear signal.

The EPA just lowered its acceptable level of PFAS in drinking water by 94%. Ridgewood Water decided, even before the EPA directives, to spend \$100 million to reduce PFAS in drinking water to non-detectable levels. PFAS is a serious public health threat and we should not be adding to the problem by installing artificial turf.

Based on this new information, we must do everything we can to dramatically reduce our exposure to PFAS. We cannot disregard the science. We need to strive to understand it and act accordingly. Given what we know today and how fast the science is changing, Green Ridgewood believes the proper course of action would be to install natural turf. We must **protect our children** and recognize there is new information that we cannot in good conscience ignore.

