



Artificial Turf Study Committee Report Summary

May 13, 2024

Presented by:

James DiTullio, Committee Chair

Natasha Waden, Committee Clerk



Committee Establishment

- 2023 Annual Town Meeting
 - Amended Article 12
- Charge of Committee
 - To review and report on artificial turf:
 - Its health, safety, and environmental impacts
 - Potential mitigation measures
 - Comparison of artificial turf to natural turf fields



Artificial Turf Study Committee Report Summary

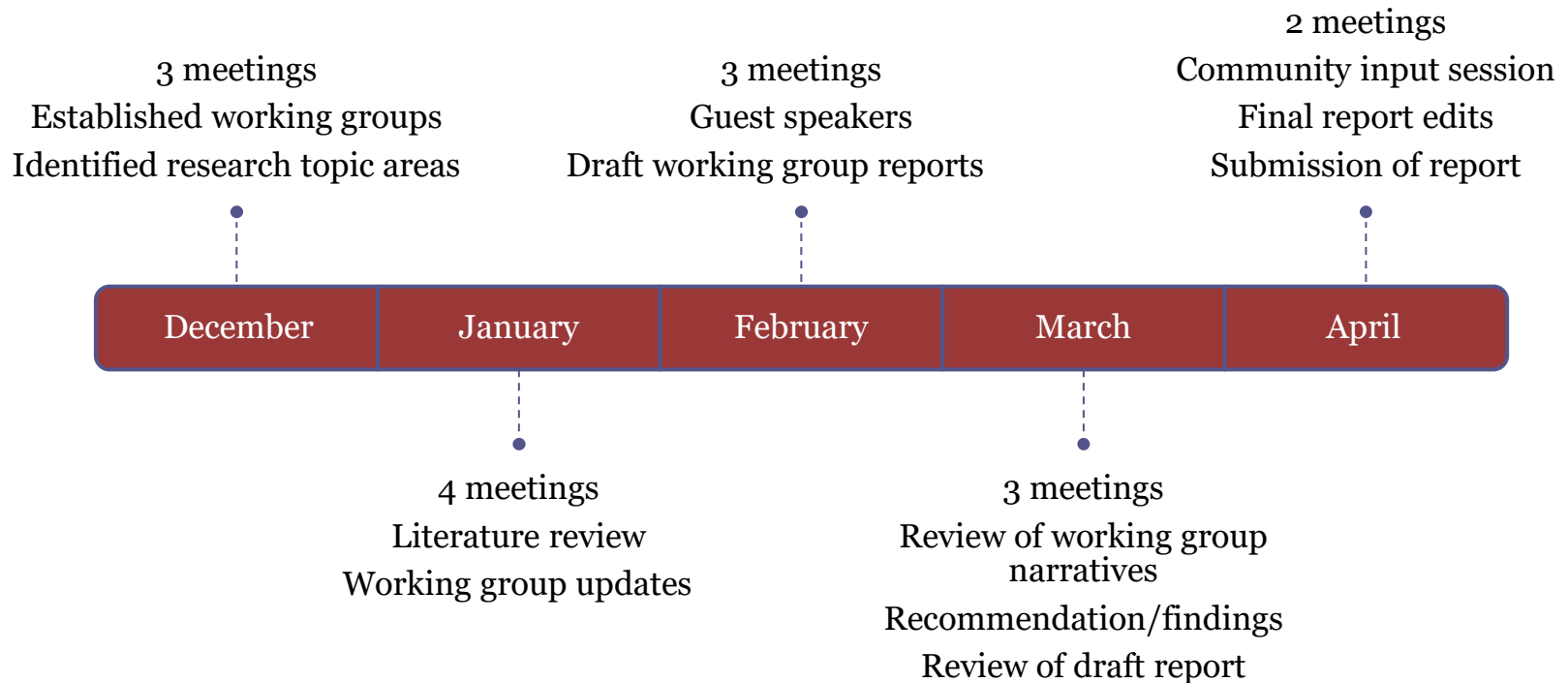
Committee Members

Name	Representing	Role
James DiTullio	Select Board	Committee Chair
Natasha Waden	HHS designee	Committee Clerk
Mike Gildesgame	ConCom	Voting member
Joseph Barr	Capital Planning	Voting member
Jill Krajewski	Envision Arlington	Voting member
Marvin Lewiton	Town Moderator	Voting member
Leslie Mayer	Park & Rec Commission	Voting member
Joe Connelly	Recreation Director	Non-voting member
David Morgan	Conservation Agent	Non-voting member



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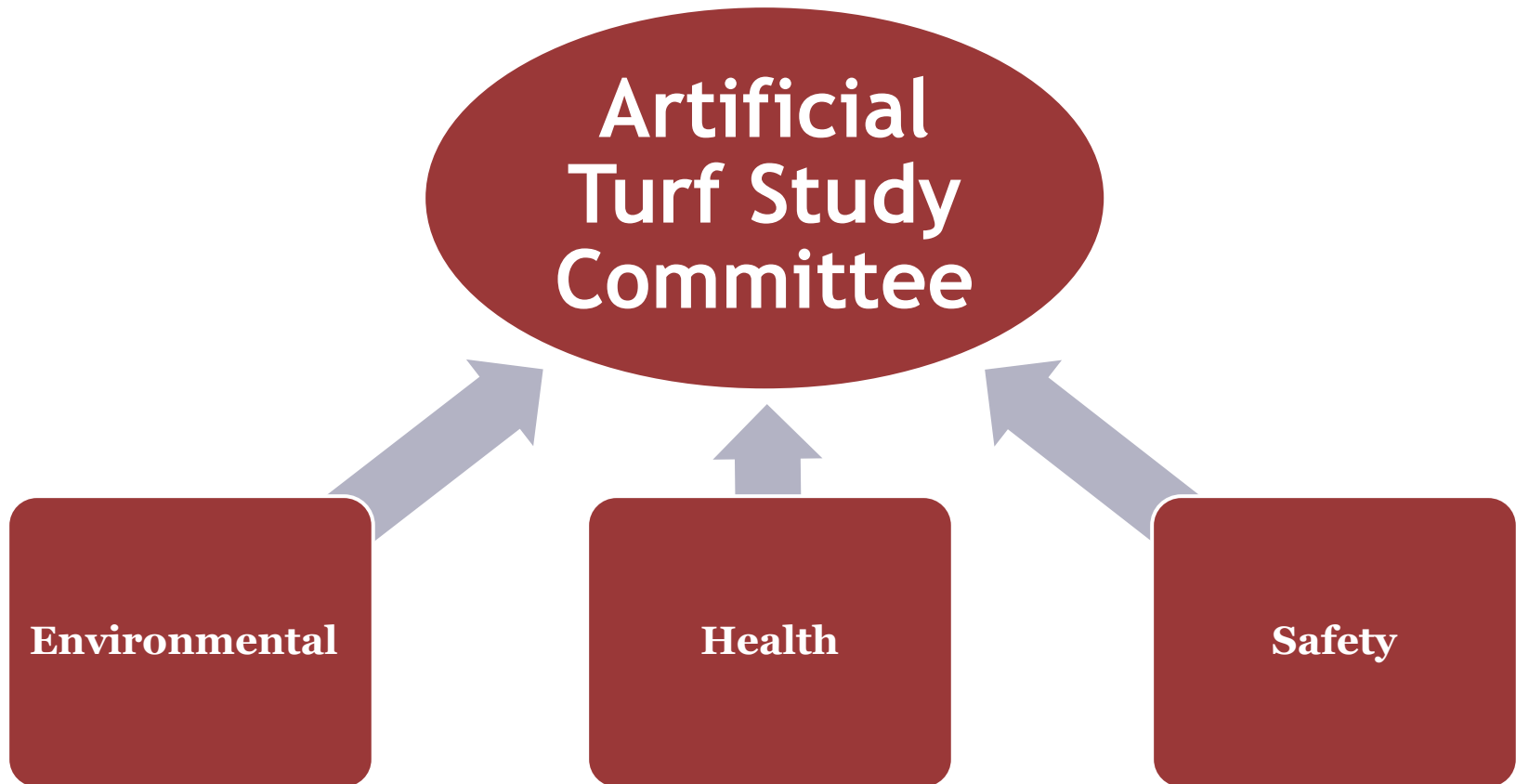
Timeline





Artificial Turf Study Committee Report Summary

Working Groups





Health Topic Areas

- Access to youth sports
 - Impact on mental & physical health
- Heat impacts on human health
- Chemical impacts on human health



Safety Topic Areas

- Injury rates
- Heat related injuries
- Skin/bacteria



Environmental Topic Areas

- Heat impacts on Environment
- Chemical & Particulate Runoff Impacts
- Stormwater Management Impacts
- Climate Change Resilience & Ecological Effects
- Alternative infills



Artificial Turf Study Committee Report to Town Meeting

Cost Comparison & Maintenance

	Artificial Turf	Natural Grass
Installation	\$850K- \$1 Million	\$50K- \$600K
Annual Maintenance	\$13K- \$40K	\$8K- \$50K
End of Life	\$150K- \$665K	\$150K

- **Importance of field maintenance**
 - Contributes to life expectancy
 - Consider maintenance cost at beginning of project
 - Leads to increased pressure on usability of limited playing fields



Consensus Findings

- No support for moratorium or ban on Artificial Turf
- Member concerns with Artificial Turf:
 - Materials used in production of artificial turf
 - Possible chemical pollution to aquatic ecosystems
 - Particulate & plastic pollution
 - Increased heat
 - Lack of carbon sequestration
 - Use of fossil fuels in production
 - Environmental impacts - replacement
 - Inconsistent recycling at end of life



Findings (continued)

- Member cited merits/benefits of Artificial Turf
 - Accessibility & durability in harsh New England weather
 - Usable playing fields in shoulder seasons benefit young people
 - Many health and environmental shortcomings of artificial turf can be mitigated



Recommendations

- Artificial turf should be an option for future field planners after careful evaluation of the practicality and feasibility of natural turf options
- To the extent future field planners in Arlington evaluate artificial turf options, the Committee strongly recommends that the following points be considered by those planners.



Recommendations (continued)

- No crumb rubber infills
- AT certified by independent lab as being free of PFAS and other toxic chemicals before shipment
- All fields in Arlington should be held to strict heat standards on the hottest days of the year
- Field planners should consider if placement of an AT field is in or near a designated heat island



Recommendations (continued)

- Equitable access to high quality playing fields
- Contractually mandate that manufacturer will take full responsibility for end-of-life recycling in the most environmentally sensitive manner
- Every future field project should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with these recommendations in mind



Recommendations (continued)

- Maintenance programs
 - Costs of high-quality maintenance programs must be fully factored into the financial analysis for field development projects
 - Town must maintain its existing natural turf fields to a higher standard than it has been doing in the past, which includes proper resting of the fields



Conclusion

Artificial turf fields can be an option for
Arlington's future field projects:

- (a) after careful evaluation of the practicality and feasibility of natural turf options, and
- (b) with proper health and environmental safeguards in place



Thank you

Access the full report:

- 2024 Town Meeting webpage:
 - <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/69624/638489437898770000>
- Artificial Turf Study Committee webpage:
 - <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/69732/638494836316530000>