

Wilton Sports Fields Facilities Coalition Introduction

March 03, 2022

Introduction to the Wilton Sports Facilities Fields Coalition

The current coalition is led by the volunteer Presidents of Wilton's not-for-profit youth sports organizations.*

- ✓ Wilton Youth Field Hockey – Chandra Ring
- ✓ Wilton Youth Football & Cheer - Nick Gemelli
- ✓ Wilton Soccer Association – Jason Partenza
- ✓ Wilton Youth Softball - Tom Viggiano
- ✓ Wilton Youth Lacrosse - Chris Skillin
- ✓ Wilton Baseball/Softball Association - Dominic Rauccio

We are/will engage with School administrators, WYC, YMCA, WHS Sports Booster clubs, realtors, youth groups and other community groups as we move forward.

We will invite other community organizations and groups to join us.

We all have a vibrant interest in supporting our overall community and Wilton's sports/recreation and economic future.

We are working with Wilton Athletic Recreation Foundation (WARF) to form a partnership.

*Ongoing seeking to add/include more community organizations

** Appendix – youth / high school sports membership calculations

Our Mission

- **Our mission is to drive a shared community vision for Wilton's sports fields, facilities and multi-purpose play spaces for the benefit of all.**
- Our vision is to advance and develop high value community-centric infrastructure for the Town of Wilton that
 - ✓ Supports year round, robust and diverse sports and activities for all ages – Recreation (in town) & competitive (travel)
 - ✓ Promotes healthy lifestyles of Wilton children and adults.
 - ✓ Delivers social and economic benefits for our community at large.
 - ✓ Is a private / public partnership with town leaders/officials and the coalition to achieve the above mentioned
- The organization is led by dedicated Wilton volunteers who will work in cooperation and partnership with
 - ✓ Wilton not-for-profit youth sports organizations
 - ✓ The Wilton High School Administrators & Athletic Department and supporting booster clubs
 - ✓ Elected Town of Wilton leaders, Wilton Public Schools, Wilton Board of Education, Board of Finance and Parks & Recreation Commission, among others
- To accomplish our objectives, we plan to
 - ✓ Develop and vet ideas, solicit community and town feedback to inform actionable objectives and goals
 - ✓ Support development plans for core infrastructure in cooperation and partnership with Town
 - ✓ Raise funds in a focused and transparent entity to deploy towards specific projects aligned with town officials

Our Mission Cont.

- **Our mission is to drive a shared community vision for Wilton's sports fields, facilities and multi-purpose play spaces for the benefit of all.**
- We envision funds supporting three types of projects to maintain, add to or upgrade existing fields/facilities
 - ✓ Yearly maintenance projects & costs – ongoing & project based
 - ✓ Annual capital projects - inclusive of long-term replacement costs
 - ✓ Long range multi-year capital projects - inclusive of long-term replacement costs
- We desire a Public/Private partnership to determine how projects are funded & envisioned to ensure utilization & quality
 - ✓ Town and Coalition co-funded
 - ✓ Coalition funds 100%
 - ✓ Coalition supplements town projects to get to desired project outcome – e.g, last 10%
- Be aspirational minded, but pragmatic in decision making
 - ✓ Support bringing businesses to Wilton
 - ✓ Have a good, better & best lens on what defines success

Our Vision

- Amazing community infrastructure for all — modern sports fields and facilities, fun and available open play spaces.
- Modernize and enhance our sports fields, facilities and open play spaces.
- Fields/Facilities are essential to the ability to offer, support and grow high-quality programs for recreational and competitive use, while also encouraging an active lifestyle of all our residents.
- These spaces build pride and enhance a sense of belonging to our community.
- They have the potential to generate positive economic activity to support local businesses and initiatives.
- Community sports fields and facilities, and open play areas are gathering places for families and friends all year long.
- Encouraging an active lifestyle of all our residents whether a solo, business, group or organized activity.
 - ✓ Solo - e.g., Triathletes
 - ✓ Business - e.g., Recreation leagues
 - ✓ Group – e.g., Cricket
 - ✓ Organized – e.g., Club
- And finally, they make Wilton a more attractive place to be and live. Through the development of actionable ideas and long-range thinking we can solidify Wilton's future as a model community with first-class town amenities for the active youth and adults of our hometown.

Why Now? – Macro View

- ✓ Extended shut down of Stadium and Lilly Field in Fall '21 caused significant pain to entire community
- ✓ Wilton youth sports & community leaders are as connected and collaborative as we can ever recall
- ✓ Opportunities to bring economic activity to Town around Wilton-sponsored events / activities
- ✓ Participation and joining in multiple youth sports in Wilton is growing – multiple sports, sports programs & seasons
- ✓ Desire to offer more programs in the community to support recreation and competitive participants
- ✓ Youth sports (volunteer organizations) seasons overlap, straining and limiting the available field space as is
- ✓ Inclement weather (123 days/year) closes fields often, stunts seasons and impacts playability
- ✓ Existing surfaces raise many safety concerns, and are expensive to maintain at sub par status quo levels
- ✓ Community members want to donate to this type of cause but there is no entity to bring projects to life

Types of Projects We Are Thinking About For Conversation

Maintenance

- Specific improvements and additions to fields (backstops, fencing, equipment storage, etc)
- Cost to maintain and repair at desired levels

Annual Projects (*temporary & long-term assets*)

- Making non-utilized field spaces available, functional, additive
- Improved amenities near / around fields
- Community service days with local businesses
- Improved fields playing surfaces – indoors / outdoors

Long Term Projects (*temporary & long-term assets*)

- Additional multi-sport turf field(s)
- Community centric facilities
- Adaptability of facilities for other opportunities
- Additive or upgraded field / play spaces at and around Wilton public schools
 - ✓ Small footprint areas to serve after school programs/youth sport collaborations, make multi functional
- Major school renovation projects (eg future Middlebrook renovation) with potential to effectively incorporate and redesign outdoor / athletic / play space in coordination