

**Riley, Kate**

---

**From:** Cambridge Girls Softball - [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 31, 2019 12:32 PM  
**To:** City Council; Riley, Kate; City Manager; SchoolCom@cpsd.us; dbeard@cpsd.us  
**Subject:** Tobin VLUS Project - copy of letter posted into the Cambridge Chronicle

We the undersigned representing many youth sports organizations and over 2,000 individual youth participants continue to work in partnership with the city to expand the number of playing fields across Cambridge.

Recently, the city began a process to renovate the Vassal Lane-Montessori former Tobin school. The site at Vassal Lane currently hosts three baseball fields for Little League, but the current plans for the new school could eliminate all usable organized-sports field space.

The city, always a great supporter of youth sports, has made plans to move Little League to Glacken Field near Fresh Pond. Glacken Field has accommodated girls softball and youth soccer, which will be moved elsewhere. While the shuffling is inconvenient, it belies the real problem: there is already a shortage of recreational field space in Cambridge.

Besides little league baseball, elementary school sports and outdoor play space, these fields have been important resources for unrestricted neighborhood play space as well. In addition, Vassal Lane is one of four middle schools in Cambridge.

When middle schools were first discussed there was a commitment to expanded school sports, which rely on those fields. Middle school sports programs are already under-supported and do not coordinate with high school programs or have much instruction or many scheduled competitions.

A beautiful new school for our children does not have to eliminate field space. Use of height along the Armory side could add space without covering precious permeable green space. Parking for the school can go underground. There are choices that architects can make to preserve the space while also creating a beautiful new school, and we ask that they make every effort to do so.

As the leaders of Cambridge Girls Softball Association, Cambridge Youth Lacrosse, Cambridge Youth Soccer and West Cambridge Little Baseball League, we ask on behalf of our current and future families that the city make every effort to create a state-of-the-art school facility that maintains field space in the city. When children and families "see" youth sports and have access to the spaces without taking long rides in traffic, more kids participate.

There are more sports activities available to children today, but it benefits everybody if we can recruit new residents, communities with limited resources, more young women and increase participation across the board in local, community-based programs. This cannot happen if we eliminate playing fields, and our children will end up losing, even if they gain a beautiful new school.

Our organizations will continue to work in partnership with the city and work together to share and accommodate each other as much as possible. We ask for the city and school departments continued partnership to maintain and expand our playing fields citywide.

- **Irving Allen**, president, Cambridge Girls Softball Association
- **Anthony Galluccio**, president, Galluccio Associates
- **Alejandro Heyworth**, president, Cambridge Youth Lacrosse
- **Steve Kendall**, president, West Cambridge Little Baseball League
- **Susan Ruff**, executive director, Cambridge Youth Soccer
- **Jason Targoff**, president, Cambridge Youth Soccer