

February 3, 2020

Dear Ms. Riley, Ms. Falise, and Mr. DePasquale,

From the January 16 meeting at the Tobin/Vassal Lane School and the letters written in advance of it I learned that Cambridge has, for over sixty years, been in public green space/open play space deficit to an enormous degree. (Letter from Sara Mae Berman) I learned that our schools have been built on city-owned green space, reducing it further with each school building. As an early elementary teacher I know the importance of outdoor play for all ages, certainly for the Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade population. Essential. I propose that absolutely no green space be sacrificed in the rebuilding of the Tobin/Vassal Lane School.

The Cambridge Pre-K Program should have its own green space apart from the middle school energy. A larger population requires a proportionately larger play space, both green and equipped. Additionally, an important benefit of consolidating our middle-schoolers was the ability to offer enhanced sports opportunities; a variety of teams, access to various fields and courts.

Finally, as a resident of Strawberry Hill I object to the proposed loss of Glacken Field. The solo Little League field is sufficient as the Tobin/Vassal School will retain its fields. Flexible use of the Glacken field for youth and adult soccer leagues and neighborhood free play should continue. Losing the existing field to a single-use Little League field is not an "improvement". I propose that absolutely no flexible-use green space be sacrificed at the Glacken.

The time has come to end the Cambridge short-sighted planning of past decades with regard to our public open spaces. We must begin a practice of preserving. We must leave an improved, healthier city for future generations.

Thank you,

Liz Merrill

